

# **Piedmont City School District**

## **Code of Student Conduct**



Revised August 12, 2024

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## **PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE**

The Piedmont City Board of Education believes that its schools should create an environment that is conducive to learning, free from unnecessary distractions and disturbances, and supportive of the effective functions of students, personnel, and the school. Furthermore, the Board believes the school should foster a friendly, purpose-driven atmosphere in which students and school personnel work cooperatively toward mutual goals.

As students progress in our public schools, it is expected that age and greater maturity should result in assuming greater responsibility for their actions. It is recognized that differences in age and maturity require different types or degrees of disciplinary action. The procedures identified in this document shall apply to all students in grades K-12. Each school within the Piedmont City School District (PCSD) will also establish specific age-appropriate guidelines for their respective student bodies in their school handbooks.

This Code of Student Conduct is designed to accomplish the following:

- Describe the roles of the home, student, and school in guiding student conduct.
- Identify student responsibilities and rights.
- Identify classifications of violations and describe procedures for disciplinary action.
- Explain due process procedures.
- Provide staff, students, and parents a guide for expected student conduct in the PCSD

## **KNOWLEDGE AND OBSERVATION OF RULES OF CONDUCT**

Student Responsibilities:

- To abide by laws, Board of Education policies, and individual school rules and policies regarding rules of conduct
- To document receipt of the Code of Student Conduct

Student Rights:

- To be informed of laws, Board of Education policies, and individual school rules and policies regarding rules of conduct
- To be informed of specific grounds of violations of the Code of Student Conduct

## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

The Piedmont City School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities or employment, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person(s) has been designated to address inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and the application of Title IX and its regulations to the Board:

***Rachel Smith, Title IX Coordinator, 502 Hood Street West, Piedmont, AL 36272, 256-447-8831, [rsmith@pcsboe.us](mailto:rsmith@pcsboe.us)***

***Debra Ledbetter, 504 Coordinator, 504 Hood Street, Piedmont, AL 36272, 256-447-7483, [dledbetter@pcsboe.us](mailto:dledbetter@pcsboe.us)***

***Revonda Pruitt, Title II Coordinator, 506 Hood Street, Piedmont, AL 36272, 256-447-9481, [rpruitt@pcsboe.us](mailto:rpruitt@pcsboe.us)***

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit

<http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm> for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

## **JURISDICTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Students enrolled in Piedmont City Schools are subject to the policies of the Piedmont City Board of Education and to the rules and regulations of the schools. Furthermore, the authority of school officials to manage student conduct off school campus and outside normal school hours is well

established in the law. When students are engaged in school-sponsored activities, the authority of school officials is the same as for activities that take place during school. This authority applies to all school-sponsored activities on school property or at other venues used by the school or school organization including but not limited to the following: field trips, athletic events, club and organization meetings, school-sponsored social events, school groups representing the school system in educational events, school related transportation by school bus or private automobile, and all activities where appropriate school personnel have jurisdiction over students. Similarly, all school regulations and prohibitions shall apply to automobiles driven or parked on school property or at establishments used for school activities. Jurisdictional control over the student shall also be extended to the immediate vicinity of the school when the conduct of the student is detrimental to school property or to the health, safety, and welfare of school personnel and students.

The school may exercise jurisdiction to discipline students for off-campus conduct unrelated to school activities under appropriate circumstances. Disciplinary actions may be imposed for serious misconduct away from campus whether or not school is in session when such conduct occurs if, after investigation by school officials, such off-campus activities may be reasonably deemed to threaten the ability of the district to maintain a safe, orderly, and disciplined educational environment. This policy is not limited to school-related events only.

### **ROLE OF THE HOME, STUDENT, SCHOOL, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

In order for schools to operate safely and efficiently, there must be a cooperative relationship among students, parents/guardians, and educators. The following expectations should guide the cooperative relationship amongst these groups.

#### **Parents or Guardians should:**

- maintain regular communications with the school authorities concerning their child's progress and conduct
- ensure that their child is in daily attendance and promptly report and explain any absences and/or tardiness in writing
- provide their child with the resources needed to complete class work
- assist their child in being healthy, neat, clean, and appropriately dressed
- bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition which affects their child or other children of the school
- discuss report cards and work assignments with their child
- discuss penalties and consequences of violation of school rules with their child
- maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers at the school

#### **Students should:**

- attend all classes daily and be punctual in attendance
- be prepared in class with appropriate working materials
- be responsible for their work
- be respectful to all individuals and respect their property
- refrain from profane language, obscene gestures, or inflammatory statements
- conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner
- be healthy, clean, neat, and appropriately dressed
- abide by the rules and guidelines of the school and teachers
- seek changes in an acceptable manner

#### **Schools should:**

- encourage effective guidance procedures
- maintain an atmosphere conducive to good behavior
- provide a flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all students
- maintain effective discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students

- encourage the school staff, parents / guardians, and students to use the services of community agencies
- engage in regular parental communication with the school
- encourage parent involvement in affairs of the school
- involve students and parents in the development of rules and regulations
- involve the entire community in the improvement of the quality of life

School Personnel should:

- be regular and punctual in attendance
- perform their duties efficiently and effectively
- respect other individuals and their property
- refrain from the use of profanity or inflammatory statements
- conduct themselves in a professional and responsible manner
- be healthy, clean, neat, and appropriately dressed
- adhere to the policies prescribed by the Board of Education and to the rules and regulations established by the school
- participate in activities designed to promote professional development
- utilize a variety of disciplinary and guidance methods which may include the following:
  - conferences and/or contacts between administrator(s), parent(s), and student(s)
  - referral to appropriate personnel for counseling
  - adjustments in student's program
  - referral of specific problems to appropriate community agencies.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS**

Individual student rights involve responsibilities that must be viewed in relation to the health, safety, and welfare of the majority of students within each school. The Principal assumes administrative responsibility and provides instructional leadership under the supervision of the Superintendent and in accordance with established policies of the Board of Education. The faculty and staff assist in the safe and orderly operation of the school and assure the rights of students.

**DUE PROCESS**

All students are entitled to, and shall receive, due process in all discipline matters.

The degree of due process afforded shall be dependent upon the gravity of the offense a student is alleged to have committed and the severity of the contemplated punishment.

Disciplinary authority must be exercised with fairness. Before being punished for violation of Board policies or school regulations, a student shall have the right of the following minimum due process procedures:

- The student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against him/her.
- The evidence against the student shall be explained to him/her.
- The student shall be given the opportunity to present his or her own version of the facts concerning the charges.

The local school administration shall ensure that all disciplinary actions are administered in accordance with the minimum due process requirements noted above. The school administration shall maintain a written record of all disciplinary actions, and of the procedures followed in determining such action, in accordance with Board policy. A record of all required written notices and disciplinary procedures shall be maintained by the school administration in such form as may be required by the Superintendent.

In the event the parent or guardian believes the school Principal's decision violates Board policy, the parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the Superintendent or his designee for a

determination of whether the disciplinary action is in accordance with Board policy. All such requests must be in writing, and must be received by the Superintendent within three days of the date on which the Principal's written decision is received by the parent. The Superintendent may make such determination on the basis of the written record, or may conduct interviews of the parties involved or such other investigation, as the Superintendent deems appropriate. The Superintendent will issue a written decision to the parent/guardian and the school Principal within a reasonable time.

In the event that the discipline falls into one of the following categories, the process utilized is below:

- Alternative school for more than 15 school days;
- Suspension from the regular school environment for 11-89 school days; or
- Expulsion from the regular school environment for 91-179 school days.

The “regular school environment” is defined as the learning environment provided by the local board, which includes in-school suspension and virtual school.

At a minimum, each system must provide at least the following in its discipline procedure if it is recommended that a student received covered discipline:

- The student is given reasonable written notice of the hearing delivered personally or by mail that includes:
  - The date, time, place, and nature of the hearing;
  - A short and plain statement detailing the alleged conduct the student is accused of;
  - The provision of the Code of Student Conduct or state law violated;
  - The proposed discipline;
  - The student’s rights at the hearing (e.g. to testify, present evidence, have counsel, etc.); and
  - The student’s right to waive the hearing and accept the discipline.
- At least five days before the hearing, the student, parent or guardian, and legal counsel or advocate may review any evidence that may be used against them at the hearing (e.g. documents, video, written statements, etc.);
- If requested, the hearing is held within 10 school days of the student’s initial suspension;
- The hearing is held before the board or designee to decide if the student violated the Code of Student Conduct or the law;
- An electronic or written record of the hearing is provided to the student, upon request; and
- A written decision is issued within five school days of the hearing; that contains:
  - The provision of the Code of Student Conduct or state law that the student is accused of violating;
  - A statement detailing the information that will be included in the student’s official record; and
  - A statement detailing how the student can appeal the decision pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct and Ala. Code §12-15-115 which is an appeal to the juvenile court.

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

### **PURPOSE**

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

### **DEFINITIONS**

*Grievance* - Grievance shall mean a claim submitted by a student or group of students of a violation of human or citizenship rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution, federal or state law, a misinterpretation of the Board of Education policy by professional staff members, a misapplication of

administrative rules and regulations by professional staff members.

*Student* - Student shall mean any person currently enrolled in a school operated under the authority of the Piedmont City Board of Education.

*Days* - Days shall mean school days exclusive of Saturday, Sunday, or official holidays, as established by the school calendar.

*Parties in Interest* - Any persons involved in the processing of a grievance.

### **INFORMAL PROCEDURE**

Most grievances can be resolved informally and at the immediate level of supervision. The parent or guardian of a student shall have the right to request review of the disciplinary action by the school Principal. The Board of Education advises the public that the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, personnel, or learning material is as follows:

1. Teacher
2. Principal
3. Superintendent of Schools
4. Board of Education

With this objective in mind, simple and honest communication is encouraged between students, teachers, and/or administrators. Parents or guardians should feel free to communicate with teachers and Principals at any point in the procedure. A student who feels he/she has a grievance should present the matter orally to his or her teacher if the teacher is in a position to resolve the grievance. If the teacher is not in a position to resolve the grievance, the matter should be presented to the Assistant Principal. If not resolved by the Assistant Principal, the grievance should be presented to the Principal. The Principal shall attempt to resolve the grievance within five (5) days from the time presented and advise the grievant of the decision within two (2) days thereafter. If the grievance is resolved, or if no further action is needed, the matter is closed.

### **FORMAL PROCEDURE**

If the grievance is not resolved through the informal procedure, a student and/or his or her parent/guardian may present a formal grievance. The grievance must be filed in writing at each level and the grievant shall indicate with this filing at each level that will accompany or represent him in any meetings or hearings that might be conducted. All meetings and hearings shall be conducted at a specified time, which does not interfere with the student's scheduled classes or activities. All decisions at each level shall be recorded in writing and filed for future reference.

