

Student and Parent Handbook 2026-2027

HOME OF THE MIGHTY WILDCATS



Walter L. Atkins, Jr., Superintendent of Education

Shamekia L. Isaac, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction

Dr. Carmella Scott, Director of Federal Programs

Dr. LaTanya Herrington, Director of Special Services

Glenda Douglas, Principal Wilkinson County High School

Patricia Gaines, Director of Martin Luther King Career & Technical Center

Chander Jenkins, Principal Wilkinson County Elementary School

**Wilkinson County School District
Student Handbook 2026-2027**

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District Vision Statement

The Wilkinson County School District will create a dynamic learning community where students and staff excel.

District Mission Statement

The WCSD will be an innovative institution of learning that fosters independence, builds confidence, and inspires growth of our faculty, staff and students.

District Motto

“ONE Pride, ONE Family, ONE Purpose!”

District Goals

- Develop and maintain an environment where all stakeholders are safe and secure.
- Utilize all resources effectively to improve student successes.
- Provide all stakeholders with opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- Promote honesty, ethical behavior, and trust to strengthen a culture of integrity.
- Strengthen relationships through open communication, trust, and effective collaboration among all stakeholders to ensure everyone is valued.
- Foster a culture of accountability by embracing responsibility and delivering consistent results to ensure excellence.

CONSENT UPON REGISTRATION

By registration of your child(ren) or any student in the Wilkinson County School District, all parents, legal guardians, and students do hereby consent to and agree to obey and follow rules and regulations contained in this handbook and such other oral directions of school administrators and/or teachers as may be necessary or desirable to carry out the orderly educational process of the school. All students are under the direction of the superintendent, school principal, school assistant principal, school lead teacher or designee and/or the immediate direction of the teacher or another member of the instructional staff or bus driver to whom such responsibility may be assigned by the Administration:

- while being transported to or from school,
- when attending school, and
- when engaged in a school-sponsored activity on school premises or away from school,
- during a reasonable time before and after a student is on the premises for attendance at school or for authorized participation in a school-sponsored activity on the premises.

Further, such parents, legal guardians, and students agree to abide by and follow all rules and/or school board policies as are obtained in the official policy handbook located at the administrative offices of the Wilkinson County School District at 488 Main Street, Woodville, Mississippi.

Further, all parents, legal guardians, and students agree and are hereby informed that all students of the Wilkinson County School District are subject to questioning or being taken into official custody while at school by any appropriately appointed law enforcement official or Department of Human Service agent investigating an official case upon oral or written court order of the Wilkinson County Youth Court, County Court, Circuit Court, or Chancery Court of the state of Mississippi.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Wilkinson County School District grants equal educational opportunities to all qualified persons regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, marital status, religion, or disability.

It is the intent and desire of the Wilkinson County Board of Education that equal educational opportunities be provided in any and all educational programs and activities.

LEGAL REFERENCE: MS Code 37-15-35; 1972 Educational Amendments, Title IX; 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title VI; 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Section 503 & 504; 45 CFR Part 84 and Part 86; Brown vs. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954); Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards

***POLICIES CONTAINED WITHIN THIS HANDBOOK ARE SUBJECT TO
MODIFICATION BY THE WCSD BOARD OF EDUCATION AS DEEMED
NECESSARY.**

Message from the District Office

Dear Students, Parents, Guardians, Faculty, Staff, and Community Members,

Welcome to another exciting school year in the Wilkinson County School District! It is my honor and privilege to serve alongside a dedicated team of educators and support staff who are committed to providing every student with a high-quality educational experience.

Our district theme, **"ONE Pride, ONE Family, ONE Purpose,"** reflects our belief that student success is achieved when schools, families, and the community work together toward a common goal. We are proud of our Wildcat tradition and remain focused on creating safe, supportive, and engaging learning environments where all students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally

This handbook serves as an important resource for understanding district policies, procedures, expectations, and available resources. We encourage all students and families to review the information carefully and refer to it throughout the school year. Clear communication and mutual understanding help us maintain a positive school climate that promotes learning and respect for all.

As we embark on this school year, I challenge each student to strive for excellence, demonstrate good character, and take full advantage of the opportunities available to them. I encourage our parents and guardians to remain actively involved in their child's education, as your partnership is essential to student achievement.

Together, we will continue building a culture of excellence that prepares our students to become productive citizens, lifelong learners, and future leaders.

Thank you for your continued support of the Wilkinson County School District. I look forward to a successful and rewarding school year for every member of our Wildcat family.

ONE Pride. ONE Family. ONE Purpose.

Sincerely,

Walter L. Atkins, Jr.

Walter L. Atkins, Jr., Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

Walter L. Atkins, Jr.

DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Wilkinson County High School

522 Pinckneyville Road
Woodville, MS 39669
Glenda Douglas, Principal
601-888-4228

Wilkinson County Elementary

522 Pinckneyville Road
Woodville, MS 39669
Chander Jenkins, Principal
601-888-4331

MLK Career & Technology Complex

1106 Highway 24 East
Woodville, MS 39669
Patricia Gaines, Director
601-888-3936

DISCLAIMER

The purpose of this handbook is to make parents and students aware of the policies, procedures, and expectations of the Wilkinson County School District. Each school in the Wilkinson County School District operates under guidelines established by the Wilkinson County School District Board of Education and each school's policies and procedures to meet the board guidelines. This handbook does not provide a complete listing of all board and school policies and procedures. Policies and procedures contained within this handbook are subject to change as a result of decisions made by the Wilkinson County School Board of Education, principals, district administration, and the superintendent of education. Each principal, district administrator, the superintendent of education, and the Wilkinson County School Board of Education reserves the right to amend or delete any policies, procedures and practices printed and not printed in this handbook as deemed necessary.

P.O. Box 785
488 Main Street
Woodville, MS 39669
601-888-3582

District Administrative Staff

	Telephone Number	Extension
Walter Atkins, Jr., Interim Superintendent	601-888-3582	
Shamekia L. Isaac, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction/District Test Coordinator/District MTSS Coordinator	601-888-3582	106
Erika Lewis, Business Manager	601-888-3172	102 or 109
Dorothy McCoy, Purchasing Department / Executive Secretary	601-888-3260	110
Sharon Tolliver, Accounts Payable/Payroll	601-888-3172	111
LaToya McPipe, SAMs7/Secondary MSIS Coordinator/ Exceptional Education Services Secretary	601-888-4734	
Dr. LaTanya Herrington, Director of Exceptional Education Services	601-888-1039	
Dr. Carmella Scott, Director of Federal Programs	601-888-3320	
Lathuchur Davis, Food Services Supervisor	601-888-3582	309
Wilkinson County Elementary School	601-888-4331	
Wilkinson County High School	601-888-4228	
Martin Luther King Jr. Career and Technology Complex	601-888-4394	



2026/2027 WCSD Academic Calendar

July 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Professional Development Days		Holidays	60% Day	Board Meeting Days	Progress Reports	Report Cards
July 1, 2026	245 & 235 Day Employee First Day	Dec. 18, 2026	End of 1 st Semester	May 25, 2027	188 Day Employee Last Day	
Jul 3, 2026	Independence D. (obs.)	Dec 21-31, 2026	Christmas Break	May 31, 2027	Memorial Day	
July 6, 2026	225 Day Employee First Day	Jan 1, 2027	New Year's Day	June 3, 2027	Last Day for 200 Day Employee	
July 13, 2026	220 Day Employee First Day	Jan 5, 2027	Student's Return	June 10, 2027	Last Day for 205 Day Employee	
July 20, 2026	205 & 200 Day Employee First Day	Jan 18, 2027	Martin L. King Day	Jun 18, 2027	Juneteenth (obs.)	
Jul 29, 2026	188 Day Employee First Day	Feb 8-9, 2027	Mardi Gras	June 24, 2027	Last Day for 225 & 220	
Aug. 3, 2026	Students First Day	Mar 5, 2027	End of 3 rd 9Weeks	June 30, 2027	Last Day for 245 & 235	
Sep 7, 2026	Labor Day	Mar 8-12, 2027	Spring Break			
Oct 1-5, 2026	Fall Break	Mar 26-29, 2027	Good Friday & Better Monday			
Oct. 9, 2026	End of 1 st 9Weeks	May 21, 2027	Student Last Day / Graduation			
Nov 23-27, 2026	Thanksgiving Day	May 21, 2027	End of 2 nd Semester			

Approved



Daily Bell Schedule



Students may arrive at school up to 30 minutes before the start of the school day and are to report to assigned areas. All students are to be in class by the school's designated start time.

	Drop-off	Regular School Day			66% Day		
	Do Not Drop off Before:	Start	End	Vacate	Start	End	Vacate
Wilkinson County Elementary School	7:00	7:45	3:00	3:30	7:45	12:40	1:00
Wilkinson County High School	7:00	8:00	3:00	3:30	8:00	12:50	1:00
Alternative Program	7:30	7:50	2:45	2:50	7:50	12:40	12:45

*****Students MUST be signed in by an adult if they arrive after 7:30am (elementary) or 7:55am (secondary). Students who are not signed in will be considered absent.**

Admission

Compulsory School Attendance/School Age

A compulsory-school-age child is defined as a child who has attained or will attain the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year. This also includes any child who has attained or will attain the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 and has enrolled in kindergarten. Students excluded from this requirement are those determined to be incapable of school attendance by school officials as based on medical documentation or an identified handicapping condition, and those in a legitimate home instruction program as determined by a school attendance officer.

If a compulsory-school-age child has not been enrolled in school within fifteen (15) calendar days after the first day of the school year or if a student has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences during the school year, the principal shall report such absences to the school attendance officer within two school days or within five calendar days, whichever is less, according to the method prescribed by the State Department of Education and on the form designated for that purpose by the district.

Data relative to individual student absences that exceed the above stated guidelines shall be forwarded to school attendance officers inclusive of information required by that office.

District employees shall submit statistical data to the State Department of Education regarding compulsory attendance violations and student attendance in the manner prescribed by that agency.

Legal Reference: MS Code 37-13-91, 37-13-92

Entrance Age Requirements

No child shall be enrolled or admitted to a kindergarten program of the Wilkinson County School District unless that child will be five years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year.

No child shall be enrolled or admitted to the first grade of any school in the Wilkinson County School District unless that child will be six years of age on or before September 1 of that school year.

Any child who transfers from an out-of-state school in which that state's law provides for a first grade or kindergarten enrollment subsequent to September 1, shall be allowed to enroll in school at the same grade level, if:

1. The parent, legal guardian, or custodian of the child was a legal resident of the state from which the child is transferring.
2. The out-of-state school from which the child is transferring is duly accredited by that state's appropriate accrediting authority.
3. The child was legally enrolled in school for a minimum of four weeks in the previous state.
4. The superintendent has determined that the child was making satisfactory educational progress in the previous state.

Legal Reference: MS Code 37-15-9

School Admission

Admission requirements for the District shall be as follows:

INITIAL ENROLLMENT

1. Presentation of a certified birth certificate (long form as recommended).
2. Verification of required immunizations. Valid immunization certificates (37-15-1) include:
 1. Form 121 - Certificate of Immunization Compliance
 2. Form 122 - Certificate of Medical/Religious Exemption
3. Completion of student information profile/emergency card.
 1. Attainment of the age of five years on or before September 1 of that school year (for kindergarten enrollment:) or attainment of the age of six years on or before September 1 of year (for first grade).
 2. Proof of residence in the attendance zone for which application is made.

RESIDENCY VERIFICATION

For a child to attend a school in the Wilkinson County School District, the custodial parent/legal guardian must prove residency. The custodial parent/legal guardian must bring two proofs with the physical address.

Proof # 1 must be one of the following:

- a. Filed Homestead Exemption Application form
- b. Current mortgage document or property deed
- c. Current lease
- d. Current property management lease/contact listing the parent/legal guardian as an occupant

Proof # 2 must be one of the following:

- a. Current **gas** bill (within two months of the time the residency is being verified by school personnel) showing the service location
- b. Current **electric** bill (within two months of the time the residency is being verified by school personnel) showing the service location
- c. Current **land line** telephone bill (within two months of the time the residency is being verified by school personnel) showing the service location
- d. Current **cable/direct television** bill (within two months of the time the residency is being verified by school personnel) showing the service location
- e. Current **water** bill (within two months of the time the residency is being verified by school personnel) showing the service location

STUDENT LIVING WITH ADULT OTHER THAN PARENT/GUARDIAN

If a child is living with an adult other than parents or legal guardians, in loco parentis authority will be recognized to establish residency of the minor in situations that include, but are not limited to:

1. death or serious illness of the child's parent/guardian
2. abandonment of the child
3. child abuse or neglect

4. verifiable unstable family relationships or conditions in the home of the parent/guardian having a documented detrimental effect on the child
5. students enrolled in recognized exchange programs residing with a host family
6. other appropriate documentation/verification.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

1. Receipt of an official withdrawal form from the last school attended to be provided by the parent or legal guardian.
2. Satisfactory proof of residence in the attendance zone for which application is made.
3. Completion of a student information profile/emergency card.
4. Presentation of valid certificate of compliance for immunization.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to accompany a student enrolling in the District for the first time. Enrollment can be delayed and attendance may be required of the parent/guardian prior to admitting the child to school. Any guardianship formed for the sole purpose of establishing residency for school district attendance purposes shall not be recognized by the Board, in accordance with state law.

Transfer students will be permanently enrolled and placed in a grade or class on the basis of an official transcript and cumulative records that document attendance, behavior, and grades from the last school attended. If such has been lost or destroyed, the last school attended shall be responsible for initiating a new record.

