

# Sumter County Intermediate School

## 2025-2026

### *Student/Parent Handbook*

*4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Grades*



**Home of the MVPS:**

***"Motivated, Visionary, & Problem Solvers"***

**Dr. Mohan Gugulothu, Principal**

Mrs. Tawana Bettis, Assistant Principal

Mr. Rodney Shelton, Assistant Principal

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Americus, GA 31719  
(229) 924-3168

Website: <http://scis.sumterschools.org>

**This book belongs to:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**This is your Student Handbook for the 2025-2026 school year. You will find an acknowledgement page in the back of this handbook. Parent and student signatures are required at the back of the handbook and return the pages to your homeroom teacher by September 1, 2025.**

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## SUMTER COUNTY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

July 7, 2025

Dear Parents:

On behalf of the staff at Sumter County Intermediate School, I am happy to welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year! We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our students can achieve their highest potential. We recognize that in order to be successful in school, our students need support from both the home and school. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in your child's education. As partners, we share the responsibility for our students' success and want you to know that we will do our very best to carry out our responsibilities. We ask that you guide and support your child's learning by ensuring that he/she:

- Attends school daily and arrives on time, ready for the day's learning experience
- Completes all homework assignments given by teachers
- Reads and practice daily to improve literacy and numeracy skills
- Shares school experiences with you so that you are aware of his/her school life
- Informs you if he/she needs additional support in any area or subject
- Knows that you expect him/her to succeed in school and go on to college

Please consider joining our school volunteer program as our students can greatly benefit from your involvement and contributions to the school's program and its operations. We seek volunteers to help us with the following activities:

- Reading with children who need extra help
- School-wide events
- Student recognition events
- Outreach and recruitment of parent and community volunteers

You are encouraged to take time to carefully read the student handbook and review school rules with your child. If you have any questions about the rules and expectations, please feel free to contact me or to discuss them with your child's teacher. It is very important that you and your child are fully informed regarding standards related to appropriate behavior for a safe and productive school year.

The wonderful Sumter County Intermediate School staff and I feel privileged to serve you and your family. Remember at SCIS, our mission is to "challenge, nurture, and support students' on their journey towards graduation" and we will strive to do that daily.

In closing, I want to thank you for your support and look forward to serving you and our outstanding students.

Sincerely,

Mohan Gugulothu, Ed. D.  
Principal  
Sumter County Intermediate School

## **PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK**

The purpose of the Student Handbook is to give Sumter County Intermediate School students and their parents/guardians an understanding of the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our schools. In a case of conflict between Board policy and the provisions of this handbook, the Board policy most recently adopted by the Board will prevail.

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that this document is reviewed annually since policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. These changes will generally supersede the provisions found in the handbook, which will become obsolete by the newly adopted policy. The handbook is not a contract between the school and parents/guardians or students. It can be amended at any time at the discretion of the Sumter County School Board. If policy changes are enacted during the school year, the administration will communicate those changes to students, staff, and parents/guardians.

It is the practice in the Sumter County School System to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and classes offered at all schools regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

The Sumter County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap/disability in education programs, activities, and employment.

# Sumter County Intermediate School

## Panther Pride!!!

School Colors: **Royal Blue and Gold**

School Mascot: ***Panthers***

School Pride and Spirit: ***MVPS - Motivated Visionary Problem Solvers***

Each student should remember that school life is comparable to life in a community. They should practice the qualities of good citizenship that are so necessary in a good community. Students can contribute to a positive school spirit by following the suggestions below:

1. Show loyalty to school functions.
2. Support the school and strive for excellence in scholastic and extracurricular activities.
3. Show courteous and respectful behavior to teachers, officials, adults, and peers.
4. Take pride in the school and school functions.
5. Demonstrate good sportsmanship by being fair, courteous, and generous in all activities including being a good loser and a graceful winner.

## **Philosophy Sumter County Intermediate School**

In partnership with parents, students, educators, and the community, Sumter County Intermediate School (SCIS) will strive to ensure academic success and meet the diverse needs of all students by providing a comprehensive, differentiated quality educational program. Innovative research-based instructional strategies will be utilized and to provide a safe, nurturing environment to ensure the success of all students. Our philosophy embraces quality instruction for all students that will result in increased academic performance, fewer classroom management problems, greater relevance and application during the instructional process. SCIS will implement data driven strategies/interventions and monitor student achievement to provide a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Sumter County Intermediate School is to challenge, nurture, and support students on their journey towards graduation.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The vision of Sumter County Intermediate School is to ensure that all students receive an equitable education and graduate, college and career ready.

## **SUMTER COUNTY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL'S BELIEFS**

***At Sumter County Intermediate School, we believe that:***

Every student can be motivated, is a unique individual, and can achieve;

Student progress should be monitored closely;

Educators, parents, and students should have a positive attitude toward learning;

A safe and orderly environment is necessary for teaching and learning to occur;

Regular communication with parents should be maintained;

An intermediate school should provide a smooth transition between elementary and middle school; and

Our students are our future.

## Sumter County Schools 2025-2026 System Calendar

July 24-30 , 2025	Pre-Planning	
July 29, 2025	Open House	
July 31, 2025	1st Day of School	
September 1, 2025	Labor Day Holiday	
September 5, 2025	Early Release/Parent Teacher Conferences	
September 10, 2025	Progress Reports	
October 2, 2025	<b><i>End of 1st Nine Weeks</i></b>	
October 3, 2025	<b>W.I.N. Learning Day/Curriculum Planning</b>	
October 13-17, 2025	Fall Break	
October 22, 2025	Report Cards	
November 12, 2025	Progress Reports	
November 21, 2025	Early Release/ Curriculum Planning-Job Embedded	
November 24-28, 2025	Thanksgiving Break	
December 18, 2025	Early Release/ End of 2nd Nine Weeks/1st Semester Workday	/Teacher
December 19, 2025	Teacher Workday	
December 22, 2025 - January 2 , 2026	Winter Break	
January 5, 2026	Teachers Return/Curriculum Planning	
January 6, 2026	Curriculum Planning	
January 7, 2026	Students Return	
January 14, 2026	Report Cards	
January 19, 2026	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	
February 11, 2026	Progress Reports	
February 13, 2026	Early Release/ Parent Teacher Conferences	
February 16, 2026	Mid-Winter Break/President's Day	
March 12, 2026	<b><i>End of 3rd Nine Weeks</i></b>	
March 13, 2026	<b>W.I.N. Learning Day/Curriculum Planning</b>	
March 16, 2026	Mid-Spring Break	
March 25, 2026	Report Cards	
April 6-10, 2026	Spring Break	
April 22, 2026	Progress Reports	
May 21, 2026	<b>SCHS Baccalaureate</b>	
May 22, 2026	Last Day of School/ <b>Early Release</b> /Report Cards K-8 <b><i>End of 4th Nine Weeks/ Teacher Workday/ SCHS Graduation</i></b>	
May 25, 2026	<b><i>Memorial Day</i></b>	
May 26, 2026	<b>Post Planning</b>	
May 27, 2026	<b>Post Planning</b>	
May 28, 2026	Report Cards (Grades 9-12)	

**Approved March 13, 2025**

## **2025-2026**

### **Dates to Remember**

#### **Progress Reports**

1st Nine Weeks Progress Reports	September 10, 2025
2nd Nine Weeks Progress Reports	November 12, 2025
3rd Nine Weeks Progress Reports	February 11, 2026
4th Nine Weeks Progress Reports	April 22, 2026

#### **Report Cards**

1st Nine Weeks Report Cards	October 22, 2025
2nd Nine Weeks Report Cards	January 14, 2026
3rd Nine Weeks Report Cards	March 25, 2026
4th Nine Weeks Report Cards	May 28, 2026

#### **Early Release Dates/Parent-Teacher Conferences**

September 5, 2025	Parent-Teacher Conference
February 13, 2026	Parent-Teacher Conference



**Home of the MVPs:**

***“Motivated Visionary Problem Solvers”***



***DAILY SCHEDULE***

Teacher/Staff Arrival Time 7:15 am

Bus arrival: 7:25 am

Breakfast: 7:25-7:40 am

Morning Announcements: 7:35 am

Tardy Bell: 7:40 am

Instruction Begin: 7:40 am

Instruction Ends: 2:55 pm

Afternoon Announcements: 2:55 pm

Early Bus Dismissal: 2:35 pm

Car Dismissal: 2:57 pm

Regular Bus dismissal: 3:00 pm

Teacher/Staff Dismissal: 3:15 pm

## **SECTION I: Curriculum and Instruction**

### **ACCREDITATION**

Sumter County Intermediate School is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC).

### **COMPUTER USE**

Students are required to use computer technology for word processing, communication, research, multimedia projects, and testing. Unacceptable uses of the computer technology will result in revoking these privileges for 30 school days for the first offense. On the second offense, privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the school year. In order for the student to regain Internet access, he/she must repeat the application process the following school year. Any violations will be documented in the student's permanent record. Repeated Internet policy violations will result in the Internet license being permanently revoked. It is not acceptable to use this Internet access for any purpose, which violates the laws of the State of Georgia and the United States of America. Users must adhere to all copyright laws.

### **CURRICULUM**

The state of Georgia has adopted a set of core standards called the **Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE)**. The standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and experts to provide a clear and consistent framework, so that upon graduation students will be able to succeed in credit -bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. This rigorous curriculum provides a consistent framework to prepare students for success in college and/or the 21st century workplace. The standards for English language arts, mathematics, and literacy in science, history/social studies, and technical subjects will ensure that all Georgia students have an equal access and opportunity to master the skills and knowledge needed for success beyond high school. Effective implementation of the **GSE** requires support on multiple fronts, including strengthening teacher content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and contextualized tasks for students that effectively engage 21st Century learners. The standards create a foundation to work collaboratively across states and districts, pooling resources and expertise, to create curricular tools, professional development, common assessments, and other instructional materials.

<b><u>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</u></b>	<b><u>5<sup>th</sup> Grade</u></b>	<b><u>6<sup>th</sup> Grade</u></b>
English Language Arts	English Language Arts	English Language Arts
Reading	Reading	
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Social Studies	Social Studies	World History
Science	Science	Earth Science
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Health/Safety	Health/Safety	Health/Safety
Connections	Connections	Connections

## **EVALUATIONS**

A variety of assessments are used to measure student achievement and program effectiveness. State administered tests include Norm Referenced Tests, State Assessments, and Writing Tests. Other types of assessment are also used to measure individual and group progress throughout the school year. All students will be administered the GA Milestones End of Grade Assessment or the Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA).

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Parental permission is required on a form supplied by the school before a student participates in a field trip. All field trips are carefully planned to ensure beneficial learning experiences and adequate supervision of students. Approval of the school principal and the Superintendent is required for any field trip. The Board must approve any out-of-state or overnight field trip.

The Board provides transportation for field trips when directly related to education purposes. It is recommended that field trips be concluded so as not to require overnight accommodations. If overnight trips are necessary, it is required that the sponsoring groups maintain adequate adult supervision.

## **GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM**

In seeking to provide services for students who have the potential for exceptional academic achievement, the Sumter County School System offers a gifted education program. Students may be nominated to be tested for gifted education services by teachers, parents or guardians, peers, counselors, administrators, self, or others with knowledge of the student's abilities. Students are automatically referred for testing when reviews of achievement test results indicate they have obtained required scores. Students are referred for further testing if they have transferred from an out-of-state school system in which they were enrolled in a gifted education program. Transfer students receiving gifted education services in other Georgia public school systems are eligible for services in Sumter County School upon receipt of documentation of eligibility.

Students can be referred but only become eligible for services by meeting criteria in any three of the four following areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. Students may also become eligible for services by meeting state required mental ability scores and achievement test scores, although evaluation data must be collected on the student in all four areas. The Sumter County Gifted Committee generally meets in October and again in March to determine if nominated students will be referred for testing or tested for gifted. If you wish to learn more about this program, contact the principal or gifted education teacher at the school.

Students at Sumter County Primary School are provided with direct gifted services through a combination of resource classroom time and cluster grouping for a minimum of five contact hours with the Gifted Education Specialist.

## **GOOD TOUCH BAD TOUCH**

The **GOOD TOUCH / BAD TOUCH** Curriculum is a research-based body safety and violence prevention education for children in Pre-K through 6th grades. The curriculum includes information and discussions about child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and bullying of

all types, internet safety, stranger danger rules, by-stander responsibilities and answers to questions about substance abuse. Parents reserve the right to deny this opportunity to their child by informing the school principal in writing. Please feel free to contact a counselor if you wish to preview materials, review objectives or obtain more detailed information.

## GRADING

Each student will be given a report card at the end of each nine-week grading period. Progress reports will be sent home every 4 ½ weeks. If a student is failing, parents are encouraged to call the school and set up a conference to discuss the child's lack of satisfactory progress. Parents will be formally notified if their child is in danger of being retained at the end of the first semester and the end of the third nine weeks. Conferences will be scheduled.

## GRADING SCALE

**Grades will be assigned on the following basis:**

Academic Grading Scale			
A	B	C	F
90-100	80-89	70-79	69 & below

## HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) requires that schools are staffed with highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. Additionally, professional development activities must ensure that teachers and paraprofessionals meet the highly qualified provisions of ESEA. Local educational agencies (LEAs) must notify parents of their rights to request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers. The principal of each Title I school is required to submit an attestation annually requiring compliance with this provision. To be considered highly qualified to teach in the State of Georgia, teachers must be fully certified to teach by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) and be teaching in their field(s) of certification.

### ***Teachers must:***

Hold a bachelor's degree from a PSC accepted accredited institution of higher education.

Hold a valid Georgia teaching certificate.

Have evidence of specialized training in the subjects they teach, such as an academic major or the equivalent in the subjects and a passing score on the required content assessment for the area/subjects they teach.

Have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the field(s) listed on the Georgia teaching certificate.

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) requires states to develop plans with annual measurable objectives that will ensure that all teachers teaching in core academic subjects are highly qualified. Core academic subjects include English, reading, language arts, mathematics, broad-field science (such as physics, biology, or chemistry), foreign

languages, broad-field social studies (such as civics and government, economics, history, geography), and the arts (visual arts, music, band and chorus). Dance and drama are not core academic subjects in Georgia. All teachers teaching a core academic subject, including remedial, extended day, evening, or summer school classes, must be highly qualified to teach the subject.

### ***Paraprofessionals***

A paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher to assist with instructional and non-instructional activities. All paraprofessionals who work in an instructional program supported by Title I funds (school-wide program or targeted assistance program) must be highly qualified. Paraprofessionals must:

**Hold an associate's degree (or higher) or**

**Met a rigorous standard of quality and demonstrated through a formal state approved assessment the knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, language arts, writing and mathematics or reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness.**

### **Annual Parent Notice - Right to Request Teacher Qualifications**

Our school system receives federal funds for Title I programs that are part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). As a parent of a student you have the right to request certain information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher(s). Specifically, federal law requires the school district to provide you with the following:

- a. Whether the Professional Standards Commission has certified or licensed the teacher for the grades and subject in which the teacher is providing instruction.
- b. Whether the Professional Standards Commission has decided the teacher can teach under emergency status for which state certification requirements have been waived.
- c. The teacher's college major and the field of discipline for any graduate degree or certificate.
- d. The qualifications of any paraprofessional working with your child.

If you would like to request this information, please contact the school with your written request and we will respond in a timely manner. Thank you for your interest and involvement in your child's education.

### **HONOR ROLL**

Students will be recognized for academic achievement for each nine-week grading period. Honor's Day celebrations will be held regularly to recognize and award students for academic achievement. Recognition of distinction will be given to honor students without any behavioral referrals.

**Superintendent's Honor Roll:** All A's with an average of 95 or higher in all academic content classes.

**Principal's Honor Roll:** All A's with an average of 90-94 in all academic content classes.

**AB Honor Roll:** Combination of A's and B's in all academic content classes.

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

Students will be given a reasonable opportunity to make up work or tests when they have documented their absence from school within five (5) days of their return to school.

## **MEDIA CENTER**

The library/media center is open during the regular school day and immediately before and after school, as well as during lunch hours. Library passes will be required during the regularly scheduled class periods. Books are checked out for a two-week period with one renewal, except by special arrangement. A child may check out a maximum of two books at any given time. Lost or damaged books are paid for at current replacement prices.

## **NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The district will adhere to the requirements established by the Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Middle/High School Athletic Association.

Extracurricular and non-instructional activities and their place in the school program;

Limit and control interruptions of instructional time in the classroom and the number of absences for such activities; requirements for those students must meet to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

### **Elementary Schools**

In general, all activities offered by the school will be open to all students. Eligibility to participate may be revoked, at the discretion of the principal, for any students whose general behavior does not meet acceptable standards.

### **Secondary Schools**

In general, all activities offered by the school will be open to all students. Eligibility to participate may be revoked, at the discretion of the principal, for any students whose general behavior does not meet acceptable standards. In addition, participation will be denied for the following reasons:

1. Students who do not meet the eligibility standards of the Georgia Middle/High Athletic Association (in those activities governed by the GMSAA or GHSA);
2. Students who do not meet the eligibility standards of the recognized agency governing any particular activity;
3. Students in grades 6-8 who did not meet the District's promotion standards.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The Georgia Student Health and Physical Education (SHAPE) Act was passed in the 2009 Georgia legislative session and is now the Official Code of Georgia 20-2-777. Beginning in the 2011- 2012 school year, the law requires each local school district to conduct an annual fitness assessment program for all students in grades 1 - 12 enrolled in Georgia public school physical education classes taught by certified physical education teachers.

In Sumter County, Health and Physical Education courses are offered at all schools in accordance with Georgia Board of Education Rules. All Health and PE courses follow the identified Georgia Performance Standards for physical education.

## PRE-K – 8TH GRADE ATTENDANCE - TARDIES

The school district emphasizes the value of regular attendance in enabling students to benefit from the school program. Georgia law places the responsibility on each student to attend school on a daily basis and the responsibility on each parent or guardian to send their child to school on a daily basis.

The child who is tardy for school loses valuable instructional time and causes undesirable disruption in the classroom. If a child is tardy, the parent should accompany the child to the school office to check in. Frequent tardiness will result in a referral to the school attendance officer.

Individual student, but his/her presence as a class participant contributes to the education of others. Frequent tardiness for any reason is almost certain to adversely affect a student's schoolwork.

<b>Board Policy IHE: Promotion and Retention</b>	<b>Status: ADOPTED</b>
<b>Original Adopted Date: 04/13/2000   Last Revised Date: 09/08/2022   Last Reviewed Date: 09/08/2022</b>	

It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education that placement or promotion of a student into a grade, class, or program be based on an assessment of the academic achievement of the student and a determination of the educational setting in which the student is most likely to receive instruction and other services needed in order to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement. The Board further requires that each principal shall annually notify parents or guardians that the promotion, placement or retention of a student will be based on the academic achievement of the student and criteria established by the Sumter County Board of Education.

### DEFINITIONS

- A. Accelerated instruction – challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic deficiencies in reading and/ or mathematics. This accelerated instruction is designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level, as defined by the Office of Student Achievement, to meet grade-level standards in the shortest possible time.
- B. Additional instruction – Academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes that are designed to bring students not performing on grade level, as defined by the Office of Student Achievement, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before and after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/ or summer/inter-session instruction.
- C. Differentiated instruction – instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.
- D. Grade level – the standard of performance as defined by the Office of Student Achievement.
- E. Placement – assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.
- F. Placement committee – the committee established by the local school principal or designee

to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not meet established criteria to be considered on grade level. This committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parents or guardian, and the teacher(s) in the content area(s) in which the student did not achieve grade level.

G. Promotion – the assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade level.

H. Retention – the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

### **Promotion, Placement or Retention for Kindergarten**

A. Documentation that supports promo/on, placement, or retention shall be on file in the student's permanent Board Policy Manual Sumter County Schools record.

All of the following (Steps 1-3) must be true for a student to be promoted to the next grade.

1. A student must demonstrate readiness by scoring "Ready for 1st grade" on the state kindergarten assessment;
2. A student must master an acceptable number, as defined by a committee of kindergarten administrators and teachers, of skills identified in reading, language arts and math;
3. Attendance/Tardies – A student in kindergarten must not be absent for more than 15 days in a school- year. If a pupil is absent more than 15 days, he/she shall be retained.
4. The retention decision may be appealed to the principal within 10 working days.

B. Should a student be recommended for retention in kindergarten, then:

1. The information obtained by the state kindergarten assessment shall be considered as part of the required documentation.
  2. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the retention decision.
  3. Should a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) appeal the retention; the principal shall convene a placement committee to determine the appropriate placement of the student.
  4. A locally developed rubric/and or set of content mastery criteria will be used by the placement committee to determine placement.
  5. To override the recommendation to retain the student requires unanimous support of the placement committee.
  6. When a student is retained, an alternative, developmentally appropriate instructional program shall be provided. Promotion, Placement or Retention for Grades 1-5
- A. Documenta/on that supports promo/on, placement, or reten/on shall be on file in the student's permanent record.
- All of the following (Steps 1 and 2) must be considered for a student to be promoted to

the next grade:

1. A student in grades 1-5 must achieve a final grade of 70 or above in reading, language arts, and math courses.

2. Attendance/Tardies – A student in grades 1-5 must not be absent more than 15 days in a school-year. If a pupil is absent more than 15 days, he/she shall be retained.