#### **Level 1 - Principal**

Representation--The grievant must present the grievance, but may be accompanied by a parent or guardian, a fellow student, or a faculty member of the student's choice.

The aggrieved party shall file the grievance in writing with the Principal and the aggrieved party shall sign the grievance. The Principal shall set a time to discuss the grievance that is mutually convenient for the parties-in-interest and shall seek an amicable solution to the problem. Within 5 days after receipt of the grievance, the Principal shall hear the grievance and within 2 days after hearing the grievance shall notify the aggrieved party in writing of the final decision. If the Principal does not resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the aggrieved at level one, the grievant may appeal within 10 days to the Superintendent.

#### **Level 2 - Superintendent**

Representation--The grievant must present the grievance initially, but may be represented by anyone of his choosing. If represented by legal counsel, superintendent must be notified prior to hearing.

Within 10 days after receipt of the decision at level one, the aggrieved party and/or his parent or guardian may appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall, within a 10-day period following the appeal do one or more of the following, as he may deem appropriate:

- Review written decisions at level one together with any and all other documentary evidence that may be submitted.
- Conduct a hearing with all persons whom he may choose to invite including, however, the Principal parties.
- Designate such person or person as he deem appropriate to investigate the grievance and to offer recommendations prior to making his final decision.

After the Superintendent initiates one or more of the options listed above, he shall within 7 days make a final decision on the appeal and notify the grievant in writing of this decision. A copy of such written notification shall be provided to the Principal.

### **Level 3 - Board of Education**

Representation--The grievant and his or her parent or guardian must be present, but he may be represented by anyone of his choosing, including legal counsel.

Within 10 days after the receipt of the decision at level two, the aggrieved party or his parent or guardian may appeal to the Board of Education. The Board shall conduct a hearing at the next regular scheduled meeting of the Board. The hearing may be an open or closed session as requested by the grievant and his parent or guardian and all parties-in-interest shall be permitted to attend. The Board shall reach a decision concerning the grievance within 10 days after the hearing and shall convey the decision to the grievant and his parent or guardian within 2 days after reaching the decision.



## **DISCIPLINARY METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

The following disciplinary methods and procedures shall be implemented in accordance with Board policy and an applicable degree of due process shall be followed in each instance. This listing of disciplinary methods is not all-inclusive, and is not meant to suggest that the Board disapproves other reasonable disciplinary actions.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/teacher conferences are a vital part of a child's education. Teachers and parent/guardian should schedule at least one conference each year. No conference is to take place during a teacher's instructional time. All parents are urged to request and attend other conferences as needed. Appointments may be made through the office. Parent conferences may be scheduled to discuss a student's disciplinary plan.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION**

Disciplinary probation is a period of time specified by the Superintendent, Principal, or his or her designee, during which a student must correct his or her behavior while abiding by all other school regulations. The staff members involved in the action will assist in monitoring the student's adjustment to the school environment.

### **DISCIPLINARY WORK ASSIGNMENT**

The Principal, or his or her designee, has the authority to assign supervised activities related to the upkeep and maintenance of school facilities for a reasonable and specified period of time. Work assignments shall not interfere with any student's regular class schedule. A parent or guardian will be notified prior to the student's placement in a work assignment and will be responsible for transportation.

### **AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION**

The Board authorizes the Principal to use a reasonable period of time after school as discipline for student misconduct. Such detention shall be properly supervised in a designated room (detention hall). The parent/guardian must be notified of misconduct and must arrange proper transportation before the student is sent to after-school detention.

### **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

In-school suspension (ISS) is a structured disciplinary action in which a student is isolated or removed from regular classroom activities but not dismissed from the school setting. The Principal, or his or her designee, has the authority to assign students to the ISS program for a reasonable and specified period of time consistent with Board policy. Students assigned to the ISS program will be counted present to school and will be allowed to continue or make up their academic work in accordance with Board policy. Students assigned to ISS may be required to perform written work assignments as directed by the ISS supervisor. Students may continue to participate in extracurricular activities with approval of the Principal.

### **SCHOOL-BUS SUSPENSION**

Bus students must comply with county bus rules. Rule violations may lead to suspension from the bus. No student will be allowed to ride the bus unless his or her residence is on that bus route. The Principal, or his or her designee, has the authority to deny a student the privilege of riding a bus. This denial, based on the misconduct of the student, will be for a reasonable and specified period of time. A parent or guardian will be notified prior to suspension from the bus and will be responsible for providing transportation in such cases.

### **SATURDAY SCHOOL**

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent the right to establish a Saturday morning school detention program for discipline of student misconduct under the supervision

of a Principal or designee. Saturday School will be scheduled by the administration as needed.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Piedmont City Schools does not utilize corporal punishment administered by school personnel.

### **HOME REFERRAL**

Home referral is the temporary removal of a student from classes until a parent / guardian can meet with the Principal or designee. The student may return to class upon completion of the conference. Failure to comply with home referral may result in more serious disciplinary actions.

### **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

Suspension is the temporary removal of a student from the school environment for violation of school rules and regulations. The Principal, or his or her designee, has the authority to suspend a student from school. All suspensions will be in accordance with prescribed Board policy. A student recommended for suspension will be made aware of the charges and given an opportunity to respond. Any time an action warrants suspension, a reasonable effort will be made to contact a parent or guardian by telephone or written notice delivered by the student or U.S. mail. The student is responsible for notifying his or her parent / guardian of all written communications from the school. Failure to do so may result in further disciplinary action. Further, students may not participate in extracurricular or other school activities while suspended.

### **ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL**

The Superintendent, or his designee, for disciplinary reasons may assign students to the Alternative School. The school Principal has the responsibility to recommend consideration of Alternative School placement to the Superintendent. A student may be suspended by the Principal in accordance with Board policy pending a hearing before the Superintendent or his designee regarding Alternative School placement. If a recommendation for Alternative School placement is made, the Principal shall notify, in writing, with a copy to the Superintendent, the student and parent or legal guardian of the suspension or other disciplinary action taken, the additional action recommended, and the cause(s) for such action and recommendation. Students are assigned to the Alternative School for a specified length of time, which is subject to increase dependent upon the student's successful compliance with the Alternative School program, including regular attendance and acceptable behavior and work performance. Failure and/or unwillingness to comply with requirements of the Alternative School program may result in a recommendation for expulsion from Piedmont City Schools. If a student withdraws from Piedmont City Schools during a pending Alternative School recommendation or assignment, the pending matter must be addressed and appropriate Alternative School time must be served upon the student's return to the school system. During assignment to Alternative School, students are not permitted to be present on the regular school campus or at school-sponsored activities.

Students with disabilities may be assigned to the Alternative School upon the action and recommendation of the appropriate committee and the Special Education/ Section 504 Coordinator, in accordance with the Procedures for Handling Misbehavior of Students with Disabilities mandated by the Board.

### **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school in the Piedmont City School System for violation of school rules or regulations. In the case of offenses warranting such action, the Principal has the responsibility to recommend student expulsion to the Superintendent in accordance with Board policy. The board is ultimately responsible for determining expulsion, pending due process (see p. 6-8) or expulsion procedures followed by the administrative staff. The hearing relative to expulsion and preliminary steps shall comply with due process. If a student is recommended for expulsion, the local school Principal shall notify, in writing, with a copy to the Superintendent, the student and parent or legal guardian of the action taken and the additional action recommended and

the cause(s) for such action and recommendation. Upon receipt of such recommendation, the Superintendent shall promptly notify in writing the student and parent or guardian of the time and place for the hearing and the process to be followed in considering the recommendation for expulsion. The hearing relative to expulsion, as well as all preliminary steps concerning the hearing and recommendation, shall fully comply with applicable due process criteria. The board hereby advises parents/guardians of their responsibility for the conduct of their children based on Legislative Act No 93-672 and Legislative Act 94-782, which amend Section 16-28-12 of the CODE OF ALABAMA. These Acts have important implications for parents and students of the school district. Applicable sections of the CODE OF ALABAMA now read as follows:

**Universal Citation:** [AL Code § 16-28-12 \(2018\)](#)

**Section 16-28-12**

Person in loco parentis responsible for child's school attendance and behavior; noncompliance; local boards to promulgate written behavior policy, contents, annual distribution, receipt to be documented; school officials required to report noncompliance; failure to report suspected violation; district attorneys vigorously to enforce provisions.

(a) Each parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of any child required to attend school or receive regular instruction by a private tutor who fails to have the child enrolled in school or who fails to send the child to school, or have him or her instructed by a private tutor during the time the child is required to attend a public school, private school, church school, denominational school, or parochial school, or be instructed by a private tutor, or fails to require the child to regularly attend the school or tutor, or fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in any public school in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education pursuant to this section and documented by the appropriate school official which conduct may result in the suspension of the pupil, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) and may also be sentenced to hard labor for the county for not more than 90 days. The absence of a child without the consent of the principal teacher of the public school he or she attends or should attend, or of the tutor who instructs or should instruct the child, shall be prima facie evidence of the violation of this section.

(b) Each local public board of education shall adopt a written policy for its standards on school behavior. Each local public school superintendent shall provide at the commencement of each academic year a copy of the written policy on school behavior to each parent, guardian, or other person having care or control of a child who is enrolled. Included in the written policy shall be a copy of this section. The signature of the student and the parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of the child shall document receipt of the policy.

(c) Any parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of any child enrolled in public school who fails to require the child to regularly attend the school or tutor, or fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education and documented by the appropriate school official which conduct may result in the suspension of the pupil, shall be reported by the principal to the superintendent of education of the school system in which the suspected violation occurred. The superintendent of education or his or her designee shall report suspected violations to the district attorney within 10 days. Any principal or superintendent of education or his or her designee intentionally failing to report a suspected violation shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor. The district attorney shall vigorously enforce this section to ensure proper conduct and required attendance by any child enrolled in public school.

*(School Code 1927, §305; Code 1940, T. 52, §302; Acts 1993, No. 93-672, p. 1213, §1; Acts 1994, 1st Ex. Sess., No. 94-782, p. 70, §1.)*

**NOTIFICATION OF LEGAL AUTHORITIES**

In situations where notification or involvement of legal authorities is warranted and/or is required by law, school officials are authorized and encouraged to contact law enforcement officials for assistance. Incidents involving violations of Board policy concerning trespassing, drugs, alcohol,

firearms and/or other deadly weapons, physical violence, property damage, and the like may require intervention by law enforcement officials, up to and including arrest and/or immediate removal of the student from the school environment.

## **SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT**

This policy shall apply to treatment of all students attending Piedmont City Schools in accordance *Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-.02 (1) (f)* and guidance from the Alabama State Department of Education.