If the last school attended is not appropriately accredited, the student seeking enrollment may be required to take a test(s) to determine the grade/class assignment.

The principal will place the student in the grade/course best suited to his educational achievement level, needs, and abilities.

****Any child in grades K-12 who fails to present a certified birth certificate within 30 days from the opening of the fall term, shall be suspended until in compliance.**

Reminders: Parents/Guardians sharing a residence with the lessee of a property management company should not complete a Landlord Verification Form or an Affidavit. Instead, the property manager should list under the "tenants or occupants" section of the lease agreement the names of the parents/guardians sharing the residence with the primary occupant or official lessee.

If a child and his/her custodial parent/legal guardian move/change residences after having enrolled in a school in the Wilkinson County School District, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent/legal guardian to promptly inform a school official that a move has taken place.

Any student who is admitted using false information is not legally enrolled; consequently, he/she is subject to immediate dismissal from the Wilkinson County School District.

If at any time a school official suspects that proofs of residency have been falsified or that a student and his/her custodial parent/legal guardian are not living where documentation says that they are living, the school official has the responsibility to resolve the situation. For example, a home visit may occur; additional proofs of residency may be requested; additional questions may be asked.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

When a child is determined to be homeless as defined by the Stewart B. McKinney Act, enrollment action in the best interest of the child shall be taken, pursuant to federal guidelines and Board policy.

EXPELLED STUDENTS

Parents, guardians or students must indicate on registration information if the student requesting enrollment has been expelled from a private or public school or is currently a party to an expulsion proceeding. If it is determined from the child's cumulative and full disciplinary record or application for admission that the child has been expelled, enrollment may be denied. If the child is a party to an expulsion proceeding, he may be admitted or denied admission pending final disposition. If the proceeding results in expulsion, admission may be revoked. If the expulsion or expulsion proceeding involves an act of violence, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs or other activity that may result in expulsion, Wilkinson County School District is not required to grant admission before expiration of one calendar year after the date of expulsion and satisfactory proof of rehabilitation of the student.

ENROLLMENT OF EMPLOYEE CHILDREN

Any Mississippi resident who is an employee of the District, but is not a resident of Wilkinson County, may petition the Board for admission of their dependent school-age children. Consent to transfer shall be granted if the employee is an instructional or certificated employee. Consent to transfer may be granted if the employee is non-certificated. No tuition fee shall be assessed for students enrolled under these circumstances.

STUDENTS OF MILITARY FAMILIES

- a. A pupil complies with the residency requirements for school attendance in a school district if the parent of the pupil is transferred to, or is pending transfer to, a military installation with this state while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order. A school district shall accept an application for enrollment and course registration by electronic means for a pupil who meets these requirements, including enrollment in a specific school or program within the school district.
- b. The parent of a pupil who meets these requirements shall provide proof of residence to the school district within ten (10) days after the published date provided on official documentation.
- c. The parent may use the address of any of the following as proof of residence.
 - * A temporary on-base billeting facility.
 - * A purchased or leased home or apartment.
 - * Any federal government housing or off-base military housing, including off-base military housing that may be provided through a public-private venture.

Cross Reference: JBAB, JGCB, and JQN

Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Homeless students in the district will have access to the education and other services needed to ensure that an opportunity is available to meet the same academic achievement standards to which all students are held. A liaison for students in homeless situations will be designated by the district to carry out duties as required by law.

The district will ensure that homeless students are not stigmatized nor segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. A homeless student will be admitted to the district school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living or to the student's school of origin as requested by the parent and in accordance with the student's best interest.

The superintendent or designee will produce written guidelines for distribution to each school that explains the rights of homeless students and the responsibilities of the schools to meet their needs and eliminate barriers to school attendance. This information shall also be disseminated in

writing and by other means designed to raise awareness of these rights and responsibilities to staff, homeless families and students, the public, and homeless service providers.

Definition

Federal law defines “homeless children and youth” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

Children and youth who are:

- * sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as doubled-up);
- * living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- * living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- * abandoned in hospitals; or
- * awaiting foster care placement;

Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Homeless students seeking to enroll in the Wilkinson County School District will be accommodated or provisions will be considered to educate the student in the district of origin, whichever is in the student’s best interest. Wilkinson County School District will work with the Wilkinson County Department of Human Services and other agencies to make a determination regarding the educational placement of a homeless student.

Disputes which may arise regarding the assignment of a homeless child or youth will be promptly resolved according to district policy. Other issues or disputes will be directed to the attention of the school official responsible for that particular matter for prompt resolution. If this dispute cannot be resolved locally, any aggrieved party may make written request for a review of the matter to:

Coordinator of the Homeless Program
Mississippi Department of Education
P. O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205

Requirements

Federal law provides certain rights for homeless students. The rights include waiving certain requirements such as proof of residency when students are enrolling and allowing categorical eligibility for certain services such as free school meals. The law further requires the following services be provided:

- * Homeless students may attend their school of origin or the school where they are temporarily residing.
- * Homeless students must be provided a written statement of their rights when they enroll.
- * Homeless students may enroll without school, medical, or similar records.
- * Homeless students have a right to transportation to school.
- * Students must be provided a statement explaining why they are denied any service or enrollment.
- * Students must receive services, such as transportation, while disputes are being settled.

- * Students are automatically eligible for Title I services.
- * Wilkinson County School District will reserve a portion of Title IA funds to serve homeless students.
- * Wilkinson County School District will review and revise policies, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, that provide barriers to homeless students.
- * Schools must post information in the community regarding the rights of homeless students, in schools and other places that homeless families may frequent.
- * Wilkinson County School District will identify a Homeless Education Liaison to assist students.

Student Records

Wilkinson County School District will comply with immunization requirements. Permanent and cumulative records for homeless students will contain academic achievement and other required data. Records will be maintained and disseminated in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations.

Assurance of Data Reporting

The Wilkinson County School District will maintain reports and/or data relative to the number of homeless students served.

Toilet Training

Students are required to be toilet trained **BEFORE** they begin school. A student who is toilet trained exemplifies the following:

- Consistently recognize when he/she needs to go to the restroom
- Have the ability to wait to use the toilet
- Pull pants up/down and sit on the toilet without assistance
- Use toilet paper correctly and understand how to wipe
- Flush the toilet
- Wash and dry hands after toileting

Students are expected to be able to completely potty independently. Classrooms are not equipped with a diaper changing table/station or diapering supplies. It would be helpful to dress children in clothing that is easy to manage so that toileting is not difficult for the child. **Pull-up diapers are not acceptable underclothing.**

LEGAL REFERENCE: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Limited English Proficiency Instruction

ENROLLMENT

Every public school in the United States is required to provide a free and equitable education to all school age children who live within the boundaries of the school district, regardless of immigration status. Several laws protect the rights of English Learners (ELs) and their families, particularly during the enrollment process. These protections are provided because many EL students' levels of transiency and lack of English proficiency make them a particularly vulnerable population. When enrolling students, district staff may not request information from students or their parents or guardians in order to deny access to public schools on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Parent(s) or Legal Guardians(s) must be present when enrolling the child. A child will not be enrolled if a parent or legal guardian is not present at the time of enrollment.

Language Instruction Educational Program for Wilkinson County School District

Any programs for limited-English proficient students should have a primary goal of mainstreaming those students into the regular classrooms and should emphasize English language instruction.

In accordance with Section 3116 of Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Wilkinson County School District will provide educational services to students who are English learners and/or immigrant children and youth.

PROCEDURES

This section outlines Wilkinson County School District's process for identifying and placing English Learner (EL) students in an appropriate Language Instruction Educational Program that assures them of an equitable, quality education.

Step 1 – Home Language Survey (HLS)

Step 2 – Assessment of Language Proficiency to determine English Language Proficiency (ELP)

Step 3 – Once a student has been identified as EL, they must have an English Language Service Plan (LSP), which should be filed and updated annually until the student exits EL status.

Step 4 – Placement in a Language Instruction Educational Program

Step 5 – Student Evaluation

Step 6 – Transition out of Language Instruction Educational Program

Step 7 – All EL students, including those who opt out of specific EL services, must be monitored for progress. In Mississippi, monitoring occurs through both an annual English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) and when students take mandated state assessments required of all students.

Step 8 – EL students who have been in U.S. schools for two years or more are expected to take and pass required state assessments. Assessment results need to inform instruction, and ELs who are not progressing should receive additional support and services, which should be documented in the Language Service Plan (LSP).

Step 9 – To exit EL status, students must achieve proficiency on the state-designated ELPT as defined by MDE.

Step 10 – Once a student has been exited from EL status, progress should continue to be monitored for four (4) years. If academic deficits surface after the student has been exited, additional support should be provided again.

GUIDELINES

Educational Services:

Assessment:

The ELPA21 will be used to help determine eligibility for placement. The assessments will yield English language proficiency in four domains of language development, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as comprehension.

Instruction:

The instructional services of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program will be flexible to accommodate the needs of the diverse student and parent population within the Wilkinson County School District.

ELs must:

- 1) have an English Language Service Plan (LSP), which should be updated annually until the student achieves English language proficiency.
- 2) be placed in a sound language instructional educational program in addition to mainstream classes.

- 3) participate in all aspects of the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP).

Transitioning:

The Wilkinson County School District will use an ELPT and standardized assessment results for exiting ELs from program services.

ELs who reach proficiency and are exited according to MDE's Title III EL exit criteria will be monitored for four (4) calendar years following exit from language assistance services.

The regular education teacher will continue to provide ongoing support as they continue to work toward grade-level academic language performance.

Administrative:

The Wilkinson County School District Language Instruction Educational Program will be monitored and supervised by the Wilkinson County School District Director of Special Services.

Withdrawals

The parent or guardian should notify the school in writing or by phone when a child is being transferred to another school. The teacher will clear all textbooks and library books that the student has checked out and will fill out a withdrawal slip. However, the parent/guardian must come by the school and sign the withdrawal form. A copy will be given to the parent for admission into the new school.

Student Health Services Inoculations

For minimum community protection against certain diseases, the Board shall require students attending District schools to be vaccinated against diphtheria, measles, mumps, poliomyelitis, rubella, tetanus, and whooping cough, hepatitis B, and chicken pox (unless child has a history of chicken pox). In addition, students are required to receive a Tdap "booster" and provide an updated 121 form before entry into 7th grade. These requirements as stipulated by the Mississippi Department of Health are to be recorded in the permanent record.

Such vaccinations shall be made prior to enrollment, or shall be completed within the date specified on Form 121. The principal shall enforce the immunization requirements suspending any student not in compliance. Such suspension shall be in effect until compliance is validated. A Certificate of Immunization Compliance (Form 121) or a Certificate of Medical/Religious Exemption (Form 122) shall be on file on each student enrolled. The principal shall provide information to the Mississippi State Board of Health relative to the immunization status of students in the school via forms provided by that agency.

Legal Reference: MS Code 41-23-37, 37-7-301

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is a federal legislation that outlines specific ways to enhance America's public education system. Certainly, we applaud any and all efforts to increase the learning levels of our students. In that regard, we will comply with the regulations as we have all government regulations in the past. Teachers in the Wilkinson County School District are certified based upon requirements of the state of Mississippi. Should you wish to know the qualifications of your child's teacher(s), we can provide that information to you. Such requests must be made through the superintendent's office. ESSA was signed into law on December 10, 2015. ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and is the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Although NCLB was designed to make changes in teaching and learning in order to increase students' academic achievement, the Highly

Qualified Teacher (HQT) provision under NCLB was eliminated from the ESSA. Despite this fact, all educators in Mississippi still are required to hold the appropriate state certificate/license for their given position. Under the ESSA, all schools receiving Title I funds must inform parents of their right to ask schools about the professional qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals. Our school receives Title I funding and we are happy to share this information with you upon your request. Mississippi has some of the most qualified teachers in the country, and we are extremely proud of the quality of the teaching staff in the Wilkinson County School District. All our classroom teachers have college degrees and many have advanced degrees. In addition, every teacher continues learning through professional development activities, and our teachers are evaluated each year to make sure their teaching skills remain at the highest possible level. You are encouraged to support your child's education and communicate with your child's teacher(s) on a regular basis. For more information on ESSA, and the role of parents, please visit the United States Department of Education's (USDE) website at <http://www.ed.gov/essa>. If you have any questions or would like to make a request, please contact the Office of Federal Programs.

Attendance, Tardiness and Excuses

Attendance has a vital bearing on educational progress; therefore, regular attendance should be encouraged. Not only does regular attendance contribute to student academic success, but state school funds are disbursed on the basis of average daily attendance rather than actual enrollment. Absences from school will be classified as excused or unexcused. To be marked present; students must attend at least **66 percent** of the day. For the purposes of reward/incentive programs, perfect attendance requires a student to be present **100%** of the day (have no late arrivals or no early dismissals).

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

The following will constitute a valid excuse for temporary non---attendance of a compulsory school age student enrolled in school, provided satisfactory evidence of the excuse is provided to the principal of the school:

1. Personal illness; or
2. Communicable disease exposure; or
3. Official college visits; or
4. Death in the immediate family (parents, siblings, and/or grandparents); or
5. Special permission of the principal (obtained in ADVANCE IN PERSON BY THE PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN).
6. Excused absences are granted once the written notes from parents/guardians or medical/dental excuses are received by the school. These written notes must be received on the day of return to school if the absence is to be excused. **After a maximum of 3 excused days absent per nine weeks based on parental notes, a doctor's excuse will be required for excusing an absence. Excused absences by parent note are not to exceed 5 days per year. Exceptions can be made by the principal when extreme circumstances arise.**

EXTENDED ABSENCES:

When a student is absent for more than five (5) consecutive days, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. If the student intends to receive an excused absence, he/she, upon returning to school, must present a statement from a licensed physician certifying specific dates missed due to the medical condition.
2. The student anticipating an extended absence due to a medical reason must notify his/her counselor prior to the absence in order that orderly academic progress may be made during the absence.
3. Failure to comply with either of the above guidelines may result in an unexcused absence.

