



Echols County Elementary/Middle School 2025-2026

The Echols County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sex in its employment practices, student programs, and dealing with the public. It is in 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. (BOE policies GAA and JAA). Any employee, student, applicant for employment, parent or other person who believes he or she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy may contact Echols County Board of Education, 216 Hwy 129 North. POB 207, Statenville, GA 31648. (229)559-5734

Echols County Elementary-Middle School
2025-2026 Student Handbook
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AVISO:

Si necesita una versión de este formulario traducido en español, por favor llame a la escuela al 229-559-5413

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ECHOLS COUNTY SCHOOLS

2025-2026

July '25						
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 Half Day
 Students Return
 Teacher Workday
 School Holiday

Echols County Elementary-Middle School
229 Hwy 129 South
Statenville GA 31648
Phone: 559-5413
Fax: 559-0423
Web Page. www.echols.k12.ga.us

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Echols County Schools operates on two campuses: PK-8 and 9-12.

- The Echols County Elementary-Middle School office is located at the entrance of the new building off Hwy 129. All visitors must enter through the main doors and sign in to come on campus. Visitors will be buzzed into the school by our front office staff. All other entrances to the school will be locked during the school day. ECS provides a safe environment for our children. Please help us with your support and understanding in this area.
- Student registration and withdrawal for ALL Elementary, Middle, and High School students will be done through the PK-8 campus office on Hwy 129.
- Parents should use the front drop off area for all “pick-ups” and “drop offs” of their children. Please do not enter the rear parking lot except for special events and ball games. The rear parking lot is for student drivers, teachers, and busses only during the school day.
- Athletics and other special events will be held throughout the year in our new Gymnasium. People who attend these events are asked to park in the rear of the campus. Overflow parking is available by the old gym.
- All students will be provided breakfast and lunch. Due to seating capacity, parents are not allowed to each lunch in the cafeteria with their children, unless a special event has been planned.
- In School Suspension will be held in the ISS room for elementary-middle school students. - ISS students should be picked up after school from the school office.

SCHOOL DAY ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE 7:40-2:30

School Day Arrival & Departure: Students are to report to the cafeteria for breakfast as soon as they arrive on campus (after 7:40). After breakfast, students should report to their classroom. Students in grades 5-8 should go to their locker to get their books before reporting to class.

School will begin at 8:00. All students arriving to school after 8:00 will be tardy and must report to the front office. All school business should be completed before 8:00 and no student should be out of 1st block after this time. Students who do not ride the bus are not to arrive on campus before 7:40 a.m. and should leave in the afternoon immediately after the dismissal bell at 2:30. No supervision is provided by teachers before 7:40 a.m. or after 2:30. It is extremely important that parents who pick up their children in the afternoon be on time. Teachers and office staff have required duties to perform and meetings to attend after the students leave and cannot keep children after 2:30. Students will not be allowed to stay on campus after the dismissal bell.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Unless teachers or the office are notified in writing, students will be required to follow their regular means of transportation home. A permission note from parents is required for changes to be made. Please instruct your child to give notes to teachers upon arrival to class. The office must issue a bus pass if a student is riding home on a different bus. Transportation changes may be emailed to the school at: transportation@echols.k12.ga.us

No changes can be made to a child's transportation after 2:00 p.m.

BELL SCHEDULE:

Elementary School

Breakfast 7:40-7:55 Warning Bell 7:55 School Begins 8:00 School Dismissal 2:30

Middle School: 6th & 7th Grades

Breakfast 7:40-7:55
Warning Bell 7:55
1st Block 8:00-9:25
2nd Block 9:30-10:55
LUNCH 11:00-11:30
3rd Block 11:35-1:00
4th Block 1:05-2:30

Middle School: 8th Grade

Breakfast 7:40-7:55
Warning Bell 7:55
1st Block 8:00-9:25
2nd Block 9:30-10:55
3rd Block 11:00-12:20
LUNCH 12:25-12:55
4th Block 1:00-2:30

EARLY CHECK-OUTS OF STUDENTS:

If parents wish to pick children up before the regular dismissal time, the request needs to be made through the office. The secretary will call the student to the office where parents may sign them out of class. If someone other than the parent or regular caretaker will be picking up children, please notify the office in advance. Please do not attempt to go to the classroom to pick up your child.

Please remember: When students are checked out of school early, they miss vital instructional time. The class continues and many things are not repeated the next day. Please do not check students out of school early unless it is necessary. Elementary students checked out before 11:15 will be counted as absent for the school day. Attendance for middle school students is taken each period.

HEALTH REFERRALS:

Any student may be referred when there is a question concerning their hearing or vision. Students in the sixth grade are screened for Scoliosis. Students will be referred to the School Nurse or Health Department Nurse for other Health concerns, as the school administrators deem necessary.

MEDICINES AT SCHOOL:

At no time should students transport medicine to and from school on the bus. A parent or guardian must deliver medication to the school nurse. The parents or guardian must complete a form giving the school permission to administer the medication in accordance with the doctor's instruction. Parents are asked to supply cough drops, Tylenol, Tums, Advil, and any other over the counter medication that their child takes on a regular basis. The student must go to the nurse to take the medicine as prescribed.

A student for whom the school has on file supporting medical documentation may carry at all times, parental/guardian permission, inhalers for asthma, auto-injectable epinephrine (EpiPen's) for allergic reactions and medical needs for diabetes. Students authorized to self-administer such medications shall be instructed not to permit any other student to handle, possess, or otherwise attempt to use his/her medication and shall be informed that violations of such instructions will be dealt with in accordance with the student code of conduct.

All medicine not claimed by the end of May will be properly disposed of by the school. An authorization to administer medication must be renewed each school year.

ILLNESS/INJURY AT SCHOOL:

The school does not have insurance to cover injuries at school. School staff will respond depending on the seriousness of the injury or illness. For non-critical illness or injury, the school staff or nurse will administer first aid. For critical illness or injury, the school will notify emergency medical services and administer first aid to the extent possible. Every attempt will be made to notify parents if their child becomes sick or injured at school. Please have someone designated to come in the event you are not available. Please keep the school informed of a telephone number (home and /or work) and address changes. If parents cannot be contacted, the nurse will isolate potentially contagious students. If efforts are not made to pick up an ill student in a reasonable amount of time the nurse and administrators will evaluate the situation to determine if a referral to the Department of Family and Children Services is appropriate.

SCHOOL INSURANCE:

The school does not provide students with insurance; however, optional student accident insurance is offered. A brochure will be sent home explaining the options available and prices for coverage. The school is not in the insurance business; we merely pass out the information. The insurance company offering the coverage handles receipts and claims. PLEASE NOTE: If a student is injured and the parents do not have personal or school insurance, the school is NOT liable.

HEAD LICE:

Lice are a common problem in a school. Please check your child's hair frequently. If your child is found to have head lice or nits, you will be required to pick up your child and provide treatment. Remember our school has a "nit free" policy, meaning all nits must be removed from the hair. The school nurse, health department nurse or medical doctor must certify the student "nit free" before being readmitted to school. Students will not be allowed to ride the school bus if they have head lice or nits. The school checks for head lice on a regular schedule to prevent the spread of head lice. Students must provide verification from the school nurse, Health Department, or doctor in order to return to school following detection. Absences after two (2) days will be unexcused unless verification is received from the Health Department or Doctor that the student is not clear of nits and lice. Verification must be sent to the office to prevent the absences from being unexcused.

Parents of children who are identified with head lice more than three times may be referred to the Department of Family and Children Services for counseling to see if neglect is present. The administrators will evaluate the situation to determine if the referral to DFACS is appropriate on a case-by case basis.

TELEPHONE:

The telephone should be used in emergency situations only. Students should make arrangements before coming to school for any after school plans which require the use of the telephone. Students must gain permission from the teacher to go to the office to ask an administrator for permission to use the telephone. K-8 students are not to have cell phones visible or use cell phones to make calls/send text message during the school day. The school is not responsible for cell phones that are damaged, lost or stolen. See Personal Electronic Devices for more information.

VOLUNTEERS:

Parents and community members who wish to volunteer in a classroom, on a regular basis, should inquire first with the classroom teacher to determine if there is a need. The classroom teachers will then seek final approval from the administration. Volunteers may be required to complete an application and obtain a criminal background check.

VISITORS:

All persons visiting the campus must sign in at the office and receive a visitor's pass. An administrator or administrator's designee must clear all visitors to the classrooms. We ask that all visitors follow the school dress code as reasonably as possible. The administrator or designee has the option of accompanying the person during their visit to the classroom. Volunteers may be issued temporary passes through the office by administrators and MUST be worn while on campus.

PERSONAL ARTICLES BROUGHT TO SCHOOL:

The school is not responsible for items that are brought to school, even when confiscated by school personnel. Items such as cell phones, mp3 players, playing cards, trading cards, toys, etc. may become disruptive to the learning environment. This could result in disciplinary action. Items brought to school are subject to collection by a teacher or school administrator if they become a problem in the classroom or on campus. Students who refuse to temporarily turn over distracting personal items to any school personnel are subject to additional disciplinary actions. Any item confiscated from a student will be donated to charity or thrown away at the end of the year if the parent does not claim it. Students will be allowed to bring water to class; however, the container must have a lid. Sodas, energy drinks, etc. will not be allowed in class.

LOST AND FOUND:

All found articles and clothing are turned into the office and stored in the cafeteria until claimed. PLEASE, clearly write your child's name on coats, sweaters, gloves, etc. with permanent marker to aid the school in returning lost and found articles. Any articles of clothing which have not been claimed at the end of each semester will be given to an organization for redistribution. If your child is missing an article of clothing, please come by the cafeteria and check the lost and found box.

LOCKERS:

Lockers are rented to students in grades 5th through 12th for an annual fee of \$5.00. Locker rental is not optional. All students in Middle and High School must rent a locker. Locks are sold for \$7.00. All students must purchase and use a school issued combination lock. Students can use previously purchased locks, as long as, they purchased if from the school. Any locker found with a non-school issued Master Lock™ will be clipped, and the student may face disciplinary action. Contents of the locker are the responsibility of the student the locker is assigned to. Lockers are not to be shared by students except with the permission of the principal. Any problems with the lockers should be reported to the office. Lockers are school property and are subject to be searched at any time when the administrator determines sufficient cause. Unclaimed articles left in lockers at the end of the year, will be donated to charity at the end of the year.

RETURNED CHECK/INSUFFICIENT FUNDS:

In the event that a check is returned for insufficient funds (NSF), closed account, or any other reason the Echols County School District may impose a fee of \$25. Upon receipt of an NSF or other unpaid check the school district will immediately contact the writer, by mail, that a dishonored check has been returned to the school. The letter will ask the bad check writer to bring cash, certified check, or money order for the face value of the bad check within five business days of the letter date. If the bad check writer does not clear the bad check within five business days, then a fee of \$25 will be imposed.

TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS:

These materials are loaned to students by the state of Georgia and Echols County. If these materials are lost or damaged, students are required to pay for them. This excludes normal wear and tear. Refer to student debt policy.

MEDIA CENTER:

- Students may check out materials from the media center any time during the school day.
- Students may check out two books at a time. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis to meet classroom needs.
- Books are loaned to students for two weeks.
- Students with an overdue book will not be allowed to check out a third book until the missing book is returned or paid for. The media center will reimburse money for books that have been lost, paid for, and then later found at the end of each semester.
- Students are expected to take care of books they borrow from the Media Center. They will be charged for damaged books. The cost of damages will be assessed by the Media Specialist.
- The following steps will be followed for students with overdue books:
 1. Overdue notices will be sent home at the end of the first semester and in May.
 2. If the book is not returned or paid for by the end of the school year, the student will be placed on the school debt list.
- The Media Center and Media Specialist will actively provide instructional support and resources to classroom teachers implementing the following Lexile Proficiency Programs (LPP).

ACCELERATED READER (AR) PROGRAM- Grades Kindergarten – 8 (updated in January 2017)

- Accelerated Reader is a voluntary reading program; however, all students are encouraged to participate.
- Accelerated Reader combines the independent reading of library books with computer-based comprehension test to encourage children to read more books.
- Accelerated Reader assessments may be used to measure the standard achievement but will not count as the academic grade.
- The Accelerated Reader software also manages participating student records to track reading performance, giving teachers valuable information to identify problem areas.
- Students are rewarded for their achievements with Maker-Space Passes, AR Parties, and End-of-the -Year Reading Awards.
- Highlights of the program are:
 - 100% Voluntary
 - There will be no grades given for AR participation
 - There will be no punishment given for not participating in the AR program
 - There will be no extra-time in classrooms given to meet AR reading goals
 - All goals, points, and rewards will be handled by the Media Specialist

NOTE: Teachers may require reading homework as part of their reading curriculum; these assignments are not related to AR.

SCHOOL DEBT POLICY

Student's debts must be cleared in a timely fashion. Students who carry debts over a period of one semester will be ineligible to participate in athletics, extra-curricular clubs, field trips, after-school program; and report cards will be held.

EMERGENCY DRILLS:

Fire, Severe Weather, Evacuation, and Intruder Alert (HB 147) drills will be held at unannounced times. There will be one or more drills per month. Upon hearing the signal, students will proceed as instructed to their assigned areas and roll will be called from the roll book. If the drill requires the students to leave the room, they should march in single file close to the wall to allow the lines on each side to move faster and to avoid any crowding at entrances and exits. All students should be at least 100 feet from any building in a fire drill.

SCHOOL CLOSURE:

If it becomes necessary to close the school, information will be made available as quickly as possible. Parents will be notified through the school call-out system and/or a list on the Echols Elementary/Middle Facebook page.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

Physical education is a required subject just as math, reading, etc. are required. When it becomes necessary for a student to be excused from PE because of a physical disability, she/he should bring a written note from his/her physician stating the reason for the request and the length of time to be excused. Beginning in middle school, students must bring a change of clothes for PE.

ECHOLS PARENT INVOLVEMENT (EPIC)

EPIC (Echols Parent Involvement Council) is our parent involvement organization which offers input and support to student academic achievement and the school- and system-wide planning process. At each meeting, an agenda is provided, attendees sign-in, and minutes are taken. The purpose of these meetings is to provide awareness of activities and issues which concern ECES-ECMS and provide an opportunity for stakeholders to be involved in the planning process. Suggestions from these meetings may also be discussed at faculty meetings to receive additional input when needed. Community Partners in Education (CPIE) are invited and encouraged to attend. EPIC meetings may correspond with Parent Involvement activities.

2025-2026 Parent Involvement Schedule:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| ➤ | July 30 th | Fall Open House |
| ➤ | August 14 th | EPIC Meeting (Annual Title I Review meeting) 6:00 p.m. |
| ➤ | September 25 th | "Reading w/Families" Literary Event |
| ➤ | October 8 th | K-8 Parent Conferences |
| ➤ | November 7 th | Family Fall Festival |
| ➤ | December 4 th | EPIC Meeting/Cooking with Kids 6:00 p.m. |
| ➤ | February 12 th | K-8 Parent Conferences |
| ➤ | February 19 th | EPIC Meeting/Spelling Bee 6:00 p.m. |
| ➤ | March 20 th | "Reading w/Families" Literary Event |
| ➤ | May 26 th | EPIC Meeting 8:30 a.m. |

WATER SAFETY

HB 402 Edna Mae McGovern Act

For information on water safety or local swim lessons, please visit the Georgia Department of Natural Resources <https://gadnr.org/swimming-safety> or the Valdosta YMCA, 229-244-4646.