### **Prohibition on the Use of Seclusion**

Piedmont City Schools prohibits the use of *seclusion*, which is defined as a procedure that isolates and confines the student in a separate, locked area until he or she is no longer an immediate danger to himself, herself, or others. Prohibited seclusion does NOT include the following, and therefore may be allowed as necessary:

- 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
- In-school suspension or detention
- A student-requested break in a different location in the room or in a separate room
- *Time-Out* is a behavioral intervention in which the student is temporarily removed from the learning activity. Time-out is appropriately used when:
  - The non-locking setting used for time-out is appropriately lighted, ventilated, and heated or cooled.
  - The duration of the time-out is reasonable in light of the purpose of the time-out and the age of the child.
  - An attending adult who is in proximity of the student while in time-out reasonably monitors the student.
  - The time-out space is free of objects that unreasonably expose the student or others to harm.

### **Prohibited Forms of Restraint**

*Chemical Restraint*- any medication that is used to control violent physical behavior or restrict the student's freedom of movement that is not a prescribed treatment for the student's medical or psychiatric condition.

*Mechanical Restraint*- the use of any device or material attached to or adjacent to a student's body that is intended to restrict the normal freedom of movement and which cannot be easily removed by the student. However, prohibited mechanical restraint DOES NOT INCLUDE (therefore it is allowed) an adaptive or protective device recommended by a physician or therapist when used as recommended by the physician or therapist to promote normative body positioning and physical functioning, and/or to prevent self-injurious behavior. In addition, mechanical restraint does not include seatbelts and other safety equipment when used to secure students during transportation.

*Prone Restraint* or any method (face down, face up, or on your side) of physical restraint in which physical pressure is applied to the student's body in a manner that restricts the flow of the air to the student's lungs.

### **Limitations on the Use of Physical Restraint**

*Physical Restraint* is defined as direct physical contact from an adult that prevents or significantly restricts a student's movement. Physical restraint is prohibited except in those situations in which the student is in 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.

Physical Restraint does not include the following (therefore may be allowed):

- Providing limited physical contact and/or redirection to promote student safety or to prevent

- self-injurious behavior.
- Providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill.
- Redirecting attention
- Providing guidance to a location
- Providing comfort
- Providing limited physical contact as reasonably needed to prevent imminent destruction to school or another person's property.

Restraint should never be used as a form of discipline or punishment.

### **Procedures for Use of Physical Restraint**

Applicable faculty and staff shall participate in training on the utilization of physical restraint and appropriate policies. Personnel participating in, or supervising the use of, physical restraint shall submit documentation of each incident. When physical restraint is utilized, school officials shall notify parents within a reasonable time not to exceed one school day following the use of the restraint.

School personnel involved in each incident of physical restraint, together with other personnel as appropriate, shall participate in a debriefing session for the purpose of planning to prevent or reduce reoccurrence of the use of restraint. Documentation of physical restraint and / or isolation shall be submitted for review to the Superintendent or designee at the Central Office on a monthly basis. Any prohibited use of seclusion or chemical, mechanical, or physical restraint shall be promptly reported to the Superintendent.

On at least an annual basis, the Superintendent or designee shall provide a summary report to the Board regarding the documented use of physical restraint, as well as any prohibited use of seclusion or chemical, mechanical or physical restraint. Reports shall also be made to the Alabama Department of Education in such format and in such frequency as required by law or regulation.

### **Authority of School Personnel**

Nothing in this policy shall be constructed to interfere with, eliminate, restrict, or modify the authority or right of the Piedmont City Schools, its schools, programs, officials, or personnel:

- To utilize time-out (as herein defined) or any other classroom management technique or approach, including a student's removal from the classroom, not specifically addressed in this policy
- To take action and use reasonable force as permitted under the Code of Alabama (2018) 16-1-14
- To implement rules and procedures governing discipline under the Code of Alabama (2018) 16-28-12:
- To take reasonable action to diffuse or break up a student fight or altercation
- To take reasonable action to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object on a student's person or within control of a student
- To use discretion in the use of physical restraint to protect students or others from imminent harm or bodily injury

Nothing in this policy shall be constructed to create a criminal offense or private cause of action against the Piedmont City Board of Education, its members, schools, programs, agents or employees.

### **Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical Personnel**

In some instances in which a student is an immediate danger to himself or herself or others, school personnel must determine when it is necessary to seek assistance from the 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. Parents shall be notified when students are removed from the school or program setting by emergency medical or law enforcement personnel.

## **CLASSIFICATIONS OF VIOLATIONS AND SANCTIONS**

The Piedmont City Board of Education feels that it is fundamental that an orderly school has clearly defined behaviors to which students must conform. Violations are grouped into three classes ranging from least to most severe. Non-conformity to these behaviors becomes violations of the Code of Student Conduct. Administrators and appropriate school personnel shall investigate, verify, and take the necessary action to resolve student misconduct. After determining a violation and the classification of the violation, the Principal or his or her designee will implement the appropriate sanction.

Violations apply to student conduct on a school campus, at school related events, or while being transported to or from school or school-related events. Below is a listing of each class of violations sanctions for the Piedmont City School district.

### **Class I Violations**

- 1.01 Distraction of other students
- 1.02 Intimidation of a student
- 1.03 Unauthorized organizations
- 1.04 Tardiness
- 1.05 Non-direct use of profane language or obscene manifestation
- 1.06 Non-conformity to dress code
- 1.07 Disruption on a school bus
- 1.08 Inappropriate public display of affection
- 1.09 Failure to follow directive / disobedience
- 1.10 Unauthorized absence from class or school / skipping
- 1.11 Refusal to complete class assignments
- 1.12 Unauthorized use of school or personal property
- 1.13 Littering on school property
- 1.14 Any other violation the Principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after investigation

### **Class I Sanctions**

1. Conference with the student
2. Temporary withdrawal of privilege(s)
3. Parent conference(s)
4. Demerit(s)
5. In-school suspension
6. Classroom discipline
7. After-school detention
8. Saturday school
9. Home referral
10. Disciplinary probation
11. Other sanctions as approved by the local board of education

### **Class II Violations**

- 2.01 Refusal to follow directive from a local board of education employee / defiance
- 2.02 Vandalism/property damage
- 2.03 Theft of property up to \$100 in value
- 2.04 Gambling
- 2.05 Knowingly in possession of stolen property
- 2.06 Threats / extortion / bullying
- 2.07 Trespassing
- 2.08 Direct use of profane language or obscene manifestations (verbal, written, gesture directed towards another person)

- 2.09 Unauthorized absence from school for a day or more
- 2.10 Written or verbal proposition to engage in sexual acts
- 2.11 Inappropriate or unwelcome touching of another person
- 2.12 Possession and/or use of matches or lighters
- 2.13 Unauthorized use of electronic communication device
- 2.14 Cheating / plagiarism
- 2.15 Intentionally providing false information to a local board of education employee
- 2.16 Failure to complete alternative assigned punishment
- 2.17 Internet violations
- 2.18 Disruptive conflict that does not become physical
- 2.19 4<sup>th</sup> repeated Class I violation
- 2.20 Any other violation which the Principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after investigation

### **Class II Sanctions**

- 1. Extended In-school suspension, not to exceed 20 days
- 2. Alternative education program
- 3. Out-of-school suspension
- 4. Referral to outside agency, including the Criminal Justice System
- 5. Restitution of money/damage to property
- 6. Privileges revoked
- 7. Expulsion
- 8. Any sanction(s) included in Class I and other sanctions as approved by the local board of education

### **Class III Violations**

- 3.01 Arson
- 3.02 Robbery (forcible)
- 3.03 Theft of property over \$100 in value
- 3.04 Burglary of school property
- 3.05 Criminal mischief
- 3.06 Bomb / Terroristic threat
- 3.07 Sexual offense / harassment
- 3.08 Fighting
- 3.09 Inciting or participating in major student disorder
- 3.10 Unjustified activation of fire alarm system or fire extinguisher
- 3.11 Assault on another person
- 3.12 Possession of a weapon (other than firearm)
- 3.13 Preparing, possession, transfer, and/or igniting explosive device
- 3.14 Possession, use, or transfer of illegal drugs / paraphernalia or alcoholic beverage(s)
- 3.15 Accessing / changing information in school computer / school program to cause harm to another individual
- 3.16 Crimes defined under the laws of the city, State of Alabama or the United States
- 3.17 Threats toward staff
- 3.18 Profanity / Defiance / Severe disrespect toward school personnel
- 3.19 Possession or sharing of pornographic material/explicit images, including those generated by AI
- 3.20 Possession of a firearm
- 3.21 Possession of tobacco products, any component / type of electronic "vaping" device, or any CBD products
- 3.22 Any other offense that the Principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after investigation and consideration of extenuating circumstances

### **Class III Sanctions**

Any sanction(s) included in Classes I and II and other sanction(s) as approved by the local board of

education.

## **VIOLATION EXPLANATIONS**

### **BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING**

Bullying is defined as a pattern of behavior intended to cause distress in one or more students, including physical or verbal harassment or threatening behavior towards others. Cyber-bullying includes these same actions through the use of technology. Such intimidation is not permitted in the Piedmont City School District and may be considered illegal. Students involved in bullying / cyber-bullying may be suspended, referred to law enforcement, and/or recommended for expulsion.

Any student feeling that they are the victim of bullying or cyber-bullying, or know of someone in the Piedmont City School District, who is a victim, should report such incidents to the counselor and / or administration immediately. Any parent, guardian, or family member of a victim or bystander should also report such incidents to the counselor and/or administration immediately.

Anyone with information regarding bullying and/or cyber-bullying may report incidents anonymously.

### **NO FIGHT POLICY**

The Piedmont City Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and orderly environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. It is the policy of this school system that fighting in school buildings, on school grounds, at any school-sponsored event, or on a school-owned vehicle will not be tolerated. A fight is defined as “any physical conflict between two or more individuals”. A student under attack should detach himself or herself from the situation to seek an adult to help if possible. Disciplinary consequences may be different for an aggressor than for a victim. The Principal or designee may impose sanctions according to any investigation into the fight.

School officials may file a complaint or petition with Calhoun County Juvenile Court against all students involved in repeat incidents of fighting. A list of witnesses should be included with the complaint / petition. Students involved in a bona fide fight will not be allowed to stay on school premises. Parents will be required to pick up those students involved in the fight at the Principal’s office. If necessary, law enforcement may be utilized at the Principal’s discretion.

### **GROOMING AND DRESS CODE**

The Piedmont City Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and orderly environment that is conducive to teaching and learning and free from unnecessary distraction. No student may dress or appear in a manner that is considered disruptive of the teaching-learning process. Personal appearance and / or attire that interferes with the instructional program, creates a health hazard, or is deemed a disturbance is not acceptable. The administration has the discretion to determine when clothing or appearance is inappropriate. School administration reserves the right to develop additional policies to address age-appropriate dress codes. Each individual school dress code will be housed in the Student Handbook for that school.