OFFICIAL ABSENCES:

Absences that are incurred due to school--related functions may be excused as OFFICIAL if prior permission has been obtained from the principal. If an official absence has been granted, the student must:

1. Obtain assignments before scheduled absences and
2. Submit completed assignments to appropriate teachers as directed or upon date of return.

MAKEUP WORK:

A student will be expected to take a test or turn in school work on the appointed day if the test/work was announced prior to the student's absence. If the student is absent on the day a test is given, the student will be expected to take the test on the day he/she returns to school. It is the responsibility of the student to contact each of his/her teachers on the day he/she returns to school to determine a time when make-up work may be completed.

Day(s) Absent	Day(s) to Complete Work
One	Two
Two	Four
Three or More	Five

A student will receive a zero for any incomplete work not submitted to the teacher under the predetermined formula. The maximum number of days allowed for make-up work is five.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

An unlawful or unexcused absence is an absence during a school day that is not due to a valid excuse. Any student who has accumulated 5 unexcused days absent during the school year will be reported to the truancy officers. This report must be made within 2 school days or within 5 calendar days, whichever is less. **An accumulation of unexcused absences may be (1) factor in determining promotion or retention of a student.**

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT FOR RECEIVING A GRADE:

Students can miss no more than 20 days total (excused or unexcused) in a course that is scheduled all year and can miss no more than 10 days in a course that is scheduled for one semester. In grades PK--6, students can miss no more than 20 days total (excused or unexcused) per year. An accumulation of unexcused absences may be one (1) factor in determining promotion or retention of a student. Exceptions may be made when circumstances warrant such and will be based on the approval of the local school administration after consideration of the student's scholastic record and causes of absence.

Progress reports sent to parents shall indicate grades and the attendance record of the student to date.

THE WRITTEN EXCUSE:

The student must present a signed written excuse from a parent, guardian, or doctor on the day the student returns to school unless permission to be absent was granted by school officials before the absence occurred. **NOTE:** A written excuse from a parent/guardian can only be submitted once per semester.

The written excuse should contain:

1. The date written
2. Full name of the student
3. The date(s) the student was absent
4. The cause of the absence
5. The signature of the parent, guardian, custodian, or doctor
6. The phone number where parent, guardian, or custodian can be reached

The principal or designee has the authority to determine the absence type based on the sufficiency and validity of information received.

TARDINESS

Promptness is a virtue that becomes a habit. The Board encourages development of this habit. Students are expected to be in class on time. Makeup opportunities for students with excessive absences and/or tardies will be arranged in a way deemed appropriate by the school administrator.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL:

A student is tardy for school if he/she arrives at school after the tardy bell has rung at 7:30am (WCES) and 8:00am (WCHS). A tardy slip must be secured from the office prior to admittance to class. A student who is tardy cannot be considered for perfect attendance. **Parents of students in grades PK-12 MUST accompany the child into the building when the child is tardy to school.**

Grades	Appointed Time	Procedure, if tardy
PreK-6	7:45am	Students arriving after 7:30 must be walked into the front office for a tardy slip.
7-8	8:00am	Any student arriving to school after 8:00 must be checked in at the Attendance Office by a parent. All unexcused tardies are subject to disciplinary consequences/discipline referral.
9-12	8:00am	Any student who is tardy to school must report to the attendance office before going to any class. All students tardy to first block class must have an admit slip from the attendance office. Any student arriving at school after 8:00a.m. must be checked in by a parent. All unexcused tardies are subject to disciplinary consequences/discipline referral.

TARDINESS TO CLASS:

A student is tardy for class if he arrives in the class after the class period has officially begun or the bell has sounded. The tardy must be recorded by the principal or his designee prior to the

admittance to class. Tardies to school and class may be excused or unexcused at the discretion of the principal or his designee.

Any student who has accumulated three (3) tardies for being late to school or for being late to class may be placed in internal suspension (ISS). **Three tardies are equivalent to 1 unexcused absence.**

Tardies to school and class will be counted per semester of the school year and all tardy reports will be kept on file in the principal's office.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE:

Perfect attendance is defined as being present 100% of the time that school is in session while the student is enrolled in the district. Any tardy, absence, or early dismissal makes the student ineligible for the recognition. School related absence for official school sponsored activities will not count as an absence.

EARLY DISMISSALS (Check-outs):

Because a student must be present at least 66% of the instructional day, students will not be allowed to check-in after 10:00am and will be documented as absent. If a student checks out before 12:45pm, they will be documented as absent. Due to safety precautions, there will be no check-outs after 2:00pm at the elementary school. Additionally, students will not be dismissed while a district or state test is being administered so that distractions and potential test security violations can be avoided.

VIRTUAL LEARNING ATTENDANCE (Applicable IF WCSD opts to offer Virtual Learning):

Based on Mississippi State Board of Education policies related to virtual instruction, students participating in virtual learning will be provided daily synchronous/interactive instruction, as well as asynchronous instruction, as appropriate, and may be required to login to the online classroom for each class/block in order to establish face-to-face contact for attendance purposes. In addition, the students' attendance will be verified by their participation in real-time virtual interactive and/or independent assignments/activities during the school day and by making adequate progress toward the completion of the daily assignments through the district-selected Learning Management System. In the case of unplanned/unforeseen virtual learning, students without access to technology will complete daily assignments toward attendance as noted in State Board Policy and corresponding procedures, provided the students have been identified by the school prior to the asynchronous learning.

*LEGAL REFERENCE: MS Code 37-13-91 as amended by House Bill 1530, Regular Session 2013; Board of Trustees of the Pascagoula Municipal Separate School District v. T.H., a Minor; Warren County Board of Education v. Wilkinson, 500 S. 2d 455 (Miss. 1986)
State Board of Education Policy*

Attendance Policy Appeal Procedures

Once a student has exceeded the maximum number of days allowed, he/she may not be awarded credit for the course or be promoted to the next grade level. At this time, the student will automatically be referred to the MTSS Team. Parents are encouraged to provide additional information regarding the reasons for absences.

If the student was absent due to a long term illness, a letter from the attending physician explaining the nature and length of the illness may be appropriate to assist the MTSS Team. Documentation from a physician or officer of the court must be original and may be subject to verification. A fax originating from the appropriate office will be accepted.

Makeup opportunities for students with excessive absences and / or tardies will be arranged in a way deemed appropriate by the school administrator.

Truancy

A concentrated effort will be made to prevent and remedy truancy in its early stages. Truancy is established if the student is out of school without permission. School personnel will cooperate with the parents and attendance officers in this endeavor.

If a compulsory school age child has not been enrolled in school within fifteen (15) calendar days after the first day of the school year or if a student has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences during the school year, the principal shall report such absences to the school attendance officer within two (2) school days or five (5) calendar days, whichever is less. The method prescribed by the State Department of Education shall be followed when reporting such unlawful absences. Forms designated for that purpose by the district shall be used.

The parents, guardian or custodian of a compulsory age child is expected to enroll said child in school unless the child is determined by school officials to be incapable of school attendance as based upon medical documentation, a handicapping condition, or documentation that the child is enrolled in a legitimate home instruction program as accepted by school attendance officer.

Parents, guardians or custodians failing to comply with compulsory attendance laws will be subject to punishment within the provision of Section 97-5-39, Mississippi Code of 1972.

Any out of school suspension or student expulsion shall be reported to the attendance officer as they occur.

Truancy shall be recorded as unexcused absences.

Legal Reference: MS Code 37-13-91, 37-13-92

Dismissals

No school or grade may be dismissed before the regular hour for dismissal without the prior approval of the superintendent.

No student may be permitted to leave school before the regular hour for dismissal without the prior approval of the principal.

No student may be permitted to leave school prior to the dismissal hour at the request of, or in the company of anyone other than a school employee, police officer, court official, parent or legal guardian of the child, unless the permission of the parent or legal guardian has been secured in writing. If any police or court official requests the dismissal of a student during school hours, parents should be notified as soon thereafter as possible.

Grading and Assessment Systems

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Consequently, teachers shall employ formative assessment strategies for the purpose of adjusting ongoing instructional procedures to improve the learning progress of students. Summative assessments shall also be used to measure a student's progress toward or degree of accomplishment relative to stated goals and objectives (standards) for a subject. Both types of assessments shall be factored into the grade received, with primary weight being on summative assessments and denoting the degree of mastery learning of material presented.

A standard numerical grading system shall be implemented and maintained in the district. Grade frequencies shall be as follows:

Elementary School

A= 95-100

B= 85-94

Secondary School

A=90-100

B=80-89

C= 75-84
D= 65-74
F= 64 and below

C=70-79
D=60-69
F=59 and below

*** Teachers will schedule at least two conferences (in-person or virtually) with the parent/guardian of each K-12 student per semester. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed.**

Grades shall be indicative of progress towards or degree of accomplishment relative to grade level standards and objectives of the subject and shall represent only quality of assignments completed or not completed. Teachers shall record no less than two grades per week and shall be listed by standard with a description of the assignment/assessment. A record of assignments pursuant to evaluation of progress toward set standards may be recorded and filed for use in parent-student conferences. Actual grades may be recorded in the grade book for reference with parents at conferences; even if teachers maintain overall averages within an attainable passing range, a curve will not be used in grading.

Assignments of term, semester, and final grades shall be made as follows. Teachers shall adhere to district or school prescribed weighting for competency areas.

GRADING CATEGORY WEIGHTS

Summative: 70%

Formative: 10%

TERM GRADE

Grades K-6: based on all assignments such as classwork, quizzes, process grades, writings, products and projects, and homework

SEMESTER GRADE

Grades K-12: Average of the term grades at 80% and the comprehensive of each semester exam at 20% Average of the term grades (i.e., average T1 and T2 for Semester 1; average T3 and T4 for Semester 2)

FINAL GRADE

First and second semester grades will be added and divided by two. For secondary courses of one semester length, the final grade will be the same as the semester grade.

Report Cards

The Board, believing that progress is the very foundation of education, recognizes the school's obligation to give private, periodic reports of a student's progress to the parents. The Board further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the school and the parents. All progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

A report card depicting a student's progress during each term will be issued or presented on the dates as indicated on the school calendar following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers or other professional personnel.

In addition, parents will be able to access students' grades through the Active Parent portal as indicated on the school calendar. This progress report shall indicate grades and the attendance record of the student to date. Written notices of unsatisfactory progress can be sent home whenever necessary to keep parents informed of declining grades.

Semester Examinations

A schedule for the administration of term tests and semester examinations will be established by the Board and included as a part of the official school calendar.

The principal shall be responsible for establishing a schedule for the administration of tests within that school. It is the intent of the Board that students not be scheduled to have more than two tests on any school day.

All term tests and semester examinations will be administered in accordance with the schedule as approved by the Board. Any exception to the schedule must have the prior approval of the principal. A copy of all semester examinations shall be submitted to the principal at least one week prior to the scheduled date for administering the examination.

EXEMPTION FROM FINAL EXAMS

All students who meet the following criteria will be eligible for exemption from the final/end of course exam in the selected subject. Exemption must be earned in each subject. Students must have all fines cleared before being exempt from exams. Exemptions will not be granted if a student has been

1. Suspended (from school or bus).
2. Placed in ISS.
3. Issued corporal punishment.

After disciplinary conditions have been met, the following criteria will qualify a student for exemption:

1. A yearly average of 90 or above with
 - a. an earned score of 4 or 5 on the student's Term 3 Benchmark Assessment in English, mathematics, or Science 8 classes **OR**
 - b. no more than 5 unexcused absences
2. A yearly average of 80-89 with
 - a. an earned score of 4 or 5 on the student's Term 3 Benchmark Assessment in English, mathematics, or Science 8 classes **OR**
 - b. no more than 5 unexcused absences and no discipline referrals at all (this includes warnings, bus suspension, in-school detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or corporal punishment)
3. A yearly average of 75-79 with perfect attendance

Promotion and Retention (IHE, 09/27/2023)

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Students shall not be retained for extracurricular purposes. In accordance with *MS Code 37-177-1* of the *MS Code of 1972*, social promotion is prohibited in compliance with the Literacy-Based Promotion Act.

Minimum requirements for promotion:

Minimum Requirements for Promotion for Grades K-6

Grade K Should pass 70% of the district objectives in language arts and math.

Grade 3 Must pass language arts and math with a 65 or above and exhibit an adequate level of reading proficiency as measured on the state approved reading assessment. If a student passes the state approved reading assessment but does not pass language arts or math with a 65 or above, the student is retained. In addition, if a student fails two or more of ANY subject, they will be retained.

Grade 1-6 Must pass language arts, math, and science with a 65 or above and exhibit an adequate level of reading proficiency as measured on the state approved reading

assessment. In addition, if a student fails two or more of ANY subject, they will be retained.

Students with eligibility rulings for special educational services shall be promoted or retained based upon mastery of skills specified in their Individual Educational Plan and a decision reached by the IEP committee and principal to assure a least restrictive environment. t.

Legal Reference: Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards; SB Policy Part 3, Chapter 36

Transfer Students

In the event that number grades are not sent from a prior school and verification is present that efforts have been made to secure the number grades and these efforts have been unsuccessful, then transfer students' grades will be averaged using the midpoint grade (i.e., A=97, B=87, C=77, D=69, F=66).