3. The retention decision may be appealed to the principal within 10 working days.

B. Should a student be recommended for retention in grades 1-5, then:

1. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the retention decision.

2. Should a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) appeal the retention; the principal shall convene a placement committee to determine the appropriate placement of the student.

3. A locally developed rubric/and or set of content mastery criteria will be used by the placement committee to determine placement.

4. To override the recommendation to retain the student requires unanimous support of the placement committee.

5. When a student is retained, an alternative, developmentally appropriate instructional program shall be provided.

Promotion, Placement or Retention for Grades 6-8

A. Documentation that supports promo/on, placement, or retention shall be on file in the student's permanent record.

All of the following (Steps 1 and 2) must be true for a student to be promoted to the next grade.

1. A student in grades 6-8 must achieve a final grade of 70 or above in at least three out of four academic subjects and at least one exploratory course.

2. Attendance/Tardies – A student in grades 6-8 must not be absent more than 15 days in a school-year. If a pupil is absent more than 15 days, he/she shall be retained.

3. The retention decision may be appealed to the principal within 10 working days.

#### **Grades 6-8:**

B. Should a student be recommended for retention in grades 6-8, then:

1. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the retention decision.

2. Should a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) appeal the retention; the principal shall convene a placement committee to determine the appropriate placement of the student.

3. A locally developed rubric/and or set of content mastery criteria will be used by the placement committee to determine placement.

4. To override the recommendation to retain the student requires unanimous support of the placement committee.

5. When a student is retained, an alternative, developmentally appropriate instructional program shall be provided.

# 1. REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 3, 5, AND 8.

a. Promotion of a student shall be determined as follows.

1. No third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

2. No fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and attain an achievement level of "Developing Learner", "Proficient Learner", or "Distinguished Learner" on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

3. No eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and attain an achievement level of "Developing Learner", "Proficient Learner", or "Distinguished Learner" on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

4. The school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.

b. When a student does not perform at grade level in grades 3, 5, or 8 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments specified in section (a) above, then the following shall occur:

1. Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student regarding the following:

i. The student's below-grade-level reading designation and/or the mathematics achievement level on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments;

ii. The specific retest(s) to be given the student and testing date(s);

iii. The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student's performance on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments; and

iv. The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.

2. The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and

3. The student shall be retested with appropriate section(s) of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board.

c. When a student does not perform at grade level on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in grades 3, 5, and 8, and also does not perform at grade level on a second opportunity to take the assessment, then the following shall occur:

1. The school principal or designee shall retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided for in this policy.

2. The school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student and the teacher(s) regarding the decision to retain the student.

i. The notice shall describe the option of the parent or guardian or teacher to appeal the decision to retain the student;

ii. The notice shall describe the composition and functions of the placement committee; it shall describe the option of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), or principal to invite individuals who can provide information or facilitate understanding of the issues to be discussed to attend the placement committee meeting (note that this is sample verbiage and is not mandated for inclusion in the policy); and

iii. The notice shall include the requirement that the decision to promote the student must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee comprised of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), and principal or designee.

3. If the parent or guardian or teacher(s) appeals the decision to retain the student, then the school principal or designee shall establish a placement committee to consider the appeal.

i. The placement committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) of the subject(s) of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or the alternative assessment instrument on which the student failed to perform at grade level.

ii. The principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian and teacher(s) of the time and place for convening the placement committee.

iii. The placement committee shall review the overall academic achievement of the student in light of the performance on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or the alternative assessment instrument and promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends, and make a determination to promote or retain.

iv. The decision to promote must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee and must determine that if promoted and given accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction during the next year, the student is likely to perform at grade level by the conclusion of the school year.

v. The placement committee shall prescribe such additional assessments as may be appropriate in addition to assessments administered to other students at the grade level during the year.

vi. The placement committee shall provide for a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student.

4. A plan for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction must be developed for each student who does not achieve grade level performance in grades 3, 5, or 8 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments specified in section (a) above whether the student is retained, placed, or promoted for the subsequent year.

5. A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in language arts and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) shall take an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board. Placement or promotion of these students shall follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.

6. A student's failure to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in grades 3, 5, and 8 in language arts and/or mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board shall result in the student being retained. The option of the parent or guardian or teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student shall follow the procedure set forth in this rule.

7. For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee shall serve as the placement committee.

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**Sumter County Schools**

ADOPTED: April 13, 2000  
LAST REVISED: June 15, 2017

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

It is the policy of the State Board of Education that students with disabilities have the same rights as any other student to receive a high quality public education consistent with all state education standards and policies. Students with disabilities have the right to be educated with their non-disabled peers, in a regular classroom alongside their regular peers to the maximum extent appropriate. Students with disabilities shall be provided real and valid opportunities to learn through specialized instruction, supportive services, related services, supplemental aids and supports, including services and training for teachers to ensure that all students have an opportunity to learn and demonstrate their knowledge to meet developmental goals that have been set.

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

Students have the privilege to participate in leadership opportunities at school by serving on the Student Leadership Council or as Class Representatives.

## **TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Students are required to have their own materials, books, paper, and pencils as prescribed by the teacher. Basic school supplies can be purchased from the school store.

Textbooks are the responsibility of the student. All students must pay for lost or damaged textbooks, based on the state textbook prices. Students will not be issued another text until the lost textbook fee is paid.

## **TRANSFER STUDENT CREDITS**

Students entering the Sumter County School System from accredited and non-accredited public and private schools, including home study programs, will be awarded credit for previous study and placed at the appropriate grade level.

Students requesting admission from non-accredited public or private schools, including home schools, will be evaluated for grade placement based upon the following criteria:

1. State and local Board of Education policy requirements relating to entrance into kindergarten or first grade and grade promotion guidelines.
2. Performance on standardized tests and/or instructional placement tests in language arts and mathematics.
3. Grade level placement and performance in the non-accredited school or program.
4. Chronological age verified by certified documents, physical size, social and emotional maturity levels of the particular student.
5. For students enrolling from a home school study program, documentation concerning coursework completed during the operation of the program will be requested. After reviewing the documentation, the principal of the school shall place the student in the appropriate grade level. A review of the placement may be conducted to determine the final placement.

### ***Rights for Appeal***

If a parent or legal guardian disagrees with either the credit awarded or denied for course work completed at a non-accredited public or private school, or a home school, or with the grade placement selected, an appeal may be made to the principal of the school and then, to the Superintendent of Schools. The decision of the Superintendent is final.

## **SECTION II: PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **AGENDAS/PLANNERS**

All students will be given agenda planners to keep up with homework assignments, dates, projects, etc. Students must use their own agenda planners as their hall pass. There will be a replacement charge of \$5.00 for lost agendas.

### **CLASSROOM VISITATIONS**

Visitors are always welcome at Sumter County Intermediate School. **All visitors must report to the office and log in the CHECKMATE SYSTEM immediately upon entering the school campus with valid ID.** Parents are encouraged to visit their children's classes for reasonable periods of time. For the protection of the children, all parents and visitors must report directly to the office if they are in the building for classroom visitation, delivering items and messages to students, or reporting as a volunteer.

We request that you help us in protecting instructional time by not interrupting the teaching and learning occurring during classroom visits. Classroom visitations are not appropriate times for teacher-parent conferences. **Please do not expect the teacher to conference with you at this time.** A parent-teacher conference is assigned during a teacher's planning time or after school. All classroom visits should be limited to 20 minutes and visitors are asked to follow up with teachers during a conference regarding any concerns they may have. During your visit, please refrain from taking pictures of other children. We also ask that you refrain from using your cell phone in the classroom. The regular school program must continue during your visit.

Parents and other visitors are always welcome and encouraged to visit the school. We invite you to visit your child's classroom and get acquainted with the teachers, however, classroom observations should be limited to 20 minutes. If visitors violate the procedures for visitation, their classroom visiting may be restricted or revoked.

1. All visitors must report to the office upon entering the building.
2. We request that parents and guardians assist us in protecting instructional time by not interrupting instruction during classroom visits. Parent Teacher conferences will be scheduled during a teacher's planning time or before/after school.
3. All visitors must have a visitor's pass before they will be allowed to visit any part of the school building.

**This is subject to change based on health safety of students, faculty and staff**

### **COMMUNICATION COURIERS**

Students will be assigned a courier/folder at the beginning of the school year. Couriers will be sent home weekly on Wednesday with important school, community, and/or academic information. Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the information and contact the school/teachers if needed. To timely address your concerns, please discuss issues with the teacher prior to contacting the principal.

### **HOMEWORK GUIDELINES**

The purpose of homework is to form good study habits and to reinforce skills taught at school. Taking the assignment home, completing it, and remembering to bring the work to school the next day are important processes in developing responsibility. Accepting responsibility is very important in order for children to learn. Parents should provide a quiet area and should set a

specific time each day for students to complete homework assignments. Homework may be assigned daily and, occasionally, on weekends.

### ***Sumter County Intermediate School*** **Parent Involvement Policy**

In acknowledgement of much reliable research proving that parental involvement raises the academic achievement of students, **Sumter County Intermediate School** encourages involvement of parents through many planned activities throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to participate in Parent-Teacher Organization meetings, Parent Orientation, Parent-Teacher Conferences, Open House meetings, a Back-to-School event, Student of the Month, and other planned events. Parent Volunteers will be solicited to mentor and tutor children. Monthly parent communication and regular parent-student interaction are encouraged to increase communication between home and school and provide parents with ways to support their child at home. Parents are made aware of academic and behavior expectations through "Nine-Weeks Expectations" flyers sent home quarterly. A calendar that includes activities of all of the school's special activities for students and their families is produced annually. This calendar includes at least one family activity per school month.

In order to build an effective, home-school partnership, **Sumter County Intermediate School** will provide the following:

1. An annual orientation meeting where parents will meet their child's teacher and be reassured of their right and responsibility to be involved in their child's education.
2. A flexible number of meetings and activities throughout the year to assist parents in understanding the federal and state academic content and student achievement standards, as well as local academic assessments. Meetings will also focus on how parents and teachers can work together to monitor the child's progress in order to improve student achievement.
3. A varied schedule for meetings and conferences in order to accommodate the needs of parents.
4. A minimum of two scheduled parent conferences, where the progress of the student will be discussed as well as the expectations for the grade level, school curriculum, test information and any other concerns that the teacher or parent may have.
5. Continuous communication to assist parents in understanding the school curriculum and student achievement through the Nine-Weeks Expectations, Report Cards, the School Parent-Pupil Handbook, handouts and mailings, student achievement reports, and newsletters which will include parenting tips and suggestions. All invitations will be sent in a timely manner with an additional follow-up reminder.
6. A school-parent compact designed by parents and school staff that outlines how parents, school staff and students share the responsibility for improving learning.
7. Every other year, a survey for all parents shall be conducted by the school to collect opinions and concerns of parents about the current program and to collect suggestions for improvement and topics for meetings that meet the needs of parents.

Every effort will be made to communicate with parents in a format and language that is free of educational jargon and easily understandable by all. Parents and community members are always welcome at **Sumter County Intermediate School**.

## **FRESH START ACADEMY**

FRESH START ACADEMY provides another opportunity for students to receive academic and behavioral support services as they strive to graduate ready for college and careers. Students who continue to display difficulties with behavior may be referred to the FRESH START ACADEMY (6th Grade). **Students who experience excessive discipline referrals may be referred to a tribunal for placement at Fresh Start Academy.**

## **PARENT PORTAL**

The Sumter County School District is using the student information system, Infinite Campus, to communicate with parents about their child's progress at school through a Parent Portal. The Parent Portal allows parents to monitor their child's daily academic progress as well as attendance. All parents are strongly encouraged to sign up for this program at each school at the beginning of the school year. Contact your child's school for information on how to register.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Effective communication between the parent and the teacher is beneficial to the student's success. Parents should plan to meet with their child's teachers at least twice during the school year. Parents should always feel free to request a conference and may do so by calling the school counselor. Teachers will not be permitted to see parents during instructional time. Teachers are available for conferences during planning time and before/after school. Parents are strongly encouraged to call and set up an appointment if a conference is requested.

## **PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION (P.T.O.)**

A school PTO, Parent/Teacher Organization, is organized each year. We encourage all parents to take an active part in this organization. Officers are needed and serve a term of one year. PTO Meetings are held each nine weeks. Please call the school if you would like to volunteer to serve on the local PTO board.

## **PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE**

As of June 30, 2012, there will no longer be a Public School Choice transfer option under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as reauthorized under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and local educational agencies (LEAs) will no longer be required to implement Choice or pay for Choice transportation as implemented under the ESEA. On November 2011, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), submitted to the United States Department of Education (USED), a flexibility waiver requesting flexibility through ten ESEA requirements and their associated, regulatory, administrative and reporting requirements.

Any student that has previously transferred to another school by exercising the ESEA Choice must be allowed to attend that school until they complete the school's highest grade; however, the LEA is no longer required to pay for the students' transportation cost during the duration of the student's attendance at their current CHOICE school. The LEA may continue to pay for CHOICE transportation for students, only if the LEA chooses to do so.

However, parents will still have the Choice transfer option under House Bill 251: The Quality Basic Education Act; Intra-District School Choice. House Bill 251 allows parents of students

enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school to enroll in a school other than the assigned school that is located within the school district, if classroom space is available after the assigned students of that district have been enrolled. Under House Bill 251, transportation will not be paid for by the district. The parent shall assume the responsibility and cost of transportation of the student to and from the school. If you have any questions, please contact Gayla Braziel, Federal Programs Director at 229-931-8525 or [gbraziel@sumterschools.org](mailto:gbraziel@sumterschools.org)

### **REPORT CARDS**

Students receive a report card at the end of each nine-week grading period. Students should take their report cards home for parents or guardians to examine, sign, and return. In an effort to continuously monitor student achievement progress reports are sent home on a bi-weekly basis. Parents may also monitor grades via the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged, especially for students experiencing failure in one or more classes.

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

School councils are created to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents and community into the school-based decision-making process.

The purpose of this group is to help the board of education develop and nurture participation of parents, the community, teachers and school administrators to share ideas for school improvement. The management and control of the public schools of this district is the responsibility of the Sumter County Board of Education. The instructional and administrative leader of each school is the principal. School councils provide advice, recommendations, and assistance and represent the community of parents and businesses. By law, the School Council is comprised of at least two parent members, two teacher members, two business members, and the principal. If you would like to serve on the local school council, please contact the school counselor.

### **SCHOOL MESSENGER**

Infinite Campus Messenger is an automatic student/parent/staff telephone and information center. Parents are notified of: absences, homework assignments, schedule of school events, invitation to meetings, cancellations of school, and report card announcements. Parents and students can instantly access information from any touch-tone phone.

### **TELEPHONE MESSAGES**

Students will not be allowed to use the school telephone except in cases of an emergency. **Students will not be called out of class to use the telephone.** Messages for students will be accepted in cases of an emergency. All requests for transportation changes must be submitted in writing.

### **VIDEO/AUDIO TAPING AND PHOTOGRAPHS**

Your child may be photographed, audio taped, or video-taped for instructional and public relation purposes. If you do not wish for your child to be audio-taped, video-taped, or photographed please indicate on the Image-news release form located in the back of this handbook. Return this form to the school by the assigned deadline.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Adult volunteers are needed throughout the school year to serve a variety of capacities. All volunteers must participate in an orientation session Please contact the school counselor if you are interested in volunteering.

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

Date: **7/1/2025**

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of every Students Succeeds Act, the **Sumter County Intermediate 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 teachers and/ or paraprofessionals' qualifications, please contact Dr. Mohan Gugulothu, at **229-924-3168**.

Sincerely,

**Mohan Gugulothu, Ed. D.**

**Principal**

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

Fecha: 7/1/2025

Estimados padres:

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

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

Si desea solicitar información acerca de las calificaciones del maestro y/o paraprofesional de su hijo/a, comuníquese con Dr. Mohan Gugulothu, al **229-924-3168**.

Saludos cordiales,

**Mohan Gugulothu, Ed. D.**

**Principal**

## **SECTION III: STUDENT SERVICES**

### **AFTER SCHOOL TIME ENRICHMENT SERVICES (ASTEP)**

Sumter County Schools provides an After School Time Enrichment Program (ASTEP) at the primary, elementary, intermediate, and middle schools. Hours of operation are from 3:15 P.M. until 6:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. ASTEP is \$35.00 weekly with a yearly \$10.00 registration fee. ASTEP is open on Release Days.

Parents who are interested in these services may contact the ASTEP Program Director, Mrs. Natasha Merritt at 229-931-8576.

### **COUNSELING**

The goal of the School Counseling Program is to provide services to students, parents, teachers, and administrators, which will enhance the student's personal, social, and educational development. The counselor provides support, encouragement, and advice. Students may talk with the counselor with complete assurance of **confidentiality**. The counselor concentrates on helping students understand themselves, their interests, and traits so that they will be better able to make decisions about themselves and their future. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of assistance offered through the career center. Information regarding grades, schedules, careers, testing, and matters relating to personal performance or individualized needs may be secured through the office.

### **HEARING AND VISION SCREENINGS**

Students attending Sumter County Schools in grades 2, 4, 6 and 9 will receive hearing and vision screening administered by certified personnel. Parents will be notified if screenings indicate a need for further evaluation. Further evaluations are the responsibility of the parent. Parents should notify the school in writing if they do not wish for their child to participate in this screening process.

### **HOSPITAL HOMEBOUND**

A hospital homebound program is available for students who are unable to attend school for 10 consecutive days or more due to serious injuries or health reasons. Parents are required to contact the principal regarding the condition of extended illness and provide a medical statement from the attending physician prior to receiving home services. More information is available in the school office.

### **MULTI-TIERED SUPPORT SYSTEM (MTSS)**

The Multi-Tiered Support System is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The MTSS process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. Data is used when making decisions in reference to interventions needed in general and special education classes to support student achievement.

## **NUTRITION PROGRAM**

The school will provide a nutritionally balanced breakfast and lunch to all students regardless of their ability to pay or their race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap.

Students are expected to eat in the lunchroom in a quiet and orderly manner. Each student is responsible for returning trays and disposing litter to the proper places. Food cannot be taken from the lunchroom. Neither fast foods nor soft drinks may be brought into the lunchroom. Parents are welcome to have lunch with their child. Please call the office to make reservations and find out the cost for adult lunches.

## **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)**

School Resource Officers (SRO) are law enforcement officers who are assigned to either an elementary, Intermediate, middle, or high school. The main goal of the SRO is to prevent juvenile delinquency by promoting positive relations between youth and law enforcement. The SRO position encompasses three major components which allow the SRO to achieve this goal: law enforcement, education, and counseling. These three components allow the SRO to take a proactive approach to law enforcement. SRO's are not just "cops" on campus. SRO's provide all law enforcement duties on their campus. The SRO becomes involved in the students' lives as a positive role model. The intent is that the positive experiences students have with the SRO will bridge the gap between juveniles and law enforcement, and in doing so, help prevent juvenile crime. SRO's often work in conjunction with the school's counselor.

## **Sumter County School Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Terms and Conditions**

### **PROCEDURES FOR INTERNET LICENSE**

1. Parent(s) must sign the Sumter County School System Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Agreement.
2. Students will be instructed on Internet policy and usage.
3. Students must sign the Sumter County School Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Agreement.

## **NETIQUETTE**

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the Internet are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply (See Student Handbook). The Internet is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to Internet services will be provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner.

## **Sumter County Schools Computer and Network Resources Student Acceptable Use Guidelines**

***Please read the following carefully. Violations of the Acceptable Use Guidelines may cause a student's access privileges to be revoked, disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.***

Any student who utilizes the computer lab(s) or any computer equipment at the school must be aware of certain policies for use of the equipment and/or facilities. Procedures

are in place for the protection of students and equipment. Students will be held accountable for any violation of the following policies (as would be the case for any classroom disciplinary matter). A student and his/her parents will be responsible for damages and will be liable for costs incurred for service or repair.

Students are only allowed to utilize the computers and network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their teacher. Students are not permitted to explore the configuration of the computer, operating system or network, run programs not on the menu, or attempt to do anything they are not specifically authorized to do.

Students are responsible for ensuring that any diskettes, CDs, memory sticks, USB flash drives, or other forms of storage media that they bring in from outside the school are virus free and do not contain any unauthorized or inappropriate files. Students may not bring personal computers or hand-held computing devices and connect them to the school network or Internet connection (including connecting to wireless access points).

***Safety issues:***

1. Any on-line communication should always be at the discretion and with the supervision of a teacher.
2. Never provide last name, address, telephone number, or school name online.
3. Never respond to, and always report to the teacher or parent, any messages that make you feel uncomfortable or that are from an unknown origin.
4. Never send a photo of yourself or anyone else.
5. Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you met online.
6. Never open attachments or files from unknown senders.
7. Always report to a teacher any inappropriate sites that you observe being accessed by another user or that you browse to by accident.

**Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to the following:**

- A. Accessing, sending, creating or posting materials or communications that are:
  1. Damaging to another person's reputation;
  2. Abusive;
  3. Obscene;
  4. Sexually oriented;
  5. Threatening or demeaning to another person;
  6. Contrary to the school's policy on harassment;
  7. Harassing; or
  8. Illegal
- B. Using the network for financial gain or advertising.
- C. Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without their consent.
- D. Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages.
- E. Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other system users.
- F. Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bankcard or checking account information.
- G. Using the school's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music or images, or violation of copyright laws.
- H. Downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware or any other unauthorized program on any school's computer or computer system.
- I. Purposely bringing on premises or infecting any school computer or network with a Virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy or provide access to unauthorized data or information.
- J. Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person.
- K. Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a

- computer while logged on under another user's account.
- L. Using the school's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended.
- M. Using the school's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is Inconsistent with a teacher's directions and generally accepted network etiquette.
- N. Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software.
- O. Attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any network or computer component.
- P. Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by their teacher or inconsistent with school policy.
- Q. Providing another student with user account information or passwords.
- R. Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which are not school system property to or in the district's technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel.
- S. Bringing on premises any disk or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data.
- T. Downloading or accessing via e-mail or file sharing, any software or programs not specifically authorized by Technology personnel.
- U. Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies.
- V. Possessing or accessing information on school property relating to "Hacking," or altering, or bypassing network security or policies.
- W. Participating on message boards without teacher direction, or in live chat using but not limited to AIM, Yahoo, or MSN Messenger.
- X. Students should follow the guidelines below when performing Internet searches.

**Elementary:** Students in grades K-5 may visit sites pre-selected by a teacher. Searches may only be done with child-friendly Internet search engines and must be done with teacher supervision.

**Middle:** Students in grades 6-8 may only perform unsupervised Internet searches using child friendly search engines. A search using any other search engine must be conducted with teacher supervision.

**High:** If students in grades 9-12 use any search engines other than a child-friendly search engine, they must use the advanced search page of Internet search engines in order to develop more reliable, useful, and relevant search results.

## Sumter County Schools Computers and Network Resources

### Website Posting Guidelines

#### I. Student Information, Work, and Pictures:

1. Web pages hosted from Sumter County School web server may contain a reference to a student. This includes references to students in photographs or in text.
2. The following student information is acceptable to include in conjunction with text or photograph, unless parent(s) request that no information on their child be posted on the school's webpage\*.

\* A student's photograph or exemplary classroom projects may be posted, but the school system is careful not to associate a student's full name in such a way that it can be identified with a photograph of a student.

#### II. Online Copyright

1. Unauthorized use of copyrighted material is prohibited. All copyrighted

material must be properly cited using standard citation information. Giving credit (web address or active link) to a company or individual (celebrity, for instance) that has created text, a graphic, etc. for a school page may be allowed, assuming the site is not blocked by the web filtering hardware and software.

### III. Prohibited Content/Items

1. Personal communications information about staff and parent volunteers: non-district email addresses, non-district mailing address, and non-district phone numbers except as approved by the building principal and the parent volunteer whose information is to be released.

Example: PTO/PTA/Booster Organization officer/contact requests have their personal email address listed in the appropriate area on the school's page(s) and the principal approves the request.

2. Student personal contact information of any kind.

3. Links to staff, volunteers or student's "personal" home pages that are on remote, non-district web servers (not hosted on Sumter County School's equipment).

4. Links to "non-official" Sumter County School's related sites that are hosted on remote, non-district web servers - Examples: athletic booster pages, PTA pages, etc. This prohibition includes teacher-created classroom pages or online services that may inform parents and visitors of the school district's site or classroom activities. The school system will provide hosting services for school-related web postings of booster club organizations, PTA groups, teachers, etc. following the same protocol and guidelines presented in this document.

5. Counters: If a school wants a web page counter on its site, it must be an "invisible" counter. Tracking information on the use of a school's web site and individual sections can be obtained from the Coordinator of Online Learning.

### IV. Compliance with FCA Acceptable Use Guidelines

All material posted to the Sumter County Schools website must adhere to all provisions set forth in the Acceptable Use Guidelines. Items from these documents, which are relevant to information posted on the web are:

No information/materials may be posted that is:

- Damaging to another person's reputation;
- Abusive;
- Obscene;
- Sexually oriented;
- Threatening or demeaning to another person;
- Contrary to the school's policy on harassment;
- Harassing; or Illegal

### Web Pages created or information posted on Sumter County Schools web sites:

- **MUST NOT** use the network for financial gain or advertising.
- **MUST NOT** contain plagiarized work created by another person without his/her consent.
- **MUST NOT** contain personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bank card or checking account information about any student or staff member.
- **MUST NOT** provide any user account information or passwords. If students participate in the creation and/or maintenance of web pages, they MUST be logged onto the network with their own USER IDs and PASSWORDS. Under NO circumstances are students to be given another student or employee's login information.

### V. Educational Appropriate Postings

Material posted to the school's web site and associated teacher web pages must be educationally sound and appropriate as determined by the school or district administrators.

***\*Parent permission is granted in the Student Handbook.***

## **Sumter County Schools Email Disclaimer**

Sumter County Schools has implemented a series of technology systems that “filter” all incoming email to detect SPAM (junk mail) and those that contain viruses, certain keywords, html scripts, or have other attributes that could potentially be unacceptable for student viewing or compromise network security. Our system also uses a Bayesian filter that uses algorithms to identify messages that are probable SPAM. We have set the system to automatically redirect any email identified as SPAM to the junk mail folder. We have had some emails sent to teachers, administrators and employees of the school system that have been reported as being blocked. We realize the scrutiny we get when email is tagged as SPAM, blocked and subsequently deleted. There are many reasons why an email may be blocked by our system and they have been listed at the bottom of the page.

Ninety percent of our received email is SPAM or SPAM related. While we realize that blocked email is an inconvenience, we have chosen to error on the side of caution due to the possibility of inappropriate content slipping through and being seen by a student peering over a teacher’s shoulder.

If you have experienced this issue with email communication, we recommend that you check a few items noted below and try again.

1. Are you sure you have the correct address and that you did not mis-key?
2. Does your computer have current virus and spyware protection software installed and working properly?
3. Does your email contain embedded images (some signatures) or have a custom stationary look that utilizes images, sounds, and/or other multi-media content?
4. Does your email address contain a correct return email address?
5. Are you trying to send the email as a blind copy?
6. Does your mail provider (or AOL, Hotmail, etc.) append anything to the message that might contain a phrase which could identify it as SPAM?
7. Does your email have advertising in the body, header, or footer? e.g. “Find out more”
8. Does your email contain third party content in the form of html links or links in the header or footers of your email?
9. Does your email contain attached files?
10. Is the problem intermittent with sometimes email being delivered and other times it is not? If so, do you see any pattern such as messages going through if you reply to one they sent you, or they get blocked when you use an account which has a signature?
11. Did you get any notification indicating the message was undeliverable or didn’t go through?

**Virus Filter** – Messages identified or suspected for Viruses, Trojans, and e-mail exploits will be deleted.

**DNS Blacklist** – There are several servers on the Internet that maintain a DNS Blacklist for servers known to distribute SPAM or to have open relays which allow SPAM. Our filter uses those lists so if someone has an email account on one of the Blacklisted servers then their mail will be blocked. It is their mail server owner who is responsible for being removed from those lists.

**Keyword Checking** – There is a long list of keywords and phrases that if found in the subject or body of the message will be identified as SPAM. Examples would include but not limited to phrases such as “don’t miss out,” “find out more,” “100% guaranteed,” “please answer quickly,” “call now,” “adult only,” and a host of obscene phrases. Yes, we know that not every message with one of those is SPAM but these are the most common and if they are removed from the filter will let hundreds or thousands of SPAM messages through each day.

**Header Checking** – Messages will be blocked if the “From” field is empty, contains more than 4 numbers, or uses part of the recipient’s address/name. They will also be deleted if they have html scripts, contain remotely hosted images in the message body or if the

message is mostly a graphic file with very little text. Both of those are methods Spammers use to get past the Keyword checking and often result in the obscene pictures being displayed in the message. Messages that have false email headers and faulty return addresses will also be blocked.

**Macro Filter** – Any files with Macros will be rejected and deleted, both incoming and outgoing. These are a potential security risk due to what could happen when a Word or Excel file is opened with destructive Macro. Those are extremely easy for an end-user to create and then send to anyone with destructive results as soon as they open it.

**Bayesian** – This is the “Smart” filter that uses algorithms to identify potential Spam. It results in a lot of false positives but the decision was made to delete all Bayesian identified messages instead of tagging them and sending them on through. This means that many thousands of messages are deleted each day and are not logged due to the size, so many legitimate messages are deleted as Spam and we have no way to trace what happened.

**Directory Harvesting** – If someone sends a message that has several incorrect addresses in the “To:” field then the entire message will be rejected. This helps prevent Spammers from just sending a huge distribution list of potential names and getting lucky with some.

**Custom Blacklist** – Individual mail addresses and entire mail domains can be added to a custom list to be blocked.

**File Attachments** – Many types of files are blocked for security reasons and include those such as VBS, EXE, COM, BAT, and ZIP. Files such as XLS, PPT, and DOC are NOT blocked unless they contain Macros. File attachments are quarantined so if they don’t have a Macro then they can be forwarded on to the recipient if they are work related and the recipient lets us know when they get an automated notification that it was blocked.

### STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)

Each school in the Sumter County School System has a Student Support Team (SST) which includes school staff who can provide information and support for students needing help academically, behaviorally or socially. The purpose of the SST is to improve the delivery of instructional services to students experiencing problems of an academic, behavioral or social nature in school and to serve as a resource for teachers and other educators in the delivery of these services. The SST may be made up of teachers, administrators, parents, special education teachers, counselors, school psychometrics, specialists, school social workers, central office personnel, outside agencies, or other appropriate personnel who can assist in the development of alternative classroom strategies and modifications to meet the individual needs of a student experiencing difficulty in school. Teachers, students, parents, or others working with the student may request a SST meeting. Parents are invited to attend and participate in all SST meetings. If you have questions about the Student Support Team, call the school and ask to speak with the principal.

### SECTION 504 Plan

A student is eligible for a 504 plan under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 when he/she is professionally diagnosed as needing special services because he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. If you feel that your child may qualify for these services, please contact the principal.

Any student or parent or guardian (“grievant”) may request an impartial hearing due to the school system’s actions or inactions regarding your child’s identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant’s failure to

request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing. The Section 504 Coordinator may be contacted through the school system's central office. Copies of the 504 Procedural Safeguards and Notice of Rights of Students and Parents under Section 504 may be found at the system website or may be picked up at the central office or at any of the school offices.

*As required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Sumter County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission to its programs, services, activities, or employment in access to them in treatment of individuals, or in any aspect of their operations.*

## **SECTION IV: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **ADMISSION TO SCHOOL**

All students whose parents or legal guardians reside in or are employed by the Sumter County School District are eligible for admission. Any student enrolling in a Georgia Public School for the first time must present these items:

1. A certified copy of the birth certificate
2. A Georgia Immunization Certificate
3. A Vision/Hearing/Dental Evaluation Certificate
4. Proof that parents/guardians of child live in the county (rent contract, utility bill, phone bill)
5. Social Security Card (School will provide waiver form if necessary)
6. Name of previous school
7. Transcripts or report card of previous school
8. Copy of previous discipline records

For entrance into 6<sup>th</sup> grade or the equivalent age, all students must have at least one additional dose of MMR for a total of two administered on or after the child's first birthday and at least 30 days apart. This dose may be given at the local county health department or by the child's private physician. Children without this additional vaccination will not be allowed to enter sixth grade.

### **AFTERNOON DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Students that are car riders will be picked up in the front of the school. Only buses and faculty/staff are allowed to park in the rear of the school during regular school hours.

### **ATTENDANCE (ABSENCES AND EXCUSES)**

The school district emphasizes the value of regular attendance in enabling students to benefit from the school program. Georgia law places the responsibility on each student to attend school on a daily basis and the responsibility on each parent or guardian to send their child to school on a daily basis.

Regular and punctual attendance has a direct and positive impact on student achievement. Not only is each day's lesson important to the individual student, but his/her presence as a class participant contributes to the education of others.

Frequent absences and tardies for any reason are almost certain to adversely affect a student's schoolwork. Each student is expected to be in school every day except when illness, injury, or some providential condition beyond his/her control prevents attendance. Excessive absenteeism may result in the student being retained.

#### **Documented Absences**

- ❖ Students may be temporarily excused from school by the principal in the following circumstances:
- ❖ Serious illness or hospitalization, including maternity confinement and delivery;

- ❖ Serious illness or death in the immediate family, which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;
- ❖ Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith;
- ❖ Court orders or mandates by order of governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for the armed forces;
- ❖ Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety; and
- ❖ Other circumstances where the parent or guardian makes prior arrangements with the building principal for their child to be absent from school, i.e., college visits, serving as a legislative page, and other special family occasions.
- ❖ Students who desire to document an absence shall present a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian within five (5) days of returning to school. Failure to present an excuse within five (5) days of returning to school shall result in an unexcused absence. Excuses may not be sent by FAX or email. The principal or designee will determine whether or not an absence is excused, and may, at his/her discretion, require supporting documentation from doctor, dentist, clinic, court, funeral home, etc. in order to make this determination.
- ❖ Students shall be given a reasonable opportunity to make up work or tests when they have documented their absence from school within five (5) days of their return to school. Failure to make up work after a reasonable time will result in a grade of F. Students placed in in-school suspension or participating in school related or sponsored activities are considered to be in attendance at school. Students, otherwise, suspended from school will be considered to be absent.

### **Consequences of Excessive or Unexcused Absences**

Parents will be contacted after the FIRST (1<sup>st</sup>) absence by their homeroom teacher. Students who demonstrate a pattern of absences and tardies shall be referred to the Attendance Officer for counseling and appropriate intervention.

### **ATTENDANCE LAW**

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, unless with written permission of the teacher, principal, or their duly authorized school official. No student shall encourage, urge or counsel other students to violate this policy.

As permitted under state law and State Board of Education policies, students may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personally ill and when attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others;
2. A serious illness or death in their immediate family necessitates absence from school;
3. Mandated by order of governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, or by a court order;
4. Celebrating religious holidays;

5. Conditions render attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety;
6. Registering to vote or voting, for a period not to exceed one day;
7. 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.

Students shall be counted present under the following circumstances:

8. In attendance at least one half of the instructional day;
9. Serving as pages in the Georgia General Assembly;
10. Students in foster care shall be counted present when attending court proceedings relating to their foster care; and, If a Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) Program is established by the Superintendent and the local election superintendent, eligible students shall be counted present for up to two days per school year while volunteering as poll officers during elections.

Excuses for absences shall be furnished in writing, shall be signed by the student's parent or guardian and shall specifically state the reasons for the absence. Excuses shall be dated and brought to the homeroom teacher within five days after the student's absence. All excuses will be evaluated by the principal or a designee to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. Students shall be permitted to make up work when absences are excused. Work missed due to unexcused absences may be made up at the discretion of the principal or his or her designee. After five (5) days no excuse is valid. Work missed due to out of school suspensions may not be made up. All make-up work must be completed within five (5) days of the student's return to school.

11. The Superintendent has the authority to affect the procedures and rules to carry out this policy.
12. The Attendance Committee is a standing committee composed of FIVE (5) members appointed by the principals and chaired by an administrator. The chair shall vote only in case of a tie.

The Attendance Committee shall use the following guidelines in determining whether to grant a waiver:

- a. If all absences are excused, the student shall be allowed to make up missed work and shall not be denied credit for the semester based on excessive absence.
- b. If any absences are unexcused, the Attendance Committee shall determine whether there exist unusual conditions or extenuating circumstances relating to the student's personal life or family situation which would require that the provisions of this policy be waived. If so, the student shall be allowed to make up missed work and shall not be denied credit for the semester based on excessive absences. If the student has any unexcused absences and there are no unusual conditions or extenuating circumstances relating to the student's personal life or family situation, the student shall not be allowed to receive credit for the semester, even if the student has passing grades.

*The Superintendent and/or his or her designee has the authority to enact rules to carry out this policy.*

## **BELONGINGS**

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their belongings. Textbooks and other items found should be turned in to the office. The school does not accept responsibility for lost or stolen articles. Parents are encouraged to label all items with the student's name for personal identification.

## **BOOK BAGS**

For the safety of our students and staff, ALL students will be permitted to carry **ONLY clear or mesh** book bags into and out of the school building before and after school. Students should place book bags in their locker or classroom for safe keeping. Rolling book bags are not allowed. Thanks for helping to keep our school SAFE!

## **BULLYING DEFINITION (SD 250)**

The Sumter 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.

Bullying is defined as follows: An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
4. 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;
5. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
6. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
7. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal that a student in grades 4 -12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative program or school.

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

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

## BUSES

**School Bus Procedures** - Buses drop students off at the back of the school and pick them up at the back of the school. Students who ride the bus home in the afternoon will report to the bus ramp where buses are parked for loading. Cars are not allowed in the rear of the school where buses are parked for loading in the afternoon.

Students who are transported to and from school by Sumter County School buses are under school jurisdiction from the time they board the bus in the morning until they leave the bus in the afternoon. School bus drivers are responsible for the behavior of the students being transported and have the authority to correct and/or reprimand students as necessary. Bus students are expected to obey the rules and regulations printed in the Student Transportation Riding Instructions and Discipline Policy. Students who misbehave on the bus will be referred to the administrative staff and will receive the appropriate punishment for their behavior. Once bus students have arrived on campus, they are not allowed to leave campus for any reason other than a parent checking them out. Should a child need to ride a different bus home, a parent **must** send a signed note with an appropriate phone number where a parent can be reached. Buses passes are issued at the end of the day. **Bus changes will not be made by phone.**

## CAR RIDERS PROCEDURES

Students who arrive early will not be allowed to enter the building before 7:35 a.m. Students waiting outside are expected to conduct themselves properly as they wait to enter the building or to be picked up after school. All car riders should be picked up no later than 3:30 p.m. Violators may be reported to other entities.

## CELL PHONES

Electronic communication devices may not be visible or used during the school day. Devices will be confiscated, and the student code of conduct will be followed for violations. ***The School is not responsible for any item that is confiscated, lost or stolen. (See Cell Phones in Code of Conduct, p. 66)***

## CHECK OUT PROCEDURES

The time to end the official school day will be posted at each school and will be clearly communicated to both students and parents. Students are expected to remain in class each day the dismissal bell rings. This does not, of course, prevent a parent from occasionally picking up his/her child from school for a valid reason. The emphasis here is on the words "occasionally" and "valid." It is very disruptive to an entire class when a student is called to the office. If your child must leave school before the regular dismissal time, he/she will be paged from the office and sent to you. Teachers are not permitted to release any student until the office contacts them. The school strongly recommends that only parents or legal guardians pick up students from school.

**Students will be permitted to be checked out early only by persons whose names are on the authorized checkout list for that student and with proper photo identification.**

## CHILD ABUSE LAW

State Law requires all caregivers of children to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Family and Children Services.

## **CLOSING SCHOOLS**

School may be closed due to inclement weather or emergency events. Local radio and television stations will carry news and information. Every effort will be made to ensure that parents are notified of school closings in a timely manner. The Infinite Campus Messenger Communication System will also be used to notify parents of school closings.

## **CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS STATEMENT**

Extracurricular clubs and activities are an important part of the life of the middle-school child. Membership in different clubs and organizations gives students the opportunity to develop skills in social interaction, to be creative, and to assume positions of responsibility. The school provides a variety of activities in which students may involve themselves. All students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. **Participation in a club or organization is a privilege and not a right.**

## **CLUB INITIATIONS**

No school club/organization or student shall participate in hazing or any type of initiation activity. Involvement in such activity shall be subject to disciplinary action by the administration (as prescribed by the state law).

## **CONTAGIOUS DISEASES**

A student who has a contagious disease or condition, i.e. strep throat, Covid-19, influenza (flu), pink eye, chicken pox, ringworm, impetigo or pediculosis (head lice), will be sent home from school and must remain home until the condition or disease is corrected.

## **DELIVERIES (FLOWERS, GIFTS, ETC.)**

No flowers, balloons, or other gifts will be delivered to students during the school day.

## **DISASTER/LOCK DOWN DRILLS**

Students are responsible for following the instruction of their teachers during disaster drills.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES/TOYS**

All electronic devices and toys should be left at home. These devices will not be allowed in classes or at school events without permission. Any item that disrupts the instructional day should not be brought to school. Those items that interfere with the classroom will be confiscated by the teacher and turned in to the office. **THE SCHOOL WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE IF ANY ELECTRONIC DEVICES THAT ARE LOST OR STOLEN.**

## **ENROLLMENT RESTRICTION**

A parent, guardian, or other person has the authority to enroll a student in a publicly funded Georgia school. A student who meets the age eligibility requirements is eligible to enroll in the school system if the student's parent or legal guardian (or the student in the case of an emancipated minor) is a resident of the school district. Proof of residence is required in accordance with regulations developed by the

superintendent.

The principal shall require from any adult who is not the parent of the student, proof of legal custody or a certificate setting forth the circumstances whereby the adult is exercising parental control. However, a student may not be enrolled by an adult acting in the place of the parent if the purpose of the student residing with such an adult is to avoid tuition as a non-resident, to avoid a suspension or expulsion imposed by another school district, or to avoid attending school in his or her attendance area. The principal, in conjunction with the central office employee designated by the Superintendent, shall make reasonable inquiry to determine the truth of the facts set forth in the certificate. Upon furnishing the required proof or certificate and appropriate verification of the facts set forth herein, the adult enrolling the student shall be deemed to stand in the place of the parent of the student for all school purposes.