The following clothing items are prohibited:

- Clothing or paraphernalia may not be racist, sexist, immoral, clearly indecent, vulgar, gang affiliated, or compromise safety.
- Clothing or paraphernalia that advertises or displays any product or service not permitted to minors by law. Any clothing, paraphernalia, grooming, jewelry, hair style, accessory, or body adornment that contain any advertisements, symbols, words, slogans, patches, or pictures that:
  - Refer to drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or weapons
  - Are sexual in nature



- o Denote membership in gangs which advocate drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, or other attribute
- o Are obscene, profane, vulgar, lewd or legally libelous
- o Threaten the safety or welfare of any person
- o Promote any activity prohibited by the PCS Code of Student Conduct

Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. It will be left to the discretion of the administration or a designee to determine when clothing, appearance, or items brought to school are inappropriate for the educational setting.

### **AUTHORITY OF TEACHERS**

All students are subject to the authority of all teachers in the classroom, halls, and any other place on campus while participating in any school function, during, before, and after school. This extends to weekend events held on school campuses. An assault or a threat directed toward any staff member is grounds for expulsion and legal action.

### **PENALTIES FOR CHEATING**

A student caught cheating by either giving or receiving information will receive a zero on the assignment. Incidents of cheating / plagiarism will be reported to the Principal and may receive additional disciplinary sanctions after investigation.

### **TERRORISTIC THREATS**

Any threat by an individual, group, or organization that, if carried out, would pose potential danger to the safety of students, staff, faculty and / or administration will be regarded as a serious matter and treated accordingly. The Piedmont City Board of Education will not tolerate terroristic threats. Any student found guilty of a terroristic threat shall be subject to expulsion.

### **RESTITUTION OF DAMAGES**

The Board authorizes the Superintendent and his or her designees to investigate the restitution or repayment of loss or destruction of property belonging to the Piedmont City School System, employees, or students as a result of student misconduct. Restitution may be in the form of disciplinary work assignment, financial compensation, criminal charges or other legal action against the student and/or parent/guardian.

### **RIGHTS OF FREE SPEECH AND SELF-EXPRESSION**

Citizens in our democracy are guaranteed freedom of speech and self-expression under the 1<sup>st</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Amendments of the United States Constitution. Student rights in the school setting must be balanced against the school's legitimate interest in maintaining a safe and orderly environment, requiring socially appropriate behavior, and ensuring that all students are protected from real or perceived threats, harassment, and similar harm.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY**

### **PRIVACY AND PROPERTY RIGHTS**

Federal and state laws provide persons with a reasonable expectation of privacy in addition to freedom from unreasonable search and seizure of property. Such guarantees are not unlimited and must be balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students. Law enforcement agencies are permitted to make periodic visits to all schools to detect the presence of illegal drugs or weapons and may use any lawful means at their disposal to detect the presence of such substances. The visits will be unannounced to anyone except the Superintendent and Principal.

### **School Property**

The Board of Education fully recognizes the implications of constitutional law in the area of student privacy. Tangible property items as student desks, lockers, school-issued computers, computer bags, and related property are and remain the property of the Board of Education. The Board of Education is charged with the maintenance of such property items and thus, authorizes inspection for any maintenance-related reasons and other reasons related to the routine operations of the school and classroom.

With respect to opening student lockers or desks for other reasons, the following shall be considered applicable throughout the School District. Desks, lockers and other equipment that belong to the Board, although assigned to particular students for use, may be entered and searched by school officials whenever said school officials have reasonable belief that some substance or other material is contained therein which is illegal, harmful, significantly disruptive, or dangerous to the overall discipline of the school. School officials may impound items that are specifically prohibited by law, by Board policy, or by local school regulation. In such cases, students shall be given a receipt for said impounded items. Such prohibited items shall include, but shall not be limited to the following:

- weapons
- drugs of any sort
- alcoholic beverages
- pornographic or obscene materials
- tobacco products / electronic "vaping" devices / components
- CBD products
- any other object, controlled substance, or materials that would be a violation or evidence of a violation of federal or state law, of Board Policy, or of the local school regulation.

### **Police Interrogation of Students**

Any law enforcement authority on school property during regular school hours, without the knowledge of the school's Principal or his designee, shall not interrogate a student enrolled in the school district. All interrogations and interviews shall be conducted in a private setting and an official school representative shall be present. School officials may allow private interviews with students by police officers in appropriate situations with the Principal's approval. Reasonable effort shall be made to contact a parent or guardian and / or to have a parent or guardian present. In those instances when a parent / guardian cannot be contacted or is not present within a reasonable period of time, school officials may allow interviews by law enforcement officials to proceed in the absence of the parent / guardian. If the student is to be removed from the school by police officers, a reasonable effort shall be made to contact the parent / guardian. Questioning or interviewing of students conducted by school officials DOES NOT require parental contact or consent, even if such questioning occurs in the presence or vicinity of law enforcement officials, or if the information obtained by school officials is later shared with law enforcement.

### **Search of a Student's Person / Personal Effects**

The Board of Education authorizes teachers and administrative personnel who have reasonable

belief that a student is in possession of weapons, illegal drugs, or other items harmful to the student or to the welfare of the student body are allowed to search the person or personal effects and property of said student. *Reasonable belief* of a violation may be based upon information from such sources as school personnel, reliable students, law enforcement officers, visual evidence, or any other reasonable source. Any search of students or their personal effects will take place under the following conditions:

- Any such action shall not deliberately be intended to embarrass, harass, or intimidate the student(s).
- Any such action shall be with the knowledge and under the supervision of the school Principal or designee.
- A teacher or administrator of the same sex as the student to be searched shall do any search of a student's person privately.
- Unless extenuating circumstances prevent, at least one witness who is an administrator or teacher, also of the same sex as said student, shall be present throughout the search.
- A written record of the search shall be maintained in the office of the school Principal. Student(s) shall be given a receipt for all confiscated items.

### **VEHICLES ON CAMPUS**

Students in the Piedmont City School System may be permitted to drive private vehicles to school under the following conditions:

- Students must possess and present a valid driver's license, current vehicle registration, and have purchased a decal that is properly displayed.
- Students are expected to park in designated areas and exit the vehicles immediately. Sitting in vehicles parked on school campus at any time is strictly prohibited.
- Students are required to carry liability insurance in accordance with state law. Proof of liability insurance is required.
- Students must sign an agreement / acknowledgement with consent to abide by all parking / vehicle operation rules.

The student driver shall abide by all Alabama traffic laws, safety regulations, and school system rules regarding vehicles. The administration retains the right to revoke driving or parking privileges if the student is operating a vehicle in an unsafe manner, or deems that the continued operation of the vehicle would be a safety hazard to others, or discovers any other violation of this policy. The student driver will obey all common rules of safety, courtesy, and consideration of others. The student also understands and agrees that the vehicle is subject to inspection and search by school officials in accordance with law and the Search and Seizure policy of the Board of Education. Neither Piedmont High School nor the Board of Education assumes any liability for any vehicle on its property. The owner / operator of the vehicle drives and parks on Piedmont City School District property at his or her own risk.

### **Bicycles and Motorcycles**

All bicycles or motorcycles are to be parked in places designated by the Principal immediately upon arriving at school. The school does not assume responsibility for these vehicles while on campus. Helmets are required to be worn for all motorcycle and bicycle riders. Riding skateboards, roller-skating, and roller-blading is prohibited on campus.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Every child between the ages of 6 and 17 years is required to attend a public school, private school, church school, or to be instructed by a competent private tutor for the entire length of the school term in every scholastic year. The parent, legal custodian, or guardian of a child who is 6 years of age may opt out of enrolling their child in school at the age of 6 years but must notify the local school board of education in writing that the child will not be enrolled until he or she is seven years of age. Except that, prior to attaining his or her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, a child attending a church school as defined in AL Code (2018) Section 16-28-1 is exempt from the requirements of this section provided such child complies with enrollment and reporting procedures specified in AL Code (2018) Section 16-28-7. Admission to public school shall be considered on an individual basis with the application of the parents, legal custodian, or guardian of the child to the local board of education at the beginning of each school year under such rules and regulations as the board may prescribe.

Alabama law states that parents/guardians having control over school age children are responsible for the children's regular attendance and proper conduct. School administrators are required by Alabama State Law to enforce compulsory school attendance laws. According to Piedmont Board of Education Policy, all students are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Students who miss more than 50% of the school day are counted as absent for the entire day. If attendance is kept on a class-by-class basis, the student must be present more than 50% of the period to be counted as present.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Alabama Law requires parents / guardians to explain the reason(s) for school absences of students under their control or supervision. The parent / guardian must submit a written explanation within 3 school days of a student's return to school. Students must bring an excuse to the office from a parent, guardian, medical practitioner, or court official when they return to school after an absence. The Principal or designee will determine if the excuse presented is *excused* or *unexcused* using standardized criteria:

Excused absences recognized by the State of Alabama include:

- Personal Illness
- Death in the immediate family
- Inclement weather, which would be dangerous to the safety and health of the child, as determined by the Principal
- Court appearance
- Legal quarantine
- Specific emergency conditions as determined by the school
- Permission of the Principal upon reasonable request of the parent/guardian

### **Parent Excuses**

The school will accept 3 parent excuses per semester (5 for students in grades K – 3). If the child is out 2 consecutive days, it may be counted as one occurrence and covered by a parent excuse. If the student is out 3 or more consecutive days, he or she must present a doctor's excuse. A student's absence from school to accompany their parents / guardians on a trip is not an excused absence except as determined in advance by the Principal. The Principal shall make final determinations on a case-by-case basis.

### **Doctor Excuses**

A student visiting a health care practitioner during normal school hours should obtain an official excuse from the practitioner. The excuse should state the date and time that the student was seen in the office and also the date and time that the student is deemed able to return to school. Doctor's excuses are required for consecutive absences of 3 or more.

Students who do not present a valid excuse by the third day of returning to school will be considered unexcused for the preceding absence(s). Students may not be allowed to make up work for unexcused absences.

### **School Events**

Students who miss all or part of a school day while attending school-approved events will be counted as present. School-approved events are those approved by the Superintendent and Principal in which the student has permission to participate.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

It is the student's responsibility after absences to work with their teachers for make up work, tests, and activities that the student has missed after returning to school. If absent on or the day before a regularly scheduled test, the student shall take the test at the teacher's earliest convenience when he or she returns to school. The period for makeup work may be lengthened in cases involving extended absences that are validated and excused. If a student is totally disabled, the work will be sent home upon request. Missed tests should be made up at a time designated by the teacher.

### **TARDIES**

At the elementary level, a student is tardy anytime after the morning tardy bell rings until one hour after school starts.

At the middle and high school levels, a student is tardy if he or she is not in the classroom when the tardy bell rings. A tardy is anytime before the end of first period. A written excuse must accompany all tardiness. A student with an unexcused tardy may not receive credit for the work that has been missed. If tardy, no student is to be admitted to class without a tardy slip from the office or counselor's office.