Summer School/Extended Year Policy

In the effort to provide quality education to all students, the Board encourages schools within the district to provide academic, cultural, recreational, and aesthetic programs that provide activities targeted toward developing the total student. After-school, summer, and extended school learning experiences can be provided by the schools as deemed appropriate to match the needs of the respective student bodies.

Extended School Year/Summer School regulations of the Commission on School Accreditation are to be followed by all schools providing summer school instruction and are as follows:

1. The program is under the leadership of the district superintendent and the supervision of a principal.
2. Each program is housed in a school building or will be offered through an online instructional program and management system.
3. A definite schedule of classes is followed.
4. All staff are appropriately licensed.
5. The instructional program and management system are consistent with that used in the regular session.
6. Students enrolled must provide written approval from the principal of their home schools.
7. Students enrolled in an extended school year/summer school program complete all remaining course/subject or credit recovery requirements/objectives before credit for the course/subject is issued.
8. Students enrolled in a summer school program are limited to earning one unit of credit during the summer school session.

All such programs designed by the schools must be approved by the district office and adequately supervised. Appropriate accreditation and legal standards set by regional or state agencies must be met.

Speech-Language Screening

Each elementary student will be screened for speech, language, voice and fluency disorders before the end of Grade 1.

- If a student fails the screener, the parent or legal guardian will be notified of the results of the screener.
- If a student fails the screener, the school district, in its discretion, may perform a comprehensive speech-language evaluation.
- If a student fails the screener twice, the school district will conduct a Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) meeting to determine if a comprehensive assessment is warranted. Child Find procedures will be followed.

A parent or legal guardian may provide written notification to the school district opting out of the mandatory screening provided by the district. The provisions of this section shall not apply to homeschooled students.

Legal Reference: MS Code 37-175-15

Dyslexia Policy

Dyslexia is neurobiological in origin and is characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition and poor spelling and decoding abilities, which typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction, and secondary consequences which may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

Wilkinson County School District shall screen students for dyslexia utilizing a screener approved by the State Board of Education in the spring of Kindergarten and the fall of Grade 1. The component of the screening must include:

1. Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness;
2. Sound symbol recognition;
3. Alphabet knowledge;
4. Decoding skills;
5. Encoding skills; and
6. Rapid naming.

If a student fails the screener, the parent or legal guardian will be notified of the results of the screener. If a parent or legal guardian of a student who fails the dyslexia screener exercises the option to have a subsequent evaluation performed, such evaluation shall be administered by any of the licensed professionals, including: Psychologists, Psychometrists, or Speech Language Pathologists, and the resulting diagnosis of the subsequent evaluation must be accepted by the school district for purposes of determining eligibility for placement within a dyslexia intervention program.

Wilkinson County School District, in its discretion, may perform a comprehensive dyslexia evaluation. Such evaluation must be administered by any of the licensed professionals listed above.

The district shall make an initial determination of whether a student diagnosed with dyslexia meets the eligibility criteria under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to have an Individualized Education Program developed and to receive services. If a student's

diagnosis of dyslexia does not result in an IDEA eligibility determination then the district will proceed with the process for determining if the student is eligible for a 504 Plan under the Rehabilitation Act based on the presumption that proficiency in spelling, reading and writing are essential for the student to achieve appropriate educational progress. The district shall develop interventions and strategies to address the needs of those students diagnosed with dyslexia which provide the necessary accommodations to enable the student to achieve appropriate educational progress.

INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTION

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the behavioral and academic needs of every student are met through an instructional model that is designed to address student learning with quality classroom instruction and opportunities for intervention. The Mississippi Department Education (MDE) shall require every school district to follow the instructional model, which consists of three (3) tiers of instruction:

1. Tier I: Quality classroom instruction based on Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards
2. Tier II: Focused supplemental instruction within the classroom
3. Tier III: Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students

If strategies at Tier I and Tier II are unsuccessful, students must be referred to the MTSS Team. The MTSS Team is the problem-solving unit responsible for recommending Tier III interventions. Each school must have an MTSS Team implemented in accordance with the process developed by the MDE. The chairperson of the MTSS Team shall be the school principal as the school's instructional leader or the principal's designee. The designee may not be an individual whose primary responsibility is special education. Interventions will be:

1. designed to address the deficit areas;
2. research based;
3. implemented as designed by the MTSS Team;
4. supported by data regarding the effectiveness of interventions.

Monitoring of student progress is an ongoing process that may be measured through informal classroom assessment, benchmark assessment instruments, and large-scale assessments.

Teachers should use progress monitoring information to:

1. determine if students are making adequate progress,
2. identify students as soon as they begin to fall behind, and
3. modify instruction early enough to ensure each student gains essential skills.

After a referral is made, the MTSS Team must develop and begin implementation of an intervention(s) within two (2) weeks. No later than eight (8) weeks after implementation of the intervention(s) the MTSS Team must conduct a documented review of the interventions to determine success of the intervention(s). No later than sixteen (16) weeks after implementation of the intervention(s), a second review must be conducted to determine whether the intervention(s) is successful. If the intervention(s) is determined to be unsuccessful, then the student will be referred for a comprehensive assessment.

Reading Deficiency Intervention

In accordance with the Literacy-Based Promotion Act of 2013, each public school student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading at any time, as demonstrated through:

1. performance on a reading screener approved or developed by the MDE, or
2. through locally determined assessments and teacher observations conducted in Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 3, or
3. through statewide end-of-year assessments or approved alternate yearly assessments in Grade 3,

must be given intensive reading instruction and intervention immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency. A student who was promoted from Grade 3 to Grade 4 under a good cause exemption of the Literacy-Based Promotion Act must be given intensive reading instruction and intervention. The intensive intervention must include effective instructional strategies and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist the student in becoming a successful reader, able to read at or above grade level, and ready for promotion to the next grade.

A dyslexia screener must be administered to all students during the spring of their kindergarten year and the fall of their first grade year. The screening must include the following components:

- a. Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness;
- b. Sound symbol recognition;
- c. Alphabet knowledge;
- d. Decoding skills;
- e. Encoding skills; and
- f. Rapid naming (quickly naming objects, pictures, colors, or symbols (letters or digits) aloud.

All students in Kindergarten and grades 1 through 3 may be administered a screener following the timelines approved by the Mississippi Department of Education to identify any deficiencies in reading. In addition to failure to make adequate progress following Tier I and Tier II, students will be referred to the MTSS Team for interventions as specified in guidelines developed by MDE if any of the following events occur:

1. Grades 1-3: A student has failed one (1) grade;
2. Grades 4-12: A student has failed two (2) grades;
3. A student failed either of the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than twenty (20) days in the current school year; OR
4. A student scores at the lowest level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 statewide accountability assessment;
5. A student is promoted from Grade 3 to Grade 4 under a good cause exemption of the Literacy-Based Promotion Act.

Students with a grade of 65-74 will be referred to the MTSS Team for Tier II interventions. Students with a grade of 64 or below will be referred to the MTSS Team for Tier III interventions. Referrals to the MTSS Team must be made within the first twenty (20) school days of a school year if the student meets any of the criteria a-d stated above under dyslexia.

Equal Educational Opportunities

The Wilkinson County School District grants equal educational opportunities to all qualified persons regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, marital status, religion, or disability. It is the intent and desire of the Wilkinson County Board of Education that equal educational opportunities be provided in any and all educational programs and activities.

Legal Reference: MS Code 37-15-35; 1972 Educational Amendments, Title IX; 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title VI; 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Section 503 & 504; 45 CFR Part 84 and Part 86; Brown vs. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954); MS Public School Accountability Standards

ENGLISH LEARNERS

The district is committed to the identification, assessment, and placement of English Learners (EL) in an environment that facilitates appropriate and effective instruction to meet the special needs of these students. English Learner teachers and classroom teachers alike share the responsibility for the EL's whole education, both in language and academic content. Classroom teachers, EL teachers, and other support staff plan jointly to determine instructional accommodations and modifications needed to make language and content as comprehensible as possible throughout the whole school day for ELs.

The newly revised *Mississippi English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports (2018)* by the Mississippi Department of Education provides WCSD with a clear understanding of the responsibilities towards ELL students. To see additional and detailed information regarding English proficiency instruction, please refer to **Policy IK**.

Section 504 Procedures (Students)

Wilkinson County School District adheres to a policy of non-discrimination in educational programs, activities, and employment and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which prohibits discrimination against the handicapped.

It is the responsibility of all teachers in the regular education program to do all that is within their professional capability to ensure that all students can learn and are successful in the regular education program. To this end, the Wilkinson County School District has established procedures within the regular classroom for assisting students with special needs. The Wilkinson County School District will adhere to the document Multi-Tier Support System as its procedural guidelines in complying with the requirements of: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Title II – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The model consists of three tiers of instruction:

- Tier I Quality classroom instruction based on MS Curriculum Frameworks and district instructional initiatives
- Tier II Focused supplemental instruction
- Tier III Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students

REFERENCE: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Title II – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Textbook Pupil Use

Instructional Resource/Textbook Definition:

The Board delegates the responsibility for selection of instructional resources and textbook materials to the professional staff employed by the district. The professional staff will choose instructional resources/textbooks that support and enrich the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, learning styles, and maturity levels of students served. As the basic unit of instructional material, the textbook shall be defined as any medium or manual of instruction which contains a systematic presentation of the principles of a subject and which constitutes a major instructional vehicle for that subject. District administrative staff shall appropriate funds for purchase of and supplemental materials for classroom use.

Home School Pupil Use

Mississippi law requires a local school board to make available to parents or legal guardians of any school-age children who reside in a school district, upon request, any textbook(s) on the state surplus inventory list (textbooks that are no longer used in the district, but do not qualify for disposal). The school textbook coordinator will be responsible for issuing these books upon request from parents. These textbooks must be returned to the school by the end of the district approved school year.

School Counseling Program

The primary goal of the School Counseling Program is to promote and enhance student learning through the three broad and interrelated areas of student development. Each of these areas of student development encompasses a variety of desired student learning competencies which, in turn, are composed of specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills which form the foundation of the developmental school counseling program. The three areas of student development are: (a) Academic Development, (b) Career Development, and (c) Personal/Social Development.

Recognizing that all children do not develop in a linear fashion according to a certain time-table, there is intentional overlapping among grade levels (elementary, middle/junior high, and high school). The school counseling program reflects the progression of a student's development throughout the K through 12 experiences. It is understood that mastery of basic skills facilitates the mastery of higher-order skills in each area of development. The school counselor utilizes a variety of strategies, activities, delivery methods, and resources to promote the desired student development. The school counselors' responsibilities include the design, organization, implementation, and coordination of the program. School counselors shall abide by the American School Counselor Association Code of Ethics. (ASCA)

Transcripts

Upon written request, a student's transcript will be sent to any designated agency, college, or school. The student must request, upon graduation, that a final transcript be sent to the agency or college of his choice. Additional transcripts are furnished upon written request for a fee of \$5.00 per copy. Students may also request transcripts online through each school's counseling department website (fees apply).

Graduation

Graduation Ceremony

To be eligible for participation in the Wilkinson County High School graduation ceremony, seniors may have no more than 10 unexcused days absent during a ½ Carnegie unit course

(semester course) and no more than 20 unexcused days during a 1 Carnegie unit course (full-year course). Students must be in attendance 66 percent of the instructional school day in order to be counted present. Prior to the graduation ceremony, students who exceed these limits will be notified by the attendance committee and be offered the opportunity to request an attendance hearing. Graduation is intended to be a dignified event. As such, students must comply with all aspects of the dress code as outlined by school administrators. The administration of Wilkinson County High School has the right to hold the diploma at the ceremony of any graduate if, in the opinion of the administration, outbursts (hollering, whistling, noise makers, etc.) disrupt the ceremony. In this situation, the student and parent/guardian may receive the diploma from the superintendent at a later date.

Seniors assigned to the alternative program must be in good standing to be eligible for participation in graduation exercises. The principal reserves the right to remove any student from participating in graduation activities based on behavior, academic progress, dress code, or other factors deemed necessary by administration.

Requirements

Beginning school year 2018-2019 and thereafter, ALL entering ninth graders will be required to meet the Traditional Diploma guidelines as outlined below. Students planning to go directly to a four-year university must also meet IHL entrance requirements. The only exception to the traditional diploma will be for students with a Significant Cognitive Disability as outlined on their IEP.