FOOD SERVICES

Breakfast:

Breakfast is served each day in the cafeteria from 7:40 to 8:00. Echols County Schools has a no-cost breakfast for all students. K through 8th grade students must report to the lunchroom when they arrive at school if they want to eat breakfast. Students must be in their classrooms by 8:00 or they will be considered tardy for school. Pre-K and Kindergarten students will report to their designated arrival area; teachers will bring the students to breakfast as a class.

LUNCH:

The type of lunch that is served in our cafeteria will provide at least 1/3 of the daily nutrition requirements for students. The lunch includes milk. Echols County Schools has a no-cost lunch for all students.

LUNCHES BROUGHT FROM HOME:

Students in Pre-K through 2nd grade should not bring food items that must be microwaved or require special tools to be opened. Do not send beverages or food items in glass containers. School policy prohibits students from leaving campus during or prior to the lunch period and returning with fast food items for lunch. Students are prohibited from calling outside establishments to deliver food to the school. Students are prohibited from entering the parking lot during lunch without permission. Parents may bring a lunch to the office for their child only.

PARENT LUNCHES:

Due to our lunchroom capacity, parents will not be allowed to eat lunch or visit with their children during this time. Look for special invitations to holiday dinners. Remember to sign in at the office and receive a visitor's pass.

MENUS:

A monthly menu is posted in the office. Most teachers will send home menus.

LUNCH SCHEDULE

10:45-11:15	Pre-K
11:00-11:30	Middle School – 6 th & 7 th Grades
11:20-11:50	Kindergarten
11:25-11:55	1 st Grade
11:35-12:05	2 nd Grade
11:50-12:20	3 rd Grade
11:55-12:25	4 th Grade
12:00-12:30	5 th Grade
12:25-12:55	8 th Grade Lunch
12:30-1:00	High School

CALENDAR SCHEDULE FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION

Character Education will be taught in Elementary homeroom, and middle school, 1st academic classes, on the last Tuesday of each month. Content will be evaluated by Brack Deloach each month and provided to teachers based on school/student/community needs.

Students in grades K-8 may be chosen at a CATS of the month, if they are chosen as being Courteous, Accountable, Trustworthy, and Successful by their teacher.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES:

All requests for parent-teacher conferences are made on an appointment basis. Parents should not attempt unscheduled conferences since teachers have classroom responsibilities. Parents can arrange to meet with all of their child's teachers at one time by contacting counselor Brack Deloach (PK-8). Parents should obtain a visitor pass from the office before entering any classroom during school hours.

A mid-year conference is available for those parents requesting one; however, teachers may request a conference if a student is in danger of failing their class. Parent/teacher conferences will be held in October & February.

REPORT CARDS:

Report cards will be issued at the end of each nine weeks of the school term. Report cards are issued four times per year. Report cards and progress reports should be signed by a parent and returned to school the next school day. Students in middle and high school should return progress reports to individual classroom teachers and report cards to their first period class. K-8 students will receive their report cards the last day of school in May.

NINE-WEEK DATES:	<u>Progress Reports</u>	<u>Last Day of 9 weeks</u>	<u>Report Cards go home</u>
1 st 9 Wks	Sept. 8, 2025	Oct. 3, 2025	Oct. 15, 2025
2 nd 9 Wks	Nov. 14, 2025	Dec. 19, 2025	Jan 8, 2026 (K-8)
3 rd 9 Wks	Feb. 11, 2026	Mar. 16, 2026	Mar. 20, 2026
4 th 9 Wks	April 24, 2026	May 22, 2026	May 22, 2026 (K-8)

GRADING FOR GRADES K-8:

The following is the grading policy adopted by Echols County Schools for Grades K-8:

➤ **Grades K-1st:** All grades will be of equal value.

➤ **Grades 2nd:** In Reading and Math, test grades will have a value of 60% and daily grades will have a value of 40%. Writing, Phonics, Social Studies and Science grades will be of equal value. Students in grade 2 should expect to be given a minimum of 4 test grades and a minimum of 8 daily grades, per nine weeks in reading and math.

➤ **Grades 3rd:** In Reading, Writing and Math, test grades will have a value of 60% and daily grades will have a value of 40%. Phonics, Social Studies and Science grades will be of equal value. Students in grade 3 should expect to be given a minimum of 4 test grades and a minimum of 8 daily grades, per nine weeks in reading, writing and math.

➤ **Grades 4th – 8th:** All subjects will have a value of 60% for test grades and 40% value for daily grades. Students in grades 4-8 should expect to be given a minimum of four test grades and a minimum of 9 daily grades, per nine weeks. Grade levels that have yearlong Science/Social Studies combinations should expect two test grades and a minimum of 4 daily grades, from each subject per nine weeks.

Students and teachers are encouraged to revise and improve assignments until mastery has been obtained:

- No first or third nine-week grade will be below 58
- No grade of 69 will be given for a nine-week grade.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SEMESTER GRADES:

Students in middle school will take a comprehensive exam in each academic subject at the end of each semester. Exams will count as 10% of their final grade.

MIDDLE SCHOOL INCENTIVE:

As an incentive to do well on the Georgia Milestones, students in grades 6-8 will receive one day off from school for each “DISTINGUISHED” score achieved on Georgia Milestones test up to two days maximum. These days will be scheduled during the last week of school.

If Georgia Milestone scores are not available before the end of school, students in grades 6-8 who have straight A’s for the year in the four core classes will be excused from all classes on the final two days for the school year.

An incentive will be provided each 9 weeks for students who meet the requirements set for attendance, academics, and behavior. Requirements will be announced prior the start of each 9 weeks period.

GRADING SYSTEM:

Kindergarten through Eighth Grades:

- A 90-100
- B 80-89
- C 70-79
- F 69 & below (Failure)

Special Areas of Social Growth, K-3 science/social studies, 4-5 writing and Conduct Grades will receive the following:

O Outstanding **S** Satisfactory **NI** Needs Improvement **U** Unsatisfactory **I** Incomplete

K-5 exploratory classes

P Passing **F** Failing

HONOR ROLL:

The honor roll recognizes elementary, middle, and high school students each nine weeks who have maintained high academic achievements in all subjects.

- The “A” academic achievement honor roll recognizes students maintaining a 90 or above in all classes while performing grade level work.
- The “A/B” academic achievement honor roll recognizes students maintaining A’s or B’s in all classes while performing grade level work. Students must have at least one “A” in any class to be on the “A/B” honor roll.
- The performance honor roll recognizes students maintaining a 90 or above based on their ability level.
- Grades 6-8 will be calculated by the nine-week average.
- Yearlong Honor roll will be determined through the end of the 3rd 9 weeks.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS:

A student’s achievement of the appropriate criteria for grade level to which he/she is assigned and his/her readiness for work at the next grade level shall be required before he/she is assigned to the higher grade. Those students who have mastered the appropriate criteria will be promoted and those who have not will be retained.

Criteria for promotion:

Kindergarten

A student must pass with at least a “70” year average in Reading, Phonics, Mathematics, and a “satisfactory” on all required state assessments (GKIDS 2.0).

Grades 1, 2

A student must pass with at least a “70” year average in Reading, Mathematics.

Grade 3

Report Card:

1. A student must pass with at least a “70” year average in Reading, Mathematics, **and**
2. A developing score on the required Georgia Milestones Assessment System ELA and Math tests, with a Lexile level on or above grade level.

Grades 4

A student must pass with at least a “70” year average in Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

Grades 5

Report Card:

1. A student must pass with at least a “70” year average in Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies: **and**
2. A developing score on the required Georgia Milestones Assessment System ELA and Math tests, with a Lexile level on or above grade level.

Grades 6 & 7

Report Card:

1. A student must pass with at least a “70” average in Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies.

Grade 8

Report Card:

1. A student must pass with at least a “70” year average in Mathematics, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies;

2. **And** a developing score on the required Georgia Milestones Assessment System ELA and Math test, with a Lexile level on or above grade level.

SUMMER SCHOOL POLICY:

The Echols County Board of Education offers students in grades three through eight the opportunity to attend summer school classes for credit recovery, as the budget allows. The focus of summer school classes will be to fill gaps in student learning. Students must have recommendation from the school counselor in order to be eligible. Students that have a class average below 70 must attend class four hours per day to make up course work. All students must have a year average above 58 to be eligible for credit recovery. The summer school class grade will be included to determine if the grade level requirements for promotion have been met. The student's final average after completing summer school can be no higher than a 70. The grading procedures for elementary and middle school summer school classes are:

Elementary and Middle School

1. Must have a minimum of a 58-class average.
2. A maximum of two classes may be taken for summer school credit (unless approved by administration).
3. Summer school class average will be calculated as 1/3 of the final course grade:
 - a. Daily Grades = 40%
 - b. Test Grades = 60%
4. First semester average will be calculated as 1/3 of the final course grade
5. Second semester average will be calculated as 1/3 of the final course grade

Students in grades 3, 5, & 8 that have a class average above 70, but failed the required Georgia Milestones Assessment System test, will be given the opportunity to attend remediation classes until retested. These students must retake the Georgia Milestones Assessment System test or face retention. If a passing score is achieved on the Georgia Milestones Assessment System make up test, the student will have completed the requirements and will be promoted to the next grade.

EDUCATIONAL RECORDS:

The school maintains educational and disciplinary records to facilitate the instructional program and the progress of students. These records are kept in the student's cumulative record. Parents have the right, upon request, to be shown these records. The request should be made in writing to the school principal.

SCHOOL ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. A certified copy of the birth certificate
2. Proof of legal guardianship
3. A report of examination of the eyes, ears, and teeth on form number 3300.
4. An adequate immunization record must be submitted on form number 3231.
5. A Social Security Number or a properly executed request for waiver of the Social Security Number.
6. A child must be 4 years old on or before September 1 to enter Pre-K. A child must be 5 years old on or before September 1 to enter Kindergarten. A child must be 6 years old on or before September 1 to enter first grade.
7. Documentation to verify student is a resident of Echols County.
8. An entrance exam, for placement purposes, may be required for K-5 students prior to enrollment.

Out of County Residence Entrance Requirements:

Students residing outside of Echols County may apply for entrance into Echols County School System. Applications will become available each June on the school website or may be picked up from the elementary/middle school office. The school website will have specific dates available for pick-up and drop off. All packets must be turned in to the elementary/middle school office. All applications and student records will be reviewed for acceptance. All out of county students will be reviewed on an annual basis. Out of county students may be withdrawn from the school system by the superintendent at any time.

Homeschool Entrance Requirements:

Any student entering Echols County Schools from a home school setting will be required to provide documentation of all homeschool courses and grades. Students will also be required to complete an entrance exam, provided by the school, for proper grade level placement.

PROOF OF RESIDENCE:

All students must complete Affidavits for residency each year. If there is a change of address during the school year, please notify the school quickly. Documents must contain a physical home address; P.O. Boxes will not be accepted. At least one of the documents listed below must be presented to register a student for school:

current lease	property tax notice	homeowner's insurance bill
mortgage statement	letter from employer if providing housing	power bill w/ service address
current PeachCare eligibility documentation for child		

Not accepted: water bill, cell phone bill, DL address

STATE IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS:

Under the law, students who are entering Georgia schools for the first time must present a certificate (Form 3321) stating that they have had the immunizations required by the law.

The immunizations required are:

1. DPT vaccine for protection against diphtheria, tetanus (lockjaw) and pertussis (whooping cough). Three doses are required.
2. Polio-for protection from poliomyelitis. Three doses are required.
3. Measles/ Mumps/ Rubella vaccine or as separate vaccines.
4. Varicella vaccine (chicken pox) is now required of all students entering Georgia schools for the 1st time.
5. Hepatitis B vaccine was previously required only for students entering school born on or after January 1, 1992. This requirement has been extended to include all new students enrolling in school at any age.
6. Effective July 1, 2014 children born on or after January 1, 2002 who are attending 7th grade and for new entrants into Georgia school grades 8th through 12th must have received one dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) vaccine and one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine.

“New Entrant” means any child entering any school in Georgia for the first time or entering having been absent from a Georgia school for more than twelve months or one school year.

Out-of-state transfer students will be allowed 30 days to provide the school with an up-to-date immunization record. The county health department will immunize school children, or you may see your private physician. If the immunization requirements and/or social security number conflict with religious beliefs, parents can present an affidavit stating that fact.

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE:

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 handicap (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973); in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Employees, students, and the general public are hereby notified that the Echols County Board of Education does not discriminate in any policies. If you have a question or grievance, please contact the Superintendent of Schools at the board office.

State Law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs local school system (Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A. 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that the Echols County High School and Elementary School does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs.

The sports equity coordinator for this school system is Mr. Zane Craven, Hwy 90 East, P.O. Box 40, Statenville, Georgia 31648, (229) 559-5437. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this school system may be submitted to the sports equity coordinator.

STUDENT SERVICES

SCHOOL COUNSELOR:

The counseling office of the Echols County Schools includes services for students, parents, and faculty of the school. Parents are encouraged to use the counseling office for information about any student problem. The faculty has access to standardized testing information and interpretation. Counseling is concerned with problems, academic or personal, which may limit a student's progress and performance in school. The Counseling helps students achieve their educational, career, and personal goals. To achieve this purpose, we provide counseling about classes, information about colleges, technical schools, and military options. Each school will have a full-time school counselor: Tara Williams (grades 9-12) and Brack Deloach (grades K-8).

GaMTSS - RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION:

Student support is a collaborative effort to help resolve problems students may encounter in school. The school counselor/GaMTSS Coordinator will schedule meetings for struggling students. Parents are invited and encouraged to be part of the process. This team consists of a group of educators, administrators, and parents/guardians. Meetings are held to address the needs of individual students who are not meeting expectations in the regular classroom. Strategies are discussed which may

have a positive impact on the student's performance. Student work samples and modifications made by the classroom teacher may be considered in developing a plan of assistance. If these strategies are not effective, further evaluation may be needed.

SCREENING TESTS:

The counselor or designated personnel may administer screening test when there is a question concerning classroom academic progress or behavior. If further testing is deemed necessary, parents will be asked to discuss recommendations with the teacher and/or Student Support Team.

DRUG EDUCATION:

The Echols County School System shall provide age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs which addresses the legal, social, and health consequences of drug and alcohol use and provides information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs or alcohol. These programs shall also provide information about any drug and alcohol counseling rehabilitation and re-entry programs available to students. Periodic staff development and curriculum revision will occur to maintain a through, spiraling instructional program.

ATTENDANCE:

Student Attendance Protocol

The Echols County School system as required by the Georgia Legislature, drafted its attendance policy with the assistance of a local Student Attendance Protocol Committee.

Student Attendance Protocol Committee

This committee was established to ensure coordination and cooperation among officials, agencies, and programs involved in compulsory attendance issues. The committee's goal is to reduce the number of unexcused absences from school, and to increase the percentage of students present to take tests which are required to be administered under the laws of this state.

Truancy

Regular school attendance is required until the age of 16 under the Georgia School Compulsory Attendance Law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1). Each day a student is absent he/she misses valuable instruction. Echols County Schools will typically refer students for truancy when they reach 7 absences and 5 out of 7 absences are unexcused; however, this is not a policy, it is a guideline. Students who reach 15 absences in a school year may be referred for truancy regardless of the excused status. (Lengthy hospital stays, or ongoing documented medical conditions are taken into consideration). Truancy is determined as a year-long pattern, and it is calculated from August to May. Truancy complaints are directed to the Echols County Probate Court.