### **CHECK-OUTS**

Each student submits a registration card in the Principal's office each year that includes emergency contacts and persons permitted to check the student out of school. If a parent or guardian has sole custody, a statement from the court to this effect must be on file. If a child's situation changes, it is the responsibility of the parent to come to the Principal's office to change the registration card. Only the person(s) designated on the checkout list may check a student out of school. No other persons will be allowed to check out the student unless the parent has contacted the Principal. All students must have an active emergency phone number on file in the office of their respective school.

Parents are not allowed to go to the classroom to pick up students. When a student is checked out of school an approved individual, he or she must sign the student out in the office. A school official must speak with a parent / guardian before a student is allowed to check out of school. After signing out in the office, the student must leave campus immediately. If the student returns to school after a checkout on that same day, he or she must sign in at the office upon returning. No student may leave campus without permission. This includes students who arrive on campus before school begins.

### **CHECKING OUT DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER WARNINGS**

If a parent decides to check out his or her student during an inclement weather event, the parent will be asked to sign a disclaimer form in the school office, which contains the following information:

*Severe weather is a very serious consideration for both the parent and the student. Although the school system considers remaining in the school under our Inclement Weather Plan as the safest option for the well-being of your child; we recognize the rights of a parent / guardian to properly check out a student.*

## **TRUANCY**

For the purposes of this section, *truancy* is defined as the act of staying out of school without an excusable reason. In an effort to comply with state law, the following steps will be taken:

### **1st Truancy (*first unexcused absence*)**

1. The school attendance clerk shall notify the parent/guardian that the student was truant, and the date of the truancy.
2. Parent/guardian also shall be provided a copy of Alabama's compulsory school attendance laws and advised to the penalties, which can be applied, and the procedures that shall be followed in the event that other unexcused absences occur.

### **5th Truancy (*fifth unexcused absence*)**

1. The parent/guardian shall attend a conference with the Principal and/or attendance officer to discuss the truancy of their child, and/or participate in the early warning program provided by the juvenile court. Attendance at this conference shall be mandatory.
2. Failure to attend the school conference and/or to appear at the early warning program shall result in the filing of a complaint/petition against the parent under *Code of Alabama (2018)*, 16-28-12 (failure to cooperate), or truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.

### **7th Truancy (*seventh unexcused absence*)**

1. After the seventh unexcused absence, a complaint / petition will be filed against the child and / or parent / guardian within 10 school days.

## **Child Under Probation**

The juvenile probation officer should notify the school attendance officer of students under probation supervision by the juvenile court as consistent with *Code of Alabama (2018)*, 12-15-100 and 105. When a child under probation is truant, the school attendance officer will immediately notify the juvenile probation officer.

## **PERFECT ATTENDANCE**

A student will be counted perfect in attendance if he or she is not absent from any class, not tardy to any class, or does not check out of school at any time before the end of the school day unless leaving class or campus on school-related business.

## **WITHDRAWAL AND LOSS OF DRIVER'S PERMIT**

Alabama law states that students 16 or over who accumulate more than 10 consecutive, or 15 cumulative, unexcused absences during a semester may be withdrawn. The Alabama Department of Public Safety will be notified for the purpose of denying this person a driver's license or learner's permit if under 20 years of age. Also see Drop-out/Driver's License (Act 94-820); AL Code (2018) 16-28-40.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

Parents and others with business with school officials or personnel are encouraged to visit the school. However, the protection of the students and the need to avoid disruption of the proper atmosphere for teaching / learning activities necessitates regulations concerning such visits. No person shall trespass or loiter in any school building or on any school grounds under the jurisdiction of the Piedmont City Board of Education. All persons shall, upon entering a school building of the Piedmont City School District, report immediately to the office of the Principal and request a visitor's pass. Any person who fails to comply with the provisions of the visitors' policy shall be in violation of the rules regulations of the Piedmont City Board of Education and the law of the State of Alabama and shall be punished as provided by Public School Laws for the State of Alabama

# **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the acceptable use of computers, networks, the Internet, electronic mail, and related telecommunications equipment in the Piedmont City School system. The Piedmont City School (hereafter referred to as "PCS") system has purchased technology resources to serve many *Users* of the community. The term *User* refers to person (i.e., student, teacher, employee, parent, etc.) who uses the technology resources of the PCS. PCS has provided technology resources (i.e., computers, networks, the Internet electronic mail, software, etc) for the following purposes:

- To provide our students and faculty the resources to achieve program related goals/objectives
- To provide a communication link between PCS and the community
- To perform functions related to conducting business by PCS

## **GENERAL**

Technology resources are an important part of our school system, and may enhance the educational experience for our students and assist employees in performance of the day-to-day operations of the school system. Employees and students of PCS may be allowed to use the school system's electronic mail system. The use of computers, networks, the Internet and electronic mail is a privilege that is granted to users. Failure to use technology resources in an appropriate manner will subject users to appropriate disciplinary action. In addition to any disciplinary action, which may be imposed for violation of this policy, a user may also have their access to PCS technology resources suspended or revoked.

## **Student Access**

It is the policy of PCS that students will be allowed to access the Internet or use electronic mail (if requested by a teacher) only after receiving the written approval of their parent or legal guardian. The Internet is a very powerful information tool that provides tremendous educational opportunities; however, it also can provide information that is considered inappropriate for a K-12 educational environment. While PCS requires students to adhere to the standards contained in this policy, parents and guardians are ultimately responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources, including the Internet. PCS supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their child access to the Internet and electronic mail. Students and parents must agree to abide by this acceptable use policy before they will be allowed to access PCS technology resources. Failure to use PCS technology resources in an appropriate manner will subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action as prescribed by the PCS Code of Student Conduct. In addition to established punishment under the PCS Code of Student Conduct, a student may also have computer, network, Internet, and electronic mail privileges suspended or revoked.

## **User Access**

PCS employees may also be allowed access to technology resources in conjunction with their job duties and responsibilities. PCS employees may also be asked to supervise students using technology resources. Each employee shall maintain responsibility for the technology resources under his or her supervision and control. Each *User*, including each employee, must agree to abide by this acceptable use policy before accessing any technology resources of PCS. Failure to use PCS technology resources in an appropriate manner as prescribed by Board policy, federal, state, and local law, will subject the *User* to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination. In addition, PCS may suspend or terminate access to PCS technology resources at its sole discretion.

### **School Board Limitation of Liability**

PCS makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by the school system will be error-free or without defect. The school system will not be responsible for any damage *Users* may suffer, including but not limited to loss of data or interruption of service. The school system is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through or stored on the equipment. All communications and information stored on computers owned by the school system shall be considered the property of the school system and may be retrieved, monitored, deleted, destroyed, modified, or used by PCS for any purpose at its sole discretion. PCS will not be responsible for financial obligations or any other damages incurred through the use of its technology resources.

### **Copyright and Plagiarism**

- Existing copyright law will be followed in using materials accessed through the Internet. Teachers will instruct students to respect copyright and to request permission to use materials when appropriate.
- Plagiarism is not acceptable. Teachers will instruct students in appropriate research and citation practices.

### **Acceptable and Unacceptable Use(s)**

The following uses of the PCS are considered acceptable:

- Employees will use the technology resources only for purposes directly related to that person's job duties. Students may only use technology resources for purposes directly related to the student's educational program.
- *Users* utilizing electronic mail through PCS will check their electronic mail frequently and delete unwanted messages promptly.
- Employees will only be allowed to subscribe to discussion groups, chat rooms, and/or mail lists that are relevant to their job duties and responsibilities. Students may be allowed to subscribe to discussion groups, chat rooms or mail lists relevant to the student's educational program. Any student asking for subscription to one of these services must submit a written request to the *User's* teacher and receive the school Principal's approval.

The following uses of the PCS technology resources are considered unacceptable:

#### **Personal Safety**

- Student *Users* who have electronic mail established with an organization other than PCS will not access that mail from within PCS.
- Student *Users* will not be allowed to use any external Instant Messaging service (e.g.-AOL)
- Users will not post personal contact information about themselves or others anywhere on the Internet except for educational purposes. Personal contact information includes home address, home telephone, school address or telephone number, work address or telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, etc.
- Student *Users* will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without their parent's approval and participation
- Students *Users* will immediately notify teachers, parents, or other school employees if they receive unsolicited e-mail, or e-mail from anyone that threatens, harasses, or makes the *Users* feel uncomfortable in any way.

#### **Illegal Activities**

- *Users* may not use technology resources for commercial purposes, defined as offering or providing goods or services or purchasing goods or services for personal use. Purchases made for official purposes must be accomplished through the purchasing methods established by school board policy.



- *Users* will not attempt to gain unauthorized access, (i.e., “hacking”) to PCS computers or networks or go beyond their authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person’s account or access another person’s files. These actions are illegal even if for browsing. *Users* may not utilize PCS technology resources to attempt to gain unauthorized access to a computer or network owned by other persons or entities.
- *Users* will not attempt to disrupt computer system performance or destroy data by intentionally spreading computer viruses or by any other means. *Users* will not access any system or configuration file without specific permission from the Superintendent or his designee.
- *Users* will not use PCS’s computer system to engage in or arrange to engage in illegal acts that could violate federal, state or local law or Board of Education policies and procedures, (i.e., arranging for the purchase of alcohol, drugs, engaging in gang activity, or threatening or harassing another person). Additionally, any action that is associated with a violation of the PCS Code of Student Conduct is considered inappropriate use of the school computer system.

### **Inappropriate Internet Sites**

- In general, purposely visiting an inappropriate Internet site is the equivalent to bring the same inappropriate material to school in the form of a book, magazine, videotape, audiotape, or other media, and is subject to the same disciplinary actions as listed in the PCS Code of Student Conduct. Any employee or other *User* Who accesses or visits inappropriate sites will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Inappropriate Internet sites are sites that a reasonable person would conclude are inappropriate for a school environment. Specific examples include:
  - o Sites that advocate or give instruction on how to break the law.
  - o Sites that provide information or picture(s) that are lewd, obscene, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or use profane or disrespectful language.
  - o Sites that advocate, in any manner, harm to the student, the school system or other individuals.

### **Inappropriate Language**

- Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, material posted in Web pages, and any media accessed, viewed, created or stored on PCS technology resources.
- *Users* will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, threatening, or disrespectful language.
- *Users* will not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
- *Users* will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- *Users* will not harass another person. Harassment is defined as persistently acting in a manner that distress or annoys another person. If a *User* tells another person to stop sending messages to them, he or she must stop.
- *Users* will not post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

### **Privacy**

- All technology resources of PCS are to be used for educational and job related purposes. Communications and activities conducted by using PCS technology resources are not private, and *Users* do not have any right to privacy when using these resources. School administrators may, and will, at their sole discretion, review communications; activities and date created on, contained on, or accessed through PCS

technology resources.