Traditional Diploma

- Earn 24 credits (Carnegie Units) in a selection of required classes including English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology or Computer Science, College and Career Readiness, Health, Art, Physical Education and electives
- Local school districts may add graduation requirements to the state requirements

Traditional Diploma + Career and Technical Education (CTE) or JROTC Endorsement

- Earn 26 Credits
- Earn an overall GPA of 2.5
- Earn silver level on ACT WorkKeys
- Must successfully complete one (1) of the following:
 - One (1) dual credit
 - Work based Learning
 - Earn a State Board of Education approved national credential
 - One (1) Advance Placement (AP), Diploma Program-International Baccalaureate (IB), or Cambridge (AICE) course aligned to their career pathway. Students must earn a C or higher and take the appropriate exam.
 - NOCTI/JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills Credential

Traditional Diploma + Academic Endorsement

- Earn 26 credits
- Earn an overall GPA of 2.5
- Two (2) elective courses must meet MS IHL college preparatory curriculum (CPC) requirements
- Must successfully complete one (1) of the following:
 - ACT sub scores of 17 in English and 19 in Math
 - Students with ACT subscore below 17 in English must enroll in Essentials for College Literacy (in the senior year). Students with ACT

- subscore below 19 in Math must enroll in Essentials for College Math (in the senior year).
 - Students meet postsecondary requirements for placement and are enrolled in ENG Comp 1 and/or MAT College Algebra and earned a C or higher in either course or have previously earned credit for ENG Comp 1 and/or MAT College Algebra with a C or higher.
 - SAT equivalency subscore
- Must successfully complete one (1) of the following:
 - One (1) AP course with a C or higher and take the appropriate Advance Placement (AP) exam
 - One (1) Diploma Program-International Baccalaureate (IB) or Cambridge (AICE) course with a C or higher and take the appropriate exam
 - One (1) dual credit course and earn a C or higher in the course

Traditional Diploma + Distinguished Academic Endorsement

- Earn 28 credits
- Earn an overall GPA of 3.0
- Two (2) elective courses must meet MS IHL CPC recommended requirements
- Must successfully complete one (1) of the following:
 - ACT sub scores of 18 in English and 22 in Math
 - SAT equivalency subscore
- Must successfully complete one (1) of the following:
 - One (1) Advanced Placement (AP) course with a B or higher and take the appropriate AP exam
 - One (1) Diploma Program- International Baccalaureate (IB) or Cambridge (AICE) course with a B or higher and take the appropriate exam
 - One (1) dual credit course earning a B or higher in the course

Alternate Diploma

- Students who have met the criteria of having a Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD) may participate in a program of study to earn the Alternate Diploma.
- Earn 24 Carnegie Units in a selection of required classes including English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Health, Career Readiness, Life Skills Development, the Arts, and Electives
- Required to participate in the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program-Alternate (MAAP-A) and achieve a level of Passing or Proficient
- The state defined Alternate Diploma is included in graduation rates in the same manner as a traditional diploma.
- Students with an Alternate Diploma must contact the postsecondary institution to determine eligibility for Ability to Benefit (ATB)

Field Trips

Field trips are intended to allow students experiences that provide insight and information that cannot be adequately developed through regular classroom instruction. Field trips of significant educational value are encouraged, while field trips of recreational value may be permitted at the discretion of the principal and district office. **No student with 10 or more UNEXCUSED absences will be allowed to go on field trips or other special-requested events. This policy may exclude school-related contests, competitions, and games.**

All field trips approved by the school principal must be forwarded to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and the Director of Operations for final approval. When requesting permission for a field trip, the person making the request must state the source of payment for the field trip, the method of transportation, the commencement and termination times and dates, the number of school personnel and chaperons to attend, the method of financing adult participation, the reference to the curriculum, and any other pertinent information. A letter shall be sent to parents regarding all specifics of the field trip and asking permission for their child's participation. No student may be allowed to leave school premises for a field trip unless a written parental permission form has been obtained. These signed forms must be kept on file at the school for one calendar year.

A ratio of one adult to every ten students is required for any field trip in PK–12th grade. No pre-school children or students from another class are allowed to go with any other identified group.

When attending field trips, violations of school policies/regulations will result in disciplinary action consistent with Board policy. Principals are expected to use discretion in authorizing trips, guarding against excessive travel, extended absence from school, and excessive cost. Primary consideration shall be given to the safety and welfare of the students involved. Students will be transported in a public or chartered conveyance by duly licensed drivers in a vehicle with adequate liability insurance.

Technology and Instruction/Electronic Information Resources

TERMS

All users of district provided laptops, tablets, or other personal computing devices will comply at all times with the Wilkinson County School District (WCSD) Technology Handbook policies. Any failure to comply may result in termination of user rights of possession effective immediately and the District may repossess the device. Any lost, stolen and damaged devices must be reported to school authorities immediately.

INTERNET ACCESS

Wilkinson County School District (WCSD) provides the privilege of Internet access to district faculty, staff, students, and occasionally guests. Each user, as well as a minor's parent or guardian, voluntarily agrees to release, hold harmless, defend, and indemnify, the Wilkinson County School District, its officers, board members, employees, and agents, for and against all claims, actions, charges, losses or damages which arise out of the user's use of the WCSD network, but not limited to negligence, personal injury, wrongful death, property loss or damage, delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries of data, or service interruptions. WCSD will fully cooperate with local, state or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the user's Internet account.

Access will be restricted as required to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act. Web browsing may be monitored and records retained to ensure compliance.

Users are expected to respect the web filter and shall not attempt to circumvent the filter when browsing the Internet. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate is based solely on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on whether a website has been blocked or not. If a user believes a site is unnecessarily blocked, the user should submit a technology work order to review the site.

Each user acknowledges that the information available from other websites may not be accurate. Use of any of the information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk. Wilkinson County School District makes no warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, regarding the quality, accuracy or validity of the data on the Internet.

INTERNET/TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

- The person to whom an WCSD network account is issued is responsible at all times for its proper use.
- Any inappropriate use may result in the cancellation of the privilege of use, and/or disciplinary action. Consequences for any user who fails to comply with WCSD and school guidelines may include paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, expulsion or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy, and state or federal law.
- Any district employee who uses the WCSD network inappropriately is subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal.
- Under no conditions should a WCSD network user give their password information to another user nor allow another user to utilize their account unless speaking directly to a technology department employee who is assisting them.
- Schools may supplement any provisions of the District AUP (Acceptable Use Policy), and may require additional parent releases and approvals, but in no case will such documents replace the District AUP.
- Users will immediately report to school district authorities any attempt by other network users to engage in inappropriate conversations or personal contact.
- Any non-standard software that is needed to perform a specific job function will need to be brought to the attention of the Technology Department. Those applications shall be the sole responsibility of that office and if the application interferes with any required programs, applications, and utilities, it should not be used and if in use, it may be disabled.

ACCEPTABLE USES OF TECHNOLOGY (not all inclusive)

A responsible user of the technology will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that they are expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher, administrator, or other staff member if they see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Use District technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using WCSD technology.

UNACCEPTABLE USES OF THE TECHNOLOGY (not all inclusive)

- Violating any state and/or federal law (i.e., copyright laws).
- Using profanity, obscenity, or other language that may be offensive to others.

- Making personal attacks on other people, organizations, religions, or ethnicities.
- Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are sexually explicit, obscene, or that offend or tend to degrade others. The administration invokes its discretionary rights to determine such suitability.
- Not respecting the privacy of a person by posting personal contact information, such as work/home address, telephone, e-mail, photographs, or names, without obtaining prior permission from the person affected.
- Student information shall be posted only with written parent/guardian permission.
- Forwarding personal communication without the author's prior consent.
- Using the Internet for commercial purposes, financial gain, personal business, producing advertisement, business service endorsement, or religious or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Destroying or altering the files of another user.
- Viewing or taking the files of another user.

TITLE

The District has legal title to the property at all times. The user's right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon full and complete compliance with this agreement, the WCSD Technology Handbook policies, and all District policies and procedures.

LOSS, THEFT OR FULL DAMAGE

If a device is stolen, the employee or parent/guardian (in the case of a student) should immediately notify the school administration. At that time, the user or the parent/guardian will be required to file a police report. Once a police report has been filed, the district, in conjunction with the local law enforcement agency may deploy locating software to aid authorities in recovering the device. It is imperative that a lost or stolen device be reported immediately. If the stolen device is not reported within three calendar days to a district school administrator, parent/guardian will be responsible for full replacement cost.

If a device is damaged, lost or stolen as a result of irresponsible behavior, the user or the parent may be responsible for the full replacement cost. The user or the parent/guardian will be responsible for full replacement cost of the device if not reported to district personnel within three days of missing or damaged device.

In the event that a device is damaged, lost or stolen, the user will be assessed a deductible for the repair or replacement of the device for the first occurrence per device.

Students who leave the district during the school year must return all devices and additional accessories (including the power adapter and cable) to the school administrator or his/her designee immediately.

REPOSSESSION

If the user does not fully comply with all terms of this Agreement and the WCSD Technology Handbook, including the timely return of the property, WCSD shall be entitled to declare the user in default and come to the user's place of residence, or other location of the property, to take possession of the property.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

The user's right to use and possession of the property terminates not later than the last day of enrollment unless earlier terminated by WCSD or upon withdrawal from WCSD.

UNLAWFUL APPROPRIATION

Failure to timely return the property and the continued use of it for non-school purposes without the District's consent may be considered unlawful appropriation of the District's property.

FEES FOR DEVICE USE

Use and Maintenance Fees

- Parents/guardians shall pay a non-refundable annual fee of \$20 for students in grades PreKindergarten-12. This fee is a classroom/home maintenance fee and will be assessed once per school year.
- For damage that occurs to any district device (students and employees) there will be a required deductible to cover damage by incident (i.e., 1st damage, 2nd damage) AND by incident type (i.e., cracked glass, broken LCD, bent frame).
- If the device is lost, stolen, or totally damaged as a result of irresponsible behavior, the person the device is issued to may be responsible for the replacement cost. A police/sheriff report will be required for all stolen devices.
- WCSD may disable the device remotely to protect the device and/or data on the device.
- Students withdrawing from the district must have all outstanding device fees paid before withdrawing from school.
- Seniors must clear all records and pay all fees before they shall be allowed to participate in commencement exercises.

Damaged Devices

Any damage must be reported to school authorities immediately. Power adapters and sleeves must be returned or paid in full.

Deductibles:

- First damage occurrence: \$50.00 deductible to cover damage.
- Second damage occurrence: \$50.00 deductible *plus* 25% of the repair cost to repair the laptop and possible loss of take home privileges.
- Third damage occurrence: \$50.00 deductible *plus* 50% of the repair cost to repair the laptop and loss of take home privileges.
- Fourth damage occurrence: Fair market value to repair or replace the laptop or tablet.

HANDLING AND CARE

- Keep the device in the district-issued or approved sleeve and case.
- Keep the device and sleeve free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not applied by WCSD.
- Use the device on a flat, stable surface.
- Do not place books on the device.
- Do not have food or drinks around the device.
- Wipe surfaces with a clean, dry soft cloth.
- Avoid touching the screen with pens or pencils.
- Do not leave the device exposed to direct sunlight or near any heat or moisture sources for extended periods of time.
- Do not remove the district provided case.

POWER MANAGEMENT

- It is the user's responsibility to recharge the device's battery so it is fully charged by the start of the next school day.
- Devices with no battery life must be charged in the classroom. The student may be required to forfeit use of the device for the entire time it takes to charge it.
- All class work missed because of uncharged batteries must be made up on a student's own time if allowed by the teacher.

TRANSPORT

- Transport the device in its protective case and sleeve.
- Do not leave the device in a vehicle for extended periods of time or overnight.
- Do not leave the device in visible sight when left in a vehicle.

MONITORING AND SUPERVISION

- Do not leave the device unattended in an unlocked classroom or during an extracurricular activity.
- Do not lend the device to a classmate, friend, or family member. If any person damages the device it will be the user's (parent/guardian in the case of a student) responsibility and the damage cost policy will be in effect.
- Any attempt to "jailbreak" or remove the WCSD profile could result in disciplinary action, including suspension.
- Students are responsible for the safety and security of the device and any activity on the device.

USER DATA

All users are responsible for keeping backups of important data. If a device has to be repaired there may be a need to reset it to the original settings. The technology department will not be responsible for any user data that might be lost as a part of this process.

HELP AND SUPPORT

Each school will have a designated technology support person. Teachers, staff, and student tech team members will be the only individuals to submit WCSD technology work orders or call the WCSD Technology Help Desk. Students will contact their teachers as a first level of support. If the student needs additional assistance they will visit the designated technology support area at their school. An authorized individual will contact the technology department for additional assistance as needed.

USE OF PERSONAL LAPTOPS AND TABLETS

Students will be allowed to use their personal laptops or tablets in place of a district device except during District and State testing. The goal of the 1:1 initiative is to provide every student with the same device. If a parent refuses a device for home use, the student will be allowed to check out a device at school for use in class. The district is not able to provide support or install software on personal devices; therefore the use of personal devices is not a viable alternative to a district provided device.

Extracurricular Activities

Student participants in athletic activities, cheerleading, JROTC, band, choir, or any other extracurricular activity are required to ride school transportation to and from such activities. A student may ride home with parents if the parents ask, but no other student will be permitted to ride with them unless the other student's parents contact the Coach or Director by phone and in writing during the school day prior to the event.

GRADES 7TH AND 8TH

- For a student to be eligible for any extracurricular activity for the first semester, he/she must pass the previous grade level with at least a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) (70 or higher) in any four courses. Additionally, a student must submit to the school a current health certificate for the year of extracurricular participation. First-year athletes must present their coach with a certified copy of their birth certificate. To be eligible for participation in any extracurricular activity during the second semester, a student must possess at least a 2.0 GPA (70 or higher) in 4 courses at the end of the first semester.

Age Limits: A 7th grader must not have reached 14 years of age prior to August 1 of the current school year, and an 8th grader must not have reached 15 years of age prior to August 1 of the current school year.

For a junior high student to be eligible to participate on a high school team first semester, he/she must pass the previous grade level with at least a 2.0 GPA (70 or higher) in the 4 core courses (English, math, science, and social studies). To be eligible for participation during the second semester, a student must possess a 2.0 GPA (70 or higher) in the 4 core courses at the end of the first semester.

WCHS houses various school-sponsored clubs in which students are encouraged to become involved. Most clubs have their own requirements for membership, and the student should check with the sponsor if interested in joining.