If the person enrolling the student is acting under the authority of a power of attorney executed by a parent or guardian serving in the military, the school shall allow the student to enroll. The school system may require proof of a duly executed power of attorney and/or certificate of acceptance as guardian, escort, or attorney. The school system shall not require such persons to obtain legal guardianship.

A grandparent with a notarized power of attorney properly executed by a parent in accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 19-9-122 through 123 may enroll a child if a hardship prevents the parent from caring for the child. The school system shall enroll a student, otherwise eligible to attend its schools, and allow such grandparents to act on behalf of their grandchildren without requiring them to go through court proceedings to obtain legal guardianship.

### **Age Eligibility**

The parent or guardian, or other person must provide:

A copy of the enrolling student's social security number or sign a form stating the individual does not wish to provide the social security number, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150.

A certificate in accordance with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-771, concerning the immunization of students, which includes an exception for religious grounds.

A certificate in accordance with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-770, concerning nutritional screening and eye, ear, and dental examinations of students.

Proof of residence shall be required, unless the student is homeless and the McKinney- Vento Act applies. A homeless child shall be enrolled immediately even in the absence of any appropriate documentation. Upon determining that a student is homeless, the child must be allowed to either remain in the district in which he or she was enrolled prior to becoming homeless or enroll in the district where he or she is now located. Proof of residence is not required. The employee or other designated individual responsible for care of homeless students shall assist the homeless student in acquiring the necessary records for enrollment.

Documents which may be used as proof of a student's primary abode include a current lease or rental agreement, and a current utility bill (gas, electric, water, telephone, or cable). Records must include the name and street address of the parent/guardian.

It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education to deny enrollment in any school in this school district to a student who has been suspended or expelled from another school district in this state or any other state for misconduct until the period of time for which the student was excluded in the previous school district has passed. The Board determines that the admission of students who have been suspended or expelled from other school districts for disruptive conduct would be disruptive as well to this school district.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Sumter County Schools offer a wide range of activities to help provide a well-rounded educational program. Included are clubs, band, sports including cheerleading, and academic teams. Membership and information regarding qualifications are presented to the student body. Additional information can be obtained from the office, coach or sponsor of the activity. All extracurricular activities are governed by state standards and regulations.

Any student participating in activities must be in good academic status the previous semester to be eligible. Sponsors are expected to check all candidates' records carefully. This rule is part of state requirements for all extracurricular activities. **Students who are assigned to In-School- Suspension (ISI) or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) will not be allowed to attend or participate in any extracurricular activities on any school campus until the suspension time is served.**

### **FEES AND FINES**

Students who owe fees and fines must pay those in full in order to receive their final report card. Students who owe fees for textbooks or materials should pay their teacher during the school year. During the summer, textbook fees and fines should be paid in the front office. Students who owe media center fines should pay those fines in the media center.

### **HALL PASSES**

All students outside a class period must have in their possession a valid hall pass or agenda planner. Students can expect disciplinary action if found without a hall pass or agenda planner. All students will respect any school personnel checking hall passes or agenda planners. Students will be expected to give name, grade, and answer any other questions asked. Teachers will not allow a student to enter or disrupt a class without permission from the teacher who is responsible for the student at the time.

### **HEALTH RECORDS**

Student health records and immunizations documents are required for school attendance. Parents should complete the Consent for Medical Treatment Health Form sent home at the beginning of the year and return to the homeroom teacher. This form must be on file and kept updated in order for the school nurse or representative to provide treatment to a student for any health reasons.

## **HOMELESS**

Students defined as homeless are allowed to enroll in school. A homeless child or youth is defined as "Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence," including, but not limited to:

Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason ("doubled up").

Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations.

Living in emergency or transitional shelters, etc.

Students meeting the above description are allowed to stay in their school of origin for the duration of homelessness or until the end of the school year after they find permanent housing, as long as that is in the child's best interests. The school counselor should be notified of students experiencing homeless situations during the school year.

## **IDENTIFICATION BADGES (IDs)**

In an effort to increase school security and safety, all students are required to wear a student ID card and lanyard, both of which will be provided at the beginning of the school year. All students must wear the ID/lanyard daily during school hours. There is a \$3 fee to replace a student ID.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Children attending public schools in Georgia must have valid immunization documentation. Children shall not be admitted to or be permitted to attend the school or childcare facility unless a certificate of immunization is provided. Georgia law allows for two types of exemptions from the immunization requirements: medical and religious. Each child must have one of two items on file—either a valid Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231) or a signed, notarized statement, which is called an affidavit of religious exemption.

## **ILLNESS/ACCIDENTS**

If a student becomes too ill to remain in class, parents will be contacted to pick up the child. It is very important that the school has an updated working phone number on the emergency contact form. If a child is ill, parents should not send him/her to school. A part-time school nurse will be available to assist in cases of emergency. In case of an emergency, each student is required to have on file at the school office the following information:

1. Parent(s) or guardian(s) names(s)
2. Complete and up-to-date address
3. Home phone number and parent(s) work phone (connected and working)
4. Emergency phone number of a friend or relative (connected and working)
5. Physician's name and phone
6. Medical Alert information
7. Authorized person(s) allowed to pick up child

## **MEDICATION/NURSE**

Medical care of the individual student is the responsibility of the parent or guardian. No school employee shall be responsible in any way for administering any drugs or other medication to a student attending Sumter County Schools, except as consented by

parents and following specific administrative procedures.

Medication to be administered during school must be brought to the school office. The parent/guardian must send a note to the office in order for the student to take any medication while at school. Medicine must be in the original container. The note must include the name of the medication and the time it is to be given.

### **PLEDGE**

Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance during morning announcements is a part of the daily school routine. Students and parents have the right to opt out of the pledge for religious reasons. Those students are required to remain seated and silent during the Pledge as an exercise of their rights to freedom of speech and religion.

### **RETURNED CHECKS**

Personal checks are not accepted. Only cash or certified funds are accepted as means of financial transactions.

### **SALE OF ITEMS AT SCHOOL**

Students or student organizations and groups may not sell items on school property without an approved fundraising request on file. Students are not to buy or sell toys, food, supplies, or products at school. Basic school supplies may be purchased during the school day.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

Regular school operating hours for the school day will be 7:35 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. No students will be allowed to enter the building before 7:35 AM (e.g. car riders, walkers, bus, etc.).

### **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

Students may purchase school insurance for their protection each year. Information regarding school insurance is sent home by the student during the first week of school. All students participating in athletics are required to have insurance. The school is not financially responsible for any injuries, which occur at school that are not covered by school insurance. The school offers accidental coverage only through National Security Insurance Company. Both "School Day" and "24-Hour" coverage are available.

### **STUDENT SURVEYS**

Students will occasionally be asked to participate in local and state surveys. If you do not wish for your child to participate, please send a written statement to the school (Main office).



### SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS DRESS CODE

Students, always, should observe the rules governing body cleanliness, neatness of appearance, and good grooming. T-shirts with improper suggestions or advertising of any alcoholic drink, or illegal substance **will not** be allowed at school. When, in the opinion of administration or teacher, a pupil is inappropriately dressed for school, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be called for proper school attire. Though pupils have the right to choose individual dress, the school has the responsibility to see that the attire is not immodest or offensive to anyone.

#### **All students must adhere to the following rules:**

1. Shoes must always be worn. **NO** flip-flops, **NO** house/bedroom shoes; **NO** stiletto high heels. Big flat high heels are OK. Some classes, for health and safety reasons, may require shoes, which cover the entire foot.
2. Shirts with profanity, alcoholic beverages, marijuana, drug pictures, suggestive writing or pictures cannot be worn to school.
3. No bicycle shorts/pants are allowed.
4. Hair must not be in rollers; no rags/wave caps; no bandannas; no sweatbands or stocking caps.
5. No combs, rakes or picks are to be worn in the hair. Rat-tail combs are not allowed.
6. Students will not be allowed to carry brushes or combs around in their hands. If caught, the items will be taken and given to the administration.
7. All pants **MUST** be worn around the waist.
8. No hats, caps, sun visors, or headgear may be worn in the school buildings.
9. Knee length shorts may be worn by all students, no cut-offs or ragged jeans or shorts, no gym shorts, No sweat pants, no short shorts – Skirts must be within three inches of the kneecap.
10. Pants should have **No holes above the knee that expose bare skin**. Any holes must be knee or below.
11. No cut-off shirts or shirts which show midriffs.
12. Proper undergarments must always be worn.
13. No sunglasses are to be worn on eyes or head.
14. No buttons with vulgar or obscene saying. No buttons with advertised drugs or alcohol.
15. Pants must not be **rolled up, stuck in shoes or socks, or bound up with rubber bands, folded up, wrapped up, or tucked up on the outside**.
16. Students must adhere to all rules governing the dress code; students will not be allowed to attend classes dressed inappropriately. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified to pick up the child or to bring appropriate clothing to the school.
17. Earrings will not be oversized. No necklaces with medallions larger than one (1) inch in diameter may be worn. No oversized clothing. No towels or bandanas, do-rags or other objects hanging from pockets.
18. No apparel or accessories that are considered inappropriate or distracting by the principal.
19. Ankle monitors must be covered with pants.

**\*Administration will use its discretion on whether student attire is appropriate. Dress shall not be extreme to the point of creating a disturbance of the educational atmosphere.**

#### **Girls**

1. No miniskirts or mini culottes. No short dresses over tights. Skirts and/or dresses must be no more than three inches above the knee. NO bareback dresses or blouses exposing the entire back, stomach, cleavage, or undergarments. **Cleavage must be covered up and not visible.**
2. Dresses with slits: NO slits longer than four (4) inches above the knee.
3. No tank top dresses unless an acceptable shirt is always worn over the dress.
4. Sundresses must always be worn with a jacket.
5. No spaghetti strap blouses or dresses unless an acceptable shirt is always worn.
6. No tube tops.
7. No writing across the buttocks, pants, or shorts.
8. No stiletto high heels during the school day.
9. No fish net tights, tights or skintight pants/or blue jeans may be worn to school.

#### **Boys**

1. No muscle shirts or tank tops. No net or mesh shirts unless a shirt with sleeves is worn underneath.
2. All pants must be worn at the waist. Pants must be above the buttocks and tight enough in the waist that they do not fall. Pants must not be constantly pulled up.
3. No belts should hang from pants or shorts.
4. No white T-shirts or under shirts worn as an outer shirt.
5. No rags or bandanas hanging out of pockets.

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ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE  
Sumter County Board of Education

Approved: 8/12/2021

#### **DRESS CODE VIOLATION**

**\*Administration will use its discretion on whether or not student attire is appropriate. Dress shall not be extreme to the point of creating a disturbance of the educational atmosphere.**

#### **Disciplinary actions are as follows:**

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- |                          |                                                                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Offense: | Sequester in ISI until clothes are changed/the office will call parents. |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense: | Sequester in ISI the rest of the day (Parent Contact)                    |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense: | 3 Days in ISI                                                            |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Offense: | 1 Day OSS, Parent Conference before returning to school.                 |

#### **TARDIES**

Students arriving after 7:55 a.m. will be counted tardy and be escorted into the building by a parent/guardian. Parents/guardians must accompany their child and sign the tardy slip in the front office, which will be presented to the homeroom teacher. Parents are asked to park in a parking space to avoid blocking traffic in the driveway. Tardies are documented each nine weeks.

#### **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are the responsibility of the student. All students must pay for lost or damaged textbooks, based on the State textbook prices. Students will not be issued another text until the lost textbook fee is paid.

## TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

If a student needs to ride another bus home, parents must notify the school office in writing. A phone number where parents can be reached must be included for official verification; this information must be turned in **before** lunch. **Please do not call the school requesting that your child be placed on a different bus, dropped off at a different point, or changed to be a bus/car rider. Permission will not be granted if the parent cannot be reached.**

## WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE

Our school receives local, federal, and state tax dollars to fund the numerous educational programs provided. School employees must take precautions to be good stewards of tax dollars by not participating in fraud, waste, or abuse.

These terms are defined as follows:

**Fraud** – Intentional Deception that would result in tangible or intangible benefit to themselves or others.

**Waste** – Intentional, unintentional, or careless expenditure, consumption or mismanagement.

**Abuse** – Excessive or improper use of something; contrary to the legal rules of use. Anyone suspecting fraud, waste, or abuse concerning federal, state or local programs should report concerns to the Principal. Reports can also be made to the Superintendent or the Sumter County Board of Education.

## WITHDRAWALS

A student withdrawing for any reason must complete a withdrawal form provided by the school. All books, materials, dues, and other obligations must be cleared before records can be completed and released.

1. Parents are required to notify the school in advance if a student is withdrawing or transferring to another school. The withdrawal form must be signed by each teacher, the counselor, the media specialist, and the principal.
2. All books must be turned in at the time of withdrawal.
3. There will be no refunds on lockers.

## **SECTION V: Student Code of Conduct**

***Board Policy Descriptor Code: JCDA***

### **Student Behavior Code**

It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education that each school within this school district shall develop and implement age-appropriate student codes of conduct designed to improve the student learning environment and which will comply with state law and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.15. Each code of conduct shall include, at a minimum, the requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-4-8-.15, STUDENT DISCIPLINE.

Each school shall involve parents in developing and updating student codes of conduct. Each code shall require disciplinary action for each infraction of the code. All student codes of conduct shall be submitted to the board for approval.

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

Sumter County Schools Date Adopted: 9/12/2002 Last Revised: 4/11/2013

### **AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL**

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

All consequences for offenses listed below are minimum consequences. Depending on the severity of the situation, school officials may apply stricter measures. An administrator has the discretion to determine the offense and the appropriateness of the consequence assigned. Misbehavior governed by the code may occur during school hours, outside school hours, on school grounds or campus, off school grounds or campus, at school-sponsored activities whether on or off school grounds/campus, and/or on school-sponsored transportation.

Each time a student is given In-School **Intervention** or Out-School Suspension the parent(s)/guardian must meet with a member of the school administration before the student may return to his/her regular classes.

Students who repeatedly violate the various rules and regulations may be subject to disciplinary action more severe than the consequences specified for the individual offenses committed, up to and including suspension to a formal hearing and possible long-term suspension or expulsion.

School **administrators** are authorized to take disciplinary action for misconduct which occurs:

- On the school grounds during or immediately before or immediately after school hours;
- On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- Off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event;
- For incidents that cause a disruption of the functioning of the school;
- Within a school safety zone.

Authority to take disciplinary action also extends to any off-campus non-school related actions by students, at any time of the year, which has a direct and immediate impact on school discipline, the educational function of the school, or the welfare of students and staff. A student who has committed a criminal act while off campus is subject to disciplinary action and may be excluded from school. Such an act could, but is not limited to, a felony, a delinquent act which would be considered to be a felony if committed by an adult, an assault misconduct of a serious nature. A student whose presence on school property may endanger the welfare and/or safety of other students or staff, whose presence may cause substantial disruption at school, is also subject to in-school intervention, and assignment to an alternative education.

The Superintendent fully supports the authority of principals and teachers in the school system to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to provisions of state law. It is the preferred policy of the board that disruptive students are placed in alternative education settings in lieu of being suspended or expelled.

### **AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER**

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

A teacher shall remove a student from class and send to a designated area under the direction of the principal for recommended placement in an alternative education program or for expulsion as appropriate, a student who engages in conduct described in Levels III and IV.

### **LEVEL III and IV DESCRIPTORS**

**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 well-being 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 an 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.

**Level IV** discipline offenses represent the most 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 well-being 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 an 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.

The teacher shall file a report of such removal with the principal by the end of the school day on which such removal occurs or at the beginning of the next school day: that describes the student's behavior.

By no later than the close of school on the day following removal, the principal shall discuss the matter with the teacher and student and give the student oral or written notice of the reason(s) for which the student was removed from class. If the student denies engaging in such conduct, the principal shall explain the evidence against the student and offer the student an opportunity to present the student's version of what happened.

If the principal seeks to return the student to the teacher's class, and the teacher gives his/her consent, the student shall be returned to class, and the principal may take such additional action to discipline the student as may be warranted.

If the teacher refuses to accept the student back in his/her class, the principal shall determine an appropriate temporary placement for the student and convene a meeting of a school placement review committee.

At the conclusion of the conference, the principal shall send to the student's parent a copy of the report filed by the teacher and written notification that:

- the student was removed from class,
- the placement of the student, whether back in class or in a temporary placement pending review by the school placement review committee,
- any additional disciplinary action imposed by the principal, and information regarding how the student's parents may contact the principal.

An appropriate temporary placement for the student shall be a placement that, in the judgment of the principal:

- provides the least interruption to the student's education, and
- reflects other relevant factors, including, but not limited to, the severity of the behavior that was the basis for the removal
- the student's behavioral history
- the student's need for support services, and
- the available education settings.

The student shall not be returned to the class of the teacher who removed him/her, as an appropriate temporary placement, unless the teacher gives his/her consent. The temporary placement shall be in effect from the time of student removal until the decision of the school placement review committee is issued or, if applicable, a placement determination is made.

The school placement review committee shall convene by the end of the second day following the student removal by the teacher and shall issue a decision in writing by the end of the third school day following such removal by the teacher. The sole function and authority of the placement review committee shall be to determine whether or not the student shall be returned to the teacher's classroom.

If a placement review committee decides to return a student to class, the principal shall implement the decision, and may, after considering the use of any appropriate student support services, take any of the following actions:

Place the student in ISI,

Impose out-of-school suspension for not more than ten school days, including any time during which the student was subject to out-of-school suspension after his/her removal from class, or ; make another disciplinary decision/recommendation consistent with local board policy his/her removal from class, or; make another disciplinary decision/recommendation consistent with local board policy.

If a placement review committee decides not to return a student to class, the principal shall implement the decision and after considering the use of any appropriate student support services may:

Place the student in another classroom, **ISI** or an alternative education program,

Impose out-of-school suspension for not more than (10) school days, including any time during which the student was subject to out-of school suspension as a temporary placement

May make another placement or disciplinary decision or recommendation consistent with local board policy; or

May implement or recommend any appropriate combination of the above and return the student to the class from which he/she was removed upon the completion of a disciplinary or placement action.

Within one day of taking action on the decision of the placement review committee, the principal shall:

Send written notification of the action to the teacher and the parents of the student

Make a reasonable attempt to confirm that the written notification has been received by the student's parents.

Parents of a student removed from class who has been determined to be a chronic disciplinary problem student may be required to participate in conferences requested by the principal. Refusal by a parent or guardian to participate in such a conference will subject the parent to an application to the Juvenile Court of Sumter County for an order to attend such conferences and/or participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior or both.

### **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's

## Character Education Program.

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

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Isolation or Time Out
- Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference with Restorative Practices/Sessions
- Corporal Punishment
- Detention - After school (ASD) or Lunch
- In School Intervention (ISI)
- Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- Short-term Suspension
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus

**Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials:** Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The School will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Board of Education policies. If a student who has been placed on a behavior contract violates the code of conduct with any infraction, the student may be referred to a tribunal for possible placement at alternative school or expulsion.

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved also by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy.

Before a student is suspended for ten days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parents will be notified, if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

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

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

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# **OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES**

## **DISCIPLINE RULES AND CONSEQUENCES**

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

Sumter County Intermediate School follows a progressive discipline plan. Students are given ample opportunities to correct the disruptive behavior. After the teacher has dealt with the behavior, if a student continues the behavior, the student will be written up on a “discipline referral form.” The school administration will then implement the “CODE of Conduct” consequences listed on the following pages.

#### **01. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

**OFFENSE:** Academic dishonesty or academic misconduct is any type of cheating that occurs in relation to a formal academic exercise. It can include:

- Plagiarism: The adoption or reproduction of original creations of another author (person, collective, organization, community or other type of author, including anonymous authors) without due acknowledgment.
- Fabrication: The falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise.
- Deception: Providing false information to an instructor concerning a formal academic exercise—*e.g.*, giving a false excuse for missing a deadline or falsely claiming to have submitted work.
- Cheating: Any attempt to give or obtain assistance in a formal academic exercise (like an examination) without due acknowledgment.
- Bribery: or paid services. Giving certain test answers for money.
- Sabotage: Acting to prevent others from completing their work. This includes cutting pages out of library books or willfully disrupting the experiments of others.
- Professorial misconduct: Professorial acts that are academically fraudulent equate to academic fraud.

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Parent conference; 1 day detention
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 1-3 periods/days ISI, Meet with Counselor
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 1-3 days **ISS** and **Restorative** Parent Conference before returning to class.  
Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Parent conference, assigned 1-3 days OSS.

**\*\* In ALL cases the student’s grade will be penalized at the discretion of the teacher based on the grading policy.**

#### **02. ACTS OF BIGOTRY**

**OFFENSE:** While on school grounds or during school activities engaging in any verbal or physical acts of bigotry whether observed, overheard, or known to be fact, by a member of the school faculty

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 1 Day Detention & Parent Conference
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3 Days **ISS**, Meet with Counselor
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS, **Restorative** Parent conference required before returning, & Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter/Behavior Contract
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS and referral to tribunal

### **03. AGGRESSIVE MISBEHAVIORS/HORSEPLAY**

**OFFENSE:** Severe behavior putting one's own or others' safety at risk, continued disruption of teaching; refusal to leave the room, continued or severe aggression, threat of severe aggression. This includes aggressive physical play, such as wrestling, slap boxing, play fighting, etc.