Possible Loss of Credit

Elementary/ Middle School students are placing their promotion to the next grade at risk when they accumulate sixteen or more unexcused absences a year. Keep in mind referral for truancy could begin at seven absences. Students that exceed the 15 or more unexcused days per year must appeal to the Attendance Committee in order to pass to the next grade.

Students from the ages of 6 to 16 are subject to the mandatory school attendance law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1).

- Elementary students must be present until 11:15 A.M. to be counted present for the day. Any student who checks out of school earlier than 11:15 A.M will be counted absent for the entire day. All students will be considered tardy if they arrive at school after the 8:00 A.M. bell.
- Attendance for all students in Middle and High School is calculated by each class period.
- Parents may be automatically notified with a recorded telephone message when a student is marked absent in one or more class periods.

Attendance Guidelines

Year Long Absence protocol for All Echols County Students:

- 4 Unexcused Absences: phone call or notification letter #1 sent home.
- 6 Unexcused Absences: required parent conference, notification letter #2 sent home. Possible referral to Echols County Probate Court for truancy.
- 15 Combination Unexcused /Excused absences: required parent conference, notification letter #3 sent home via School Resource Officer. Possible referral to Echols County Probate Court for Truancy.

Elementary/Middle School

- 15 Unexcused absences per year in Elementary and Middle result in possible retention.

The Echols County School Board of Education will follow the state guidelines for approving student's absences.

An absence is excusable ONLY when:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school that endangers a student's health or the health of others.

2. A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. The observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard, and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted up to 5 days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the parent's leave.

The principal may in certain circumstances require students to present appropriate medical or other documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused. Students in foster care shall be counted present when they attend court proceedings related to foster care.

Tardy to School:

Students tardy to school must be checked in at the office or they will be counted absent for the whole day since we will have no record of their coming to school without checking into the office.

Students in Elementary school are counted tardy if they arrive in the classroom after 8:00. Students in middle school are counted tardy for each class they arrive late.

Discipline will be administered when middle school students reach a certain number of occurrences. These are cumulative across all blocks. (ex. A middle school student who is late to 1st block twice and forth block twice would expect discipline to occur).

Tardy per 9 Weeks

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| • 2 nd time | Warning, student conference |
| • 3 rd and 4 th time | 1 day ASD (30 Min) or Lunch Detention |
| • 5 th and 6 th time | 2 days ASD 1 Hour |
| • 7 th time | 3 days ASD 1 Hour |
| • 10 th + time | 4 days ASD 1 Hour |

Chronic Late Arrival and Chronic Early Checkout

Students who are chronically late to school or check out early are missing vital information and are developing habits that can become difficult to break. Echols County Schools utilizes the following truancy complaint protocol for students who are habitually

late to school. In addition to the steps outlined in our student handbook the attendance coordinator will take the following steps.

- 6 Unexcused tardies to school or unexcused early checkoutsLetter sent home
- 8 or more Unexcused tardies to school or unexcused early checkouts Possible referral for truancy

ATTENDANCE AWARDS:

- K-5 students will have the opportunity to be rewarded for perfect attendance each month.
- One K-5 class will be rewarded for best attendance each 9 weeks.
- One K-5 class will be reward for best attendance all year.

GEORGIA'S PRE-K PROGRAM:

Regular school attendance is a component to a child's academic success. Children who do not attend on a regular basis, are routinely late, or routinely leave early may be disenrolled. In addition, children who are late, leave early, or are absent for ten consecutive days without medical or other reasonable explanation must be disenrolled from the program.

Georgia's Pre-K Program Family Handbook Rev. July 2006

SCHOOL NURSE:

The Echols County School Nurse has the authority to excuse student absences in cases of illness. Only students who see the school nurse during the course of a regularly attended school day will receive documented excuses. At no time should you send your child to school simply for the purpose of seeing the school nurse. You should take your child to a Doctor or a health clinic for evaluation and an excuse. Only students who see the school nurse during the course of a regularly attended school day will receive documented excuses.

When students are absent from any class, they must present proper documentation for the absence within 3 days of returning to school. Middle and High School students will present their notes to the front office by 8:00 AM upon their return to school. Elementary students will present their notes to their teacher.

Students should get certificates from their doctor, the Echols County Health Department, or their dentist EACH time they visit their offices for treatment. These certificates must state the date(s) the student was present for treatment and be turned into the office or attendance officer within 3 school days from the visit. A student who must be absent for any reason other than the reasons listed above should make preparations for a prearranged absence with an administrator. The absence will be an unexcused absence; however, the child will be able to make up missed work. It is the responsibility of the student to ask the teacher for assignments missed due to an absence.

PARTICIPATING IN SCHOOL-RELATED AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

A student suspended in school (ISS) will be counted present although out of the regular classroom. The student will receive grades for all work done in ISS and be allowed to make up other work missed. Students in ISS will not be allowed to participate in any school -sponsored event or school activity, **without administrative approval**. Students will be allowed to resume participation on the next regular school day or weekend. An assignment of ISS will not prohibit the student from attending events as is the case for OSS.

A student suspended out of school (OSS) will be counted absent. Suspended students will be provided assignments to work on at home and are required to make up work missed. The student shall make up those tests and assignments that the teacher determines will have impact on the student's final grade and mastery of course content. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements to make up work within 3-5 school days upon return to school. During the term of the suspension the student is not allowed on the school campus or at any school activity or school-sponsored event.

****School discipline is assigned as a reaction to a student's behavior and/or actions. Consideration for upcoming games or scheduled school events is not part of determining a student's discipline assignment.**

ATHLETICS

Echols County does participate in an athletic conference consisting of schools from South Georgia school districts. The GHSA athletic eligibility standards are used to determine student athlete eligibility. Please see the Echols County Athletic Handbook for more information.

ASD & LUNCH DETENTION:

Students who fail to report to ASD or Lunch Detention will face disciplinary action, which could result in extended ASD/ISS. They may still be required to report to ASD or Lunch Detention assignments they missed. No after school transportation is provided for students in ASD. Please make sure to arrange for your child to be picked up in the front office at the end of their assignment.

FIELD TRIPS:

Students with chronic discipline issues and more than three separate discipline incidents that result in ISS, may be withheld from class field trips, at the discretion of the school principal. Parents that wish to chaperone school field trips will not be permitted to bring siblings on the field trip.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY:

An excused check out will only be granted based on the conditions given as excused absences according to the State. Any student checking out and checking back into school will follow the same guidelines set up for absences and must have signed documentation. Before a student can check out of school, a parent or legal guardian must be contacted. A note must be sent with a phone number where the parent can be reached. No student may leave the school without permission from a school official. If a parent cannot be reached to verify a doctor's appointment, an appointment card can be provided to the office, and used for verification for leaving.

Elementary students must be present until 11:15 A.M. to be counted present for the day. Any student who checks out of school earlier than 11:15 A.M. will be counted absent for the entire day. Attendance for all students in Middle School is calculated by class period.

School work missed during an absence must be completed to the satisfaction of the classroom teacher within 3-5 days. Pre-assigned work/projects/tests are due on the day of return.

MAKE-UP WORK:

Clarification of the Board of Education Policy

A student must be given at least three days and up to five days from the time the student returns to class from an absence to make up work that was not assigned prior to the date absent. If more than five days are needed to complete make-up work, then arrangements must be made with the teacher to set up a timeline for completion. The teacher has discretion whether to allow additional time without penalty for a student to complete assigned work, whether to accept extra assignments, alternate assignments or to allow work to be redone.

Definition: Make-up work

- Assignments given to students prior to or following absences
- Absences due to participation in extracurricular/ co-curricular/school related activities
- Prearranged absences-these assignments may be duplicate assignments given to other students during the time of absence or similar assignments as deemed appropriate by the teacher.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE:

The School Administration will appoint a Student Attendance Appeal Committee each school year to hear appeals from students who exceed the number of unexcused days allowed for absences from school. The committee will include three teachers from the system. When an appeal is requested, parents will be notified of the time and place of the appeal hearing. Any documentation should be brought to the appeal hearing. All appeals must be completed within five days of the end of the school year or applicable semester. To appeal the decision of the committee, written notification must be sent to the Superintendent, indicating the desire for appeal to the Echols County Board of Education within five days of the Student Appeals Committee Meeting.

WRAP-AROUND SERVICES:

All wrap-around services must be approved by the building level administrator and superintendent. Services will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

In addition to academic preparation, Echols County School is responsible for instilling in our youth the behaviors that are required to sustain society. We have established the goal of creating an atmosphere throughout the school where children feel safe, secure, and happy and have maximum opportunity to learn. To achieve this goal, we have identified what is acceptable behavior and what is unacceptable behavior and the consequences of the unacceptable behavior. Appropriate behavior is expected at all times on the campus, in the cafeteria, classrooms, hallways, parking lots, buses, and at extra-curricular activities. Echols County School is not required to notify parents before corrective action is taken. A parent who refuses to allow the school to correct a student must sign a waiver with the principal and they will be called to pick their child up from school when he/she violates the student code of conduct.

Georgia law (O.G.C.A. 20-20735) requires that all local boards of education adopt a student code of conduct including standards of student behavior and disciplinary action for students who violate the code of conduct.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT:

The purpose of this code is to provide students in the Echols County School System an effective and safe learning environment. This handbook has been prepared in accordance with the Discipline Procedures of the Echols County School System. Included is an outline of expected behaviors and the consequences relating to various violations. Expected behavior is behavior that promotes learning and encourages maturity during the school day as well as during all school- related activities.

Students and their parents need to know and understand this code in order to achieve these goals. Students should: Participate fully in the learning process. Students need to report to school and class on time, attend all regularly scheduled classes, remain in class until excused or dismissed, pay attention to instruction, complete assignments to the best of their ability, and ask for help when needed.

Avoid behavior that impairs their own or other student's educational achievement. Students should know and avoid the behaviors prohibited by this code, take care of books and other instructional materials, and cooperate with others. Show respect for the knowledge and authority of teachers, administrators, and other school employees. Students must obey reasonable directions, use acceptable and courteous language, avoid being rude, and follow school rules and procedures. Recognize and respect the rights of other students and adults. All students should show concern for and encouragement of the educational achievements and activity participation of others.

In all cases, the right of students will be ensured and protected. Echols County School Administrators will make every reasonable effort to administer the discipline code consistently. When applicable, individualized plans (i.e. IEP, 504, and GaMTSS) will be reviewed for appropriate consequences.

STUDENT SEARCH AND SEIZURE PROCEDURES:

The Board authorizes reasonable searches of students directed to that end by authorized school officials. Searches based on reasonable suspicion may proceed without hindrance or delay, but they shall be conducted in a manner which ensures that students are not arbitrarily stripped of personal privacy. The principal of each school, or his/her authorized representative, possesses the authority to conduct inspection of a student's locker, automobile, person, or other possessions based on a reasonable suspicion of the presence of unauthorized items. The term "unauthorized" is intended to mean any item that is dangerous to the health or safety of students or school personnel, or disruptive of any lawful function, mission or process of the school, or any item described as unauthorized in school rules available beforehand to the student.

Metal detectors and drug-sniffing and weapon-sniffing canines may be used to search students and their personal property to detect possession of unauthorized items before, during, or after the school day on school property, school transportation,

and at school related activities. A student's failure to permit searches will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. Student cars brought on campus, student book bags and other containers, pocketbooks/purses, school lockers, desks and other school property, including school buses, shall be subject to inspection and search by school authorities at all times without further notice to students or parents. Such searches may be conducted using search dogs or hand-held metal detectors.

In the event that a specific student is reported or suspected of having weapons, drugs, or other materials in violation of school rules, school district policy or state law, his/her person may be searched. Full random searches will be conducted by school officials and/or law enforcement.

Seizure of Illegal Materials: If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to proper authorities for ultimate disposition.

DISCIPLINE GLOSSARY

General Terms

After-School Detention- Students assigned to ASD will report to a designated classroom as assigned by the principal. Assigned students are supervised for a period of approximately 30 minutes to 90 minutes, depending on infraction. Parents are responsible for student transportation.

Bus Suspension- the student is suspended from the bus for a specified period of time by the local school administrator. The student is expected to attend school, but the parents are responsible for providing transportation to school.

Cell Phone Use- Knowingly uses or transmits a cell phone or any device with can receive to transmit information ~~electronic~~ **page** while on school property during school hours.

Disciplinary Probation- A student found guilty of certain offenses may be placed on probation by the local school and/or the Student Disciplinary Panel. Probation is a trial period during which a student violating school and /or school system rules is subject to further disciplinary action.

Due Process- A student is afforded oral or written notice of the charges against him/her and is given an opportunity for a review, hearing, or other procedural rights in accordance with state and federal laws.

In-School Suspension- the student is removed from regular classes for a specified period of time at the local school. The teachers send class work assignments to the student.

Intermediate Alternative School Placement – The student is placed in an alternative school setting located on the Echols County School campus for a length of time to be determined.

Long-Term Suspension- the student is suspended out of school for more than ten (10) days.

Non-Prescription Drug- Over the counter drug not authorized by a registered physician and not prescribed for the student. Student use is prohibited unless the parent/guardian signs a release giving permission.

Out of School Suspension- the student is suspended out of school for a determined period of time. See short term suspension.

Permanent Expulsion- The student is removed from all public-school property and activities or events for an indefinite period of time. This action may be taken only by the Board of Education. Schoolwork may not be made up or credit given.

Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs): Any privately owned device that can send, receive, store, or display digital data, images, video, or audio, including cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, e-readers, headphones, earbuds, and other devices with functionalities such as wireless communication, internet access, messaging, video recording, gaming, social media access, or data transmission.

Prescription Drug – All medications other than the exceptions listed in this policy, whether prescription or over the counter, may be administered only in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the principal of each school. All medications must be taken by the student, parent, or guardian to the school nurse immediately upon arrival at school and must be in original pharmaceutical containers, clearly labeled as to the name of the student, the name of the medication, the appropriate dosage, and the times for dosage. Any student possessing prescription or over -the- counter medication not in accordance with these guidelines will be considered in violation of the school district's drug policy and shall be subject to the discipline set forth in the student code of conduct and/or the student/parent handbook. A student shall not sell, use, or transmit any medication, prescription, or non-prescription to another student while on school grounds or during a school activity, function, or event off school grounds, or while under school supervision.

Short-Term Suspension- The student is suspended out -of-school up to ten (10) days by the local school administrator. The student may be suspended for an accumulation of offenses, as well as a major offense. Suspended students are required to make up work missed. The student shall make up those test and assignments that the teacher determines will have impact on the student's final grade and mastery of course content. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements to make up work within five (5) school days upon return to school. During the term of suspension, the student is not allowed on the school campus or at any school activity or school-sponsored event. (See "Participating in school related and extra-curricular activities" for more information).

Student Disciplinary Tribunal – A three-member panel composed of an administrator, teacher, counselor, social worker, or central office staff member. The Panel hears evidence presented by the school system, the students, and parents when a student is referred by the local school principal or his/her designee. The panel has the authority to make decisions ranging from returning the student to the local school to recommending to the Board of Education for permanent expulsion of the student.

Silent Lunch-A student is assigned to sit at a designated table away from his peers during lunch. The student is not allowed to have conversations with other students during this time nor are they entitled to purchase or receive ice cream or drinks from the machines.