****A student must be in attendance on the day of extracurricular activities in order to participate. Students must also be in attendance 66% of the day to participate in practice.**

GRADES 9TH, 10TH, 11TH, and 12TH

- For a 10th, 11th and 12th-grade student to be eligible for any extracurricular activity for the first semester, he/she must be making "satisfactory progress toward graduation" with at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average from the previous school year. For a 9th-grade student to be eligible for any extracurricular activity for the first semester, he/she must pass the eighth grade with at least a 2.0 GPA. Also, a student must submit to the school a current health certificate for that year. First-year athletes must present the coach with a certified copy of their birth certificate. To be eligible for any extracurricular activity the second semester, he/she must have at least a 2.0 GPA at the end of the first semester. **ALL COURSES THE STUDENT IS TAKING WILL BE USED IN DETERMINING THE SEMESTER AND END OF THE YEAR GPA AVERAGES!**

BETA CLUB

The Wilkinson County Chapter of the Beta Club is affiliated with the National Beta organization. The purpose of the club is to be of service to the school and community. The Beta Club stands for achievement, character, and leadership. To be eligible for Beta Club membership, a student must maintain a 85 or above overall average in English, Math, Science,

History, with no grade lower than an 80 in any subject, less than two discipline infractions per year and not more than three unexcused absences per semester. Grades, discipline records and attendance will be checked each nine weeks by the sponsor(s). Any student without the minimum requirements will be placed on probation. If the average is 85 or above the following nine weeks, the student will be removed from probation. To attend the State or National Convention, students must maintain the 85 or above average, have no more than three unexcused absences, and no more than two minor discipline infractions prior to attending.

Demerit System:

To ensure that Beta Club members uphold the highest standards of behavior, we have implemented a demerit system:

- Detention = 1 Demerit
- In-School Suspension (ISS) = 2 Demerits
- Once a student reaches 5 demerits, they will be removed from the club.
- Out of School Suspension (OSS) will result in automatic removal from Beta Club

ELECTIONS

In a school election, a candidate must have a majority of the vote cast in order to be elected. If a second ballot is necessary, the 3 highest candidates will be voted upon if there are more than 5 candidates. If there are 5 or fewer, the 2 highest candidates will be voted upon.

Homecoming Court Requirements

All candidates for homecoming maid must achieve an 80 average in core subjects for the previous semester. Candidates must abide by the complete list of election procedures outlined in the Constitution of the Wilkinson County High School Student Council. The Homecoming Queen will be elected using the school election guidelines listed under the “Elections” section of this handbook.

Who’s Who Election Requirements

1. The student must have an 80 overall average for the previous semester.
2. A petition must be submitted endorsing the student signed by 20 students in the same grade as the nominee.
3. The nominee’s signature must be present on the first line of the petition.
4. The petition must be submitted 5 days prior to the election.
5. Graduating seniors submitting petitions for Mr. and Miss Wilkinson County High School must have an 85 overall average and must have been a student at Wilkinson County High School since the beginning of their junior year. Mr. and Miss Wilkinson County High School will be elected using the school election guidelines listed under the “Elections” section of this handbook.
6. No suspensions the previous semester.

Office Workers

Because of the need for additional help, some students are asked to assist in the office during the school year. In order for a student to help in the office, the student must sign a Confidentiality Agreement, maintain an Average Daily Attendance of 95%, be courteous, dress appropriately and maintain a B average. A student may be dismissed as an office worker upon being referred to the Assistant Principal for discipline. Also, any unauthorized admit slip, excuse, or any other office document carried out by an office worker will result in immediate dismissal as an office worker and OSS.

USE OF OUTSIDE EMAIL CLIENTS & STIPULATIONS FOR USING DISTRICT EMAIL CLIENT AS DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE (Teachers, Administrators, Managers, etc.)

Use of “Internet mail” by students, staff, and faculty such as Yahoo mail, Gmail, and POP3 accounts provided by their “home” Internet service providers is allowed at this time.

The District does not block use of Internet mail accounts, but any “OFFICIAL” communications, e.g., Teacher to Parent, Teacher to Student, Staff to Staff, must be via the district's e-mail system. This includes, but is not limited to teachers who guide extracurricular activities such as Clubs, Choirs, Bands, Athletics, and the like.

FILTERING

An Internet filter is in place for Wilkinson County School District. This filter is a critical component of the WCSD network as well as Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant since it allows valuable online Internet access while restricting access to specific unwanted material in the following categories:

- Pornography
- Gambling
- Illegal Drugs
- Online Merchandising
- Hate Speech
- Criminal Skills
- Alternative Journals
- Other Undesirable Materials

This filter is updated on a daily basis in order to restrict access to the above items. Filtering is not a 100% foolproof way of limiting access to appropriate sites. Inappropriate sites are added to the Internet daily. Students will be supervised at all times by a teacher while using the Internet. All inappropriate hits are logged along with the date/time and the IP address of the workstation making the request.

Attempts to bypass the school Internet filters are in violation of this acceptable use policy and will be subject to disciplinary action that may include denial of access to technology during suspension, expulsion, termination of employment or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy, and state or federal law.

USE MONITORING

All data transferred and/or transmitted over the WCSD network and/or on WCSD issued devices can be monitored and recorded at any time. All data transferred or transmitted over the network can be tracked and identified, and originating users can be held liable if their use of the network violates any established policy, regulation, or law. Any data stored on district-owned equipment may be archived and preserved by the district for an indefinite period. Such data includes, but is not limited to E-mail, text documents, digital photographs, music, and other digital or electronic files. If a particular user continues to try to connect to an inappropriate site, that workstation will be remotely monitored and the individual will be reported to the Principal of the school and the WCSD Central Office.

TECHNOLOGIES COVERED

WCSD may provide the privilege for Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, email, and more.

The Acceptable Use Policy applies to both District-owned technology equipment utilizing the WCSD network, the WCSD Internet connection, and/or private networks/Internet connections accessed from District-owned devices at any time. Thus AUP also applies to privately-owned devices accessing the WCSD network, the WCSD Internet connection, and/or private networks/Internet connections while on school property or participating in school functions or events off campus. WCSD policies outlined in this document cover all available technologies now and in the future, not just those specifically listed or currently available.

EMAIL

Student WCSD email is the property of WCSD. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain this email account appropriately.

Users should refrain from using district email for personal business. Users should not sign up for subscriptions or memberships for sites not directly related to WCSD business using WCSD email accounts.

SECURITY

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the WCSD network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. Users should never share personal information.

If users believe a computer or laptop they are using might be infected with a virus, they should alert the Technology Department. Users should not attempt to remove the virus themselves or download any programs to help remove the virus.

ONLINE ETIQUETTE

Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.

Users should recognize that among the valuable content online there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should only use known or trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet.

Users should remember not to post anything online that they would not want students, parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it cannot be completely retracted and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways the user never intended.

PLAGIARISM

Users should not plagiarize (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet. Users should not take credit for things they did not create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online. Information obtained via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet in person someone they meet online without parental permission.

If users see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes them concerned for their personal safety or the safety of someone else, they should immediately bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or administrator if at school, parent if using the device at home).

CYBER BULLYING

Cyber bullying including, but not limited to, harassing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyber stalking will not be tolerated. Users should not send emails or post comments with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted individual and create for the targeted individual a hostile school environment.

Engaging in these behaviors or in any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in disciplinary action described in WCSD Policy IJB – CIPA Policy - Acceptable Use. In some cases, cyber bullying can be a crime. Users should remember that online activities might be monitored.

All students will be educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other persons on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyber bullying awareness and response

SOCIAL MEDIA

The District has a policy that addresses Social Media, which applies to all employees and students. By signing the Acceptable Use Policy, users are acknowledging they have read and agree to abide by the Social Media guidelines. See WCSD Policy GABB - Staff Conduct with Students.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

WCSD will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

While WCSD employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness.

WCSD will not be responsible or liable for, financially or otherwise, unauthorized transactions conducted over the WCSD network.

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary consequences, including:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges;
- Notification of parents;
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities;
- Employment disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment;
- Legal action and/or prosecution.

Students and parents/guardians shall be required to sign the District's Acceptable Use Policy as part of the district's Technology Handbook before Internet or network access shall be allowed.

LEGAL REFERENCE: MS Code 11-46-9

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The Board recognizes the educational values inherent in a broad, varied, and well-directed student activities program. Participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities at the school should be considered by all concerned as a privilege rather than a right. School-sponsored and student-led clubs are permitted in the district. Students may participate in extracurricular activities, such as clubs, with the permission of their parents. All clubs involving students shall require and maintain a signed written parental permission form for each student participant involved in the club for inspection by the superintendent or the superintendent's designee. The superintendent shall cause a standard parental permission form to be made available for all clubs.

1. School-sponsored clubs: No student may attend or become a member of a school-sponsored club without signed written parental permission forms for each student participant. Supervising teachers or supervising faculty of school-sponsored clubs shall maintain for inspection signed written parental permission as part of that person's responsibilities of club leadership.
2. Student-led clubs: No student may attend or become a member of a student-led club without signed written parental permission forms for each student participant. Supervising teachers or supervising faculty of student-led clubs shall maintain for inspection signed written parental permission as part of that person's responsibilities of club supervision or sponsorship.

Principals are responsible for the co-curricular and extracurricular programs in their schools, operating them in accordance with Board policies, state regulations, and directives from the superintendent.

Co-curricular and extracurricular activities will be an integral part of the total educational program of the district. These activities will be governed by the rules and regulations of the Mississippi Department of Education.

Additionally, these activities will function under the by-laws or such set of rules established by the organization, with the approval of the principal.

Principals shall assure that no classroom instructional time is lost by students in soliciting funds for any activity, in operating any concession stand, or in attending club meetings.

The scheduling of competition in extracurricular activities (band, speech, debate, choral groups, drama, etc.) is discouraged during State testing days.

LEGAL REFERENCE: MS Public School Accountability Standards; Mississippi High School Activities Association Handbook

Interscholastic Activities

Interscholastic athletic activities shall be under the supervision of the principal or his designee. The program shall be governed by the rules and regulations of the Mississippi High School Activities Association, Inc. and the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards.

SEX-RELATED EDUCATION

The Wilkinson County School Board believes that every student has the right to accurate information concerning the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. The School Board is committed to fostering community partnerships that educate both students and parents about this important topic.

The Wilkinson County School District seeks to affirm its commitment to creating healthy and responsible teens in the Wilkinson County School District by fully complying with the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, Section 37-13-171, and by:

- Adopting educational programs designed to help students and parents take action to reduce rates of teen births and sexually transmitted infections and integrating such programs into already established classes, and
- Establishing principles, guidelines, and strategies for implementing effective sex education programs, referred to in state law as “Abstinence-Plus” education programs.

The district shall utilize an age-appropriate, evidenced based, medically accurate, Abstinence-Plus curriculum from the list of curricula approved and recommended by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), including as one choice the curricula of Abstinence-Plus developed by the Mississippi Department of Human Services and the Mississippi Department of Health, if such curricula are on the MDE’s approved curriculum list.

ABSTINENCE-PLUS SEX EDUCATION

The Wilkinson County School Board adopts a Mississippi Department of Education approved “Abstinence-Plus Education Curriculum” and requires the implementation of such program and curriculum in the Wilkinson County School District effective at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

Furthermore, the Wilkinson County School Board:

1. Prohibits any teaching that abortion can be used to prevent the birth of a baby;
2. Requires boys and girls to be separated into different classes when sex-related education is discussed or taught;
3. Prohibits instruction and demonstrations on the application and use of condoms; and
4. Requires the school nurse employed by the school district to carry out the functions of those strategies to promote consistency in the administration of the program if the district adopts the program developed by the Mississippi Department of Health.

DEFINITION

Abstinence-Plus education is a grade and age appropriate school curriculum that includes every component of the following, plus any other programmatic or instructional components approved by the MDE:

- the social, psychological, and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity, and the likely negative psychological and physical effects of not abstaining;
- the harmful consequences to the child, the child's parents and society that bearing children out of wedlock is likely to produce, including the health, educational, financial and other difficulties the child and his or her parents are likely to face, as well as the inappropriateness of the social and economic burden placed on others;
- that unwanted sexual advances are irresponsible and teaches how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances;
- that abstinence from sexual activity before marriage, and fidelity within marriage, is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually-transmitted diseases and related health problems;
- the current state law related to sexual conduct, including forcible rape, statutory rape, paternity establishment, child support and homosexual activity; and

- that a mutually faithful, monogamous relationship in the context of marriage is the only appropriate setting for sexual intercourse.
- any other age and grade appropriate material such as contraceptives (excluding instruction and demonstrations on the application and use of condoms), the nature, cause and effects of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, along with a factual presentation of the risks and failure rates.

Parent's Rights

Each school providing instruction or any other presentation on human sexuality in the classroom, assembly or other official setting shall be required to provide no less than one (1) week's written notice thereof to the parents of children in such programs of instruction. The written notice must inform the parents of their right to request the inclusion of their child for such instruction or presentation. The notice must also inform the parents of the right, and the appropriate process, to review the curriculum and all materials to be used in the lesson or presentation. Upon the request of any parent, the school shall excuse the parent's child from such instruction or presentation, without detriment to the student.

PROCEDURES

The superintendent, or his/her designee, shall establish procedures to support this policy. The Superintendent will provide the Wilkinson County School Board with an annual report on the outcomes of the Abstinence-Plus education program. If funding is available, this report shall include quantitative as well as qualitative analysis of the program and shall include the perspective of students, teachers, and parents/guardians.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis in accordance with the Board's policy review process. This policy shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, including but not limited to code sections 37-13-171, 37-13-173, 37-13-175, as amended and with all other applicable federal and state laws.

This policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis in accordance with the Board's policy review process. This policy shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Mississippi Code and with all other applicable federal and state laws.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

ESEA prohibits the use of funds authorized under this Act to be used to:

1. Develop or distribute material, or operate programs or courses of instruction directed at youth, that are designed to promote or encourage sexual activity, whether homosexual or heterosexual,
2. Provide sex education or HIV-prevention education in schools unless that instruction is age appropriate and includes the health benefits of abstinence, and
3. Operate a program of contraceptive distribution in schools.