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 2 Days ISI; Parent Conference
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days ISS, meet with school counselor
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 1-3 Day OSS, Restorative Parent Conference required before returning to class
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS with Referral to Tribunal

### **04. ALCOHOL**

**OFFENSE:** A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any drug, alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, or intoxicant of any kind. (*Influence is defined as noticeably impaired behavior and/or obvious physical symptoms.*)

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS from school pending a tribunal. Parent must provide proof of professional counseling prior to student return to school

A STUDENT WHO VIOLATES THIS RULE WILL FACE SUSPENSION FROM ALL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ANY ELECTED/APPOINTED STUDENT BODY OFFICE FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR. (*In every instance, law enforcement will be notified.*)

### **05. ARSON**

**OFFENSE:** Unlawful and intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary device.

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS, Restitution, Referral to Law Enforcement and Referral to Tribunal

### **06. ASSAULT AND/OR BATTERY ON SCHOOL EMPLOYEE**

**OFFENSE:** Engaging in an assault on and/or battery of any school employee on or off school property, if school-related. This includes touching, striking, pushing, or threatening the person, bodily or psychologically, and/or the property of any school system employee. (GA Code 20-2753) Code Section (20-2-751.6) Relating to suspension policy for students committing acts of physical violence resulting in injury to teachers would be amended in: Subsection (a), (b), (c) to permit local boards to use disciplinary hearing officers or panels, in addition to tribunals, to hear cases involving students committing acts of physical violence resulting in injury to teachers.

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

Minimum 10 day OSS. Students will be referred to a tribunal hearing for long term suspension and a formal complaint will be filed with the proper authorities.

## **07. BEING IN AN UNAUTHORIZED AREA**

**OFFENSE:** Being in areas designated as unauthorized

*\*\*\*Students are not to be in unauthorized areas of the school without written permission.*

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1st Offense: Parent contact and Detention

2nd Offense: 2 Days ISI & parent conference

3rd Offense: 1-3 Days ISS

4th Offense: 1-3 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter

5th Offense: 10 Days OSS with Referral to Tribunal

## **08. BREAKING AND ENTERING-BURGLARY**

**OFFENSE:** Unlawful entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a crime.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1st Offense: 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal, and Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Authorities

## **09. BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING (SOCIAL MEDIA)**

**OFFENSE:** Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm or emotional distress caused by repeated teasing, taunting, joking, name calling, etc. This includes cyberbullying, text message/chat threats, pictures/videos, and other electronic threats through social media platforms. Instances may be referred to law enforcement or juvenile authorities.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISI, meet with school counselor, Restorative Parent Conference prior to release from ISI

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3 Days OSS, Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter/Behavior Contract

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal

## **10a. CAMPUS DISTURBANCE/DISORDERLY CONDUCT**

**OFFENSE:** Causing substantial disruption of learning opportunities, the normal operating procedure of the school, and/or threatening the safety of other students

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1st Offense: 1-3 Days ISI, meet with school counselor, Parent Conference prior to release from ISI

2nd Offense: 3-5 Days ISS

3rd Offense: 1-3 Day OSS

4th Offense: 3-5 Days OSS, & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter

5th Offense: 10 Days OSS with Referral to Tribunal

\*Substantial disruption may lead to law enforcement referral\*

Georgia Code Section 20-2-1181 states that “it shall be unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop as established by

local school boards of education. Any person violating this Code Section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature."

## **10b. CLASSROOM DISTURBANCE**

**OFFENSE:** Disrupting the learning environment.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days/Blocks ISI, meet with school counselor
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days ISS, RESTORATIVE parent conference prior to release from ISS
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days OSS, parent conference prior to return to school, Behavior Contract
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS, Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter/Behavior Contract
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: Administrator's Discretion and/or referral to tribunal hearing

## **11. CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

**OFFENSE:** To protect instructional time and minimize distractions of the educational setting, electronic devices will not be allowed at school. Only school-issued or approved devices necessary for student learning will be allowed to be used during the school day from arrival to departure time. *The following personal electronic devices (PEDs) are not allowed to be used: Cell phones, AirPod/like devices, IPAD/like devices, bluetooth headphones/earphones, smartwatches, smart glasses, toys, games, or other unapproved electronic communication devices. Any material stored or saved on confiscated electronic devices/cell phones may be searched by school officials. ALL CONFISCATED DEVICES that are not used for investigative purposes or picked up by a parent/guardian, WILL BE DISCARDED AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.*

*Permitted Use: Devices may still be used under specific circumstances, like for students with IEPs or medical needs, or for emergency communication protocols.*

*Sumter County Intermediate School will assume NO LIABILITY for lost or stolen phones and/or electronic devices. No searches will be conducted for any electronics reported stolen or lost. CONFISCATED ITEMS MAY ONLY BE PICKED UP BY A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN. ALL UNCLAIMED CONFISCATED DEVICES WILL BE DISCARDED AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR ON JUNE 30. A parent or guardian must come to the school between 3:15 PM and 3:45 PM.*

### **Cell Phone**

1) Cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used during the school day. No recording of any activities is allowed. If a cell phone is seen or heard, it will be confiscated, and the following consequences will be assessed:

The guidelines for cell phone violations are as follows:

- 1st Offense: Student may pick up phone from the office at the end of the day
- 2nd Offense: 1 Day ISI & Parent Contact
- 3rd Offense: 2 Days ISI, Parent Conference and meet with the counselor

4th Offense: 3 Days ISI & Parent Conference

A parent or guardian may come to the school between 3:15 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to pick up cell phones .

2) If a student refuses to give a cell phone to a teacher, the teacher may write the student up on a discipline referral. Administrators may assign up to five (5) days in In-School Suspension (ISI) for non-compliance.

~~Administrator will then take up the cell phone and it will be held for one (1) month.~~

## **12. COMPUTER/LAPTOP/IPAD TRESPASS**

***OFFENSE:*** Unauthorized use of a computer, laptop, Ipad, computer network, or data

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

Penalty at the discretion of the administrator which may include, but is not limited to loss of computer privilege, ISI, suspension, suspension for a tribunal hearing, and/or referral to law enforcement officials, or juvenile authorities. Immediate restitution for any damages is required. (See **Internet Usage Policy**)

## **13. DISOBEDIENCE, DISRESPECT, MISCONDUCT, AND/OR INSUBORDINATION**

**(Following Directions, Refusal to obey faculty, Inappropriate Behavior, Interruption Instruction)**

***OFFENSE:*** Acting in a rude, disobedient, disrespectful and/or insubordinate manner and/or refusing to identify oneself correctly upon request. Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days/Blocks ISI
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days/Blocks **ISS**, meet with school counselor
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days OSS, **RESTORATIVE** parent conference prior to return to school, Behavior Contract
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS, Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: Administrator's Discretion and/or referral to tribunal hearing

*\*Blatant disrespect may result in immediate suspension*

## **14. DRUGS: Drug related, Drugs, Pseudo Drugs**

***OFFENSE:*** Selling of or attempting to sell, distribution of, possession of, use of drugs or under the influence of drugs on school property or at a school function \*(illegal drugs or substances represented to be illegal drugs, inhalants, and/or drug paraphernalia such as rolling papers, roach clips, pipes, etc.) Mere possession of inhalants such as glue, white-out, and/or rubber cement does not constitute a violation of this policy. It is a violation of this offense for a student to possess any form of CBD product with or without THC at school, on the school bus, or at a school sponsored activity.

**Georgia law**, 16-12-191, provides that persons may be in possession of *medical* marijuana under limited circumstances defined in the law. Because of **federal law** parents should make other arrangements for

administering medical marijuana **at school** and students should not possess the medical marijuana at school. Parents must administer medical marijuana off campus to the student.

**Federal law** has NOT changed and possession of any form of marijuana is illegal.  
(*Influence is defined as noticeably impaired behavior and/or obvious physical symptoms.*)

**CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Minimum ten-day suspension for illegal drugs possession and/or distribution. The student will be referred to a tribunal for a formal hearing.  
IF A STUDENT IS CHARGED WITH A FELONY OR DESIGNATED FELONY POSSESSION:  
THE STUDENT IS SUSPENDED FOR 10 SCHOOL DAYS AND IS REFERRED TO A DUE PROCESS HEARING WHICH MAY IMPOSE LONG TERM SUSPENSION, EXPULSION, AND/OR ASSIGNMENT TO AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL.

*\*(In every instance, law enforcement officials and parents will be notified.)*

**15. FIGHTING/BATTERY**

**OFFENSE:** It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to engage in fighting. Fighting is a serious offense. Students may be charged with affray, disruption of public school, battery, and/or assault.  
(Based on investigation and administrative discretion. **Regardless of who throws the first blow.**)

**CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days OSS and/or ISI, Parent Conference required before student returns.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS, & Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter/Behavior Contract  
3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS with Tribunal Referral

*NOTE: If a school system employee is hit/injured, whether intentionally or not, during the process of breaking up a fight, the student **may** receive up to a ten-day suspension. In addition the student may be referred to a formal hearing.*

*NOTE: A legal complaint may be filed with the proper law enforcement officials at the discretion of the administration.*

**16. FOOD ITEMS \* (Gum, candy, soft drinks, junk food) (Unless school-approved)**

**OFFENSE:** Unauthorized possessing/chewing/eating/selling/buying of identified food items

**CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: After school detention, parent contact  
2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 1 day/Blocks ISI  
3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 3 days ISI

\* Note: In all instances, items and/or money will be confiscated and disposed of.

## **17. FORGERY/FALSE SIGNATURES/FORGED PASSES (False info, False signature)**

**OFFENSE:** Forging checks, school or parent documents, hall passes, absence or check out excuses, etc.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1st Offense: 3 Days ISI, parent conference

2nd Offense: 1-3 Days ISS, meet with counselor

3rd Offense: 1-3 Days OSS and **RESTORATIVE** parent conference prior to returning to school.

4th Offense: 3-5 Days OSS, & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter

5th Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS and/or referral to tribunal hearing

**Possible referral to law enforcement.**

## **18. GAMBLING**

**OFFENSE:** Participating in illegal gambling, games of chance or possession of illegal gambling devices such as dice. Gambling on school property or while attending an activity under school supervision is not allowed.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1st Offense: 1-3 Days ISI, meet with school counselor

2nd Offense: 1-3 Days **ISS, parent conference prior to release from ISI**

3rd Offense: 5 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter

4th Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS and a referral to disciplinary tribunal

**(Note: All gambling devices and/or money will be confiscated and given to law enforcement or returned to parents.) \*Law enforcement may be notified.**

## **19. HOMICIDE**

**OFFENSE:** Murder and non-negligent manslaughter, killing of one human being by another, killing a person through negligence.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS, Tribunal referral, Notification of Law Enforcement.

## **20. INAPPROPRIATE DISPLAY OF AFFECTION**

**OFFENSE:** Displaying inappropriate expressions of affection such as kissing, holding hands, embracing, and petting, etc., while at school or at any school sponsored activity.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 1 Day ISI, meet with school counselor, parent conference.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISS, **RESTORATIVE** parent conference prior to release from ISS with school counselor.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 1 Day OSS

4th Offense: 3-5 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter

5th Offense: Administrator discretion and/or referral to tribunal hearing

## **21. INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR**

**OFFENSE:** Making sexual advances, requesting sexual favors or being involved in sexual conduct of any nature without force at school or any of its functions.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1st Offense: 1-3 Days OSS, meet with school counselor, RESTORATIVE parent conference prior to returning from OSS

2nd Offense: 5 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter

3rd Offense: 10 Days OSS & Referral to Tribunal

\*(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement and/or tribunal based on the severity of the student's actions.)

## **22. INDECENT EXPOSURE**

**OFFENSE:** Violating the school's dress code and/or removing one's own or another's clothing or acts which offend against commonly recognized standards of good taste.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

Penalty at the discretion of the administrator which may include In-School Suspension, Suspension, or Suspension for a formal hearing.

*Indecent exposure is defined as removing clothing items, pulling down pants, wearing pants significantly below the waistline, or unzipping pants in public. Unzipping pants and/or pulling them down while wearing shorts underneath will be treated as indecent exposure.*

## **23. KIDNAPPING**

**OFFENSE:** Unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will, or of a minor without the consent of his/her custodial parents or legal guardian.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal, Notification of Law Enforcement

## **24. LEAVING CAMPUS WITHOUT PERMISSION OR SKIPPING**

**OFFENSE:** A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school function during school hours except for illness or other providential cause, nor shall any student encourage, urge or counsel other students to violate this rule. Truancy, skipping class or required in-school activity out of class without valid permission, being in areas designated as unauthorized (students are not to be in unauthorized areas of the school without written permission.) and/or leaving campus without permission constitute skipping.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 2 Days ISI/blocks, parent conference prior to release from ISI.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 5 Days ISS and student placed on a Behavior Contract

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS, & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter

4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal

## **25. MISBEHAVIOR IN IN-SCHOOL INTERVENTION/SUSPENSION (ISI)**

**OFFENSE:** Acting in a rude, disobedient, disrespectful, and/or insubordinate manner, causing a disruption, use of profanity, and/or failure to follow rules while in ISI.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1st Offense: 1 day OSS, parent conference
- 2nd Offense: 3 days OSS & meet with counselor prior to returning to class
- 3rd Offense: 5 days OSS and Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter
- 4th Offense: Minimum 10 days OSS and referral to tribunal

## **26. MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT**

**OFFENSE:** Theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle (car, truck, motorcycle, RV, dune buggy, ATV, or anything that is self-propelled.)

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal, and Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Authorities

## **27. NON-SANCTIONED GROUP ACTIVITIES (GANG RELATED ACTIVITIES)**

**OFFENSE:** Participating in an activity related to non-sanctioned groups while on school premises or at a school function. Gangs are herein described as clubs, groups, or organizations of limited membership, which are known to the Sumter County School System through its personal intelligence or through information furnished through local law enforcement officials, to advocate, practice, engage or participate in unlawful acts such as intimidation, violence, or destruction to property. Gangs shall not be permitted on school premises or in school facilities, or to conduct any activities, meetings, or gatherings on or about school facilities, premises, or property at any time. The presence of such gangs is a disruption to the education process and a threat to the safety and well-being of the students and faculties of the Sumter County School System. Membership in or affiliation with gangs as defined above shall not be permitted. Wearing of any insignia, and/or uniforms, or other means of any gang identification, or using or making any signs, signals, or other means of gang communication or identification by any students or non-student visiting on the premises of any school facility shall not be permitted.

There is zero tolerance in the Sumter County School System for non-sanctioned group activities which are detrimental to a healthy and safe school environment.

1. No colors, bandanas, articles of clothing, or paraphernalia which promote or identify with a non-sanctioned group is acceptable. No extremes in dress and/or grooming will be permitted.
2. No recruiting, intimidating, initiating, or hazing will be permitted on school property and/or at school related functions.
3. No signs, symbols, gestures, songs, drawings, or writings which show an allegiance or affiliation with non-sanctioned groups will be permitted. Tattoos, body carvings showing allegiance or affiliation with non-sanctioned groups must be covered at all times.
4. Any items found on school property which display signs, symbols, gestures, songs, drawings or writings which show allegiance or affiliation with a non-sanctioned group will be confiscated by school officials and turned over to law enforcement agencies.
5. No student shall threaten to commit, or actually commit, any crime of violence or damage property with the purpose of terrorizing another; cause the evacuation of a building, place of assembly, school bus, or other school facility, or otherwise disrupt the orderly operation of any activity on any school campus or school property in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or disruption.

6. Any student who urges, encourages, counsels, furthers, promotes, assists, causes, advises, procures, or abets any other students to violate any section or paragraph of this policy shall be deemed to have violated this policy.

**CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 3 Days OSS, meet with school counselor, parent conference prior to returning from OSS.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter/
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal, Referral to Law Enforcement

**28. OBSCENITY**

**OFFENSE:** Using profane, vulgar, and/or obscene words or gestures, or improper dress, possession of pornographic material.

**CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 2 Days ISI, meet with school counselor
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days **ISS & RESTORATIVE** parent conference prior to release from ISS.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS with Referral to Tribunal

*NOTE: If obscenity is directed toward any school system employee, consequences will result in a minimum of two (2) day suspension from school & parent-teacher conference. It may result in a formal hearing.*

**29. POSSESSION AND/OR USE OF EXPLOSIVE COMPOUNDS (LIGHTER/MATCHES)**

**OFFENSE:** Carrying, possessing or having under such person's control while at school building, school function, on school property, on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school, ammunition of any type or explosive compound, (matches, lighter, explosives, fireworks, flammable incendiary devices). (GA Code OCGA. 16-11-127.1) Punishment is subject to administrative discretion based on the severity of the offense.

**CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISI, meet with school counselor, parent conference prior to release from ISI.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS and Tribunal Referral  
(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement and/or tribunal based on the severity of the student's actions.)

**30. PRANKS/UNAPPROVED OBJECTS**

**OFFENSE:** Causing substantial disruption of learning opportunities, the normal operating procedure of the school, and/or threatening the safety of other students. Destroying, vandalizing of, and/or threatening

to destroy public or private property located on school premises or at a school function. (This may include such actions as use of **lasers, dangerous toys,** bombs, explosive devices, setting fires, pulling or vandalizing fire alarms, calling 911, the deliberate destruction or defacement of school property.)

**CONSEQUENCES:**

Based on the severity of each situation the administrator will use their discretion for appropriate consequences. Which may include but not be limited to the following listed below.

- Repayment for damages
- ISI or OSS depending upon the severity of the incident
- Student removal from Extracurricular/Graduation/Honors programs
- Clean up by students involved (unless outside service is required)
- Law enforcement referral for damages and battery/assault

**(Events that cause a classroom/campus disturbance may result in an additional consequence.)**

**\*Substantial disruption may lead to law enforcement referral\***

Georgia Code Section 20-2-1181 states that “it shall be unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop as established by local school boards of education. Any person violating this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.”

### **31. ROBBERY**

**OFFENSE:** Taking or attempting to take anything of value that is owned by another person or organization, under confrontational circumstances by force, threat, or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

**CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal, Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Authorities.

### **32. SEXUAL BATTERY**

**OFFENSE:** Forceful sexual union against a person’s will; or not forcibly or against the person’s will when the victim is incapable of giving consent because of age or mental incapacity, (Includes rape, attempted rape, fondling, indecent liberties, child molestation).

**CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal, Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Authorities.

### **33. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

**OFFENSE:** Sexual harassment means unwanted sexually oriented words or actions that hurt or humiliate people. It causes tension for others. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or any member of the district staff to harass a student through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined below. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the school staff to a student or when made by any student to another student or system employee constitutes sexual harassment when: Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual’s education. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual; or Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s academic or professional performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or

offensive academic environment. Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal harassment or abuse
- Pressure for sexual activity
- Repeated remarks to a person with
- Sexual or demeaning implications
- Unwelcome touching
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.
- Sexual harassment is a kind of discrimination. It means that someone is treated differently because of his or her sex. It is behavior or words that:
  - are directed at a person because of his or her sex
  - are uninvited, unwanted, and unwelcome
  - cause a person to feel uncomfortable or offended
  - create an environment that makes learning difficult
  - are pervasive and ongoing.

Any person who alleges sexual harassment by a staff member or student in the school district may complain directly to a principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor, or other individual to receive such complaints. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future employment, grades, or job assignments. The right to confidentiality, both of the complaint and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the Board's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

All allegations of sexual harassment shall be fully investigated, and immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated. Appropriate documentation shall be maintained on all allegations of sexual harassment. A substantiated charge against an employee shall subject such person to disciplinary action, including discharge. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject that student to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Additionally, in all cases a report of sexual harassment will be reported to the system's Title IX coordinator. It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the district to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 3 Days OSS, Intervention with school counselor & Parent Conference

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS Referral to Tribunal, Referral to Law Enforcement

\*\*(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement and/or tribunal based on the severity of the student's actions.)

## **34. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

**OFFENSE:** A student shall not engage in physical sexual activity on school property or at school sponsored events. A student shall not be in possession of any asexually oriented device or material.

Parents and students should be aware of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct that can include criminal charges and the student being tried as an adult. Sexual offenses are prohibited with and against members of the same sex as well as members of the opposite sex. Students may not engage in consensual sexual acts on school grounds or at a school activity, function, or event whether on or off school grounds. Sexual Misconduct is defined as amorous kissing or similar displays of affection; any form of sexual activity; or exposing one's intimate body parts or "mooning" to another student or adult. A student may be charged with Sexual Battery for intentionally making physical contact with the intimate parts of another person without the consent of that person. A student may be charged with Sexual Molestation for doing any immoral or indecent act to or in the presence of another person, without that person's consent, with the intent to arouse or satisfy the sexual desires of either the student or the other person. This includes forcing another person to make physical contact with the student's intimate body parts. Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of abuse, sexual misconduct, or other inappropriate behavior is urged to immediately make a report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

### **What Teenagers Need to Know About Sex and the Law?**

- a. If you are 18, you are considered to be an adult even if you are still in high school. Anyone younger than 18 is a "minor."
- b. "Sexting" is a crime. You and your friends can be charged criminally if there is a nude or partially nude photo of you on their cell phone or computer—even if you took the photo yourself. You can get into trouble, too, for sending it to them. Once you send the photo, you cannot control who else they share it with or where they post it.
- c. If you touch, slap or pinch someone's breast or bottom as a joke in school, it may not be a joke to that person. If the person you touch finds it offensive, the legal system will not take it as a joke either.
- d. If you are convicted of a sex offense, even as a juvenile, you will be required to register as a sex offender. You will have to notify the police every time you move, get a new job, or attend a new school.
- e. If you have consensual sexual contact with someone under the age of 16, you can be charged with statutory rape in juvenile court even if you are under the age of 16 as well. If your case then is transferred to adult court, you will be treated as an adult sex offender and subject to the same penalties as an adult.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal, Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Authorities.