- *Users* are hereby notified that monitoring software will be used that records what sites have been visited and from which computer the sites were accessed or viewed. PCS will utilize said software to monitor its technology resources to ensure compliance with federal, state and local law, PCS policy, and PCS's educational objectives.
- *Users* are hereby notified that filtering software will be utilized to prevent access to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web.
- *Users* are hereby notified that all electronic mail will be subject to PCS monitoring and that all messages may be reviewed by appropriate system employees at their discretion for compliance with system policy, federal, state, or local law or PCS educational objectives.
- *Users* will not post private information about another person.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICE MISUSE**

- Students shall not record, photograph or video other students or school employees on school property, on a school bus or at school-sponsored activities without their knowledge and consent, except for activities considered to be in the public arena (e.g. sporting events, public meetings, academic competitions or public performances). School social events, activities sponsored by student clubs, team building retreats, and activities that take place during the school day are not considered to be in the public arena.
- Students shall not e-mail, text, or post to the Internet or social media, or otherwise electronically transmit images of other individuals taken at school without their expressed consent.
- Recording, photographing, or making video of others is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, dressing rooms, health offices and restrooms, where individuals have every expectation of privacy.
- Students must have permission from their teacher to make phone calls. In the event that a student becomes ill during the school day, the parents will be notified and expected to respond accordingly.
- It shall be left to each school to develop policies for personal electronic device usage for their campus.

### **STUDENT REQUIRED USE AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICY (RUP)**

PURPOSE: Piedmont City Schools provides all students' access to the Internet, network resources as well as laptop computers at designated graded levels, as a means to promote achievement and provide diverse opportunities during the educational experience. This policy provides guidelines and information about the limitations that the school imposes on use of these resources. In addition to this policy, the use of any school device, including laptop computers, also requires students to abide by the PCS Technology Use Guidelines as stated in this Code of Student Conduct. Additional rules may be added as necessary and will become a part of this policy.

#### **TERMS OF THE REQUIRED USE AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICY**

Specifically, the student will adhere to these guidelines each time the Internet is used at home and school:

1. Will make available for inspection by an administrator or teacher upon request any messages or files sent or received at any Internet location. Files stored and information accessed, downloaded or transferred on district-owned technology are not private.
2. Will use appropriate language in all communications avoiding profanity, obscenity and offensive or inflammatory speech. Cyber bullying, such as personal attacks and/or

threats on/against anyone made while using district owned technology to access the Internet or local school networks, is to be reported to responsible school personnel. Rules of netiquette should be followed conducting oneself in a responsible, ethical and polite manner.

3. Will follow copyright laws and should only download/import music or other files to a district owned technology that he/she is authorized or legally permitted to reproduce, or for which he/she has the copyright.
4. Will never reveal identifying information, files or communications to others through email or post to the Internet.
5. Will not attempt access to networks and other technologies beyond the point of authorized access. This includes attempts to use another person's account and/or password.
6. Will not share passwords or attempt to discover passwords. Sharing a password could cause the primary user to become liable if problems arise with its use and subject to disciplinary action.
7. Will not download and/or install any potentially harmful programs, files, or games from the Internet or other sources onto any district owned technology. This includes the intentional introduction of computer viruses and other malicious software.
8. Will not tamper with computer hardware or software, engage in unauthorized entry into computers, vandalize or destroy the computer/computer files. Damage to computers may result in felony criminal charges.
9. Will not attempt to override, bypass or otherwise change the Internet filtering software or other network configurations.
10. Will use technology for school-related purposes only during the instructional day while refraining from use related to commercial, political or other private purposes.
11. Will not make use of materials or attempt to locate materials that are unacceptable in a school setting. This includes, but is not limited to pornographic, obscene, graphically violent, or vulgar images, sounds, music, language, video or other materials. The criteria for acceptability is demonstrated in the types of material made available to students by administrators, teachers, and the school media center. Specifically, all district owned technologies should be free at all times of any pornographic, obscene, graphically violent, or vulgar images, sounds, music, language, video or other materials (files).
12. Will not connect any personal technologies such as laptops and workstations, wireless access points and routers, printers, etc. to district owned and maintained local, wide or metro area network. Connection of personal devices such as iPods, smart phones, PDAs and printers are permitted but not supported by PCS technical staff. Home internet use and cost is the responsibility of the student both in cost and configuration.
13. Will keep device secure and damage free. Each device is issued with a protective book bag style case. Use of provided device bags is required at all times. Follow these general guidelines:
  - Do not loan your device or charger and cords.
  - Do not leave the device in vehicle.
  - Do not leave your device unattended.
  - Do not eat or drink while using the device or have food or drinks in close proximity to the device.
  - Do not allow pets near your device.
  - Do not place the device in floor or in sitting area such as couches or chairs.
  - Do not leave the device near table or desk edges.
  - Do not stack objects on top of your device.
  - Do not leave the device outside or use near water such as a pool.
  - Do not check the device as luggage at the airport.

14. Will back up data and other important files regularly. PCS will at times maintenance the laptops by imaging. All files not backed up to server storage space or other storage media will be deleted during these processes. Students are ultimately responsible for backing up all personal files on their own storage media.

By signing this policy you agree to abide by the conditions listed above and assume responsibility for the care and proper use of PCS technology, including personally backing up personal data. PCS is not responsible for any loss resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, lost data, or service interruptions caused by user errors, omissions or reasons beyond the district's control. Information obtained via the Internet and other sources using PCS technologies is not guaranteed as to its accuracy or quality. I understand that should I fail to honor all the terms of this Policy, future Internet and other electronic media accessibility may be denied. Furthermore, I may be subject to disciplinary action outlined in the PCS Code of Student Conduct and my device may be recalled. By signing below, I give permission for the school to allow my son or daughter to have access to the Internet under the conditions set forth above.

### **STUDENT DIGITAL CURRICULUM FEE**

The digital curriculum fee cost is \$50.00 per year.

The amount is due at the beginning of the school year.

A payment plan may be established if needed

If a student withdraws, a pro-rated refund may be issued upon written request, provided the device is in good operational order.

### **STUDENT DEVICE DAMAGES**

Willful and deliberate damage to a device will result in a cost to the parent/guardian for the full amount of repair; or the complete replacement of the device. ALL damage incidents must be investigated by the administration. The list below is at No time covered under Apple warranty:

- Damage as a result of the violation of the RUP (i.e., involving food, drink, or other liquid on or near the laptop)
- Damage as a result of negligence (i.e., the device is placed in an unsafe location or position)
- Damage caused by misuse/improper handling (i.e., the device is dropped)
- Damage caused by a pet
- Damage resulting in a broken screen.
- Damage caused by a service performed by anyone other than a representative of Apple or an Apple Authorized Service Provider

Leaving the device or a charger unattended will void all warranty coverage of either item. The student is responsible for the replacement of the charger and/or device in the event of theft.

### **FAMILY CONTRACT FOR DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP**

Student Pledge

- I will tell my parents or another responsible adult immediately if I receive an inappropriate message or come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
- I will not respond to any inappropriate messages.
- I will not do anything online that hurts other people, or is against the law.
- I will check with my parents before downloading or installing software.
- I will remember that I need to balance technology use with other activities.

- My parents and I will set up rules for making online purchases – if permitted. I will help my parents understand how to have fun and use resources online as we learn together about the Internet, computers, and other technology.

## **APPLE DEVICE PROPER CARE GUIDELINES**

This is your device – take good care of it.

### **1. Device Temperature Zone**

Your device works best at room temperature. It should be stored in places with a temperature range of 50 to 95 degrees.

### **2. Initial Start up**

Be sure to fully charge your device when you plug it in for the first time.

### **3. Standard Maintenance**

For proper maintenance of the device's lithium-based battery, it's important to keep the current moving through it occasionally. However, Apple does not recommend leaving it plugged in all the time.

### **4. Optimal Setting**

Listed below are some power-saving tips:

- **Brightness:** Dim the screen to the lowest comfortable level to achieve maximum battery life.
- **Bluetooth Wireless:** Bluetooth may be turned off to maximize the battery life.
- **Applications and peripherals:** Disconnect peripherals and quit applications when not in use. Eject CDs and DVDs if not currently accessing them.

### **5. Device Care, Use, and Safety Information**

When carrying your device, you must use two hands, and the screen must be closed. Remove all small objects from its carry case before placing it inside.

Important: The device power-adaptor port contains a magnet that can erase data on a credit card, iPod, or electronic device. To preserve your data, keep magnetically sensitive items away from the power-adaptor port. When cleaning your device, shut it down and detach the power adapter. Use a damp, soft, lint-free cloth to clean the device's exterior and screen. Avoid getting moisture in any openings. Do not spray any type of liquid directly on the device.

# **USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) PROGRAMS IN SCHOOL**

## **Purpose of Writing Assignments**

Writing assignments aim to develop students' skills in critical thinking, communication, literacy, and creativity. Assignments are designed not just to evaluate knowledge, but also to cultivate these skills, encouraging original thinking and personal growth. They are avenues for students to explore, articulate, and defend their ideas.

## **Academic Integrity and AI**

Academic Integrity, in the context of AI use, means using AI tools ethically, responsibly, and as intended – to support your learning, not to bypass it. It implies producing work that is primarily your own, and appropriately acknowledging assistance received from AI.

## **Guidelines for AI Use**

1. Supplemental Aid: AI can be used as a tool for assistance in brainstorming ideas, understanding complex texts, or improving grammar and syntax. However, the bulk of the thinking, analysis, and composition should be your own.
2. Reference and Citation: If significant insights or phrases are borrowed from AI, these should be properly cited, much as you would cite a human source.
3. Clarification, Not Substitution: Use AI for clarifying doubts or seeking explanations, not as a shortcut to avoid reading, analysis, and comprehension.
4. Learning, Not Completing: Use AI as a tool for learning, not just for task completion. Your primary goal should be understanding and skill development, not simply finishing an assignment.
5. Tutoring, Not Completing: Use AI to ask questions as you would your English teacher. Just as your English teacher would not provide “what are the answers,” neither should AI.

## **Violations of Policy**

1. Unattributed Use: Copying significant portions of AI-generated content without appropriate citation.
2. Over-reliance: Leaning on AI to do most of the work, particularly the critical thinking or creative aspects of assignments.
3. Substitution: Using AI to bypass necessary steps in assignments, such as reading or analysis.

The main purpose of education is to learn and grow, and while AI can be a helpful tool in that process, it cannot replace active engagement and efforts. AI must be used responsibly, respecting the principles of academic integrity.

## **Distribution of Explicit Images**

No student shall distribute, display, solicit, possess, or produce a sexually or pornographic explicit image of any individual, including sexually explicit images of a child. This prohibition applies whether or not the image is of an identifiable person nor whether the age of the individual can be determined. This prohibition includes images of known and unknown individuals and those generated by artificial intelligence. This shall be incorporated into the and treated as a Class III violation.