Legal Reference: MS Code 37-13-171, 37-13-173, 37-13-175

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

Any student participating in any school sponsored athletic program will have a physical examination prior to participation in any practice activity or inter-scholastic competition. The cost of such physical examination shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian and shall

be performed by a qualified medical practitioner who shall certify in writing that the student is medically fit to participate in the athletic programs offered by the school.

Vision and hearing screenings may be performed by the school on any student suspected of having visual or auditory difficulties that could affect educational performance. Any potential problems identified during the screening will be reported to the parent, guardian, or custodian.

GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

It is the mission of the Board to provide an educational program that addresses the unique needs of gifted students by providing appropriate, qualitatively different options in addition to regular classroom instruction. The goal of providing optimal opportunities for gifted students to realize their maximum potential can be met through a multidimensional approach that involves students in leadership, decision making, and creative yet practical problem solving activity.

Students will be identified and considered for placement in the program in accordance with District procedures and State Department of Education regulations. The program will be offered to eligible students in each attendance zone with participation elective on the part of the student and parent. Private testing will only be accepted after the final day of school each year and no later than the second week prior to the first day of school. No eligible student will be placed in the gifted program until signed parent consent has been obtained.

The instructional program for the gifted student will meet standards set by the Mississippi Department of Education. Teachers and students will work cooperatively within the given framework to design a program specific to their needs and interests so that motivation will be maximized. When students miss regular classroom assignments due to participation in the gifted program, no grade is taken.

The progress of each student in the gifted program will be assessed at least annually to determine need for continuing services. Parents will be informed if school personnel see the need for removal of a student from the program for any period of time. Specific District procedures for removal of a gifted student from the program must be followed. Parental consent for removal is not required.

The success of the gifted program is contingent upon the commitment of the District and the staff. The Board will make the necessary commitment to promote optimal learning experiences and provide for staff development needs.

Legal Reference: MS Code 37-23-173 through 37-23-181

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE: Mississippi Department of Education Gifted Program Regulations

CHILD NUTRITION

In order for any student to qualify for free or reduced price meals, there must be a current application on file for the student. All students in the household must be on the same application. If there is not a SNAP or TANF case number, monthly income information is necessary. Applications are available at the Child Nutrition office or the local school. In compliance with USDA regulations, WCSD adopted the following policies: Child Nutrition is a Federal Program. Meal costs cannot be credited in the cafeteria.

Extra food sales, including milk and water, are to be paid for with cash daily to purchase these items.

USDA regulations require all secondary schools to implement the “offer vs. serve” provision. This allows students to select a minimum of three of the five meal components for their lunch and it must include a fruit or vegetable.

Students who purchase a tray are allowed to purchase extra sale items. Only foods which meet the criteria of a meal component can be sold. Students who bring their lunch are able to purchase milk, water or ice cream. **No carbonated soft drink cans/bottles are allowed in the cafeterias.**

A Board of Education ruling allows the sale of food on campus up to one hour prior to the meal service period and after the period ends. This refers to the time when the first students go to breakfast or lunch. This ruling is a WCSD policy and is strictly enforced.

Students who wish to purchase more than one lunch tray will be required to pay the adult price on the second tray. USDA allows only one meal per student for reimbursement.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The Board acknowledges that students must learn acceptable behavior patterns to enable them to be responsible, self-disciplined, contributing members of society. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop student codes of conduct, in consultation with teachers, school personnel, students, and parents/guardians, as all contribute to the maintenance of a climate conducive to learning. The student codes of conduct/discipline plan shall be included in the student handbook or similar publications and the parent/guardian shall sign a statement verifying that they have been given notice of the district discipline/conduct policies. Annually, the official discipline/conduct policies shall be reviewed to insure compliance with applicable statutes, case law, and state and federal guidelines.

The conduct/discipline plan of the district shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Specific grounds for disciplinary action
2. Procedures to be followed for acts requiring discipline
3. An explanation of student rights and responsibilities

Except in cases of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment, a teacher or other member of the instructional staff, a principal or his designated representative, or a bus driver shall not be civilly liable for any action carried out in conformity with state law and Board rules regarding the control, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students.

The parent, guardian, or custodian of a student in the district shall be financially responsible for any destructive acts of the minor child against school property or persons and any criminal fines brought against such student for unlawful activity occurring on school grounds. Further, a parent, guardian, or custodian can be required to attend a discipline conference regarding these acts when properly notified by an appropriate school official.

Every student within the Wilkinson County School District shall have the right to take reasonable actions as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. Furthermore, the Wilkinson County School District defines “reasonable actions including but not limited to promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior.

Legal Reference: MS Code §37-11-55, §37-11-53, §37-11-57, §37-11-69

Rules and Consequences

The principal is responsible for designing disciplinary procedures that fit the needs of the local school and the situations that arise. It is the responsibility of the principal to disseminate the rules to parents and students at the beginning of the school year.

STUDENT IN SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

Each student will be responsible for providing a positive, safe, and healthy educational environment for others by maintaining order, self-discipline, and having consideration for the rights and property of others. The accomplishment of this objective will entail the following:

1. Each student will bear the responsibility for his or her own conduct, including responsibility for neatness and cleanliness of personal attire and hygiene.
2. Each student will respect the rights of other students, teachers, administrators and other school personnel and visitors as human beings and fellow citizens of the school community.
3. Each student will respect the personal property of others and refrain from causing intentional damage or unnecessary wear and tear to books, facilities, school materials, school buildings and furnishings, and the personal property of others and obey all state laws pertaining thereto.
4. Each student will refrain from violating all state laws, school discipline codes, or city ordinances and will refrain from:
 1. using profanity or inappropriate language.
 2. fighting or making threats.
 3. creating disturbances.
 4. carrying any weapon or any instrument which could be used as a weapon on school grounds or at school functions.
 5. intentionally injuring another person or acting in such a negligent or indifferent manner as to expose others to risk or danger of harm or injury.
 6. using threats or intimidation against any other person.
 7. denying others the use of school facilities or buildings.
5. Each student will respect the health and safety of others and will refrain from:
 1. smoking or using; possessing on their person, in their automobile or vehicle, or in their locker; or transmitting tobacco, electronic cigarettes, vapors, spice on campus or at extracurricular activities.
 2. using, possessing, transmitting, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage.
 3. using, possessing, transmitting, or being under the influence of any narcotic substance, illegal or prohibited drug, or controlled substance as defined by state law.
 4. engaging in gambling or extortion.
 5. engaging in theft.
 6. assaulting or attempting assault of another person.
 7. producing excessive noise.
 8. engaging in any other unlawful activity.
 9. making suggestive sexual remarks to other persons, students, or teachers or engaging in any type of conduct or action relative in any way to sex or sexual advances or sexual threats or gestures to or in

the presence of another person while at school, on the bus, or attending a school related activity or function of any type at any location.

10. exposing oneself sexually by the removal of clothing or the wearing of see through clothing or clothing that is otherwise inappropriate or which might jeopardize the enhancement of the educational process or learning environment.
 11. showing disrespect to or failing to obey instructions or requests of his/her/or a teacher, principal, or other school authority figure employed by the Wilkinson County School District, including bus drivers.
6. Each student will respect the educational process and learning environment of others by refraining from:
1. tardiness.
 2. being absent from school for reasons that are unexcused or for reasons not associated with sickness, injury or death in the family unless excused in advance by the principal.
 3. any activities which diminish the rights of others and the opportunity for other students to receive an education and obtain the maximum benefit from a public education. A student who enhances their educational performance or allows other students to enhance their educational performance through any dishonest means shall be given a zero and is subject to suspension or expulsion for the remainder of the year.

Note: During times of pandemic, epidemic, or community spread of communicable disease, face masks/coverings will be required on buses since social distancing is not possible and may be required on school campuses. Face masks/coverings must follow the requirements of WCSD Dress Code for Students.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent and principals to develop such further rules and regulations as necessary to insure that students conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the best interest of the school and it shall be the responsibility of the students to obtain and follow such rules, oral or written, upon request and in an expedient, efficient, and timely manner.

Code of Conduct at Extracurricular Activities

When attending extracurricular activities, students are expected to follow the rules and regulations established for operation of the schools. Students failing to do so will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with District policy.

Corporal Punishment

Reasonable corporal punishment of a **non-disabled** student is permitted as a disciplinary measure in order to preserve an effective educational environment which is free from disruption and is conducive to furthering the educational mission of the board. The superintendent shall establish and enforce rules and regulations governing the administration of corporal punishment which are consistent with the following requirements:

1. **School personnel is prohibited from using corporal punishment on any student with a disability. A student with a disability is any student who has an IEP or Section 504 plan.**

2. Corporal punishment shall be administered only after less stringent measures such as counseling, parental conferences and other forms of discipline have failed to produce the desired results, unless the conduct of a student is of such an extreme nature that corporal punishment is the only reasonable form of discipline under the circumstances.
3. Any corporal punishment shall be reasonable and moderate and may not be administered maliciously or for the purpose of revenge. Such factors as the size, age and condition of the student, the type of instrument to be used, and the amount of force to be used and the part of the body to be struck shall be considered before administering any corporal punishment.
4. Corporal punishment may be administered by the school principal or assistant principal.
5. When corporal punishment is administered, it shall be done in the presence of another school employee

Except in the case of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment, a principal or assistant principal shall not be civilly or criminally liable for any action carried out in conformity with state or federal law or rules or regulations of the State Board of Education or the local school board regarding the control, discipline, suspension and expulsion of students. The local school board shall provide any necessary legal defense to a principal or assistant principal in any action which may be filed against such school personnel.

A public school teacher, assistant teacher, principal, assistant principal, or other school personnel shall not be granted immunity from liability for the use of corporal punishment on a student with a disability.

Corporal punishment administered in a reasonable manner by a principal or assistant principal acting within the scope of his employment or function and in accordance with any state or federal laws or rules or regulations of the State Board of Education or the local school board does not constitute assault, simple assault, aggravated assault, battery, negligence or child abuse. No principal or assistant principal so acting shall be named as an individual defendant or be held liable in a suit for civil damages alleged to have been suffered by a student as a result of the administration of corporal punishment, unless the court determines that the principal or assistant principal acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose or in a manner exhibiting a wanton and willful disregard of human rights or safety.

Corporal punishment means the reasonable use of physical contact by a principal or assistant principal as may be necessary to maintain discipline, to enforce a school rule, for self-protection or for the protection of other students from disruptive students. Corporal punishment in the form of paddling shall be witnessed at all times by at least one (1) school employee, and all other acts of corporal punishment, as defined herein, shall be witnessed at all times, if possible, by a school employee. MS 37-11-57

Detention of Students

A student may be required to be present for up to an hour before or after the instructional day as a means of disciplinary action provided the parent of the student has been notified of the detention and arrangements have been made for the student's transportation. Twenty-four hour notice will be given so that transportation arrangements can be made by the parent. However, if the parent cannot or will not provide transportation, an alternate disciplinary procedure will be substituted.

Students who are detained must be supervised during said detention. Supervision will be provided by, or arranged for, by the teacher or principal who detains them. Detention will not exceed one hour per instructional day but may be administered over several days in succession.

Saturday detention is permissible, at the discretion of the principal, provided the parent/guardian has been notified and has made transportation arrangements.

Professional staff are expected to follow the procedures established by the Board and the principal when detaining students.

Suspension

DEFINITION:

Suspension is the denial of the privilege of attending school in the regular pattern and is imposed after due process by the principal or his designee and will be counted as an unexcused absence. While under suspension, students shall not attend any day or night school functions. Students under out-of-school suspension shall not trespass or come upon or be found within any school buildings or grounds except for a pre-arranged conference with the principal. Students under in-school suspension shall follow an attendance schedule arranged by the principal.

VIOLATIONS LEADING TO SUSPENSION:

The Board authorizes the County Superintendent or the principal or their designee to suspend or expel according to law any student who commits one of the following violations:

1. causes or attempts to cause damage to school property or private property located upon school grounds;
2. causes or attempts to cause physical injury to another person;
3. possesses on their person, or in their locker or automobile or transmits any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object at school;
4. possesses, uses, transmits, or is under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, tobacco, or any other controlled substance without medical sanction for prescriptive substances; possesses any other over the counter medication or drug or pill of any type, kind or nature while on campus without first securing the written permission of the school principal or his designee or school nurse practitioner or for failing to abide by all other prescription or non-prescription drug policies of the Wilkinson County School District or otherwise;
5. uses or copies the academic work of another and presents it as his own without proper attribution;
6. defies the valid authority of personnel or refuses to abide by oral or written instruction or directive;
7. is found guilty of inappropriate behavior of any kind which interferes with the ongoing educational process or seriously threatens the physical safety of others or engages in such other conduct that is likely to pose a threat to the educational process and learning atmosphere;
8. fails to follow reasonable requests and directives of a teacher, bus driver, school official or employee or to abide by the rules and regulations of the student handbook of each school which are hereby approved.

DUE PROCESS:

A given suspension shall be for a period of time not to exceed nine school days. The student will be informed of the charges orally or in writing by the principal or his designee. If the student denies the charges, he shall be given an explanation of the evidence that has accumulated against him and shall be given an opportunity to refute the charges. No time delay is necessary between the time a student is notified of charges and the time of conference before the principal or his designee. The parent/ guardian shall be notified in writing of such suspension, and the reasons therefore. Further, the principal or his designee should make reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian via telephone or personal contact to communicate the specific acts for which suspension was ordered and the length of the suspension.