Lunch Detention- Students in Middle and High school can be assigned lunch detention for more serious classroom disruptions as a prior step to a referral. Students receive a takeout tray from the lunchroom and report to an assigned room for the entire lunch period. The student is not allowed to have conversations with other students during this time nor are they entitled to purchase or receive ice cream or drinks from the machines.

Transmission- Any substance, article, or weapon passed to another person.

Waiver of Right to Attend Student Disciplinary Panel- Parents may sign a waiver if they cannot attend or do not elect to attend the panel hearing. In the event a parent or student does not attend the hearing, it will proceed as scheduled.

Work Assignments – Supervised activities related to the upkeep and maintenance of school facilities.

Zero Tolerance- These actions will not be tolerated and the proper authorities will be notified: (1) Sexual misconduct; (2) Assault or battery of a school employee; (3) Possession or use of drugs; (4) Criminal law violations; (5) Any type of gang activity; (6) Vandalism of personal property of faculty and staff. The school system will be proactive. Each individual case will be reviewed.

DISCIPLINE VIOLATION TERMS

AWOL – Unauthorized absence and/or leave from class, school, activity, or event.

Bullying- See separate section

Bus Misconduct- Failure to comply with rules of bus safety or Student Code of Conduct.

Chronic Lack of Supplies- Repeatedly reporting to class without necessary materials such as books, physical education attire, supplies, etc.

Disobedience/Insubordination- Failure of the student to comply with a reasonable direction or instruction by staff.

Disrespect- Responding in a rude and impertinent manner.

Disruption- Behaving in a manner which interferes with educational activities.

Fighting- Involves the exchange of mutual physical contact such as pushing, shoving, and hitting, with or without injury,

Harassment/Intimidation/ Verbal Abuse- Disturbing consistently, by pestering or tormenting in the classroom, on the school bus, or elsewhere on the school site.

Inappropriate Dress- Dressing in a manner that disrupts the teaching and learning of others, or violation of the school dress code.

Inappropriate Personal Property – Possession of personal property that is prohibited by the school rules, such as food, beverages, and electronic equipment, and that is otherwise disruptive to the teaching and learning of others.

Profanity/Vulgarity- Writings, speech, or gestures that convey an offensive, obscene, or sexually suggestive message.

Sexual Harassment- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is deliberate and/or repeated sexual or sex-based behavior that is not welcome and not asked for.

Tardiness- Failure to be in a place of instruction at the assigned time without a valid excuse.

Truancy- The student stays out of school without permission or valid excuse.

LAW VIOLATION TERMS

Arson- Intentionally starting or attempting to start any fire or combustion.

Assault- With criminal intent, the act or threatening to strike, attack, or harm any person in school or at any school-sponsored or supervised activity. Intentional offensive/physical contact without consent.

Battery- Any physical force or violence unlawfully applied to a person. This can include jostling, tearing clothes, or seizing or striking another person, so long as there is criminal intent.

Bomb/Explosive- A device containing combustible materials and a fuse, including fireworks M-80 or above.

Burglary- Unauthorized entry into a school district building (unoccupied) with the intent of committing a felony when the building is closed to the students and the public (See Theft).

Disorderly Conduct- Behaving in a violent or seriously inappropriate manner which disrupts the educational process. (Note: This category is used only when the police are called to cite a student or person for extreme disruption).

Drug/Alcohol/Chemical Offense- Any controlled substance or alcohol; includes any transfer of a prescription drug or any substance alleged to be a drug, regardless of its actual content.

Extortion- Use of 'mild' threats or intimidation to demand money or something of value from another (no weapon).

False Fire Alarm – Reporting a fire to school or fire officials or setting off a fire alarm without a reasonable belief that a fire exists.

Felony- Any offense punishable as a felony under Georgia or Federal Law.

Gambling- Playing any game of skill or chance for money or anything of value.

Loitering/Trespassing- Entering any school property or school facility without proper authority (includes student entry during a period of suspension or expulsion).

Robbery- Taking property from a person by force or violence, or threat of aggression.

Sexual Assault/Offenses- Intentional sexual contact of a harmful or offensive manner.

Theft/Larceny- Unlawful taking and carrying away of property belonging to another person (while the building is occupied) with the intent to deprive the lawful owner of its use (See Burglary).

Threatening/ Menace- with criminal intent, the act of threatening to strike, attack, or harm any person in school or at any school-sponsored or supervised activity.

Vandalism/Graffiti- the willful or malicious destruction or defacement of public or private property.

Weapon- An article or implement that can cause bodily harm. The term “weapon” means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife, straight-edge razor, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shudken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind, and any stun gun or taser. **The administration retains final authority in determining what constitutes a weapon, especially when evaluating potential danger.**

Exceptions:

Law Enforcement officials may carry weapons on school property. Principals may issue exceptions for items such as cutting instruments used in art or vocational education classes, or weapons or look-a-likes used for instructional programs. Instruments such as box cutters will be provided by the classroom instructor and should never be brought in by the student.

IN -SCHOOL SUSPENSION

ISS Classroom Procedures

The ISS day will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 3:30 p.m. Students will report directly to the ISS classroom after obtaining their required materials. Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy. After 3:30 p.m., students will be waiting in the front office for parent pick up. ISS students will be required to perform school services after breakfast and lunch sessions. Students who are assigned partial days to ISS will be released at 2:30.

ISS Procedures for Chronic Offenders

- A parent conference may be required when a student is assigned ISS. ISS assignments are from 8:00-3:30. No after school transportation is provided for students in ISS. Please make sure to arrange for your child to be picked up in the front office at the end of their assignment.
- Students receiving their third ISS assignment may be considered chronic offenders. A behavior contract may be implemented for these students.
- Students who are assigned to ISS for a fifth time in a school year will be considered a chronic discipline problem for the school system. These students may be recommended for a disciplinary tribunal which may result in being assigned to the alternative school or possible expulsion.

Echols County School Disciplinary Procedures

Violation	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Comments
1. Classroom Disruption. (Excessive Talking, Horse Play, etc.)	X	X	X			
2. School Disruption, Participating in Riot, Pulling Fire Alarm, or Arson.		X	X	X		
3. Destruction, Damage, Defacing or Theft of School or Private Property.		X	X	X		
4. Rude or Disrespectful Behavior.		X	X	X		
5a. Disregarding Directions (includes Sleeping, Disengagement from class, Etc.)	X	X	X	X		
5b. Chronic Lack of Supplies	X	X	X	X		
6. Threatening Staff.		X	X	X		
7. Assault and Battery.			X	X	X	
8. “Bullying”, Threatening, or Harassing Another Student and Sexual Harassment.	X	X	X	X	X	3 offenses of bullying will Result in assignment to an Alternative school setting.

9. Profanity, Vulgarity, Obscene Language, Writing, Etc.	X	X	X			
10. Fighting or Instigating a Fight.	X	X	X			
11. Possession of a Weapon or Dangerous Instrument.				X	X	
12. Drugs and Drug Paraphernalia.				X	X	
13. Tobacco Products, Vaping, E-cigarettes, and Paraphernalia.			X	X		
14. Alcoholic Beverages Possession, Use or Being Under the Influence.				X	X	
15a. Inappropriate Bodily Contact (ex, Holding Hands, Kissing, etc.)	X	X	X			
15b. Sexual Misconduct.				X	X	
16. Skipping Class/Chronic Tardiness.	X	X	X			
17. Truancy.	X	X				
18. Conduct Outside of School Time/Away from School that Poses a Threat to the School		X	X	X		
19. Gambling	X	X	X	X		
20. Loitering, Trespassing.			X	X		
21. Cheating or Forgery	X	X	X	X		
22. Any other conduct Considered by The Principal or Designee to be Disruptive.	X	X	X	X		
23. Cell Phone Violation.	X	X				
23b. Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)	X	X				
24. **Inappropriate Dress.	X	X				Refer to Administrator
25. **Lunchroom Conduct	X	X				
26. **Assembly Conduct	X	X				
Violation	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Comments
27. **Disruptive Behavior on Bus						Refer to bus discipline Procedure chart.
28. **Inappropriate Computer Use And Violation of Internet Acceptable Use Policy	X	X	X	X	X	
29. **Zero Tolerance Offense.			X	X	X	
30. **Parking Lot/Car on Campus		X	X	X	X	
31. AWOL- Unauthorized Leaving Campus		X	X			
32. Disregard for School Personnel. (ex. Refusal to give name, Intentionally Walking Away, or Out of Class.			X	X		

DEFINITIONS OF A SERIOUS BREACH OF CONDUCT

The following list of serious offenses will not be tolerated in the Echols County Schools, on school property, bus stops, on school-sponsored transportation, or during a school-sponsored activity:

1. Intentionally causes, or attempts to cause, substantial damage to school property, steals, or attempts to steal school property of substantial value.
2. Intentionally causes or attempts to cause substantial damage to private property, steals, or attempts to steal valuable private property.
3. Intentionally causes, or attempts to cause, physical injury to another person.

4. Knowingly possess, sells or attempts to sell, uses, transmits, or is under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, or intoxicant alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, or any controlled substance while on school property or at any school sponsored activity; Using a wireless communications device to commit a criminal act may result in the imposition of disciplinary action or criminal penalties.
5. Formally is charged with a felony for an incident which allegedly occurred on property other than public school property, but which is shown to have an adverse impact on the educational program, discipline, or welfare in the school in which the student is enrolled.
6. Knowingly uses or copies the academic work of another or artificial intelligence (AI) and presents it as his own without proper attributions.
7. Repeatedly and intentionally defies the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators.
8. Bomb threats.
9. Homicide (murder, manslaughter).
10. Sexual battery.
11. A verbal and/or written threat to take or jeopardize the life/safety of students, teacher, and /or other personnel.
12. Armed robbery.
13. Assault, battery, or aggravated battery on a teacher, students, or other school personnel.
14. Kidnapping or abduction.
15. Arson.
16. Possession, use or sale of any explosive device; and/or
17. A student, who knowingly transmits, transports, or possess (on student or in student's automobile or otherwise) on campus any firearm, razor blade box cutter, knife, or other dangerous object or weapon, shall be considered for expulsion.

A student shall be considered to have committed a serious breach of conduct, which would warrant suspension or expulsion, if he/she does any of the above.

A VERBAL AND/OR WRITTEN THREAT:

A student, who commits a verbal and/ or written threat to jeopardize the life and / or safety of another student, teacher, or school personnel may establish a behavioral contract during a meeting with the school's principal/designee and student's parent/guardian and may be subject to the following actions:

- Alternative placement
- Community/volunteer services
- Counseling by appropriate school personnel
- Expulsion
- In/out of school suspension
- Law enforcement intervention
- Mental /health intervention
- Other action deemed appropriate by the school administration

A terroristic act upon a school (15-11-560 OCGA) by persons 13-17 years of age must be referred to superior court.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCESS FOR ECHOLS COUNTY SCHOOL

This progressive discipline model is divided into five levels. Each level represents progressively more serious misbehavior and consequences. The level of discipline imposed shall be based on the severity of the misbehavior. The purpose of the following discipline procedures is to ensure that all students are aware of the actions that violate school rules and the consequences of these actions. Depending on the severity of the incident. Students guilty of an offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee. The list is not all inclusive and any act of misbehavior is subject to consequences. Any time a student is referred to the office for disciplinary reasons the student will be given a copy of the disciplinary referral to take home for parents or one will be sent via mail.

Level I Discipline

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

Each teacher will develop a classroom behavior management plan to be approved by his or her administrator. The plan will be discussed with all students.

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

1. Teacher-student conferences
2. Parent conference
3. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian and teacher.

4. Loss of privileges.
5. Isolation during lunch.
6. Classroom isolation from peers.
7. Loss of recess or other free choice time.
8. Participation in a school-service project that enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s).
9. Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s).

The principal or his designee may utilize any of the previously mentioned discipline management techniques, and /or may employ:

1. Verbal reprimand or conference
2. Time-out in an alternative setting
3. Writing assignment from student handbook
4. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian, teacher, and/ or principal
5. Restriction from school programs and special assemblies
6. After-school detention
7. Partial day in-school suspension (ISS)
8. Full day in-school suspension (ISS) for one school day
9. Work assignment
10. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
11. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s)

Level II Discipline

Level II discipline offenses are intermediate acts of misconduct that require administrative intervention. These acts include, but are not limited to, repeated, unrelated acts of minor misconduct and misbehaviors directed against persons or property, but which do not seriously endanger the health, safety, or wellbeing of others. Students guilty of a Level II offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques as in Level I if deemed appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee.

In addition to the following alternatives:

1. Full day in-school suspension (ISS) for up to five school days
2. Corporal punishment (parent must give permission)
3. Suspension from school for up to three school days
4. Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
5. Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s).
6. Participation in a school service project that enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)

Note: Level II differs from Level I in that it increases the maximum number of days in ISS from one to five, adding financial restitution of the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment, providing for out-of-school suspension for up to three days, and prompting consideration of behavior support services.

Level III Discipline

Level III discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature, serious disruptions of the school environment, threats to health, safety, or property, and other acts of serious misconduct. These offenses must be reported to the principal. Offenses that threaten the health, safety, or wellbeing of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from the school and/or school-sponsored activities for up to three school days. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the principal is a required element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided.

Students guilty of a Level III offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques mentioned in Level I and II as deemed appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee, including the following alternatives:

Full day in-school suspension (ISS) for up to ten school days:

1. Suspension from school for up to five school days, which shall include any time during which the student was subject to suspension pending investigation.
2. The possession of a firearm or weapon will result in expulsion from school for one year. The Superintendent may modify the expulsion requirement for good cause on a case-by-case basis.

The administration retains final authority in determining what constitutes a weapon, especially when evaluating potential danger.

Exceptions to Weapon Policy:

Law Enforcement officials may carry weapons on school property, Principals may issue exceptions for items such as cutting instruments used in art or vocational ed classes, or weapons or look a -likes used for instructional programs (e.g. for drama classes).

Note: Level III differs from Level II in that it requires student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the principal for any discipline incident in this category and increases the maximum number of days in situations in which the health, safety, or well-being of others, is at-risk during the disciplinary investigation, and increases the maximum number of out-of-school suspension days from three to five.

Level IV Discipline

Level IV discipline offenses represent the serious acts of misconduct. These offenses must be immediately reported to the principal. These violations are so serious that they may require use of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. Such acts may also result in criminal penalties being imposed. Any misconduct that threatens the health, safety, or wellbeing of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from the school and /or school-sponsored activities for up to three school days, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the principal is a required element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given if not already provided.

Students guilty of a Level IV offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques mentioned in Level I, II, and III as deemed appropriate by the principal or designee. Additional alternatives include:

1. Suspension from school for up to ten school days, which shall include any time during which the student was subject to suspension pending investigation.
2. Referral to local intermediate alternative school placement.
3. Expulsion
4. Referral to the disciplinary tribunal
5. Alternative school, if assigned by disciplinary tribunal.

Note: Level IV differs from Level III in that it increases the maximum number of days suspended from school from five to ten.

Level V Discipline

Level V discipline is utilized for students in grade six or the age equivalent whose behaviors cause them to be excluded from the regular school program. Examples of Level V behavior include chronically disruptive behavior, extremely violent behavior, and weapon possession.

Because Level V discipline results in placement in a separate alternative educational program, students in this discipline level have benefit of due process, such as the process provided by the school discipline tribunal or the procedural safeguards and other requirements identified in the 1997 Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Georgia Board of Education's special education rules.