## Chart of Acceptable/Unacceptable Uses of AI in Your School Work

Acceptable Uses	Unacceptable Uses
Rewriting a reading passage at a simpler reading level.	Asking things like "What are the main points of the reading passage?"
Asking for clarification on a confusing concept or passage.	Requesting direct answers to specific questions or assignments without any effort to read or understand the material.
Seeking suggestions for additional resources or references related to the topic.	Asking for a summary or paraphrasing of the reading passage instead of reading it.
Requesting help with understanding complex vocabulary or sentence structures.	Asking for a complete essay or paper on the topic without doing the necessary research or writing.
Asking for guidance on how to analyze or approach a literary work.	Asking for the main points or key ideas of the reading passage without making any personal effort to comprehend it.
Seeking examples or explanations to enhance understanding of literary devices or techniques.	Requesting direct quotes or citations from the reading passage to use as evidence without independently identifying them.
Asking for suggestions on how you analyzed and interpreted a specific literary passage or poem.	Requesting a complete essay or analysis of a literary work without any personal analysis or effort.
Seeking guidance on how to structure an essay or formulate a thesis statement based on the reading material.	Requesting AI to write the entire essay or provide a ready-made thesis statement.
Asking for help in understanding the historical or cultural context of the literary work.	Requesting direct answers to discussion questions or assignments without reflecting on the material.
Requesting examples of effective writing techniques found in the reading passage.	Asking AI to generate fictional examples or provide content to plagiarize.
Seeking guidance on how to properly cite and reference sources used in an essay or project.	Asking for a pre-written bibliography or list of sources without conducting personal research.
Asking for suggestions on how to analyze character development or themes in a novel.	Requesting a detailed plot summary or book review without reading the book.
Seeking help in understanding the author's writing style and its impact on the overall meaning of the text.	Asking for direct answers to multiple-choice questions or quizzes without attempting to answer them independently.
Asking for recommendations on related books or literary works to further explore the topic.	Requesting direct answers to essay prompts or assignments without constructing an original response.
The AI information is utilized to help our students understand what is isn't expected of them in the use of AI <a href="https://alicekeeler.com/2023/05/24/acceptable-use-policy-for-ai-in-the-ela-classroom/">https://alicekeeler.com/2023/05/24/acceptable-use-policy-for-ai-in-the-ela-classroom/</a>	

## **ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **Definitions**

The term *harassment* as used in this policy means a continuous pattern of intentional behavior that takes place on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to, written, electronic, verbal, or physical acts that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student, or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic, if the characteristic falls into one of the categories of personal characteristics set forth below. To constitute harassment, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:

- Place a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
- Have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student.
- Have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of the school.
- Have the effect of creating a hostile environment in the school, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function.
- Have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

The term *violence* as used in this policy means the infliction of physical force by a student with the intent to cause injury to another student or damage to the property of another student.

The term *threat of violence* as used in this policy means an expression of intention to inflict injury or damage that is made by a student and directed to another student.

The term *intimidation* as used in this policy means a threat or other action that is intended to cause fear or apprehension in a student, especially for the purpose of coercing or deterring the student from participating in or taking advantage of any school program, benefit, activity, or opportunity for which the student is or would be eligible.

The term *hostile environment* as used in this policy means the perception by an affected student or victim that the conduct of another student constitutes a threat of violence or harassment, and that the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that the conduct constitutes harassment, threat of assault, or assault.

The term *student* as used in this policy means a student who is enrolled in the Piedmont City School System.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT REPORTING**

Any student who believes that he or she has been or is being subjected to any form of sexual harassment shall immediately report the matter to a teacher, the school counselor, Principal, or Superintendent. Any student who suspects that another student is being sexually harassed shall immediately report the matter to a teacher, the school counselor, Principal, or Superintendent. Pursuant to AL Code (2018) Section 26-14-3, school personnel are required by law to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to constituted authorities. For confidentiality purposes, a student's request to make his or her report to someone of the same sex will be granted.

### **Harassment, Violence, and Threats of Violence Prohibited**

The Piedmont City School District is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning



environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. Harassment, violence, and threats of violence constitute unacceptable behavior that will not be tolerated. No student shall engage in, or be willfully subjected to, harassment, violence, threats of violence, or intimidation by any other student. Violence, threats of violence, harassment, and intimidation are prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary consequences and sanctions if the perpetrator of such action is found to have based the prohibited action on one or more of the following personal characteristics of the victim of such conduct:

- The student's race and / or color
- The student's gender
- The student's religion
- The student's national origin
- The student's disability
- The student's marital status
- The student's sexual orientation
- The student's gender identity

### **Description of Behavior Expected of Students**

Students are expected to treat other students with courtesy, respect, and dignity and to comply with the Piedmont City Schools Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected and required to:

- comply with the requirements of law, policy, regulation, and rules prohibiting harassment, violence, or intimidation
- refrain from inflicting or threatening to inflict violence, injury, or damage to the person or property of another student; and
- refrain from placing another student in fear of being subjected to violence, injury, or damage when such actions or threats are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any personal characteristic of the student that is identified in this policy.

### **Consequences for Violations**

A series of graduated consequences for any violation of this policy will be those outlined in the PCS Code of Student Conduct or any rule or standard adopted under authority of this policy. Punishment shall conform to applicable federal and state disability, anti-discrimination, and education laws and school discipline policies.

### **Reporting, Investigation, and Complaint Resolution Procedures**

Complaints alleging violations of this policy shall be submitted on Board approved complaint forms available at the Principal and / or counselor's office and are also available on our school system's website. The complaint must be signed by the student alleging the violation or by the student's parent or legal guardian before being delivered to the Principal or the Principal's designee either by mail or personal delivery. An education employee acting on behalf of an affected student or his or her parent or guardian cannot write the complaint. At the request of the complaining student or the student's parent or legal guardian, incidental or minor violations of this policy may be presented and resolved informally.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Principal or the Principal's designee will, in their sole discretion, determine if the complaint alleges a serious violation of this policy. If the Principal or the Principal's designee determines that the complaint alleges a serious violation, the Principal or the Principal's designee will undertake a thorough and complete investigation of the complaint. The investigation will entail the gathering of relevant facts and evidence and will be conducted in a reasonably prompt time period taking into account the circumstances of the complaint. If the investigation establishes a violation, appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be imposed on the offending student(s). The Principal or the school system may also impose other

measures that are reasonably calculated to prevent a recurrence of the violation(s).

Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any student who has reported a violation of this policy or sought relief provided by this policy are prohibited and are themselves a violation of this policy. Any confirmed acts of reprisal or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary sanctions that may include any sanction, penalty, or consequence that is available to school officials under the PCS Code of Student Conduct. A student who personally, or through his or her parents, deliberately, recklessly, and falsely accuses another student of a violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the PCS Code of Student Conduct.

Parents or guardians can also make referrals to law enforcement and other agencies, even if insufficient to warrant a charge.

If a threat of suicide is reported, the Principal or the Principal's designee will inform the student's parent or guardian of the report.

**Promulgation of Policy and Related Procedures, Rules, and Forms**

This policy and any procedures, rules, and forms developed and approved to implement this policy will be published, disseminated, and made available to students, parents and legal guardians, and employees by such means and methods as are customarily used for such purposes.

**Following Exhibits:**

Exhibit "A" - Harassment Complaint Form

Exhibit "B" – Harassment Witness Statement Form

**Appendix A - Harassment Complaint Form**

This report **MUST** be completed to file a complaint relating to an incident of alleged harassment. *(For the purpose of this form, harassment also includes violence, threats of violence, or intimidation by another student.)* This form should be submitted to the Principal or the Principal's designee either by mail or personal delivery.

**COMPLAINANT'S NAME (Last, First, Middle)                      SEX                      GRADE**

**VICTIM'S NAME (Last, First, Middle)                      SEX                      GRADE**

**ACCUSED'S NAME (Last, First, Middle)                      SEX                      GRADE**

**SITE WHERE INCIDENT OCCURRED**  
(i.e., locker room, playground, cafeteria, classroom, etc.)                      **School Name**

**PRINCIPAL'S NAME**                      **Date of Incident**

Describe the incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the location where the incident took place:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List all witness names and grades:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person Receiving Harassment Complaint Form                      Date

**If you fear a student is in IMMEDIATE danger, please contact the police immediately!**

**Appendix B – Harassment Witness Statement Form**

This report **MUST** be completed when there is a witness to an incident of alleged harassment.

*(For the purpose of this form, harassment also includes violence, threats of violence, or intimidation by another student.)* This form should be submitted to the Principal or the Principal's designee either by mail or personal delivery.

**WITNESS' NAME (Last, First)**  
(ex: Parent, Student, Teacher)

**WITNESS' TITLE**

**INTERVIEW DATE**

**VICTIM'S NAME (Last, First)**

**ACCUSED'D NAME (Last, First)**

**SCHOOL SITE WHERE INCIDENT OCCURRED**  
(i.e., locker room, playground, cafeteria, classroom, etc.)

**SCHOOL TELEPHONE NUMBER**

**PRINCIPAL'S NAME**

**DATE OF INCIDENT**

Describe the incident witnessed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the location where the incident took place:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List any other witness' names and grades:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List evidence of harassment (i.e., letters, pictures, etc.) Attach all listed evidence, if possible:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person Receiving Harassment  
Complaint Form

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Board accepts that discipline is an integral part of the educational process. Based upon this understanding, disabled students will be expected to follow the discipline policy established by the Board of Education as outlined in this publication to the fullest extent appropriate under the law.

Misbehavior by disabled students in the regular classroom will be brought to the attention of the student's primary special education teacher. Repeated misbehavior or violations of rules should be addressed by the appropriate committee for consideration of an appropriate behavior plan.

Prior to extended suspensions, extended ISS assignments for cumulative violations, expulsions, or extended Alternative School assignments of disabled students for disciplinary violations, a determination must be made by the appropriate committee, including the Special Education or Section 504 Coordinator, or his or her designee, regarding whether the misbehavior is a manifestation of the student's disability.

Suspensions of 5 days or more or repeated short suspensions should result in a review of the student's educational plan by the appropriate committee. Suspensions (or other removals from class) of 10 days or repeated suspensions having a cumulative total of 10 days could result in a "change of placement" and require a review of the student's educational plan within 10 business days by the appropriate committee. Alternative School assignments of disabled students may be made upon the action and recommendation of the appropriate committee and the Special Education / Section 504 Coordinator.

Immediate suspension or removal from the school environment of a disabled student is justified, however, when the student's presence at school would threaten his or her own safety and well-being or that of others, endanger school property, or seriously disrupt the orderly educational process. Principals are given immediate authority to have law enforcement agencies remove uncooperative students under these criteria and as otherwise required by Board disciplinary policy and state and federal law. If immediate removal is necessary, the parent or guardian and the Special Education or Section 504 Coordinator will be promptly notified and an appropriate meeting conducted to address the student's misbehavior as indicated above.