## **35. SKIPPING DETENTION/ ISI**

**OFFENSE:** Failure to report to ISI when assigned. In all cases the students must serve assigned ISI days upon returning to school.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- |                          |                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Offense: | 1 additional day of ISI, parent conference with administration prior to student returning to class |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense: | 1-3 day OSS, meet with counselor                                                                   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense: | 3-5 days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter                 |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Offense: | Minimum of 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal                                                       |

## **36. TARDINESS TO CLASS/SCHOOL**

**OFFENSE:** Tardiness is defined as (1) being late for school, or (2) late for class. Tardies accumulate on a nine week basis. Tardiness occurs when a student is not in the classroom when the tardy bell sounds. Students who are tardy to class will report to class and sign the tardy roster. Students who are tardy to school (after 7:40 a.m.) will report to the office to sign in and retrieve a tardy slip excused/unexcused to submit to the teacher.

**CONSEQUENCES:** If caught by an administrator/designee, the student will report to the ISI room for the remainder of that class period.

1 <sup>st</sup> Tardy:	Warning (Teacher must document on Tardy Log) and 1 day Lunch Detention
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tardy:	Parent Notification (Letter must be sent by Teacher) and 1 day Lunch Detention
3 <sup>rd</sup> Tardy:	Office Referral: 1 Day After School Detention
4 <sup>th</sup> Tardy:	Office Referral: 1 Days/Blocks ISI
5 <sup>th</sup> Tardy:	Office Referral: 2 Days ISI
All Other:	Office Referral: 3 Days ISI

- **Tardy Policy starts over each Nine Weeks**
- **Late to Detention = additional day**

### **37. TERRORISTIC THREATS TOWARDS SCHOOL**

**OFFENSE:** O.C.G.A. 16-11-37(a) A person commits the offense of a terroristic threat when he or she threatens to commit any crime of violence, to release any hazardous substance, as such term is defined in Code Section 12-8-92, or to burn or damage property with the purpose of terrorizing another or of causing the evacuation of a building, place of assembly, or facility of public transportation or otherwise causing serious public inconvenience or in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

Students **charged** with making a terroristic threat toward the school or students (verbally or via social media) may be permanently expelled or expelled for a specific period of time. OCGA 20-2-690.1 clearly gives the school system the authority to expel a student, particularly when there is a threat to the safety and security of the school.

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS, Intervention with school counselor  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Minimum of 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal

\*(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement and/or tribunal based on the severity of the student's actions.)

### **38. THEFT OR POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY**

**OFFENSE:** Theft without threat, violence or bodily harm of public or private property located on school premises or at a school function. Based on the value of the object, law enforcement may be notified. **Consequence may result in immediate suspension based on administrative discretion.**

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days ISI, meet with school counselor, parent conference prior to release from ISI  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS and Referral to Tribunal\*

(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement and/or tribunal based on the severity of the student's actions.)

### **39. THREATENING AND/OR INTIMIDATING ANOTHER STUDENT**

**OFFENSE:** Threatening and/or intimidating another student: touching, pushing, or threatening the person bodily or psychologically. Possible referral to law enforcement

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 2 Days ISI and parent conference
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days **ISS**, meet with school counselor, and/or **RESTORATIVE** parent conference prior to release from ISS
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal

### **40. TOBACCO/VAPING**

**OFFENSE:** The possession, distribution, or use of tobacco products (i.e. Cigarettes, E-Cigarettes, E-Cigs, Hookah, Vapes, Snuff, & Juuls) on school campus and/or school property is not permitted. In addition, lighters and matches should not be brought to school. Possible referral to law enforcement and immediate suspension. If an electronic smoking device is found to contain any illicit or illegal drugs, the student will have violated the Drug Offense (see pg. 68)

***No student, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product at any time on any school District owned/leased property or at any school event, including non-school hours, 24 hours a day, seven days per week***

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 1-3 Day OSS, meet with school counselor, parent conference prior to return to class.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS, & Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator Letter
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Minimum 10 Days OSS with a referral to tribunal  
(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement and/or tribunal based on the severity of the student's actions and contents of the device.)

### **41. TRESPASSING**

**OFFENSE:** Entering or remaining on a public school campus or School Board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry (includes students under suspension or expulsion, and unauthorized persons who enter or remain on a campus after being directed to leave by the chief administrator or designee.) No trespassing or loitering is allowed.

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Notify Parents and Trespass Letter & possible referral to Law Enforcement
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Referral to Law Enforcement & tribunal hearing

### **42. VANDALISM**

**OFFENSE:** Destroying, vandalizing of, and/or threatening to destroy public or private property located on school premises or at a school function. (This may include such actions as use of bombs, explosive

devices, setting fires, pulling or vandalizing fire alarms, calling 911, the deliberate destruction or defacement of school property.)

**CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days ISI, meet with school resource officer
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days ISS and **RESTORATIVE** parent conference prior to release from ISI
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS & student placed on Behavior Contract
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Administrator discretion and/or referral to tribunal hearing

**(Immediate restitution for damages and possible referral to law enforcement. May result in immediate suspension/(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement and/or tribunal based on the severity of the student's actions.)**

**43. VIOLATION OF DRESS CODE**

**OFFENSE:** Violation of dress code guidelines.

**CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Sequester in ISI until clothes are changed/the office will call parents.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Sequester in ISI the rest of the day (Parent Contact)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days in **ISS**
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 1-3 Day OSS, Parent Conference before returning to school.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: Administrator discretion and/or referral to tribunal hearing

**44. WEAPONS (Hand Gun, Knife, Rifle, Firearm, Other)**

**OFFENSE:** Possessing a dangerous instrument or weapon on school property or at a school event. A student shall not supply, possess, handle, use, threaten to use or transmit any weapon or any other tool or instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury and intended for use as a weapon, in a school safety zone, at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school. A "weapon," "tool" or "instrument" means and includes by way of illustration but is not limited to the following items:

1. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.
2. Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nunchakka, nunchuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or Taser. **Such terms shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.**

**Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion.** The Superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one-year expulsion under circumstances where the one-year expulsion appears excessive to the superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirements on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment. Finally, in any tribunal decision appealed to the board of education, the board may reduce the mandated punishment but shall consider whether the superintendent and/or tribunal considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction.

Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the student code of conduct.

### Reporting Requirements

Any employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a student possesses a weapon as defined in paragraph 1, is involved in an assault using a weapon as defined in paragraph 2, or is involved in a second offense with a weapon on campus must report such violations to the principal or assistant principal of the school. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that a report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney. The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any activity involving weapons.

If a student turns in a weapon found, school authorities have to make an insightful determination as to whether the student is truthful in reporting *finding* a weapon as opposed to being in *possession* of the weapon. In cases where doubt exists, proof remains with the student. Please be reminded that the case law ruling from the State Board of Education is that **intent** must be determined in order to expel a student for possession of a weapon.

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

A student is deemed to be in possession of an illegal and/or banned item(s) under BOE policy when such item(s) is/are on the person of the student, in the student's possession, in the student's locker, in the student's vehicle on school property or on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity or any school event held away from the school.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS, Referral to Tribunal, Notification of Law Enforcement

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student desks, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search.

As used in this discipline code, the term "unauthorized" means any items dangerous to the health or safety of students or school personnel, or disruptive to any lawful function, mission or process of the school, or any item described as unauthorized in school rules available beforehand to the student.

A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action.

**Personal Searches:** A student's personal belongings and/or personal effects (e.g. purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials.

If a pat down search of a student's person is conducted it will be conducted by a school employee of the same sex and with an adult witness present, when feasible.

If the school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student has on his or her person an item imminently dangerous to the student or to others, a more intrusive search of the student's person may be conducted. Such a search may only be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex, with an adult witness of the same sex present, and only upon the

prior approval of the Superintendent or his or her designee, unless the health or safety of students will be endangered by the delay which might be caused by following these procedures.

**Desk and Locker Searches:** Student desks and lockers are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. **Periodic general inspections of desks and lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.**

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

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

The school administration reserves the right to make decisions on other school matters in the best interest of the student body in any or all matters not specifically addressed in this handbook. Any item brought onto school property may be searched at any time.

School administrators reserve the right to change the consequence for any discipline violation based on the severity of the infraction and administrative discretion. A RESTORATIVE parent conference may be required prior to students returning to class from ISS & OSS.

#### **CONTINUOUS VIOLATORS:**

- Students may serve a maximum of 15 days in ISI (in school intervention). Once a student has reached the 15 day maximum, any future offenses will result in immediate out of school suspension.
- Students who accumulate 5 discipline referrals (to not include bus and tardy referrals) in a school year will result in a Behavior Contract/Behavior Contract/Parent Notification of Continuous Violator letter or a behavior contract.
- Students who accumulate 8 discipline referrals (to not include bus and tardy referrals) in a school year will result in a mandatory 10 day suspension and referral to tribunal.
- If a student who has been placed on a behavior contract violates the code of conduct with any infraction, the student may be referred to a tribunal for possible placement at alternative school or expulsion.

Each local board of education shall make available to all Qualified Student Discipline Hearing Officers and Disciplinary Tribunal or Panel Members the initial and ongoing tribunal training course prior to the individual(s) serving in such capacity. The local board of education shall ensure initially trained student discipline hearing officers and disciplinary tribunal or panel members undergo continuing education so as to continue to serve in such capacity. Each local board of education shall observe Georgia law in developing and implementing disciplinary hearings held by a disciplinary hearing officer, disciplinary panel, or disciplinary tribunal pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751 through § 20-2-759 including the ability to honor disciplinary orders of private schools and other public schools/school systems pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.2.



## 2025-2026 Sumter County Schools Transportation Manual



### Safe Student Riding Instructions

Welcome to another great year! We look forward to transporting your child this school year. To ensure that your child will have a safe riding experience this year, we ask that you review the safe riding instructions with your child now and periodically during the school year.

Statistics show children riding a school bus are much safer than in their parent's personal vehicle or any other type of transportation on the roadways. The Sumter County Board of Education believes the school bus is an extension of the classroom; therefore, the same rules of "Respect Your Self", "Respect for Others and Other's Property" will apply in route to the bus stop, departing from the bus stop, and while on the bus.

Safe riding begins before your child leaves the house or arrives at the designated bus stop. To keep your child safe, **your child needs to arrive at the bus stop approximately five minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.** These few minutes will allow your child time to arrive at the bus stop without the need to hurry. These five minutes will also limit your child's time near roadways and exposure to various weather conditions for any longer than necessary.

#### **While Waiting for the Bus**

Students should wait away from the roadway at their designated stop. There should be no horse playing, pushing, or shoving while on the way to the bus stop or at the bus stop. Students who do not live on the same side of the road as the bus pick up must wait on their side of the road until the bus arrives. If your child must cross the road, he/she must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and wait for the driver to give instructions when it is safe for him/her to cross.

#### **While Loading the Bus at the Designated Stop (same side of road)**

Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, wait for the entrance door to open, and make sure that the red stop lights are flashing before approaching the bus to board. When more than one student boards at the same bus stop, they must line up in a single file line just prior to the bus' arrival. There should not be pushing, shoving or horse playing while boarding the bus. Students should always use the handrail when stepping onto the bus. Students should be seated in their seat as carefully but as promptly as possible and remain there until they reach their school or destination.

#### **While Loading the Bus at the Designated Stop (opposite side of road)**

When a student must cross the road to board the bus, they must stand on their side of the road. Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, wait for the entrance door to open, and be sure the red stop lights are flashing before approaching the bus to board. Students must wait for the driver to give a verbal or physical sign that it is ok to cross the road. Even after all the above, students must quickly look both ways to be sure the road is still clear, and all other vehicles have stopped. Students must always cross in front of the bus and should always use the handrail when stepping onto the bus. There should not be pushing, shoving or horse playing while loading the bus. Students should seat themselves as carefully and as promptly as possible and remain seated until they reach their school or destination.

#### **While on the Bus**

Once students board the bus, the driver is in full charge of the safety of your child. Students must follow the listed "Bus Regulations" found in "Code of Student Conduct" to ensure a safe ride, whether it is from home to school or back home or any school-sponsored trips.

#### **While Unloading the Bus at the School or Destination**

Students should unload the bus in single file from front to back with no pushing, shoving or horse playing while unloading the bus. Students should use the handrail as they depart the bus until both feet are on the ground. Students should check for an approaching bus on the door side before stepping off the bus while unloading.

Students should look both ways before crossing the traffic area and should clear this area as quickly and safely as possible. Students should **never** return to the bus without supervision of an administrator.

### **While Loading the Bus at the School**

Students should wait for buses in a safe area designated by the school. The bus should come to a complete stop and your child must wait for the driver to open the entrance door before approaching the bus. Students should look both ways before leaving the curb and crossing the traffic area to approach the bus. Students must watch for other buses pulling up on the right side while loading the bus. Students should line up in a single file in the order they arrive at the bus and should use the handrail to load. There should be no pushing, shoving or horse playing while coming to, while loading and while getting to their seat. Students should be seated as carefully but as promptly as possible and remain seated until they reach their designated stop.

### **While on the Bus**

Once students board the bus, the driver is in full charge of the safety of your child. Students must follow the listed "Bus Regulations" found in the "Code of Student Conduct" to ensure a safe ride, whether it is from home to school or back home or any school-sponsored trips.

### **While Unloading the Bus at the Designated Stop**

Students should unload the bus in single file from front to back with no pushing, shoving or horse playing. Students should use the handrail as they depart the bus until both feet are on the ground. Students should exit the bus and clear the roadway and continue to move until they are safely away from the bus. Students who live on the opposite side of the road must cross in front of the bus while the bus is at their stop. When a student must cross the road, they should stop at the front of the bus and look both ways before continuing to cross. When all is clear, students should clear the roadway as quickly as possible. Students should go directly home and **never** return to the bus for any reason. Please instruct your child to **never** retrieve an item that is dropped and goes under the bus. Students who have permission from parents to check their mailbox who live on the same side of the road as their mail box must clear the roadway and wait for the bus to depart and traffic to clear before returning to the roadway to the mailbox. If your child lives on the opposite side of the road from their mailbox, they must cross over to their side of the road while the bus is at their stop. If your child has permission from you to check the mailbox and you live on the opposite side of the road from your mailbox, your child must also wait until after the bus has departed their stop and traffic to clear before crossing back over the road to check their mailbox.

### **Railroad Crossing**

History has shown that more lives are lost in school buses at railroad crossings than at any other location. Every time a school bus and a train collide, the train wins! Therefore, it is so important for the driver to have their full attention on the railroad crossing. There is no other time when a driver's distraction can cost the loss of so many lives. Please reinforce with your child the importance of being "Silent at All Railroad Crossings"

### **Bus Evacuation**

Due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the bus driver's control, your child may have to evacuate a bus at some time during the year. The decision to evacuate may be based solely on having the best interest of the students in mind. When evacuating a bus is necessary, students are placed in a safer location while waiting for assistance.

Most evacuations are due to breakdowns which may leave the bus in questionable surroundings. Not all breakdowns result in an evacuation; several factors are taken into consideration before the decision is made to Evacuate a bus. The location of an inoperative bus is the greatest factor when deciding to evacuate a bus. Some locations, we may feel it necessary to evacuate the bus. These locations include but are not limited to being next to a high-volume roadway, high speed limit roadway, on or near a bridge, on a steep hill, in a curve or near water.

When any type of evacuation occurs, students must follow the instructions of the driver to safely unload and to relocate in a safe location away from the hazard. On a rare occasion, the driver may be incoherent so we may depend on the older, mature students to help without placing them at any additional risk. This type of evacuation is practiced with all students during each new school year. There are several reasons that students may have to be unloaded from one bus to another bus without it being an emergency. We ask for you to periodically remind your child to stay calm whenever it is necessary to unload from one bus to another bus for any reason and to always use their "While Loading and Unloading the Bus" directions found on page 2.

All buses are designed with several "Emergency Exits"; these locations are, but not limited to the entrance/exit door, rear door, emergency exit windows and roof hatches. Students should always use the front entrance/exit door during all evacuations when possible. When the service door is not available, the second choice should be the back door. All other exits should be used only when the loading door and the back door are not practical. When the rear door is the chosen exit, selected students designated by the driver are instructed to assist students to the ground. All students are instructed to leave all personal belongings on the bus and to exit from the front to the back of the selected exit location. Students are instructed to walk at least 100 feet away from the bus at the direction away from the recognized hazard or hazards.

School bus transportation is such an important part of the education system in Sumter County. We appreciate your assistance as we try to provide the safest and most efficient transportation for our precious cargo-your children!

**SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
100 LEARNING LANE  
AMERICUS, GEORGIA 31709  
1-229-931-8529  
FAX 1-229-931-8602**

I have read and understand the contents of the Safe Student Riding Instructions handout. Please keep the Safe Riding Instructions found on pages one through three (1-3) for your future reference to go over with your child during the school year. Please sign and return the bottom portion of this page.

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**Student Signature/Name**

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**Date**

---

**Parent Signature**

---

**Date**

# Intermediate School Bus Discipline Procedures (4th-6th)

## **BUS PASSES:**

If a student needs to ride a bus other than their assigned bus, they must bring a letter stating the bus number, reason for bus pass request, parent name, signature, and contact number. All bus pass requests should be submitted to the front office no later than 10:30 a.m.

The following rules are published for the safety, health, and welfare of all children who ride school buses. Parents are requested to impress on their children the importance of obeying the rules so that all students may be transported safely and comfortably. If a student is suspended from the bus, he or she may also be suspended from school depending on the severity of the offense. The school reserves the right to combine school consequences with transportation consequences. When a student is suspended from the school bus, he or she **CANNOT** ride any Sumter County School Bus. If a student is suspended and gets on another bus to or from school, then 3 additional days will be added to the current suspension. **This rule also applies to activity buses/field trips.**

## **FIGHTING**

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Five (5) days bus suspension.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** Ten (10) days bus suspension.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** Twenty (20) days bus suspension.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the semester (minimum 30 days).
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the school term

## **PROMOTING A FIGHT, THROWING OBJECTS, ARGUING WITH/OR PROFANITY TOWARD STUDENTS**

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Three (3) days bus suspension.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** Five (5) days bus suspension.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** Ten (10) days bus suspension.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Twenty (20) days bus suspension.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the semester (minimum 30 days).
- 6<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the school term.

## **BULLYING**

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Five (5) days bus suspension.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** Ten (10) days bus suspension.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** Twenty (20) days bus suspension.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the semester (minimum 30 days).
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the school term

## **General Bus Rules:**

The following are not allowed on the bus

- A. Disrespecting a person in authority
  - Refusing to obey the driver or person in authority.
  - Refusing to sit in an assigned seat.
  - Refusing to answer the driver when a question is asked.
  - Giving the driver the wrong information.
  - Getting off the bus at the wrong stop without a note from the school.
  - Refusing to obey the railroad crossing rule.
- B. Water, food, gum chewing, juice or sodas
- C. Toys of any size.
- D. Supplies out on the bus except a book to read.

- E. Graffiti
- F. Extending any part of the body or other objects out the windows, doors and aisles of the bus.
- G. Standing, walking, playing or kicking.
- H. Sunglasses unless prescribed by a physician.
- I. Yelling out the window or inside the bus.
- J. Getting on or off the bus while in motion.
- K. The use of mirrors, lasers, flash, cameras, lights, reflective devices or any electrical communication device is prohibited.
- L. Any other action that might cause disruption for the driver.
- M. Dress Code Violations

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

**1st Offense:** Needs Improvement Form

**2nd Offense:** Five (5) days bus suspension.

**3rd Offense:** Ten (10) days bus suspension.

**4rd Offense:** Twenty (20) days bus suspension.

**5th Offense:** Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the semester (Minimum 30 days).

### **MAJOR OFFENSES**

The following behavior will not be tolerated in any form and **MAY** result in an automatic suspension for the entire year. Additionally, students may be referred for a disciplinary tribunal for these offenses:

- A. Sexual misconduct offenses (engaging with or fondling one another).
- B. Ignition of lighter, matches, and /or combustible or flammable materials, etc.
- C. Possession of a dangerous instrument /Firearm/Other Weapon.
- D. Physical assault /Physical Violence.
- E. Smoking, dipping, use of drugs/alcohol, or possession of related products including electronic smoking devices.
- F. Theft/Vandalism of school or personal private property.
- G. Arson/Unlawful and intentional damage real or personal property by fire.
- H. Sexual Harassment/**Gestures.**
- I. Intentional spitting at or on another person
- J. Racial slurs
- K. Profanity toward an adult

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

Minimum of 10 days' suspension with possible tribunal unless another penalty is given at the discretion of the administrator according to the policy listed above, including, but not limited to an automatic suspension of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

### **STUDENT RETURNED TO SCHOOL**

If the student is returned to school when no one is home to get him/her off the bus, the following will occur:

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

**1st Offense--**Meet with Parents and present a letter with Consequences for them to sign.

**2nd Offense--**Student suspended from the bus for three (3) days.

**3rd Offense--**Student suspended from the bus for five (5) days.

**4th Offense--**Student suspended from the bus for ten (10) days.

**5th Offense--**Student suspended for the Remainder of the Year.

**\*\*\*No student shall be allowed to ride any school bus if the student's riding privileges have been suspended. If the school year ends and the student has not served his/her entire bus suspension, then the student shall finish the bus suspension at the beginning of the next school year.**

**\*Restitution for damaging bus seats and/or property is required.**

## **SECTION VI: APPENDICES AND FORMS**

### **ATHLETICS**

Where selection is based on competitive skill or the activity involved is a contact sport, athletics may be provided through separate teams for males and females, or through a single team open to both sexes. If separate teams are offered, they must provide equal opportunity-comparable facilities, equipment, etc.-but equal aggregate expenditures are not required.