Personal Electronic Device Use – Grades K–8

Purpose

To promote a focused and distraction-free learning environment, this policy outlines the access and use of personal electronic devices for students in kindergarten through eighth grade while on school premises during school hours.

Statement

Students in grades K–8 are not permitted to access or use personal electronic devices, while on school premises during school hours including but not limited to cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, e-readers, headphones, earbuds, and other devices with functionalities such as wireless communication, internet access, messaging, video recording, gaming, social media access, or data transmission during school hours. For K-8, this includes classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, restrooms, and playgrounds. Any student found in violation of this policy and or its procedures during the school day shall be subject to progressive consequences as outlined in the Echols County Student Code of Conduct.

Definitions

Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs): Any privately owned device that can send, receive, store, or display digital data, images, video, or audio, including cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, e-readers, headphones, earbuds, and other devices with functionalities such as wireless communication, internet access, messaging, video recording, gaming, social media access, or data transmission.

School Hours for K-8: Bell to Bell. The period beginning with the first bell signaling the start of instructional time or entrance into the school building, whichever occurs first, shall include all scheduled instructional time, breaks, transitions, assemblies, and other school-related activities occurring between the start and end of the school day. Students will claim devices at the end of the school day; however, devices should not be powered on or accessed until students leave the school building for dismissal. K-5 and 6-8 instructional hours as defined in the student handbook each year.

Instructional time includes all scheduled academic classes, assemblies, and other school-related instructional activities.

Access: Viewing, holding, wearing, or otherwise using a device for the purpose of communication, internet access, gaming, recording, listening to music, or any other function commonly associated with personal electronic devices.

Application

This policy applies to students in grades K-8 on school premises during school hours.

Echols County Schools is not responsible for the theft, loss, or damage to personal electronic devices brought onto its property, during field trips, or during extracurricular activities.

Guidelines

Storage of Devices:

K-3 students: should be put away in school designated cubby areas

4th grade students: should be locked in a school designated storage container held by homeroom teacher

5th grade students: locked in the student's school-issued locker

6th – 8th grade students: must be turned off and stored and locked in the student's assigned school-monitored storage cart

Parental Contact: Parents needing to contact their child during the school day, in an emergency situation, should call the front office of their child's school or send an email to messagek8@echols.k12.ga.us. Messages will be given to students at the end of the day or at an appropriate transition time as deemed by administration. Students will not be called out of instructional time to receive messages.

Field Trips: Electronic devices may be used in accordance with the guidelines set up by the school and are subject to change.

Athletic and or Extracurricular Events: Electronic devices may be used in accordance with the guidelines set up by the school and are subject to change.

Progressive Discipline

- First Offense: Device confiscated – parent notified. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- Second Offense: Device confiscated – parent notified. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator. ISS will be assigned for 1 day.
- Third Offense: Device confiscated – parent notified. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator. ISS will be assigned for 2 days. Behavior contract may be implemented.
- Fourth Offense and beyond: Device confiscated – parent notified. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator. Up to 10 days ISS, OSS, or alternative school placement.

- For students K-5, punishment will be at the discretion of the administrator. The student's age/level of maturity or development should be considered.
- Serious Misuse: Any use of a cell phone that involves academic dishonesty, harassment, unauthorized recording, or a violation of school safety protocols will result in immediate disciplinary action, regardless of the number of prior offenses.

Exceptions

Students with documented medical needs or with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans that require access to their personal electronic devices are allowed to utilize the device as necessary to fulfill the requirements of their respective program or plan.

LUNCHROOM CONDUCT

Students are expected to exhibit good table manners and to respect the rights of others in the lunchroom. There are many students in the cafeteria and even minor problems must be avoided.

1. School Board policy prohibits students from leaving campus during the lunch period. Students are prohibited from entering the parking lot during their lunch period.
2. Ice cream or drinks may be taken from the lunchroom in designated areas with administrative approval or designated areas as directed by the administration.
3. All students are required to eat in the lunchroom whether they bring their lunches or purchase them. Parents may bring food for their child and it must go through the office.
4. Good behavior and cleanliness are expected.
5. Students are not to run to lunch or break lunch lines.
6. No trays or trash should be left on tables).
7. Loud talking and loud laughing will not be tolerated in the lunchroom.
8. Throwing food or other objects will not be tolerated.
9. Students should sit in their assigned area unless directed to do differently by an administrator, teacher, or paraprofessional.
10. Students should obey any school personnel.
11. Students must report to the lunchroom during their assigned time. Permission to leave the lunchroom, eat outside, conduct any other school business should be sought by the student from an administrator or teacher on duty.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

All Echols County students should attire themselves in proper public dress in keeping with the generally accepted standards in the community. All students shall be modestly dressed and groomed so as not to attract unreasonable attention that would interfere with the educational program.

All student clothing considered to be distracting is prohibited: inappropriate messages related to drugs, alcohol, violence, tobacco, sexually suggestive messages, cult slogans, gang symbols, profane or vulgar language, or suggestive symbols.

The following items of dress and accessories are NOT in keeping with the dress code set forth by the Echols County Board of Education and will not be allowed for 5th to 8th grade students:

Skirts/Dresses/Pants/Shorts

- Skirts, dresses, and shorts may be worn; however, the length must be appropriate. When standing, skirts and dresses cannot be shorter than three inches above the knee, both front and back. When standing shorts/skorts cannot be shorter than five inches above the knee, both front and back.
- Tights, leggings, jeggings without pockets, or skin fitting pants worn without an accompanying legal shirt, skirt, or shorts are prohibited. (Legal shirt length is considered fingertip length).
- Pants with holes and section cut out garments are prohibited above the knee.
- Undergarments may not be showing on students.
- No saggy pants.
- Cut-off pants are allowed if the fringe is no more than one inch and meets the length requirement for shorts.

SHIRTS/BLOUSES

- Revealing clothing will not be permitted. (i.e. excessive cleavage, etc.).
- Tank tops are prohibited for teachers and students.
- Racer back tops with at least 1.5-inch-wide straps can be worn if bra straps cannot be seen.
- Items of clothing worn under mesh, crocheted, or "see through" over garments must meet the dress code. Students wearing a shirt made of crochet, net, mesh, etc., must wear a sleeveless undershirt coming to the edge of the shoulders so that the bra strap does not show. The undershirt cannot be a tank top it must be at 1.5 inches wide.
- Blouses or shirts MUST meet the top of slacks or skirts when the arms are raised.
- Female teachers and students may wear appropriate sleeveless tops provided no under-garments are showing.
- Clothing and/or jewelry with painted words, signs or symbols that advertise, or display drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or violence are prohibited. Cult or gang related slogans may not be worn. In addition, profane and/or vulgar language or symbols may not be worn.

Hair

- No distracting hair colorings, dyes, or weaves.
- Hair curlers, picks, combs, caps, hats, bandannas, scarves, stocking caps, or any other head covering, hair covering or hair piece that is considered distracting are prohibited.

ACCESSORIES

- Non-prescription sunglasses unless requested by the teacher for required safety regulations. Sunglasses are not to be worn inside classrooms or buildings unless a medical permit is on file.
- Any jewelry or items that could be used as weapons are not to be worn (i.e. No loose hanging chains).
- Choke collars, chains, jewelry, clothing, or adornment that may be considered dangerous or disruptive to the learning environment.
- Any piercings that are considered distracting or dangerous by the administration are prohibited.
- There will be no bare feet, unbuckled belts, straps, or untied shoes allowed.
- Inappropriate writing, drawings or markings on the body including coloring with magic markers, paints, etc. are not allowed.
- Before leaving PE classes, students must change back into their regular clothes before entering another classroom.
- No bathrobes or one-piece pajama sets, including those with hoods that made me deemed inappropriate or distracting.
- No bedroom shoes.
- No distracting lounge pants may be worn.
- No hats or head coverings are to be worn in the school building or cafeteria unless approved by an administrator.

****The principal or his designee shall be responsible for making decisions regarding matters not covered in this policy.

ASSEMBLY CONDUCT

Students are expected to follow all school rules and behave appropriately during assembly programs. Each student should:

1. Sit and respond appropriately
2. Talk very quietly while waiting
3. Use good manners
4. Do not talk during performances

Failure to obey these rules may result in the following:

1. The student(s) will be moved to a designated area.

2. The student(s) will be removed from the assembly and other punishment will be implemented depending on the circumstances surrounding removal.
3. First and foremost, the members of the audience should respect the rights of the performer, speaker, or whomever is presenting the program.

BUS TRANSPORTATION:

The Echols County School System is committed to providing the students of Echols County with the safest and most courteous transportation to and from school. The primary job of the bus driver is to drive/transport the district's children to and from school in the safest manner possible. There are no MINOR discipline problems on a school bus. Students must be prepared to 1.) take responsibility for their actions and conduct; and 2) to accept the consequences of their actions and conduct.

Bus transportation is furnished to any student who lives in Echols County. This transportation is a convenience and in order for it to function properly, full cooperation between parent, student and school is necessary. Students who endanger the safety of others on the bus may be suspended from riding the bus. PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR GETTING THE STUDENT TO AND FROM SCHOOL DURING THE STUDENTS SUSPENSION FROM THE BUS.

Students must ride the bus to which they are assigned. If a student wishes to get off at a stop other than their home, he or she must bring a note from home. The principal or his designee must approve the note and a bus change notice will be given to the bus driver.

Riding the bus is part of the school day; therefore, all school rules apply to the bus and the bus stop which is a designed school area.

More extreme punishment may be given for misconduct on the bus because distracting the bus driver endangers the lives of the students.

BUS RULES:

1. Students must be on time and waiting at the normal bus stop. The bus will wait briefly only if students are in route to the bus stop at a fast pace.
2. Students will use NO PROFANITY.
3. Students will wait for the bus driver's signal before crossing the road.
4. Students will walk 10 feet in front of the school bus.
5. Students must keep their seat at all times when the bus is moving.
6. Students must keep their arms and heads inside windows.
7. Unnecessary conversation with the driver is dangerous. Please remain quiet. ABSOLUTE SILENCE is required at all railroad crossings. (This is State Law).
8. Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct is to be observed.
9. The driver is in full charge of bus and students.
10. The driver has the right to assign certain seats on the school bus.
11. No eating, drinking, or tobacco in any form will be allowed on the bus. All pencils or pens must remain in book bags or notebooks.
12. There will be no fighting on the bus. Fighting will automatically place the student on suspension from riding the bus.
13. Drugs, alcohol, or dangerous weapons on the bus will automatically terminate all bus riding privileges for the school year or longer for the student.

Please Note:

Misbehavior on the bus may result in suspension from school and suspension from riding the bus. The principal or his designee will determine length of suspension.

In addition to the system transportation rules, the State of Georgia has adopted Senate Bill 291. This bill is also known as a "student discipline bill". This bill provides for MANDATORY EXPULSION to be the penalty for certain disciplinary infractions and specifies the procedures that school systems must use to deal with them.

Code Section 20-2-751.5- Code of Conduct Requirements

The code reads as follows:

Requirements for student codes of conduct have been expanded so as to require comprehensive and specific provisions prescribing and governing student conduct and safety rules on public school buses, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Students shall be prohibited from acts of physical violence as defined in Code Section 20-2-751.6 (1. *Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another; or 2. Intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or physical harms were in defense of himself or herself*), bullying as defined in Code Section 20-2-751.4, (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.*) physical assault or battery of other persons on the school

bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior.

- B. Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; audible radios, tape, or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and,
- C. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

An infraction against this code will require a meeting between appropriate school district officials and the parent or guardian. The purpose of the meeting will be to formulate a school bus behavior contract for the student.

BULLYING AND CYBER BULLYING

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

All forms of bullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the School District, offenders shall be subject to appropriate staff intervention, which may result in administrative discipline. The term: "bullying" and "cyber bullying" shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student's right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.

Any staff member who receives a bullying or cyber bullying complaint shall gather information or seek administrative assistance to determine if bullying or cyber bullying has occurred. If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying or cyber bullying the site principal must refer to the cyber safety plan and discipline action will be tailored to meet the specific violation as stated in the handbook for Echols County School Disciplinary procedures.

Bullying is defined as follows: An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at 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 that is personal or school-owned while the person is on school property, on school bus, at school bus stop, or a school related function, that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so.
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying through the use of digital technologies that include email, blogs, social networking websites (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, etc.) chat rooms, texts, and instant messaging that:
 - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1.
 - b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education.
 - c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment
 - d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
4. A cause of emotional distress to the victim that may stem from cyber stalking or engaging in communication that may include words, images or language by or through the use of email or electronic communication directed at or about a specific person.
5. The use of electronic imaging devices, including but not limited to cameras and phone cameras for the use of taking pictures or video recordings of students or school employees and posting them online.
6. Creating and/ or sending abusive or threatening text messages or instant messages.
7. Gossip or rumors that are circulated to other students through the use of websites.

ZERO TOLERANCE OFFENSES

The following offenses fall under the category of ZERO TOLERANCE. The Echols County School System will not tolerate these actions and the proper authorities will be notified after the first offense.

- Sexual misconduct. (Ex. Molesting another student, indecent exposure, etc.)
- Assault or battery of a school employee.
- Damage or destruction of personal property of school employee.
- Possession or use of alcohol.
- Possession or use of drugs.
- Criminal law violations.

- Any type of gang-related activities.
- Arson
- The possession of a firearm or weapon will not be tolerated. If a student is caught in possession of either of these, the student will be expelled from school for one year. The Superintendent may modify the expulsion requirement for good cause on a case-by-case basis.
- If a student is in possession of, use of, or under the influence of alcohol while on school property or while attending a school function, the student will be suspended with the possible recommendation for long term suspension.
- If a student is involved in the sale of or distribution of drugs (or substances intended or held out to be drugs) or is in possession of or under the influence of or is using such items while on school property or while attending a school function, the student will be suspended from school immediately with the possible recommendation of expulsion.

Any 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 could be suspended or expelled from school.

Notice

It shall be unlawful for any person to carry to or to possess or have under control any weapon within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school.

The term "weapon" means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shudken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind, and nay stun gun or taser as defined in O.C.G.A 1 6-11-106.

Punishment:

A fine of not more than \$10,000; imprisonment for not less than two or more than ten years, or both. A juvenile who violates this shall be subject to the provision of O.C.G.A. 15-11-37.

NOTE:

The above notice is Georgia Law; notification of law enforcement of violations is required. A knife according to school policy is any knife but a knife with a blade less than two inches is not required to be reported to law enforcement.

Student Drug Use

The Echols County Board of Education has a priority, the provision of a drug and alcohol free, safe, and secure school environment for all students, including consideration for the health and well-being of each individual.

The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. Drug/alcohol use also interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of children and adolescents. Therefore, the Echols County Schools System has a fundamental, legal, and ethical obligation to prohibit selling, using, possessing, or distributing illegal drugs, materials, substances, or alcoholic beverages on or in school property at any time.

School administrators and faculty will inform students and parents of policies, regulations, and procedures prohibiting use of alcohol and drugs on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities at the beginning of each school year. School handbooks will be updated annually with this information.

Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages, and Stimulant Drugs or Any Other Control Substance

- A student shall not possess, sell, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any legal or illegal drug in any form whatsoever, including, but not limited to, any narcotic drug or any drugs requiring prescription controlled by the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy (unless lawfully prescribed for use by such student), inhalants, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, cocaine, marijuana, other controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroids, intoxicant of any kind, or any substance represented to be or reasonably appearing to be any type of drug;
 1. At school or on school property at any time.
 2. Off the school grounds at a school sponsored activity, function, or event; and /or
 3. En route to and from school.
- A student shall not attend school or any school event after having consumed any quantity of alcohol or illegal substance, including any CBD product with or without THC. Use may be detected by observation, odor or other means.
- A student shall not have on his/her person, or in any way be in possession or control of drug-related paraphernalia.

- A student shall be deemed to be in possession of substance or paraphernalia prohibited by this policy if such substances or paraphernalia are found in cars, lockers, book bags, desks, or other personal effect of students.
- A student shall deposit in the nurse's office (or other location determined by the principal) all lawfully prescribed drugs when he/she arrives at school. A student shall not sell, use or transmit any medication, prescription or nonprescription to another student while on school grounds or during a school activity, function or event off school grounds or while under school supervision.

School properties may be inspected by school authorities in the interest of maintenance, health, and safety. Lockers, though assigned to pupils, are school property and may reasonably be inspected. It is recommended that two members of the staff conduct inspections together, particularly when the student is not present.

Vaping

The Echols County School District is committed to the health, safety, and welfare of its students. The District has determined that the use of vapes, vaporizers, e-cigarettes, or other devices used to inhale vapor by means of an electronic device ("vaping") is harmful to the health of students. Vaping requires the use of a purpose-made or homemade device that vaporizes oil that may contain flavoring, nicotine, Cannabidiol, tetrahydrocannabinol, or other substances that may or may not be legal to possess. It will be a violation of the Echols County Schools Code of conduct to possess, use or transfer a vape by any students.

Inspections for the location of tobacco products, vapes, electronic cigarettes, drugs, narcotics, alcohol, weapons, poisons and missing properties are matters relating to health and safety and may be regarded as reasonable purposes for inspection by school personnel. The Superintendent, their designee or principal is authorized and empowered to conduct and cause to be conducted announced or unannounced inspections of school property by dogs trained in the sniffing or smelling of the presence of drugs and narcotics and when such presence is indicated thereby the same shall be reasonable suspicion for a further inspection, search or investigation of such school property by school personnel.

DISCIPLINE ACTION AND PROCEDURES

All employees must report violations of this policy to the principal or assistant principal of the school where the violation occurred. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that a report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the police and district attorney.

The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any illegal drug activity. Students and their parents will be given a copy of the code of Conduct through the Student Handbook or through some other appropriate means, which includes a statement of prohibited conduct with regard to drugs and alcohol and possible disciplinary actions.

Disciplinary sanctions (consistent with local, state, and federal law) up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution will be imposed on students who violate the standard of conduct. Compliance with the requirements set forth in this policy is mandatory.

Procedures for handling incidents in the schools involving the possession, sale and/or use of drugs, alcohol or any other behavior affecting substances shall be as follows:

1. Definite assignments shall be given to personnel within the school:
 - a. The principal will be responsible for carrying out the policy and its supporting procedures within his/her school.
 - b. The principal will serve as the clearing point for records, reports and inquiries relating to his/her school.
 - c. Staff members will pass concerns to any of the school's administrative staff. Administrative staff members are the principal and assistant principal(s) or their designee(s).
2. The names of students involved will not be released.
3. The parents of any involved students shall be contacted immediately.
4. Disciplinary action shall be specific.
 - a. Student known to be in possession of such substances at school or under the influence of such substances at school shall be suspended from school for a minimum of 10 days. A physician's written clearance shall precede a return to school. With the recommendation of the principal and the approval of the superintendent, the student may be assigned to the Alternative School.
 - b. Student known to be distributing such substances at school shall be suspended for 10 days and referred for disciplinary action to a disciplinary tribunal.

The school system will cooperate with the police department by making every effort to identify and report the source of supply, and by developing an in-service instruction program for staff members.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT:

Sexual Harassment is defined by the courts as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may be:

- physical, such as unwelcome touching or interference with movement.
- verbal, such as epithets, derogatory comments or slurs.
- visual, such as the display of derogatory cartoons, drawings, or posters.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, re-requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In simple terms, sexual harassment is deliberate and/or repeated sexual or sex-based behavior that is not welcome and not asked for.

Examples of conduct, which may constitute sexual harassment, are:

1. Unwelcome leering, staring, sexual flirtations or propositions.
2. Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions.
3. Unwelcome graphic verbal comments about an individual's body or overly personal conversation.
4. Unwelcome sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures.
5. Unwelcome spreading of sexual rumors.
6. Unwelcome touching of an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way.
7. Cornering or blocking of a sexual nature of normal movements.
8. Displaying sexually suggestive objects.

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PROCESS

Echols county Schools has developed a behavior support process pursuant to the "Improved Student Learning Environment and Discipline Act of 1999." The Behavior Support Process is a mechanism for identifying and addressing those behaviors and environmental influences that promote the positive, emotional, mental, social and physical health needs of students.

The process of disciplining students will include due consideration, as appropriate in light of the severity of the behavioral problems. The student support process is designed to recognize and build on strengths that exist in all young people, their families and communities, creating a system of support and opportunity that promotes positive choices and behavior.

The Behavior Support Process is:

- Student Centered – belief in the student to effect positive change in behavior.
- Family Focused – including parents as essential partners in promoting self-discipline of students.
- Prevention Oriented – being proactive about helping students to avoid negative behaviors initially as well as helping troubled students avoid future difficulties.
- Community Based – utilizing services that are accessible to students and their parents.
- Goal Oriented – actively working to see that desired behavior occurs by fostering positive school climate.

Echols County Students in need of Behavior Support Services will be referred to the Student Support Team. The principal or his designee will initiate all referrals.

GaDOE SCHOOL SEVERE WEATHER/TORNADO RECOMMENDATIONS

- If there is a tornado watch the district should monitor for the changing status of the weather. Drivers should continue their route under extreme caution and monitor their 2-way radio for changing conditions.
- If there is a tornado warning at dismissal time, the school should hold the children until the warning is lifted. Drivers should wait inside the school with the children.
- If drivers are already on their route and become aware that a tornado warning has been issued, they should proceed to the nearest educational facility or other shelter and take the students inside. Drivers need to be aware of schools and alternate sites such as fire stations, public buildings or other emergency shelters located on their route. If feasible notify dispatch of your shelter location. Drivers and students should remain in the shelter until the warning is lifted. Drivers should stay with the students and monitor broadcasts to know when the warning has expired.
- If unexpected weather conditions present a hazardous situation or if unable to reach a safe location as indicated above, the driver:
 1. Should pull the bus well off the roadway to a safe location and stop the vehicle. Keep the engine running.
 2. Should turn on 4-way emergency flashers and strobe light in order that other motorists can see the bus is stopped.
 3. Should consider the 14th National Congress on Pupil Transportation guidelines for en route emergency evacuation procedures:

Assessing the Need to Evacuate:

Student safety and control are best maintained by keeping students in the bus during an emergency and/or impending crisis situation if doing so does not expose them to unnecessary risk of injury. A decision to evacuate should include consideration of the following conditions:

- a. Is there a fire involved?

- b. Is fuel leaking?
- c. Might the bus roll or tip, thereby causing further threat to safety?
- d. Is the bus likely to be hit by other vehicles?
- e. Is the bus in the direct path of a sighted tornado or other natural disaster, such as rising water?
- f. Would evacuating students expose them to speeding traffic, severe weather or other dangerous environment?
- g. Considering the medical physical and emotional condition of the students, does staying in the bus or evacuating the bus pose the greater danger to the student's safety?
- h. Should assess the need to evacuate, and under most severe weather conditions keep the students on the bus. Have the students protect their head by lowering their face against their upper legs so that they are below the window level. Students should cover their faces with a jacket, book, etc. to protect themselves from flying debris. Notify the transportation office of your location.
- i. Should not allow students off the bus to move trees, limbs, cables, or power lines. The transportation office should be notified for further direction and assistance. Be extremely cautious for the students' safety.
- j. Should not allow students to disembark from your bus if the driver arrives at a stop and is aware or suspects that there are power lines down in the area. The transportation office should be notified for further direction and assistance.
- k. Should radio the Transportation Office for further assistance if the bus cannot be moved due to blockage of the roadway.

Note – If unable to reach the transportation office in the event of an emergency, drivers should contact 911.

The 14th National Congress on Pupil Transportation further recommends: Local District Policy. Bus staff should be familiar with local district policy regarding evacuation procedures to follow when students are en route; or, what to do if a tornado or flash flood, etc. is sighted and no shelter is near.

Echols County Schools

Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement

Students 2025-2026

*Please read this agreement carefully as it contains important information, requirements, and expectations for your use of technology at Echols County Schools (“ECS”). While your signature is requested to acknowledge your receipt and understanding of this agreement, please note that **this agreement applies to your or your student’s use of technology at ECS with or without your signature.***

Introduction

The goal of the Echols County Board of Education (the “Board”) is to provide Internet/intranet service and technology to teachers, staff, and students to promote educational excellence and facilitate resource sharing, innovation, and communication. It is important to note that the use of this technology **is a privilege, not a right**. To aid ECS’s students in understanding and implementing appropriate technology practices, the Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement (the “AUA”) is set forth and governs student use of ECS technology resources, defined as including any computer, server, network, digital storage media, mobile, cloud, software, or electronic device, including the Internet and intranet. The “user” is defined as a person authorized to use some or all ECS technology devices, subject to the AUA, Board policy, and state and federal law. Each user of ECS technology resources is responsible for their actions and activities involving ECS computers, technology, and the network.

Due to the nature of technology use and the Internet, it is neither practical nor possible for the Board, ECS school administration, or ECS staff to monitor student use and enforce compliance with this AUA at all times. Accordingly, parents and students must recognize that students will be required to make independent decisions and use good judgment in their use of the ECS technology resources and the Internet. Parents/guardians must participate in the decision whether and how to allow their children access to the Internet and must communicate their own expectations to their children regarding its use.

Penalties

Any user violating this AUA, applicable state and federal laws, posted classroom rules, or ECS policies is subject to loss of ECS technology resource privileges and any other ECS disciplinary options in accordance with the Students’ Handbook and Code of Conduct, and if applicable to the conduct, possible involvement of law enforcement agencies. Illustrations of disciplinary options are contained in the Teachers’ Handbook and Students’ Handbook. Although some specific examples of prohibited uses are stated, these are intended as illustrations and are not to be considered an inclusive list. ECS school administrators will make the determination as to what constitutes unacceptable use of ECS technology resources, and their decision is final. The users and/or the users’ parent(s)/legal guardian(s) shall be responsible for compensating ECS for any losses, costs, or damages incurred by ECS relating to or arising out of the user’s violation of this AUA.

ECS Commitments

ECS is committed to:

- ❑ Preventing user access over the ECS network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail (“e-mail”), or other forms of electronic communications;
- ❑ Preventing unauthorized access to the ECS network and other unlawful activity;
- ❑ Preventing unauthorized and/or unlawful disclosure, use, access, or dissemination of ECS student records and other legally protected information; and
- ❑ Complying with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (“CIPA”) and all applicable state and federal laws.

ECS Monitoring, Filtering, and Threat Protection Scanning

To protect users against access to inappropriate materials on the intranet/Internet, ECS has installed a qualifying “technology protection measure” as that term is defined in CIPA. This firewall and filtering program is designed to prevent access to visual depictions that are (1) obscene, (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors as those terms are defined by CIPA. This program filters and blocks only **known** sites that feature nudity, pornography, violence, hatred of others, inappropriate chat rooms, and inappropriate language. The list of restricted sites is updated daily; however, inappropriate sites are published frequently during the day, and no filtering software has proven to be 100% effective. Furthermore, the user is responsible for not seeking or initiating access to inappropriate material.

ECS reserves the right to review any information, files, or documents that are stored within or transmitted by an ECS technology resource or on the ECS network without the student’s knowledge or consent. This monitoring is intended to determine whether specific uses of the network and technology are appropriate and for ECS to remain in compliance with state and federal law. ECS uses a monitoring and alert system to identify incidents of cyberbullying, violence, self-harm, inappropriate content, and violations of FERPA and CIPA in ECS-provided Office 365 accounts for all faculty, staff, and students. Scanning includes Outlook email and all Office 365 features (Documents, Spreadsheets, Presentations, PDFs, Images & Photos, Videos) and all file types supported in Microsoft One Drive. ECS seeks to provide improved data security and insights into potential exposures through this scanning process.

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Echols County Schools staff to attempt to supervise usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children’s Internet Protection Act, and relevant state and federal laws. As required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, Echols County Schools will educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response, and the importance of parental involvement in their online activities. The district will also provide communication to parents about online resources and tools available to monitor and manage their child's internet usage.

A list of software/applications used by ECS students is available on the district website <https://echolscountyboe.schoolinsites.com/> at Technology>Technology Documents.

Expectations and Acceptable Use

- ❑ Usage of ECS technology resources must be in support of academic purposes and consistent with Board policy and this AUA. Students will use ECS technology resources in ways that are appropriate and meet ECS expectations--whether at school, at home, or anywhere else.
- ❑ Students will login using their ECS network assigned username and password (when provided to the student). Students will protect their password information and not share with anyone other than a teacher or ECS staff member or their parent/guardian.
- ❑ Students shall use their ECS-provided email account only for instructional purposes and as directed by his or her teacher (if provided an email account by ECS).
- ❑ Students shall notify the teacher if he or she inadvertently browses to an inappropriate site on the Internet.
- ❑ Students shall notify the teacher or school administrator if they receive any inappropriate messages that make them feel uncomfortable.
- ❑ Students will never loan out or share any ECS technology resources assigned to them.
- ❑ Students will keep food and beverages away from ECS technology resources to avoid damage.
- ❑ Students are responsible for not utilizing images that they do not own the copyright to. Students should only use images that are in the public domain, images of their own creation, or images that are permitted to be used by Creative Commons licenses for class projects.
- ❑ Students must give credit to and cite information used in a class project or paper to avoid plagiarism.
- ❑ Students should identify themselves by name only when posting on any wiki, blog, or other web-based tool provided by or authorized by ECS.

- ❑ Live streaming of video and audio, or any other streaming media, must be related to academic purposes and instructional objectives.
- ❑ Student computer files and activity are not private, and ECS staff and school administrators may see them at any time.

Unacceptable Use

These are intended as illustrations and are not an inclusive list. ECS school administrators will make the determination as to what constitutes unacceptable use of ECS technology resources, and their decision is final.