### **ALABAMA UNSAFE SCHOOL OPTION**

A student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense committed on school property during school hours or at school-sponsored activities shall be given an opportunity to transfer to a safe public school within the local education agency. The school shall notify the student's parent/guardian of the right to transfer within 10 calendar days from the date of a final determination by the school board that a violent criminal offense has occurred. Alabama students who attend a school deemed persistently dangerous by the State Department criteria will be offered a transfer option to another school. A persistently dangerous school is one in which for 3 consecutive years the school has expelled 1% of the student population or 5 students (whichever is greater) for violent criminal offenses committed on school property during school hours or committed at school-sponsored activities. (Ala Code 290-3-1-02).

## **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION - BUS RULES**

Calhoun and Cleburne Board of Education shall provide transportation to eligible students of the Piedmont City School District. The transportation program shall be operated in accordance with provisions of the Code of Alabama and State Board of Education rules and regulations. The primary consideration of the transportation program shall be the safety and welfare of students. The Board of Education shall be responsible for the child until he or she is delivered to the home bus stop. If the child requires supervision at home, it shall be the parents' responsibility to ensure that a responsible adult is present. The bus driver or other school official will not be responsible to ensure that an adult is present. Policies pertaining to student safety and the transportation program are as follows:

### **Who May Ride the Bus?**

Only regularly enrolled students of the Piedmont City School District or other authorized Board of Education employees shall be permitted to ride a bus on a regularly scheduled route. Preschool and post school individuals are prohibited from riding a bus on a regular route or on special trips except as a chaperone.

### **Loading and Unloading**

- Students should be at the designated stop when the bus arrives.
- Students shall only board and unload from the bus at designated stops as determined by the driver and transportation supervisor.
- Students must have a note from home or school office, signed by the Principal or designee, to ride any bus other than the assigned bus or to get off at any stop other than the usual stop.
- Students shall not open or unload from the emergency door except in an emergency.
- Unsupervised students may not sit on a bus while the bus is parked at school.

### **Seating**

- Students should find a seat promptly after boarding the bus.
- Once seated, they should remain in that seat until the bus comes to a full stop. No standing or moving around will be allowed while the bus is in motion. The driver may assign seats.

### **Talking**

- Students should never shout or making loud noises that may distract the driver.
- Students shall be silent when the bus approaches a railroad crossing and remain so until the crossing is completed.

### **Bringing Articles Aboard the Bus**

- Students shall not bring any article on the bus that cannot be held in the lap. Overly large should be transported in parent vehicles.
- Students shall not bring any object that may obstruct the view of the driver from the bus such as balloons or posters.

### **Conduct**

- Students are considered "in school" when they board the bus. All written Board of Education Policies contained in the Code of Student Conduct and school Handbook apply while on the bus.
- The bus driver will report misbehavior of a continuing or serious nature to the Principal.
- The Principal of the school being served by a bus has the authority to withhold bus service from a student for poor conduct on the bus.

The following are common violations of bus behavior which are strictly prohibited:

- Putting any part of the body out of the window
- Playing (rough-housing), scuffling, or fighting
- Eating or drinking while being transported
- Throwing articles of any kind out of windows
- Shooting rubber bands on the bus
- Any other activity which driver determines is an obstacle to the safe transportation of students

## **IT'S THE LAW**

### **Student and Parental Notification of Civil Liabilities and Criminal Penalties**

The following laws and administrative procedures have been approved by the Legislature of the State of Alabama and/or the Alabama State Board of Education. In cases where laws and administrative procedures have been revised or new laws / procedures have been approved, the Piedmont City Board of Education will follow the most current laws and procedures.

### **Parental Responsibility for Child's Attendance and Conduct (Act 94-782), AL Code (2018) 16-28-12**

Each parent/guardian or other person having control or custody of a child required to attend school who fails require the child to enroll and regularly attend school or fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself/herself in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

### **Causing Delinquency of a Child (Act 75-1205) AL Code (2018) 12-15-111(3)**

Anyone who contributes to the delinquency of a child under this provision shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

### **Teacher Assault (Act 94-794) AL Code (2018) 13A-6-21(5)**

A person commits the crime of assault in the second degree (Class C felony) if, with intent to cause physical injury to a teacher or to an employee of a public educational institution during or as a result of the performance of his or her duty, he or she causes physical injury to any person.

### **Drug Dealing (Act 94-783), AL Code (2018) 6-5-72**

A person who unlawfully sells, furnishes, or gives a controlled substance to a minor may be liable for injury or damage suffered by a third person caused by or resulting from the use of the substance by the minor, if the sale, furnishing, or giving of the controlled substance is the proximate cause of the injury or damage.

### **Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons, Physical Harm, or Threatened Physical Harm (Act 94-784), AL Code (2018) 16-1-24.1 (see also 16-1-24)**

The school Principal shall notify appropriate law enforcement officials when a person violates local board of education policies concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, and physical harm to a person or threatened physical harm to a person. If any criminal charge is warranted, the Principal is authorized to sign the appropriate warrant. If that person is a student, the local school system shall immediately suspend that person from attending regular classes and schedule a hearing within five (5) school days. If a person is found to have violated a local board of education policy concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, physical harm to a person or threatened physical harm to a person, the person may not be readmitted to the public schools until criminal charges, if any, have been disposed of by appropriate authorities and the person has satisfied all other requirements imposed by the local board of education as a condition for readmission.

### **Deadly Weapons in Schools (Act 94-817), AL Code (2018) 13A-11-72(c)**

No person shall knowingly with intent to do bodily harm carry or possess a deadly weapon on the premises of a public school. Possession of a deadly weapon with the intent to do bodily harm on the premises of a public school or school bus is a Class C felony.

### **Firearms in School (Act 95-756), AL Code (2018) 16-1-24.3**

All local boards of education must implement a policy requiring expulsion for a period of one year of all students determined to have brought or have in their possession a firearm in a school



building, on school grounds, on school buses, or at school-sponsored functions. Notwithstanding, the foregoing, city and county boards of education and the local Superintendent of education may modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. In case of a violation, the Principal shall notify law enforcement officials and the parents of the student.

**Vandalism (Act 94-817), AL Code (2018) 6-5-380**

The parents, guardian, or other person having control of any minor under the age of 18 with whom the minor is living and who have custody of the minor shall be liable for the actual damages sustained to school property, plus the court costs, caused by any intentional, willful or malicious act of the minor.

**Pistol/ Loss of Driver's License (Act 94-820) AL Code (2018) 16-28-40**

Any person over the age of 14 convicted of the crime of possession of a pistol on the premises of a public school, or a public school bus, shall be denied issuance of a driver's permit or license to operate a motor vehicle for 180 days from the date the person is eligible and applies for a permit or license. If a person over age 14 possesses a driver's license on the date of conviction, the license will be suspended for 180 days.

**Drop-Out/Driver's License (Act 94-820) AL Code (2018) 16-28-40**

The Department of Public Safety shall deny a driver's license or learner's permit to any person under 19 who is not enrolled or has not received a diploma or certificate of graduation. Exceptions are students who: are enrolled in a secondary school, are participating in an approved job training program, are gainfully employed, are a parent of a minor or unborn child, or are the sole source of transportation for the parent.

**Hazing Prohibited (Act 81-824) AL Code (2018) 16-1-23**

Any person, who commits the offense of hazing in connection with initiation or affiliation with an organization, to include any person who encourages, aids or assists, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

**ADMINISTRATIVE CODE REGULATIONS**  
**(Alabama State Board of Education)**

**Drug inspections** --Students are advised that law enforcement agencies make periodic, unannounced visits to local schools for the purpose of detecting the presence of illegal drugs.

**Tobacco prohibited** -- Use of tobacco products on school property is prohibited. This mandate is inclusive of students, school personnel, parents, and visitors. School property is inclusive of athletic fields and facilities. Non-compliance with this policy could result in the loss of federal funding.

**False Alarms** -- False setting or misuse of the fire alarm or fire alarm system and/or false reporting of the threat of incendiary or explosive devices may be considered grounds for expulsion from school. The school may file a complaint in adult court or a petition in Juvenile Court in accordance with fire marshal regulations or city or state laws. False setting of a fire alarm and bomb threats are now considered felonies in the State of Alabama. Setting a fire or bringing an explosive device into the building or on the school grounds is also grounds for expulsion from school.

## **ANNUAL NOTIFICATION REGARDING SCHOOL PROVIDED OR SPONSORED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

### **Mental Health Services**

The Piedmont City School System provides or sponsors the following mental health services:

1. **Assessments or Surveys** - includes questionnaires provided to students related to social behaviors, feelings, etc.
2. **Crisis intervention** - short-term, immediate assistance by school counselor or professional for a specific situation.
3. **School-Based Mental Health** - On-going counseling services by school professionals or private practitioners in the school setting.

### **Review of Materials**

You may request to review any materials used in the guidance and counseling programs available to students by contacting the student's principal.

### **Information Regarding How to Allow, Limit, or Prevent Your Child's Participation in Mental Health Services**

Under Alabama law, no student under the age of fourteen may participate in ongoing school counseling services including, but not limited to, mental health services, unless (1) the student's parent or legal guardian has submitted a written opt-in granting permission for the student to participate or (2) there is an imminent threat to the health of the student or others.

Therefore, if your child is under fourteen, they will only be allowed to participate in mental health services if you opt-in. **If you would like the school system to be able to offer and/or provide mental health services to your child, you must opt-in for each service listed for them to participate in that service.**

Even if you do not opt-in to mental health services, your child may be provided mental health services if there is an imminent threat to their health or others. School employees may determine in their discretion whether such an imminent threat exists and provide any mental health services they deem necessary under the circumstances.

**Parent of students with disabilities:** Please note that the opt-in process is not applicable to any school counseling services or "mental health services" contained in a student's IEP or §504 plan. Consent for those services will be obtained and information regarding your child's mental health services will be provided through the usual special education process.

## **OPT-IN FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Student First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

As of the date of my signature below, my child, \_\_\_\_\_, is under the age of 14 years old:

- **Yes**
  
- **No**

If No, stop here.

If Yes, continue below.

I hereby give my permission for my child to participate in the following mental health services:

[Check the box for each mental health service you want to be available to your child]

- **Assessments/Surveys** – includes questionnaires provided to students related to social behaviors, feelings, etc.
  
- **Crisis intervention** - short-term, immediate assistance by school counselor or professional for a specific situation.
  
- **School-Based Mental Health** - On-going counseling services by school professionals or private practitioners in the school setting.

You may rescind permission for a student to participate in mental health services at any time by providing written notice to your school administrator.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Signature)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_