### **COUNSELING MATERIALS**

Counseling materials developed and disseminated in keeping with these regulations must exclude references, which portray biases toward race, sex, color, national origin, age, religion or disability.

### **COVERAGE**

The final regulations cover all operations of the Sumter County School District with the exception that the Vocational Education Guidelines cover vocational programs only.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

The regulations apply to nondiscriminatory policies and practices including both full-time and part-time employment and students. Specifically, the regulations cover:

- Employment criteria;
- Recruitment;
- Compensation;
- Job classification and structure;
- Fringe benefits;
- Marital or parental status;
- Effect of state or local law or to other requirements;
- Advertising;
- Pre-employment inquiries.

Employment coverage generally follows the policies of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

### **HEALTH EDUCATION**

Classes in health education may not be offered separately on the basis of sex except that separate sessions for boys and girls are permissible during times when materials and discussion deal exclusively with human sexuality.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Sex segregated physical education classes are prohibited. The regulations allow separation by sex within physical education classes during competition in wrestling, boxing, basketball, football, and other sports involving bodily contact.

## **ORGANIZATIONS**

The school district may not provide significant assistance, in connection with its education program or activity, to any organization, agency, or person, which discriminates on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age or disability.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

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

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

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the Sumter County School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.

Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contacted to perform a special task, (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

**Family Policy Compliance Office**

**U.S. Department of Education 600 Independence Ave. SW. Washington, DC  
20202-4605**

The school district has designated the following types of personally identifiable information about students "Directory Information." Directory information may be released by the school district without consent of parent or student, such as:

- Student's name, address and telephone listing;

- ☐ Date and place of birth;
- ☐ Dates of attendance;
- ☐ Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- ☐ Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- ☐ Diploma Award.

A parent or eligible student who desires that the school district not release any or all of the directory information about a student must notify the school district to that effect in writing addressed to Sumter County School District, Attention: Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Personnel, 100 Learning Lane, Americus, GA 31719 no later than 30 days after the first day of school.

### **TREATMENT**

All schools must treat students and employees without discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability. The regulations cover the following areas:

- Access to and participation in course offerings and extracurricular activities, including campus organizations and competitive athletics.
- Eligibility for and receipt or enjoyment of benefits and services.
- Use of facilities.

A recipient school district may not participate with single-sex organizations other than the following: Boy Scouts; Girl Scouts; YWCA; YMCA; and certain voluntary youth services organizations that meet the provisions of Title IX.

### **RESEARCH**

All instructional material, including teachers' manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis or evaluation conducted by or for the school district, shall be available for inspection by the parents or guardians of the students involved in the survey, analysis or evaluation.

No student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis or evaluation which reveals any of the following information without prior consent of the student (if an adult or an emancipated minor) or of the student's parent or guardian:

Information concerning political affiliations, mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to students or their families, sexual behavior and attitudes, illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior, critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships, legally recognized privileges and analogous relationships such as those with lawyers, physicians and ministers, or income (other than that required by law) to receive eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972, THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT, THE HATCH AMENDMENT, AND THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION GUIDELINES**

It is the intent of the Sumter County School District to comply with the above referenced federal statutes and regulations adopted pursuant thereto, in terms of employment, programs and other related activities in the school district. Part of our compliance effort is to periodically apprise employees, parents and students of the existence of these statutes and regulations, and our intent to carry out the mandates thereof.

#### **COMPLIANCE**

Helen Ricketts, Director of Human Resources has been named to coordinate the school district's activities in complying with all regulations and purposes cited above.

#### **GRIEVANCES**

If employees or students think that they have been discriminated against because of their sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, or disability, they should contact:

**Helen Ricketts**  
**Director of Human Resources**  
**Federal Regulations Compliance Officer Sumter County School District**  
**100 Learning Lane Americus, GA 31719**  
**(229) 931-8500**

**OR**

**The Office of Civil Rights**  
**U.S. Department of Education 101 Marietta Towers**  
**Atlanta, GA 30323**  
**(404) 221-2352**

**Contact should be made in writing stating the nature of the grievance and indicating how you may be reached in order to schedule a conference.**

**Note:** This Appendix is a review of federal regulations cited above. Only those areas related to the Sumter County School District are reviewed in this summary. The complete implementation plan includes the regulations, the Sumter County School District's Policies and Rules related to personnel and students, a Grievance Procedure, and a Title IX record of implementation activities.

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

**PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR, EACH SCHOOL SYSTEM MUST PROVIDE PUBLIC NOTICE TO ADVISE STUDENTS, PARENTS, EMPLOYEES, AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT ALL TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS WILL BE OFFERED WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, OR HANDICAP. THE NOTICE MUST INCLUDE THE NAME, OFFICE ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE PERSON DESIGNATED TO COORDINATE TITLE VI, TITLE IX, AND SECTION 504/ADA.**

## DISCRIMINATORY DISCLOSURE

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 and the Perkins Act of 1998); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Students, parents, employees and the general public are hereby notified that the Board of Education does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities or in employment policies.

The following individuals have been designated as the employees responsible for coordinating the school system's effort to implement this nondiscriminatory policy:

### Title VI

**Gayla Braziel Sumter County BOE 100 Learning Lane  
Americus, GA 31719  
229-931-8500**

### Section 504

**Vamsee Mallineni Sumter County BOE 100 Learning Lane  
Americus, GA 31719  
229.931.8500**

### Title IX

**Helen Ricketts Sumter County BOE 100 Learning Lane  
Americus, GA 31719  
229.931.8500**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **SUMTER COUNTY FEDERAL PROGRAMS COMPLAINT PROCEDURES** **Complaint Procedures under the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965**

#### **Section 9304 – General Applicability of State Educational Agency Assurances** **Section 9503 – Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children**

##### **Grounds for a Complaint**

Any individual, organization or agency (“complainant”) may file a complaint with the Sumter County Board of Education (“Department”) if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a local educational agency (“LEA”), the state educational agency (“SEA”), or an agency or consortium of agencies is violating a Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965. 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 systemic or ongoing.

##### **Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed**

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 I, Part F: Comprehensive School Reform Title I, School Improvement Grant 1003(a)

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 A, Subpart 1: Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2: Community Service Grant

Title IV, Part B: 21 Century Community Learning Centers Title V, Part A: Innovative Programs

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

Race to the Top, RT3 SIG 1003(g)

Title VI, Part B; the McKinney-Vento Act

Title X Part C – McKinney-Vento Homeless Education

##### **Complaints Originating at the Local Level**

As part of its Assurances within NCLB program grant applications and pursuant to Section 9306 of the No Child Left Behind Act, an LEA accepting federal funds also agrees to adopt local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore, for complaints originating at the local level, a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education until every effort has been made to resolve the issue through local written complaint procedures. If the complainant has tried to file a

complaint at the local level to no avail, the complainant must provide the Georgia Department of Education with written proof of their attempt to resolve the issue at the local level.

### **Filing a Complaint**

A complaint must be made in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

A statement that the LEA, SEA, agency or consortium of agencies 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 (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation);  
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:

**Sumter County Schools**  
**Director of Federal Programs**  
**100 Learning Lane**  
**Americus, GA 31719**

Once the complaint is received by the Director of Federal Programs, it will be copied and forwarded to the district Superintendent's office as documentation of complaint being received and investigated.

### **Investigation of Complaint**

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, the Director of Federal Programs or his or her designee will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

The date the district received the complaint;  
How the complainant may provide additional information;  
A statement of the ways in which the district may investigate or address the complaint; and Any other pertinent information.

The Department will have thirty (30) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings.

Appropriate Department staff will review the information and determine whether:

Additional information is needed;

An on-site investigation must be conducted;

Other measures must be taken to resolve the issues raised in the complaint; or A Letter of Findings can be issued.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the Department will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings.

If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included. Either the 30-day or the 60-day timelines

outlined above may be circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant, as well as the other parties involved.

### **Right of Appeal**

If an individual, organization or agency is aggrieved by the final decision of the district,

that individual, organization or agency has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education.

For complaints filed pursuant to Section 9503 (20 U.S.C. §7883, complaint process for participation of private school children), a complainant may appeal the Department's decision to the United States Secretary of Education no later than thirty (30) days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Department's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

**Sumter County Schools**  
**Complaint Form for Federal Programs**  
**under the Elementary and**  
**Secondary Act of 1965**

**Please Print:**

Name (Complainant):
Mailing Address:
Phone Number (Home): _____ Cell Number: _____
Work Number: _____ Email Address: _____
Agency/Agencies complaint is being filed against:
Date on which violation occurred:
Statement that the Sumter County Schools has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation) (attach additional sheets if necessary):
The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (attached additional sheets if necessary):

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Complainant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of District Receiving**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**\*In order to file a complaint regarding Fraud, Waste or Abuse involving US Department of Education funds or programs, please visit**  
**<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/hotline.html>**

## **SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT**

On July 8, 2010, the Georgia Board of Education approved rule 160-5-1.35 regarding the use of restraint in Georgia Schools. The Sumter County policy is provided below.

### **BOARD POLICY SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT DESCRIPTOR CODE:**

The Sumter County Board of Education establishes the following standards for the safe administration of physical restraint with regard to enrolled students.

1. The use of chemical restraint, mechanical restraint, or prone restraint, as defined by the Georgia Department of Education Rule 160-5-1-.35, is prohibited within the Sumter County School District.
2. The use of seclusion, as defined by Georgia department of Education rule 160-5-1-.35, is prohibited within the Sumter County School District.
  - a. Seclusion does not include situations in which a staff member trained in the use of de- escalation techniques or restraint is physically present in the same unlocked room as the student.
  - b. Seclusion does not include “time-out” defined as a behavioral intervention in which the student is temporarily removed from the learning activity but in which the student is not confined.
  - c. Seclusion does not include in school- suspension, detention, or a student-requested break in a different location in the classroom or in a separate unlocked room.
3. Physical restraint may be utilized only when the student is an immediate danger to himself or others and the student is not responsive to less intensive behavioral interventions including verbal directives or other de-escalation techniques.
  - a. Physical restraint does not include: providing limited physical contact and/or redirection to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or promoting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing guidance to a location, or providing comfort.
  - b. Physical restraint shall not be used:
    - i. As a form of discipline or punishment, or
    - ii. When the student cannot be safely restrained, or
    - iii. When the use of the intervention would be contraindicated due to the student’s psychiatric, medical, or physical conditions as described in the student’s educational records.
  - c. All physical restraint must be immediately terminated when the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others or if the student is observed to be in severe distress.
4. Before any staff member may implement physical restraint, he or she should have completed an approved training program.
  - a. Approved training programs will address a full continuum of positive behavioral intervention strategies as well as prevention and de-escalation techniques and restraint.
  - b. Schools and programs shall maintain written or electronic documentation on training provided and the list of participants in each training. Copies of such documentation will be made available to the Georgia department of Education or any member of the public upon request.
  - c. If a staff member who has not completed an approved training

program has to physically restrain a student to prevent injury to a student or others in an emergency situation when staff members trained in physical restraint are unavailable, he or she should ask other students, if present, to request assistance immediately.

5. Whenever possible, the use of physical restraint on a student shall be monitored by another staff member or administrator. The use of physical restraint shall be documented by staff or faculty participating in or supervising the restraint for each student in each instance in which the student is restrained.
6. Whenever physical restraint is used on a student, the school or program where the restraint is administered shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian within one school day after the use of restraint.
7. This policy does not prohibit a staff member from utilizing time-out, as defined in paragraph (2) above, or any other classroom management technique or approach, including a student's removal from the classroom that is not specifically addressed in this rule.
8. This policy does not prohibit a staff member from taking appropriate action to diffuse a student fight or altercation.
9. Deciding whether the use of physical restraint is necessary to protect students or others from imminent harm or bodily injury, and taking the actions deemed necessary to protect students or others from imminent harm or bodily injury, are actions that involve the performance of discretionary, not ministerial, duties.
10. In some instances, in which a student is an immediate danger to himself or herself or others, the school or program must determine when it becomes necessary to seek assistance from law enforcement and/or emergency medical personnel. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to interfere with the duties of law enforcement or emergency medical personnel.
11. School officials must notify a student's parent or guardian immediately when emergency medical or law enforcement personnel remove a student from a school or program setting

**BOARD POLICY  
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

**DESCRIPTOR CODE: JBC**

**DEFINITIONS**

1. **Attend** – A student’s physical presence in the educational programs for which he or she is enrolled.
2. **Case Management Consultation (CMC)** – a consultation by a school social worker or case manager in which a process is used to discover whether any transition problems exist and whether any services are necessary for a child placed by the Department of Human Resources (DHR) or Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). This process, as defined in State Board Rule 160-4-8-.17 (JGEB), will be utilized each time a DHR- or DJJ-placed child enrolls in a new school.
3. **Education for Homeless Children and Youths** – Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 *et seq.*) that requires each state to ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth. In accordance with the Act and State Board Rule 160- 5-1-.28 (JBC), the term “Homeless Child and Youth” is defined as children and youth who are:
  - a. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
  - b. Living in motels, hotels trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - c. Living in emergency or transitional shelters; d. Abandoned in hospitals; or
  - e. Awaiting foster care placement.
  - f. Moreover, the following children are included in the definition: children who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; children who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
4. **Emancipated Minor** –An individual under the age of eighteen who is no longer under the control or authority of his or her parents or guardians by operation of law or pursuant to a petition filed by the minor with the juvenile court as provided in O.C.G.A. § 15-11-202. Emancipation by operation of law occurs when a minor is validly married or as otherwise prescribed by law. Emancipation by petition is granted by a judge in juvenile court after the judge determines emancipation is in the best interest of the minor.
5. **Enroll** – The registration of a student by a parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child, or the student (in the case of an emancipated minor providing the school system with the appropriate documentation). Once enrolled, the child shall be eligible to attend the assigned school.
6. **Other Person** – An adult at least 18 years of age or an emancipated minor at least sixteen years of age residing within the school system who is not the parent or guardian of a child but

stands *in loco parentis* (i.e., to assume the duties and responsibilities of a parent such as providing food, shelter, clothing or medical care.)

7. **Residency** – Residency as applied to this policy shall mean the place where the student lives with a parent, guardian, or other person, unless the student is an emancipated minor. The student must be an occupant of a dwelling located within the school system. Proof of residence in the school district shall be required when a student enrolls and whenever a change of residence occurs, unless the student is homeless. Individuals not legally admitted into the country shall not be denied a free public education.
8. **Withdraw** – The removal of a student from the official roll of a school.

## II. Requirements for Enrollment

### 1. Military Families

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, new code section O.C.G.A. § 20-2295 will allow children of military families living in the school system in base housing, whether on or off-base may attend school in the school system,

“provided space is available for additional enrollment.”

### 2. Authority to Enroll

Under the provisions stated in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1, a parent, guardian, or other person has the authority to enroll a student in a publicly funded Georgia school.

- a. A student who meets the age eligibility requirements is eligible to enroll in the school system if the student’s parent or legal guardian (or the student in the case of an emancipated minor) is a resident of the school district. Proof of residence is required in accordance with regulations developed by the superintendent.
- b. The principal of the school to which a student is seeking admission shall require from any adult who is not the parent of the student, proof of legal custody or a certificate setting forth the circumstances whereby the adult is exercising parental control. However, a student may not be enrolled by an adult acting in the place of the parent if the purpose of the student residing with such an adult is to avoid tuition as a non-resident, to avoid a suspension or expulsion imposed by another school district, or to avoid attending school in his or her attendance area. The principal, in conjunction with the central office employee designated by the Superintendent, shall make reasonable inquiry to determine the truth of the facts set forth in the certificate. Upon furnishing the required proof or certificate and appropriate verification of the facts set forth herein, the adult enrolling the student shall be deemed to stand in the place of the parent of the student for all school purposes.
- c. If the person enrolling the student is acting under the authority of a power of attorney executed by a parent or guardian serving in the military, the school shall allow the student to enroll. The school system may require proof of a duly executed power of attorney and/or certificate of acceptance as guardian, escort, or attorney. The school system shall not require such persons to obtain legal guardianship.
- d. A grandparent with a notarized power of attorney properly executed by a parent in accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 19-9-122 through 123 may enroll a child if a hardship prevents the parent from caring for the child. The school system shall enroll a student, otherwise eligible to attend its schools, and allow such grandparents to act on behalf of their grandchildren without requiring them to go through court proceedings to obtain legal guardianship.

### 3. Age Eligibility

Other than students specifically exempted by rule or by law, the following individuals are eligible for enrollment:

- a. Students who have attained the age of five by September 1 unless they attain the age of 20 by September 1 or they have received a high school diploma or the equivalent as prescribed in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150; or
- b. Students who were legal residents of one or more other states for a period of two years immediately prior to moving to Georgia, were legally enrolled in a public kindergarten or first grade, are otherwise qualified and will attain the age of five for kindergarten or six for first grade by December 31; or
- c. Special education students through the age of 21 or until they receive a regular high school diploma.

### 4. Evidence of Date of Birth

Other than students specifically exempted by State Board rule or by Georgia law, before admitting any student to a school in the school system, the superintendent or designee shall accept evidence in the order set forth below that shows the individual's date of birth:

1. A certified copy of a birth certificate, certified hospital issued birth record or birth certificate;
2. A military ID;
3. A valid driver's license;
4. A passport;
5. An adoption record;
6. A religious record signed by an authorized religious official;
7. An official school transcript; or
8. If none of these evidences can be produced, an affidavit of age sworn to by the parent, guardian or other person accompanied by a certificate

of age signed by a licensed practicing physician, which certificate states that the physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is substantially correct.

- b. Upon presentation of one of these evidences above, a photocopy of the document shall be placed in the student's record and the document that is presented shall be returned to the parent, guardian, or other person.
- c. A student will be identified in the local Student Information System (SIS) and in the Georgia Statewide Student Information System (GSSIS) by the student's legal name as it appears on the documentation submitted for age verification as cited above or in a court order changing the student's name.
- d. Once a student has successfully enrolled in any publicly-funded Georgia school by providing one of the evidence cited above and is recorded in the Georgia Testing Identifier application (see SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.07), further proof of age is deemed unnecessary.

#### **Other Documents Required During the Enrollment Process**

The parent or guardian, or other person must provide:

- a. A copy of the enrolling student's social security number or sign a form stating the individual does not wish to provide the social security number, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150.

- b. A certificate in accordance with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-771, concerning the immunization of students, which includes an exception for religious grounds.
- c. A certificate in accordance with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-770, concerning nutritional screening and eye, ear, and dental examinations of students.
- d. Proof of residence shall be required, unless the student is homeless and the McKinney-Vento Act applies. A homeless child shall be enrolled immediately even in the absence of any appropriate documentation. Upon determining that a student is homeless, the child must be allowed to either remain in the district in which he or she was enrolled prior to becoming homeless or enroll in the district where he or she is now located. Proof of residence is not required. The employee or other designated individual responsible for care of homeless students shall assist the homeless student in acquiring the necessary records for enrollment.

Documents which may be used as proof of a student's primary abode are:

- 1. A lease or rental agreement consisting of written evidence that the agreement is valid and current, **and** a current utility bill (gas, electric, water, telephone, or cable). Records must include the name and street address of the parent/guardian.

OR

- 2. A property tax statement or home ownership title (property deed, warranty deed, quit-claim deed, or security deed), **and** a current utility bill (gas, electric, water, telephone, or cable). Records must include the name and street address of the parent/guardian.

## **5. Students Placed by DHR or DJJ**

- a. When a student is being placed by DHR into a new home or facility that would require a change in school or school system, the school system in which that student is attending school shall consult with the student's custodian to ascertain whether the student should be maintained in the school of origin or assigned to the appropriate school in the new school system in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act. Foster children awaiting permanent placement qualify as homeless under the McKinney Vento Act.
- b. Upon notification by DJJ that a student will be enrolling in the school system, the school system shall enroll the student in his or her home school, as opposed to an alternative educational setting, unless the Case Management Consultation team concludes that the best placement for the child would be the alternative setting. Any placement made pursuant to an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team shall take precedence.
- c. Upon notification by DHR or DJJ, the school system shall immediately enroll a student in the physical or legal custody of DHR or DJJ or a student placed by DHR or DJJ in a residential facility located within the school system's jurisdiction, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133. The school system will follow guidelines developed by the State Department of Education governing the provision of education services provided by local school systems to students being served in therapeutic facilities.

## **6. Provisional Enrollment**

- a. A student shall be enrolled on a provisional basis and allowed to attend a school for 30 calendar days while awaiting evidence of age, residence, or other local requirements. The provisional enrollment period may be extended for extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.
  - 1. The superintendent or designee shall notify the registering parent, guardian, or other person at least 10 calendar days prior to the withdrawal of the student.
  - 2. If evidence is not provided within this period, the superintendent or designee shall mark the

student withdrawn at the end of the thirtieth day.