- ❑ Students may not use ECS technology resources for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright, cyberbullying, harassment, and any other violation of ECS policy, the Code of Conduct, state or federal law.
- ❑ Students will not use ECS technology resources to copy or download copyrighted software, music or images, or for other violation of copyright laws. Peer-to-peer, file-sharing, torrent software, and/or other forms of similar software may not be installed on an ECS computer or laptop.
- ❑ Students must not vandalize ECS technology resources or use them to harm, access, distribute, or destroy data of another user, individual, and/or the ECS network. This includes, but is not limited to, creating and/or uploading or downloading viruses, disconnecting, or disassembling any network or computer component.
- ❑ Students are not permitted to use the computer of a teacher, administrator, or other ECS staff member without permission or supervision. Students are not permitted to use the login or password of another user.
- ❑ Students cannot use ECS technology resources in such a way as to disrupt the ECS network's functionality or other users (sounds and/or excessive bandwidth usage, e.g., radio/audio streaming, video streaming).
- ❑ Students are not permitted to use ECS technology resources to access, monitor, or use personal websites and/or networks, for commercial gain, and/or for entertainment.
- ❑ Students are not permitted to bypass and/or attempt to circumvent ECS network security, virus protection, network filtering, and/or the ECS firewall.
- ❑ Students are prohibited from bullying and are not permitted to use ECS technology resources to threaten, harass, and/or intimidate others. Prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:
 - Accessing, contributing to, creating, or initiating inappropriate material on the Internet, including (but not limited to) abusive, obscene, sexually oriented material, or hate speech to communicate, or cause to be communicated through words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person, which may cause substantial emotional distress to that person or damage to their reputation.
 - Cyberbullying or the willful act of hostile or repeated harassing or intimidating of someone through digital technology, including but not limited to, email, blogs, social networking websites (ex: Facebook, Twitter, etc.), chat rooms, texts, and instant messaging.
 - Using cameras or camera phones to take embarrassing or inappropriate photographs or videos of student or school employees and posting them online.
 - Sending threatening or abusive text messages or instant messages or any social network or digital form.
 - Using the Internet, ECS technology resources, or email to propagate gossip or rumors to other students.
 - *Bullying and its consequences are described further in the ECBOE Bullying policy (JCDA) and the Student Code of Conduct (JCDA).*
- ❑ Students are not permitted to connect any personal equipment to the ECS network.

No Warranties

ECS makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the technology resources it provides. ECS will not be liable or responsible for any damages a user may suffer through use of ECS technology resources, including loss of data. ECS may not at any time be held responsible for any loss or damage to a

student's personal device. Students bring devices at their own risk. Help and support will not be provided for personal devices.

Internet Safety Curriculum

To promote appropriate use of technology and to encourage students to be responsible digital citizens, students will complete Digital Citizenship lessons on the Parent Protech platform which has been provided by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE).

Microsoft for Education (Office 365)

ECS adopted Microsoft for Education to provide online communication and productivity tools for students and teachers. Microsoft for Education accounts (Office 365) are provided to all students in grades Pre-K through 12. Active email accounts are only grades 6-12. Outlook (email) for grades Pre-K through 5 have not been activated at this time. Teachers and students will be able to create dynamic learning experiences in and outside of the classroom with an internet connection. Students will be able to share with teachers and collaborate with peers. MS for Education (Office 365) can be used to develop college and career ready skills of communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.

ECS is providing this notification to the parents of children under the age of 13 to comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). The only information ECS transfers to Microsoft in creating an account is the child's first name and last name. Student data will be used only to provide the student the Online Services including purposes compatible with providing those services. Microsoft will not use student data or derive information from it for any advertising or similar commercial purposes. Microsoft provides an overview of their commitment to student security and privacy at <https://www.microsoft.com/online/legal/v2/?docid=31>.

When there is reason to believe violations of law or district policies related to the AUA and Student Discipline Policy have occurred, ECS maintains the right to withdraw access to the student's Microsoft account. The alleged violation will be submitted to the ECS school administrator for further investigation as a written behavioral referral. Consequences for violations will be determined by the ECS Technology Director and the stated student discipline policy as deemed by the ECS school administrator.

Parents who object to their child using Microsoft for Education must contact their child's principal in writing within ten (10) days of the student's enrollment.

Please note that ECS student email accounts will remain active until July 1 following graduation for students to get their accounts in order.

News Media Coverage, School District/School Publications and Websites

Events and programs in public education are often considered newsworthy and of interest to local communities. Schools frequently seek media coverage to highlight successful programs and special events involving students and staff. As a result, your child may occasionally be interviewed or photographed by the news media for positive school news coverage, publicly recognized at a School Board meeting, or have their work displayed. Additionally, your child's image (including video), name, or intellectual property may be included in School District publications, school webpages, or social media platforms.

If you, as a parent or guardian, **object** to your child being published (in print or digital form) as described above, your objection must be submitted in writing to the principal of the school where your child is enrolled **within 10 days** of the student's enrollment date.

If you have more than one child, a separate letter must be submitted for each child to the appropriate school principal. Students will only be **excluded** from publications if a written objection is received by the school principal. If no written objection is submitted, the district will include the student in all applicable publications.

Parents/Guardians:

I understand that the intranet/Internet access is designed for educational purposes and that ECS will attempt to discourage access to objectionable material and communications that are intended to exploit, harass, or abuse users. However, I recognize it is impossible for ECS to restrict access to all objectionable material, and I will not hold the school or district responsible for materials acquired or contacts made on the intranet/Internet network.

I understand that a variety of inappropriate and offensive materials are available over the Internet, and that it may be possible for my child to access these materials if he/she seeks these materials in contravention of this AUA or by accident. I also understand that it is possible for undesirable and/or unknown individuals to communicate with my child over the Internet, that there are no practical means for ECS to prevent this from happening, and that my child must take responsibility to avoid such communications if they are initiated. While I understand ECS may monitor any communications to or from my child and the Internet, I recognize that it is not possible for the school to monitor all such communications.

I have determined that the benefits of my child having access to the Internet outweigh potential risks. I understand that any conduct by my child that is in conflict with these responsibilities is inappropriate, and such behavior may result in the termination of access and possible disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.

I have reviewed these responsibilities with my child, and I hereby grant permission to the school to provide Internet and network access and ECS technology resources.

I agree to compensate ECS for any expenses or costs that incur as a result of my child's violation of the AUA, ECS policy, and/or the ECS Code of Conduct.

I understand that if I object to my child having access or rights to any portion of this AUA, as the parent/guardian, **I am required to submit a written letter to the school principal within ten (10) days of enrollment.** (If you have more than one child, a letter must be written for each child and presented to the appropriate school principal.) Students will only be excluded if written objection is presented to the principal of the school. If there is no written objection turned in to the principal, the district will include the student in all publications.

I understand that my child and I must complete the AUA sign-off or all student account(s) associated with my child will be suspended until all documentation is received. I understand, however, that my signature is not required on this AUA for its requirements to apply to my child.

Adoption

The Echols County Board of Education adopted this Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement for employees July 2025. Previous versions of this agreement are rescinded.

**Complaint Procedures for Federal Programs
Echols County Elementary/Middle School
Echols County High School
2025-2026**

Programs from which Echols County receives federal funds and for which stakeholders may file complaints include the following:

- Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies.
- Title I, Part B, Subpart 3: Even Start Family Literacy.
- Title I, Part C: Education of Migrant Children.
- Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who are Neglected, Delinquent or At-Risk.
- Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund.
- Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology.
- Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement.
- Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 6111: State Assessment Program.
- Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 6112: Enhanced Assessment Instruments Competitive Grant Program.
- Title VI, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income Schools.
- Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children.
- Title X, Part C – McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency (stakeholder) may file a complaint with Echols County School (ECS) if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that the ECS is violating a Federal Statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered ongoing.

Filing a Complaint

Complaints and grievances shall be handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible and through the proper channels using the following procedures:

- A complaint must be made in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:
 - A statement that the PCSD has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program.
 - The date on which the violation occurred.
 - The facts on which the statement is based, and the specific requirement allegedly violated.
 - A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information.
 - Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency.
 - Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position; and
 - The address of the complainant.

The complaint must be addressed to:

**Rebecca Hill
Federal Programs Director
Echols County Schools
P.O. Box 40
Statenville, GA 31468**

AVISO:

Investigation of the Complaint:

- Any complaints or grievances shall be addressed to the Federal Programs Director. The Coordinator or his or her designee will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:
 - The date the complaint was received.
 - How the complainant may provide additional information.
 - A statement of the ways in which the Federal Programs Coordinator may investigate or address the complaint; and
 - Any other pertinent information
- The decision of the Federal Program Director may be appealed to the Superintendent in writing.
- The decision of the Superintendent may be appealed to the Echols County Board of Education in writing.
- All decisions and appeals shall be submitted in writing.
- Complaints will be tracked by the Federal Programs Director by maintaining documentation of written complaints and other supporting information.
- Reports will be maintained with letters of complaint and the final resolutions.

07/01/2025

Echols County Schools Office of Civil Rights Coordinators

Title II:

42 U.S.C. §2000a (a) All persons shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations of any place of public accommodation, as defined in this section, without discrimination on the ground of race, color, religion, or national origin.

Coordinator: Dr. Vince Hamm

Phone number: 229-559-5734

Email: vince.hamm@echols.k12.ga.us

Address: 190 Hwy 94 East, Statenville, GA 31648

Title IX:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. Title IX states "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Coordinator: Rebecca Hill

Phone Number: 229-559-2489

Email: rebecca.hill@echols.k12.ga.us

Address: 190 Hwy 94 East, Statenville, GA 31648

Section 504:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects the rights of persons with handicaps in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance.

Coordinator: Angie Sowell

Phone Number: 229-559-5734

Email: angie.sowell@echols.k12.ga.us

Address: 190 Hwy 94 East, Statenville, GA 31648

What is a School-Parent Compact?

A School-Parent Compact for Achievement is an agreement that families, students, and teachers develop together. It explains how families and teachers will work together to make sure all students reach grade level standards.

Effective Compacts:

- Link to goals of the school improvement plan
- Focus on student learning skills
- Describe how teachers will help students develop those skills using high quality instruction
- Share strategies parents can use at home
- Explain how teachers and families will communicate about student progress
- Describe opportunities for families to volunteer, observe, and participate in the classroom

Jointly Developed

The parents, students, and staff worked together and shared ideas to develop the school-parent compact. Teachers met with their grade level teams to design practical strategies for families to use at home. Families provided feedback on their needs to help their students. Students completed surveys to add ideas for the school-parent compact. Meetings are held each year to review and revise the school-parent compact based on the schools' academic achievement goals and student's needs.

Families are welcome to provide feedback on the compact at any time during the school year. All feedback will be collected and reviewed during the annual revision meeting with families. Please call 229-559-5413 or visit our website www.echols.k12.ga.us for more information on the school-parent compact.

Activities to Build Partnerships

ECES -ECMS offers ongoing events and programs to provide families and students with access to our staff.

- Fall Open House
- Parent-Teacher Conferences to discuss child's progress and to review the progress of the school-parent compact.
- Teacher Web pages and Family Engagement Web page
- EPIC meetings throughout the year
- To make an appointment with your child's teacher, call the ECES-ECMS office at 229-559-5413.

Communication About Student Learning

ECES-ECMS offers ongoing events and programs to provide families and students with access to our staff.

- Fall Open House
- Parent-Teacher Conferences to discuss child's progress and to review the progress of the school-parent compact.
- Teacher Web pages and Family Engagement Web page
- Monthly school parent involvement calendar
- EPIC meetings
- Each grade level provides weekly news letters about what is going on in their child's classroom
- Progress reports are sent home every 4 ½ weeks
- Parent Portal is available for all families
- Family Engagement videos - "The Den"
- To make an appointment with your child's teacher, call the ECES -ECMS office at 229-559-5413.

Parental Involvement

ECES -ECMS offers many opportunities for families to volunteer and play a role in their child's education. Please consider joining the faculty, staff, and your student in some of the following events and programs-

- Fall Open House - July 30, 2025
- EPIC Meeting Annual Title 1- August 14, 2025
- EPIC Reading w/Families (PreK-K) - September 25, 2025
- Family Engagement Fall Festival - November 7, 2025
- EPIC Christmas Art—December 4, 2025
- EPIC Meeting-5th Grade Spelling Bee - February 19, 2026
- EPIC Reading w/Families (1st-2nd) March 20, 2026
- EPIC Meeting—May 26, 2026
- To participate or learn more about these activities please call Sena Pike at 229-559-5413

School-Parent Compact for Achievement 2025-2026

(Revised 6/4/25)

School Focus for Student Success



Echols County Elementary/Middle School

229-559-5413

www.echols.k12.ga.us

AVISO:

Si necesita una versión de este formulario traducido en español, por favor llame a la escuela al 229-559-5413.

2025-26 District Goal

All students will show an increase in ELA and Math proficiency on the Georgia Milestone assessments.

2025-26 ECES-ECMS Goals

After reviewing our data, ECES-ECMS administrators will work to increase the percentage of students working at the Proficient Learner level or above in ELA and Math on the Georgia Milestone assessments. We will also work to increase the percentage of students with reading Lexile levels at or above grade level.

Focus Areas: ELA/Math

To increase ELA and math proficiency on the state assessment in grades K-8, our school will concentrate on the following areas:

- Sight Words in grades K-2
- Citing text evidence in grades 3-8.
- Math fact fluency in all grades.



Teachers, Parents, and Students – Together for Success

In the Classroom

We will work with students and their families to support students' success in reading and math through the following ways:

- Provide parents with home learning resources which will include sight words (grades K-2) and strategies for citing text evidence (grades 3-8) and math fact flashcards.
- Throughout the year, we will provide "Family Activity Events" concentrating on sight word acquisition strategies (K-2), citing text evidence (3-8), and math fact fluency (K-8).
- Weekly class newsletters will provide additional resources for building reading and math skills.

At Home

ECES-ECMS school parents joined staff to develop ideas about how families can support students' success in reading and math.

- Use materials from the home learning resources to explore reading and math at home.
- Try to attend "Family Activity Events" or get information from my child's teacher if we cannot attend.
- Use the resources provided in the newsletter to practice literacy and math activities with their child.
- Read with your child or have them read to you nightly, at least 20 minutes.



Students

ECES-ECMS students join staff and parents to develop ideas about how they can succeed in reading. Students thought of the following ideas to make connections between learning at home and school:

- Practice my sight words and math facts nightly with my family (K-2)
- Read nightly with my family and use the strategies provided in home learning resources to give supporting evidence from the text (3-8) and practice math facts.
- Participate with my family in "Family Activity Events".
- Bring home class newsletter and review it with my family.
- Attend school daily and on-time.

Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan
Echols County Schools
2025-2026

Revised: June 4, 2025

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Echols County Schools receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by Section 1116(a)(2) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the LEA's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and describes how the LEA will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the LEA's plan submitted to the Georgia Department of Education.

The Echols County Elementary and Middle School agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs. These programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents and family members of participating children.
- The school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) of the ESSA, and each include as a component a school-parent compact consistent with federal law.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, limited literacy, disabilities, of migratory children, who are economically disadvantaged, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESSA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the state Department of Education.
- The school district will be governed by the following definition of parental engagement /family engagement and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition in Section 8101 of the ESSA:

Family engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- (A) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- (B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school
- (C) Parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child
- (D) Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA

DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

The Echols County Elementary and Middle School will take the following actions to involve parents and family members in jointly developing its LEA plan under Section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of Section 1111(d) of the ESSA:

The parents, students, and staff worked together and shared ideas to develop the school-parent compact. Teachers met with their grade level teams to design practical strategies for families to use at home. Families provided feedback on their needs to help their students. Students completed surveys to add ideas for the school-parent compact. Meetings are held each year to review and revise the school-parent compact based on the schools' academic achievement goals and student's needs.

Families are welcome to provide feedback on the compact at any time during the school year. All feedback will be collected and reviewed during the annual revision meeting with families. Please call 229-559-5413 or visit our website www.echols.k12.ga.us for more information on the school-parent compact.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Echols County Elementary and Middle School will provide the following coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build capacity of all Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education:

ECS System will provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist ECS in planning and implementing effective parent engagement programs. A part-time Parent Engagement Coordinator will conduct parent engagement activities. The System coordinates and integrates other programs such as social services, health agencies, local civic organizations, churches, and other community related agencies within the school wide Title I program. The school guidance counselor, parent coordinator and school nurse will work together to ensure that the maximum numbers of educational and social services will be available to all students and their families.

Every parent, regardless of limited English proficiency (LEP) or disability, will be afforded the opportunity to participate in their child's environment. Once a need is identified, the necessary assistance will be provided to the parent and child.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Echols County Elementary and Middle School will take the following actions to conduct, with the meaningful engagement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The evaluation will also include identifying the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers and strategies to support successful school and family interactions. The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement policy to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental engagement, and to revise, if necessary, its parent and family engagement policies.

ECS System will evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Parent Engagement Policy and the increase of parent participation by reviewing and comparing sign-in sheets over a three-year-period to determine if there has been an increase in attendance. In addition, ECS will review the different times of day when workshops have been held to statistically determine what time of day the most participation has occurred. Specific attention will be given to those parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, LEP, have limited literacy or are considered an ethnic minority who may need additional accommodations to participate.

ECS System will use the findings of the evaluations to assist in designing strategies for school improvement and to assist in revising the ECS System Parental Engagement Policy and the ECS Parental Engagement Policy and planned activities.

RESERVATION OF FUNDS

The Echols County Elementary and Middle School will involve the parents and family members of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to Title I schools.

Parents of ECS children were involved in decision making through the parent survey and parent engagement meetings regarding how funds will be allotted for parental engagement activities. Parental Engagement funds will be spent with the Echols County Board of Education approval through the Consolidated Application process.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

The Echols County Elementary and Middle School will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs:

There is not a Head Start or an Even Start Program within Echols County. Echols County integrates parent engagement activities with Title I part A, Title I part 3, Growing Readers, Lottery-Funded Pre-Kindergarten, EPIC, DFACS, Public Health, Echols County Library, Migrant Program, DFACS Homeless (when identified), Home Instruction Program, Family Connections, The Echols County Council for Children and Families, and Instruction for Pre-School Youngsters.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS

The Echols County Elementary and Middle School will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, build parents' capacity for strong family engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy) to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement. Assistance will also be provided to parents in understanding the following topics:

Parents will be informed by workshops, informational newsletters, phone conferences, teacher conferences, principal conferences, counselor or conferences support groups for families of children with disabilities.

ECS System website, Response to Intervention conferences, and flyers of the following:

- National education goals
- State content standards and student content standards.
- State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
- School improvement and corrective action process (if applicable).
- Components of a school wide program (if applicable).
- Components of a targeted assistance program (if applicable).
- State and local assessments

- Requirements of Title I part A.
- Ways that parent can monitor their student progress and work with educators to improve the performance with their children
- Ways parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of their children
- How to work with educators

ECS System, with parent assistance, will educate teachers, pupil service personnel, principals, and other staff, on the value and utility the contributions of parents has on student achievement and will inform those on how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners. In addition, the system will implement and coordinate parent programs and will conduct activities to build ties between home and school.

Although ECS System is located in a very rural county with a minimal number of businesses within the county's boundaries, the ECS System has developed appropriate roles for community-based operations and businesses in the parent engagement activities. The roles of others include providing information about opportunities for organizations and businesses to work with parents and ECS and encouraging the formation of partnerships in elementary, middle and

secondary school levels. Existing partnerships will be nourished and encouraged to support ECS System. ECS System will also seek available partnership opportunities on a regional level.

ECS System will establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental engagement. The advisory panel will meet prior to the fall and spring required meetings. ECS System may arrange district wide meetings at a variety of times to meet the needs of parents, food and other services which may relate to parental engagement. ECS System may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training. ECS will use parent meeting focus groups or surveys to gather information.

ECS System will conduct other activities, as appropriate and as requested by parents on the end-of-the-year surveys. Activities include a parent resource wall, when space is available, and opportunities for parents to learn about child development and child rearing issues. These activities will be designed to train parents to become full partners in the education of their children.

ECS System will collect all unsatisfactory parent comments regarding the ECS System plan and they will be submitted with the ECS System Title I plan to the GADOE. These comments will be on file in the Federal Programs Directors Office.

ECS System will provide such other reasonable support for parental engagement activities as parents may request to the ECS System Title I Parent Engagement Coordinator as dictated by federal, state, and LEA guidelines.

To the extent practical, ESC System will provide full opportunities for the participation of LEP parents, parents of migratory students, and parents with disabilities, including providing school profiles and information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities in a language and format such parents understand. ECS has on staff a person to act as an interpreter to the Spanish speaking population as well as certified teachers, and an administrator in special education to work with parents with disabilities.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

The Echols County Elementary and Middle School will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and schools by:

- Teachers and staff will conduct monthly data meetings to discuss student achievement

- ECS will conduct a two schoolwide parent conferences per year to discuss student progress
- Attend relevant trainings through RESA, GADOE, and other reputable organizations
- Teachers and staff will meet a minimum of two times per year to discuss building parent and school staff capacity

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR ENGAGEMENT

- ☐ Involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training
- ☐ Providing necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training
- ☐ Training parents to enhance the engagement of other parents
- ☐ Maximize family engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school
- ☐ Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving family engagement
- ☐ Establishing a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to family engagement in Title I, Part A programs
- ☐ Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in family engagement activities

ECES –ECMS offers ongoing events and programs to provide families and students with access to our staff.

- Fall Open House (July 30th from 4-6 pm)
- Parent-Teacher Conferences to discuss child's progress and to review the progress of the school-parent compact (October 8th and February 12th)
- Teacher Web pages
- EPIC meetings and other programs to provide families and students with access to staff throughout the year
- Communication about student learning (PreK-5 weekly communication folders)
- Progress reports are sent home every 4 ½ weeks
- Parent Portal is available for all families

ECES –ECMS offers many opportunities for families to volunteer and play a role in their child's education. Please consider joining the faculty, staff, and your student in some of our events and programs throughout the year.

- August 14th EPIC Meeting (Annual Title I Review meeting) 6:00 p.m.
- September 25th "Reading w/Families" Literary Event
- October 8th K-8 Parent Conferences
- November 7th Family Fall Festival
- December 4th Epic Meeting/Cooking with Kids 6:00 p.m.
- February 12th K-8 Parent Conferences
- February 19th EPIC Meeting/Spelling Bee 6:00 p.m.
- March 20th "Reading w/Families" Literary Event
- May 26th EPIC Meeting 8:30 a.m.

We will work with students and their families to support students’ success in reading and math through the following ways:

- Provide parents with home learning resources which will include sight words (grades K-2) and strategies for citing text evidence (grades 3-8) and math fact flashcards.
- Throughout the year, we will provide “Family Activity Events” concentrating on sight word acquisition strategies (K-2), citing text evidence (3-8), and math fact fluency in all grades.
- Teachers will provide additional resources for building reading and math skills in grades K-8.

ECES-ECMS students join staff and parents to develop ideas about how they can succeed in reading. Students thought of the following ideas to make connections between learning at home and school:

- Practice my sight words and math facts nightly with my family (K-2)
- Read nightly with my family and use the strategies provided in home learning resources to give supporting evidence from the text (3-8) and practice math facts.
- Participate with my family in “Family Activity Events”.
- Bring home class newsletter and review it with my family.
- Attend school daily and on-time.

ECES-ECMS school parents joined staff to develop ideas about how families can support students’ success in reading and math.

- Use materials from the home learning resources to explore reading and math at home.
- Try to attend “Family Activity Events” or get information from my child’s teacher if we cannot attend.
- Use the resources provided in the newsletter to practice literacy and math activities with their child.

ADOPTION

This LEA parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly and agreed on with parents and family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by

_____.

This policy was adopted by the Echols County Elementary and Middle School on 6/04/26 and will be in effect for the period of the 2025-2026 school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before _____.

Echols County Schools System
Parent Right to Know
2025-2026

Echols County Schools Parent's "Right to Know" Policy and Procedures

In accordance with Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, all LEAs are required to notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their 'Right to Know' the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals.

In compliance with the requirements of the "Every Student Succeeds Act", parents may request the following information:

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

Procedures:

Echols County High School and Echols County Elementary and Middle School will include the Parent's Right to Know notification in the beginning of the year packets. These packets are given to the students on the first day of school by their homeroom or 1st block teacher. The secretaries at each school are responsible for making copies of the Parent's Right to Know notifications and including them in the beginning of the year packets. Teachers will turn in a statement verifying that each of their homeroom/1st block students received the Parent's Right to Know notification on their first day of school to the school secretary. This documentation will include a list of the teachers' homeroom/1st block students. This school secretary will keep this documentation on file.

In addition, the Parent's Right to Know notification will be included in the enrollment packets for students enrolling after school starts. The registrar will ensure that each parent receives the packet upon enrolling his/her student.

The Parent's Right to Know notification will also be included in the schools' handbooks and on the schools' websites.

Timeline:

When	What	Who
June-July	Parent's Right to Know notification is included in school handbooks, placed on school websites	Principals
Preplanning	Parent Right to Know notifications copied and placed in beginning of the year packets	School Secretaries
First Day of School	Parent Right to Know notifications are sent home with students in beginning of the year packets and handbooks	Homeroom/1 st block Teachers
August	Teacher turns in documentation stating all students received Parent's Right to Know- include roster on documentation- Documentation is kept on file in office	Secretary
August- May	Registrar will ensure students enrolling after school starts receive a copy of the Parent's Right to Know notification in enrollment packets	Registrar

Reviewed 06/01/2023

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

Date: August 1, 2025

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of the “Every Student Succeeds Act” (ESSA), Echols County High School would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student’s teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

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

If you wish to request information concerning your child’s teacher’s and/ or paraprofessional’s qualifications, please contact the principal, Ms. Bobbie Staten at 229-559-5413.

Sincerely,

Ms. Bobbie Staten
Echols County Elementary and Middle School Principal

Derecho a conocer las cualificaciones profesionales de los profesores y de los paraprofesionales

Fecha: 1 de agosto de 2025

Queridos padres,

En cumplimiento con los requisitos de la Ley de Exito de Todo Estudiantes, Echols County High School Le gustaría informarle que puede solicitar información sobre las calificaciones profesionales de los maestros y / o paraprofesionales de su estudiante. Se puede solicitar la siguiente información:

- Si profesor- del estudiante
 - Ha cumplido con los criterios estatales de calificación y concesión de licenciatura para los niveles de grado y materias en los que el maestro provee instrucción;
 - Está enseñando en estado de emergencia u otro estado provisional a través del cual se los criterios de concesión de licenciatura se han suprimido; y
 - es la enseñanza en el campo de la disciplina de la certificación del profesor.
- Si el niño recibe servicios de profesionales y de ser así, sus calificaciones.

Si desea solicitar información sobre las calificaciones de su maestro y / o paraprofesional, por favor comuníquese con el director, Bobbie Staten Al 229-559-5413.

Sinceramente,

Bobbie Staten
Director Principal del Condado de Echols

ECHOLS COUNTY SCHOOL FACULTY AND STAFF

High School Principal.....	Renee McLeod		
Elementary/Middle School Principal.....	Bobbie Staten		
Elementary/Middle School Assistant Principal	Mitch Shoup		
Finance and Operations.....	Dave Rosser		
Special Education Director	Angie Sowell		
Federal Programs and Testing Director.....	Rebecca Hill		
Secretaries	Candace Crosby	Loraine Johnson	Maria Lopez
Pre-Kindergarten Teachers	Shasta Allen	Lisa Carter	Alexis Wisenbaker
Pre-Kindergarten Teacher Assistants.....	Melody McEady	Melanie Williams	Twyla Gribble
Kindergarten Teachers.....	Kelsie Highsmith	Kim Tutt	Sarah Lambert
First Grade Teachers.....	Brandi Harvey	Sarah Reynolds	Courtney Meeks
Second Grade Teachers	Jennifer Dees	Terri Beaudrie	Debbie Holt
	Amy Witherspoon		
Third Grade Teachers	April Fountain	Lindsay Jarvis	Sena Pike
Fourth Grade Teachers	Maegan Sills	Angie Roberts	Abbie McLeod
Fifth Grade Teachers	Brittany Barrett	Elizabeth Register	Liza Vargason
Middle School Teachers.....	Faith Peterson	Anna Joy Collier	Kristy James
	Rachael Whitmer	Glen McDonald	Erin Deloach
	Beverly Highsmith	Jennifer Culpepper	Elizabeth Larmour
High School Teachers.....	Shane Collier	Kimbra Balthazor	Crista Rosser
	Chad Schneider	Jessie Pruitt	Holli Hayes
	Tyler Gilbert	Hank Majeski	Abby Hamm
	Ashley Deloach	Sarah Repass	Holden Staten
	Robert Grimes		
Art.....	Elizabeth Rowe		
Computer Science – Middle School.....	Candace Smith		
Athletic Directors	Rebecca Hill & Brack Deloach		
Migrant Education	Irene Vargas	Melissa Varela	
Physical Education	Richard Andrews	Hunter White	Joe James
Guidance Counselors.....	Tara Williams (9-12)	Brack Deloach (K-8)	
Special Education	Becky Parramore	Kelsey Davis	Amanda Deloach
	Hunter Bennett	Cassie Sandlin	Jennifer Schneider
	Shayna Lusk		
ESOL Education.....	Kathleen Pafford	Jennifer Carter	Candace Smith
	Jenna Newham		
Speech	Ashley Futch		
Media Specialist	Analiese Hamm		
Bookkeeper.....	Kathy Carter		
SIS Coordinator	Amy Rowe		
Alternative Education & In-School Suspension	Burt Copeland		
School Nurse	Courtlain Nowell		
Instructional Technology Specialist.....	Carol Isgro		
Technology Support Specialist.....	Candice Crosby		
Student Support Staff.....	Michelle Church	Sarah Powers	Paige Corbett

	Wendy Mullis	Tammy Tudor	Kasey Lucas
	Robbie Reynolds	Michelle Lane	Faith Jones
	Kilia McLeod	Emily Pafford	Hannah Keesling
	Mechelle Carter	Bridgett Jones	Taylor Jones
Maintenance	Jaime Register	Tori Register	
Transportation Director	Dr. Vince Hamm		
Bus Mechanic	Jeff Bennett		
Bus Drivers.....	Crystal Martinez	Lee Walker	Aline Crosby
	Sarah Powers	Paul Wilson	Mechelle Carter
	Robbie Reynolds	Bobby Walker	Donnie Sanders
	Elizabeth Frier		
Lunchroom Manager.....	Crystal Martinez		
Lunchroom Staff.....	Judy Corbett	Debbie Darling	
	Martina Young		

Echols County Board of Education

Mr. Bo Corbett, Chairman
Mr. Mitchell Church, Vice-Chairman
Mrs. Patricia Gray
Mr. Chad Pafford
Mr. Travis Dees

Echols County School System Staff

Dr. Vince Hamm, Superintendent
Mrs. Angie Sowell, Special Ed. Director
Mrs. Carol Isgro, Technology Director
Mr. Dave Rosser, Finance & Operations
Mrs. Missy Pittman, Accounts Payable
Mrs. Mande Davis, Personnel & Payroll
Mrs. Rebecca Hill, Federal Programs & Testing
Mrs. Kathy Carter, Administration

Alma Mater

“Neath the tall pines of ol’ Statenville
There our school grounds lie.
Green and white are proudly flying-
May she never die.

Alma Mater, dear ol’ Statenville
We love and honor thee.
Ever shall our memories linger
Love and loyalty