- i. The registering parent, guardian, or other person will be considered noncompliant and subject to all penalties as prescribed in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1.
  - ii. The superintendent shall report violations to the appropriate authorities for adjudication.
3. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150(c) concerning compulsory attendance of students prior to their seventh birthday does not apply to provisional enrollment.
  4. Students pre-registering for school are not eligible for provisional enrollment until the beginning of the attendance period of the school term for which the student is enrolling.
  5. The provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-670 regarding transferal of discipline actions or felony convictions for students in grade 7 and above shall take precedence over any provisional enrollment.
  6. A student shall be allowed to enroll in the school system if the student meets residency and other specified qualifications and otherwise would not be denied enrollment under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.1 and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.2 concerning student expulsion.
  7. The school system is not responsible for making determinations regarding immigration and visa status. The school system will accept non-immigrant, foreign students on visas and immigrants/non-visa- holders who meet age and residency requirements without inquiring about their legal status, in accordance with federal or state law and SBOE rule.

**III. Admission of Students Suspended or Expelled from Other School Districts** It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education to deny enrollment in any school in this school district to a student who has been suspended or expelled from another school district in this state or any other state for misconduct until the period of time for which the student was excluded in the previous school district has passed. The Board determines that the admission of students who have been suspended or expelled from other school districts for disruptive conduct would be disruptive as well to this school district.

A student who has withdrawn from school in another school district to avoid receiving a suspension or a hearing as to whether the student should be suspended for more than 10 consecutive days or expelled may not enroll in the schools in this school district until the student has completed a hearing before the previous Board of Education or its designated tribunal and that Board of Education has determined the guilt or innocence of the student and the appropriate disposition of charges against that student.

The Superintendent shall have the authority to waive this policy as to any student when the denial of admission to a school in this district would constitute a violation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or other federal or state law.

Sumter County Schools  
Date Adopted: 4/11/1996  
Revised: 5/22/2017

**BOARD POLICY****Descriptor Code: JBC (1)****Homeless Students**

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Homelessness exists in our community. A combination of high housing costs and poverty causes many families to lose their housing. Many young people leave their homes due to abuse, neglect and family conflict. Children and youth who have lost their housing live in a variety of places, including motels, shelters, shared residences, transitional housing programs, cars, campgrounds and others. Their lack of permanent housing can lead to potentially serious physical, emotional and mental consequences. Sumter County Schools will ensure that all children and youth receive a free appropriate public education and are given meaningful opportunities to succeed in our schools.

It is the policy of our district to view children as individuals. Therefore, throughout this policy, the term “children and youth in transition” will be used instead of homeless children. Under federal law, children and youth in transition must have access to appropriate public education, including preschool, and be given a full opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards. They must be included in state- and district- wide assessments and accountability systems. Sumter County Schools will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation and harassment.

Information regarding this policy will be: distributed to all students upon enrollment and once during the school year; provided to students who seek to withdraw from school; and posted in every school in the district, as well as other places where children, youth and families in transition receive services, including family and youth shelters, soup kitchens, motels, campgrounds, drop-in centers, welfare departments, health departments and other social service agencies.

Each year, schools that have been particularly creative or pro-active in implementing this policy will be publicly recognized for the benefits they provide their students.

**Definitions**

**Children and youth in transition** means children and youth who are otherwise legally entitled to or eligible for a free public education, including preschool, and lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, camping grounds or trailer parks due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- children and youth who are living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting; and
- migratory children and youth who are living in a situation described above.

A child or youth shall be considered to be in transition for as long as he or she is in a living situation described above.

**Unaccompanied youth** means a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who

is in transition as defined above. The more general term *youth* also includes unaccompanied youth.

**Enroll and enrollment** means attending school and participating fully in school activities.

**Immediate** means without delay.

**Parent** means a person having legal or physical custody of a child or youth.

**School of origin** means the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

**Liaison** means the staff person designated by our Local Educational Agency and each Local Educational Agency in the state as the person responsible for carrying out the duties assigned to the liaison by the McKinney-Vento Act.

### **Identification**

In collaboration with school personnel and community organizations, the liaison will identify children and youth in transition in the district, both in and out of school. The liaison will train school personnel on possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity in identifying families and youth as in transition, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the liaison. The liaison will also instruct school registrars and secretaries to inquire about possible homelessness upon the enrollment and withdrawal of every student, and to forward information indicating homelessness to the liaison.

The liaison will keep data on the number of children and youth in transition in the district, where they are living, their academic achievement (including performance on state- and district-wide assessments), and the reasons for any enrollment delays, interruptions in their education or school transfers.

### **School Selection**

Each child and youth in transition has the right to remain at his or her school of origin, or to attend any school that housed students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend. Maintaining a student in his or her school of origin is important for both the student and our school district. Students who change schools have been found to have lower test scores and overall academic performance than peers who do not change schools. High mobility rates have also been shown to lower test scores for stable students. Keeping students in their schools of origin enhances their academic and social growth, while permitting our schools to benefit from the increased test scores and achievement shown to result from student continuity.

Therefore, in selecting a school, children and youth in transition shall remain at their schools of origin to the extent feasible, unless that is against the parent's or youth's wishes. Students may remain at their schools of origin the entire time they are in transition, and until the end of any academic year in which they become permanently housed. The same applies if a child or youth loses his or her housing between academic years.

Feasibility shall be a child-centered determination, based on the needs and interests of the particular student and the wishes of the parent(s) or youth. Potential feasibility considerations include:

- Safety of the student;
- Continuity of instruction;
- Likely area of family's or youth's future housing;
- Time remaining in the academic year;

- Anticipated length of stay in temporary living situation;
- School placement of siblings; and
- Whether the student has special needs that would render the commute harmful.

Services that are required to be provided, including transportation to and from the school of origin (see below) and services under federal and other programs, shall not be considered in determining feasibility.

### **Enrollment**

Consistent, uninterrupted education is vital for academic achievement. Due to the realities of homelessness and mobility, students in transition may not have school enrollment documents readily available. Nonetheless, the school selected for enrollment must immediately enroll any child or youth in transition. Enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including:

- Proof of residency;
- Transcripts/school records (The enrolling school must contact the student's previous school to obtain school records. Initial placement of students whose records are not immediately available can be made based on the student's age and information gathered from the student, parent and previous schools or teachers.);
- Immunizations or immunization/health/medical/physical records (If necessary, the school must refer students to the liaison to assist with obtaining immunizations and/or immunization and other medical records. Health records may often be obtained from previous schools or state registries, and school- or community-based clinics can initiate immunizations when needed.);
- Proof of guardianship;
- Birth certificate;
- Any other document requirements;
- Unpaid school fees;
- Lack of uniforms or clothing that conforms to dress codes; and
- Any factor related to the student's living situation.

Unaccompanied youth must also be immediately enrolled in school. They may either enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling or liaison.

### **Transportation**

Without appropriate transportation, a student may not be able to continue attending his or her school of origin. To avoid such forced school transfers, at a parent's request, transportation shall be provided to and from the school of origin for a child or youth in transition. Transportation shall be provided for the entire time the child or youth has a right to attend that school, as defined above, including during the pendency of disputes. The liaison shall request transportation to and from the school of origin for unaccompanied youth. The length of the commute will only be considered in determining the feasibility of placement in the school of origin based on potential harm to the student, as discussed above. Parents and unaccompanied youth must be informed of this right to transportation before they select a school for attendance.

Schools and the liaison shall use the district transportation form to process transportation requests. Requests shall be processed and transportation arranged without delay. If the student in transition is living and attending school in this district, this district shall arrange transportation. If the student in transition is living in this district but attending school in another, or attending school in this district but living in another, this district will follow the inter-district transportation agreement to determine who must arrange transportation. It is this district's policy that inter-district disputes shall not result in a student in transition missing school. If such a dispute arises, this district will arrange transportation and immediately bring the matter to the attention of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.

In addition to receiving transportation to and from the school of origin upon request, children and youth in transition shall also be provided with other transportation services comparable to those offered to house students.

### **Services**

Children and youth in transition shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including:

- Transportation (as described above);
- Title I (as described below);
- Educational services for which the student meets eligibility criteria, including special education and related services and programs for English language learners;
- Vocational and technical education programs;
- Gifted and talented programs;
- School nutrition programs; and
- Before and after school programs.

The district recognizes that children and youth in transition suffer from disabilities at a disproportionate rate, yet frequently are not evaluated or provided appropriate special education and related services. To address this problem, evaluations of children and youth in transition suspected of having a disability shall be given priority and coordinated with students' prior and subsequent schools as necessary, to ensure timely completion of a full evaluation. When necessary, the district shall expeditiously designate a surrogate parent for unaccompanied youth suspected of having a disability. If a student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the enrolling school shall immediately implement it. Any necessary IEP meetings or reevaluations shall then be conducted expeditiously. If complete records are not available, IEP teams must use good judgment in choosing the best course of action, balancing procedural requirements and the provision of services. In all cases, the goal will be to avoid any disruption in appropriate services.

When applying any district policy regarding tardiness or absences, any tardiness or absence related to a child's or youth's living situation shall be excused. Our school district will follow state procedures to ensure that youth in transition and youth who are out of school are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services. School personnel shall refer children and youth in transition to appropriate health care services, including dental and mental health services. The liaison will assist the school in making such referrals, as necessary.

School personnel must also inform parents of all educational and related opportunities available to their children and provide parents with meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education. All parent information required by any provision of this policy must be provided in a form, manner and language understandable to each parent.

### **Disputes**

If a dispute arises over any issue covered in this policy, the child or youth in transition shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute. The student shall also have the rights of a student in transition to all appropriate educational services, transportation, free meals and Title I services while the dispute is pending.

The school where the dispute arises shall provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal and shall immediately refer the parent or youth to the liaison. The liaison shall ensure the student is enrolled in the school of his or her

choice and receiving other services to which he or she is entitled and shall resolve the dispute as expeditiously as possible. The parent or unaccompanied youth shall be given every opportunity to participate meaningfully in the resolution of the dispute. The liaison shall keep records of all disputes in order to determine whether particular issues or schools are repeatedly delaying or denying the enrollment of children and youth in transition.

The parent, unaccompanied youth or school district may appeal the liaison's decision as provided in the state's dispute resolution process.

### **Free Meals**

Hunger and poor nutrition are obvious barriers to learning. To help ensure that children and youth in transition are available for learning, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has determined that all children and youth in transition are automatically eligible for free meals. On the day a child or youth in transition enrolls in school, the enrolling school must submit the student's name to the district nutrition office for immediate processing.

### **Title I**

Children and youth in transition are automatically eligible for Title I services, regardless of what school they attend. The trauma and instability of homelessness puts students at sufficient risk of academic regression to warrant additional support. The district shall reserve such funds as are necessary to provide services comparable to those provided to Title I students to children and youth in transition attending non-participating schools. The amount reserved shall be determined by a formula based upon the per-pupil Title I expenditure and developed jointly by the liaison and the Title I director. Reserved funds will be used to provide educationally related support services to children and youth in transition, both in school and outside of school, and to remove barriers that prevent regular attendance.

Our district's Title I plan will be coordinated through collaboration between the Title I director and the liaison. Children and youth in transition shall be assessed, reported on and included in accountability systems, as required by federal law and U.S. Department of Education regulations and guidance.

### **Training**

The liaison will conduct training and sensitivity/awareness activities for the following LEA and school staff at least once each year: The Assistant Superintendent, principals, assistant principals, federal program administrators, registrars, school secretaries, school counselors, school social workers, bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, school nurses and teachers. The training and activities will be designed to increase staff awareness of homelessness, facilitate immediate enrollment, ensure compliance with this policy, and increase sensitivity to children and youth in transition.

The liaison shall also obtain from every school the name and contact information of a building liaison. Building liaisons will lead and coordinate their schools' compliance with this policy and will receive training from the district liaison annually.

### **Coordination**

The liaison shall coordinate with and seek support from the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, public and private service providers in the community, housing and placement agencies, the pupil transportation department, liaisons in neighboring districts and

other organizations and agencies. Coordination will include conducting outreach and training to those agencies and participating in the local continuum of care, homeless coalition, homeless steering committee, and other relevant groups. Both public and private agencies will be encouraged to support the liaison and our schools in implementing this policy.

## **Preschool**

Preschool education is a very important element of later academic success. Children in transition have experienced many difficulties accessing preschool opportunities. To facilitate preschool enrollment and attendance, the provisions of this policy will apply to preschools. Our district will ensure that children in transition receive priority enrollment in preschool programs operated by the district, including exempting children in transition from waiting lists.

Children in transition with disabilities will be referred for preschool services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Children in transition under age three will be referred for at-risk services under Part C of IDEA and screened to determine if referrals for additional Part C services are appropriate. The liaison will collaborate with Head Start and Even Start programs and other preschool programs to ensure that children in transition can access those programs.

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Sumter County Schools

Adopted: 6/13/2002

Revised: 8/13/2020

## **COMPUTER USE**

### **Appropriate Use Policy of Sumter County Schools Computers and Network Resources**

Sumter County Schools recognizes that access to technology in and out of school gives students greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21<sup>st</sup>-century technology and communication skills.

To that end, we provide access to technologies for student and staff use.

This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviors that users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices on the school campus and or network.

- The Sumter County Schools network is intended for educational purposes.
- All activity over the network or using district technologies may be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary action.
- Sumter County Schools makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school

technologies.

- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected to alert IT staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

### **Technologies Covered**

Sumter County Schools may provide Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more.

As new technologies emerge, Sumter County Schools will attempt to provide access to them. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover *all* available technologies, not just those specifically listed.

### **Usage Policies**

All technologies provided by the district are intended for education purposes. All users are expected to use good judgment and to follow the specifics of this document as well as the spirit of it: be safe, appropriate, careful and kind; don't try to get around technological protection measures; use good common sense; and ask if you don't know.

### **Web Access**

Sumter County Schools provides its users with access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. That access will be restricted in compliance with CIPA regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely.

Users are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution, and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a user believes it shouldn't be, the user should follow district protocol to alert an IT staff member or submit the site for review.

### **Email**

Sumter County Schools may provide users with email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies.

If users are provided with email accounts, they should be used with care. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origin; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher.

Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage may be monitored and archived.

### **Social/Web 2.0 / Collaborative Content**

Recognizing the benefits collaboration brings to education, Sumter County Schools may provide users with access to web sites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users.

Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Users should be careful not to share personally-identifying information online.

**Mobile Devices Policy**

Sumter County Schools may provide users with mobile computers or other devices to promote learning outside of the classroom. Users should abide by the same acceptable use policies when using school devices off the school network as on the school network.

Users are expected to treat these devices with extreme care and caution; these are expensive devices that the school is entrusting to your care. Users should report any loss, damage, or malfunction to IT staff immediately. Users will be financially accountable for any damage resulting from negligence or misuse.

Use of school-issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored.

**Personally-Owned Devices Policy**

Students should keep personally-owned devices (including laptops, tablets, smart phones, and cell phones) turned off and put away during school hours—unless in the event of an emergency or as instructed by a teacher or staff for educational purposes.

Because of security concerns, when personally-owned mobile devices are used on campus, they should not be used over the school network without express permission from IT staff. In some cases, a separate network may be provided for personally-owned devices.

**Security**

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. If you believe a computer or mobile device you are using might be infected with a virus, please alert IT. Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or download any programs to help remove the virus.

**Downloads**

Users should not download or attempt to download or run .exe programs over the school network or onto school resources without express permission from IT staff.

You may be able to download other file types, such as images or videos. For the security of our network, download such files only from reputable sites, and only for education purposes.

**Netiquette**

Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.

Users should also recognize that among the valuable content online is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet. Users should also remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

**Plagiarism**

Users should not plagiarize (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet. Users should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online.

Research conducted via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

### **Personal Safety**

Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life without parental permission.

If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

### **Examples of Acceptable Use**

I will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, and posts) online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.
- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

### **Examples of Unacceptable Use**

I will **not**:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- Attempt to find inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarize content I find online.
- Post personally-identifying information, about myself or others.
- Agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that isn't intended for my use.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

### **Limitation of Liability**

Sumter County Schools will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

While Sumter County Schools employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness.

Sumter County Schools will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

### **Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy**

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges
- Notification to parents
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities
- Legal action and/or prosecution

## SCHOOL-PARENT-STUDENT COMPACT

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Sumter County Intermediate School students participating in the Title I, Part A program, and their families, agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement as well as describes how school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards. To understand how working together can benefit your child, it is first important to understand our district's and school's goals for student academic achievement.

**Sumter County District and Sumter County Intermediate School's Goal:**

*Increase the percentage of students scoring at the **DEVELOPING LEARNER** Level and above by 4% in all core content areas by the end of the 2025-2026 school year as measured by the Georgia Milestones Assessment.*

To help your child meet the district and school goals, the school, you, and your child will work together to:

**School Responsibilities:**

1. **We** will provide weekly homework assignments in reading and math
2. We will attend and support monthly Title I Parent engagement meetings to help parents understand academic expectations
3. **We will** communicate with parents about their child's progress through regularly two-way communication via Class Dojo, phone call/Google meet, and/or text messages.
4. We will incorporate writing across the curriculum.
5. We will be available for consultations with parents during the planning period, after school, and during Parent-Teacher Conferences in which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual student's achievement.

**Parent Responsibilities:**

1. I will ensure that my child completes all reading and math homework assignments and reviews it with him/her before signing.
2. I will attend at least 5 Title I Parent Engagement Meetings and 2 Parent-Teacher Conferences throughout the 2020-2021 School year.
3. I will log on to the Parent Portal in Infinite Campus at least once per week to monitor my child's attendance, assignments, and grades.
4. I will review and listen to my child read his/her writing homework assignments.
5. I will keep lines of communication open and collaborate with my child's teachers as it relates to student progress

**Student Responsibilities:**

1. I will independently complete reading and math homework assignments, review it with parents and bring a signed copy back to school.
2. I will attend Title I parent meetings with my parents and participate in the parent/teacher conferences.
3. I will make sure to give my parents the Wednesday Curriers, agendas, and any form of communication sent by the school.
4. I will complete homework writing assignments and share with my parents.
5. I will take home or bring to school any written communication between my parents and teachers

**Please sign and date below to acknowledge that you have read, received, and agree to this School-Parent Compact. Once signed, please return the form to your child's teacher. We look forward to our school-parent partnership!**

School Representative Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## AFFIRMATION OF KNOWLEDGE

**I have READ and STUDIED the contents of this HANDBOOK. With my signature below, I am saying that I am aware of the:**

- (1.) Attendance (Absences and Excuses),
- (2.) Attendance Law,
- (3.) Car Rider Procedures,
- (4.) Checkout Procedures,
- (5.) Morning Procedures,
- (6.) Student Dress Code,
- (7.) Transportation Changes,
- (8.) SCS Student Behavior Code and the Offenses and Consequences,
- (9.) SCS Transportation Manual (Safe Student Riding Instructions),
- (10.) School Bus Discipline Policy,
- (11.) Computer Use/Appropriate Use Policy,
- (12.) Student Acceptable Use Guidelines, and
- (13.) Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy at my child's school, *Sumter County Intermediate*.



**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE AND RETURN BY September 1, 2025.**

**Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**

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\_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the policies set forth in this  
(Print Student Name)  
**edition of the Sumter County Intermediate School Handbook. Furthermore, I agree to abide by these policies.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian's Signature**      **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student's Signature**      **Date**

# Sumter County Schools

## *Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Agreement*

**STUDENT'S FULL NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **SS#** \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Homeroom Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **SUMTER COUNTY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Agreement: (If under 18 years of age.)**

**Signature required for all students' Internet Access Privileges**

As the parent or guardian of this child, I have read the Sumter County School Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Terms and Conditions. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes and that the Sumter County School System has taken some available precautions to eliminate controversial materials. I will not hold the Sumter County School System responsible for materials acquired on the Internet. I hereby give permission to issue Internet privileges for my child and certify that the information contained on this form is correct. I may withdraw my permission at any time and my child's access privileges will be canceled within 24 hours (working days only). I understand that the Sumter County School System may cancel my child's access privileges at any time for Internet policy violation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

### **Student Agreement:**

I understand and will abide by the Sumter County School System Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Terms and Conditions. I further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be initiated?

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**User Name (Please Print):** \_\_\_\_\_



## SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS IMAGE-NEWS RELEASE FORM

I, the undersigned, being the parent or legal guardian of the below named student, do hereby grant permission for the student's name to appear in photographs or in video tape to be used by Sumter County Schools, their Board of Education and other video media organizations. This permission is not limited to inclusion in newspaper articles, school publications, social media, and/or Georgia Movie Academy. I further release the Sumter County Board of Education, Sumter County Schools, and any of its representatives, agents, and employees from any liability related to the creation or use of a student's image, excepting only such injuries or damages resulting from the willing act of said representatives, agents or employees.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home or Cell Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Name and Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

### AFFIRMATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Please read and sign this section and return to your child's school.

### PARENT *OPT-OUT* CLUB PARTICIPATION

I hereby acknowledge receipt of information regarding student clubs that are scheduled to be operational at the school during the current school year. I understand that if a club for which information has not been provided is started after this information is distributed, I will be provided the club information at that time and my written permission will be required prior to my student's participation.

I **DO NOT** wish for my child to **participate** in the following club(s).

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date