In all cases of student discipline resulting in suspension for nine (9) days or less, the decision of the principal or his designee shall be final and not appealable (*Goss vs. Lopez*) except that the County Superintendent of Education shall have the discretion to review the record of the principal's (or designee's) decision upon written request of the student, his parent or guardian setting forth the reasons why the decision should be reversed or modified within twenty-four (24) hours of such decision, excluding weekends and school holidays.

I. **HEARING BODIES.** Cases of student discipline will be heard at the discretion of WCSD by one of the hearing bodies unless the accused elects to waive his rights to a formal hearing:

1. Principal or his/her designee
2. Disciplinary Determination Committee (DDC)
3. Superintendent or his/her designee
4. School Board (See Section VI. Conduct of Hearing.)

II. **PROCEDURE FOR WAIVING HEARING.** In the event a student desires to waive the opportunity of a hearing or appeal when charged with an offense or rule violation, he/she or his/her parent or representative may do so. The student need only confer with the designated discipline authority, whereby the charge will be explained and the possible punishment explained. At that time, the student may waive a hearing before the official and punishment for the particular offense will be imposed.

III. **JURISDICTION.** The principal and/or superintendent, or their designees, of the respective schools of the district, shall have the jurisdiction to hear and decide on matters of student discipline and impose the necessary punishment once guilt or innocence is determined. Appeals from I.1, I.2 or I.3 above will be heard by the county school board.

IV. **NOTIFICATION OF CHARGES.** In all cases, the student will be orally informed of the charges lodged against him/her and the student shall have a right to respond and refute these charges. There need be no delay between the time that "notice" is given and the time of the hearing. A brief record or notes will be kept of these proceedings, and if the student so chooses, an appropriate appeal may be made from a given disciplinary decision for which the student feels aggrieved. To perfect or make an appeal for any suspension of more than nine (9) days or expulsion, the parent/guardian must inform the Superintendent of his or her desire to appeal, in writing, and within five (5) days of receiving notice of the DDC decision, excluding weekends and school holidays.

V. **APPEALS.** Appeals by a student and/or parent/guardian from a given local school disciplinary decision imposing suspension for more than nine (9) days shall be to the

Disciplinary Determination Committee (DDC). The DDC will consist of three building level administrators from within the school district, namely a principal or assistant principal from the local school, a district level administrator and the assistant superintendent of education in charge of disciplinary hearings (or his/her designee). The DDC shall convene and meet within a reasonable period of time as circumstances may dictate and, if possible, during the period of suspension.

1. The assistant superintendent of education in charge of disciplinary hearings (or his/her designee) shall preside over all DDC meetings. At such meetings, the principal and student involved may appear and make a brief summary of the facts and circumstances in support of or against a particular charge or charges and in support of or against the disciplinary decision with respect thereto. The DDC may consider any written documentation or statements of witnesses and any and all other relevant matters presented by the principal or student.
2. No formal rules of evidence shall apply to DDC meetings. Unless otherwise directed by the presiding assistant superintendent, no formal oath shall be administered to those appearing before the DDC. However, the DDC shall be the sole judge as to the truthfulness or reliability of all matters presented. All statements of witnesses, other than those of the principal, student and such student's parent or guardian shall be submitted in written form, unless otherwise directed by DDC.
3. At the conclusion of the meeting, the DDC shall adjourn and decide whether the disciplinary decision should be upheld, modified or overturned, based upon a majority vote. In making such a decision, the DDC shall consider all matters presented and shall consider all relevant factors as set forth in board POLICY JDE. The decision of the DDC shall be rendered forthwith and delivered in writing to the parties. Thereupon, the meeting of the DDC shall conclude.
4. If the student desires to appeal the decision of the DDC, the parent/guardian shall inform the superintendent of education of such desire to appeal, in writing, by registered mail, within five (5) days following the decision of the DDC.

All appeals from a decision of the DDC shall be de novo to the board of education. At the discretion of the board, such hearings may be conducted before a hearing referee designated by the board. In the event of an appeal to the board, the following procedures shall apply.

1. The student affected shall be notified by letter of the specific charge or charges, the nature of the evidence to be presented against him (whether by affidavit or list of the witnesses and brief summary of their testimony) and of the time and place where the hearing will be held. Such notice shall be hand-delivered or mailed via certified mail and will be postmarked no less than five (5) days before the scheduled hearing.
2. The notification will specifically inform the student: (a) that he may bring witnesses to testify on his behalf or present affidavits at the arranged hearing; (b) that he has the right to be accompanied by his parent and/or counsel of his own choosing, but that such counsel may participate only in advisory capacity.
3. At least three (3) days prior to the hearing, the student shall provide to the school district, in writing: (a) a brief statement and explanation of his defenses to the charges; (b) the nature of the evidence to be presented by him (whether by affidavit or list of the witnesses and brief summary of their testimony); and (c) the name, address, and telephone numbers of the student and his parents and all witnesses to be offered at the hearing.

Failure to provide any of the above, a., b., or c., may result in dismissal of the appeal and the original decision shall stand.

VI. CONDUCT OF HEARING.

A. Hearings will not be open to the public.

B. The hearings will be conducted by the hearing referee in an orderly manner. Any persons attempting to disrupt proceedings will be subject to immediate action on the basis of contempt or arrest and ejection from the building.

C. The accused will have an opportunity to be heard in his own defense by oral testimony. In any event, all findings of fact shall be based solely upon the testimony and evidence presented and shall be based upon proof of violation of a statute or policies, rules and regulations or directive of a teacher, principal, assistant principal, coach or person of authority of the school by the student, as charged by a preponderance of the evidence of the case as a whole.

D. The accused will have an opportunity to hear and refute all testimony against him. Where the evidence is presented in writing, he will have the right to see and refute such written testimony. The accused may present any relevant evidence on his behalf, may reply to charges in his own words and/or may present witnesses on his own behalf, and be represented by an attorney at his/her own expense.

E. All witnesses will present testimony under oath and be subject to cross-examination.

F. The burden of proof will rest upon those bringing the charge, and all matters upon which the decision is based must be produced at the hearing. No formal rules of evidence and/or procedure shall be followed. The hearing will be conducted in an informal and fair manner.

G. A reporter will take and transcribe all evidence and testimony at the hearing. Where the hearing is held before a hearing referee, the entire transcript will be provided to each member of the Wilkinson County Board of Education for review prior to a final board decision in the matter.

H. The student's permanent status at the school will not be altered pending final disciplinary action on the charges. Except as provided for above or by law, the student's right to be present on the campus and attend classes will not be suspended, except for reasons relating to the health, safety and well-being of the student, other members of the school community or school property, or unless said student's presence poses a potential threat of disruption or potential danger of or disruption to the educational process or learning environment, as determined in the sole discretion of the County Superintendent of Education or designee.

VII. FINDINGS.

A. Hearing before hearing referee: A transcript of the hearing will be prepared and forwarded unto each board member for review as soon as possible. The matter shall be set for a date certain before the board for a final vote and decision by the board as to the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken. Prior to making such a decision, the student affected, or his parent/guardian/attorney, shall be entitled to address the board for up to ten minutes and make a brief statement on the student's behalf.

B. Hearing before the board: In any case where the hearing is held before the board itself, the board will issue its decision, in writing, to the student, to be delivered either by hand or by mail, within seventy-two (72) hours after the conclusion of the hearing, exclusive of weekends or school holidays or as soon thereafter as is practical or reasonable.

LEGAL REFERENCE: *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975)

IMMEDIATE REMOVAL:

If a student's presence poses a threat of danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, the student may be immediately removed from school. If a student is sent home during normal school hours, a parent/ guardian shall be notified before the student is dismissed.

IDEA STUDENTS:

School personnel may order the removal of a student for not more than nine (9) consecutive school days to the extent that such removals would be applied to children without a disability for the same offense or when the student's behavior is deemed to be dangerous behavior. Additional removals of not more than nine (9) consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct may be ordered.

1. 9 Days or Less: When removals during the first nine (9) day period are less than nine (9) cumulative days, services are not required;
2. Ten Days or More: After a student has been removed from his or her current placement for more than ten (10) cumulative school days in the same school year, during any subsequent days of removal, services are provided.

When a student with a disability has been removed for more than ten (10) school days in a school year, a manifestation determination is conducted. If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the disability, an intervention plan will be reviewed and/or revised or implemented, if one is not already completed.

Weapons, Drugs, or Serious Bodily Harm: School personnel may order the removal of a student that results in a change in placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days if:

1. The student carries a weapon to school or to a school function or acquires a weapon at school or at a school function under the jurisdiction of Wilkinson County School District; or;
2. The student knowingly possesses on his person, automobile or locker or any area within his control or uses illegal drugs whether prescription, non-prescription or as otherwise defined by law or the Mississippi Code of 1972 as annotated or amended or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, prescription drug or non-prescription drug while at school or a school function under the jurisdiction of Wilkinson County School District;
3. The student attempts to or inflicts or threatens serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of Wilkinson County School District or off campus as to create a presumption of unwarranted violent behavior which might constitute a threat to the safety or well being of others.

The district may first remove the student for up to ten (10) consecutive school days while convening the IEP committee to determine the student's interim alternative setting.

The IEP committee will complete a manifestation determination. If the behavior is a manifestation of the disability, a functional behavioral assessment and positive behavioral intervention(s) will be reviewed and revised or developed. The IEP Committee will reconvene at the end of the 45 days to review and recommend the appropriate placement.

NOTIFICATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS:

In the event that a student commits one of the following acts either off school property or on school property or during a school related activity he is subject to suspension or expulsion under this policy and the principal is required to immediately report by telephone and then in writing the act to the appropriate law enforcement agency:

1. aggravated assault resulting in serious physical injury;
2. sexual assault/battery;
3. sexual offense;
4. rape;
5. kidnapping;
6. indecent liberties with a minor;
7. assault involving use of a weapon;
8. possession of a firearm in violation of the law;
9. possession or use of a weapon in violation of the law;
10. possession, sale, or use of any controlled substance in violation of the law;
11. simple assault upon any school employee;
12. murder;
13. other violent acts (action resulting in death or physical harm or attempt to cause death or physical harm to another).

The principal making said required report or participating in any judicial proceeding resulting therefrom shall be presumed to be acting in good faith and, as such, shall be immune from any civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

LEGAL REFERENCE: *Goss v. Lopez 419 U.S.565 Tinker v. Des Moines 393 U.S.503.*

Expulsion

Expulsion is the denial of school attendance for any period in excess of ten (10) school days sequenced consecutively. The decision to expel a student shall rest with the Board, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Principal and the evidence presented at a hearing before the Board or appropriate Hearing Officer, as may be appointed by the Board. Any student considered for expulsion shall receive proper notification consistent with state and federal due process requirements. Said student shall remain on suspension and out of school until such expulsion hearing is held if, in the opinion of the Superintendent, the student's presence in school could be a disruptive influence to the educational process or within reason constitutes a threat to the health or safety of the student or others. The possession of illegal drugs or weapons or firearms on school property shall be deemed to constitute a threat to the health or safety of the students or others.

Admission or enrollment may be denied for up to one calendar year after the date of the expulsion to any student who has been expelled or is party to an expulsion proceeding for an act involving violence or the threat of violence, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, or other activity that may result in expulsion. Students bringing a firearm upon school property shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year, except when the Superintendent modifies such expulsion requirements for an individual student in accordance with special education or disability laws or court decision or act of the legislature or the legal opinion of the Board attorney based upon the given facts, circumstances, or laws.

A given expulsion shall be for a period of time of eleven (11) school days sequenced consecutively (minimum) up to a period of one (1) calendar year (maximum). However, in extreme cases involving acts of violence or potential violence by a student, whether occurring on or off campus, and where the Superintendent has reasonable grounds based upon a due process investigation to believe that such actions constitute a threat or potential threat to the health or safety of others, expulsion may be deemed permanent, subject to court order or to the appeal rights of such student.

For any suspension of more than ten (10) days or expulsions, a student shall have the right to the hearing process. The first step in the process is a request to the Disciplinary Determination Committee (DDC). No formal rules of evidence shall apply to DDC meetings. At such meetings, the principal and student involved may appear and make a brief summary of the facts and circumstances in support of or against a particular charge or charges and in support of or against the disciplinary decision with respect thereto.

If the student and parent/guardian desires to appeal the decision of the DDC, the student shall inform the superintendent of education of such desire to appeal, in writing, by registered mail, within seven (7) days following the decision of the DDC or thereafter be barred from further appeal.

The student shall have the right to a formal due process hearing, be represented by legal counsel, to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses presented by the district. The student and the student's parent, legal guardian or person in custody of the student may appeal suspension of more than ten (10) days and expulsions to the school board. The standard of proof in all disciplinary proceedings shall be a preponderance of the credible evidence.

The principal and/or Disciplinary Determination Committee, when contemplating the length of a given expulsion recommendation, and the Superintendent and/or Board, when contemplating a given expulsion, shall consider the following factors prior to making such recommendation or decision:

1. The mental and physical age of the student;
2. The prior academic and disciplinary record of the child;
3. Seriousness of the offense;
4. Whether violence, injury, or real threat of injury to the student or others involved;
5. Whether the act, if committed by an adult, would constitute a felony;
6. In cases of possession of prohibited items, whether such possession is willful on the part of the student;
7. The student's level of cooperation and truthfulness with regard to the infraction and with regard to any ancillary investigation of infractions by other students;
8. The overall best interest and welfare of the student involved and of the school population overall;
9. The likelihood of a repeat violation by the student involved;
10. The nature and extent and written opinion of professional counseling and/or treatment undertaken by the student with regard to a particular unacceptable behavior associated with the infraction;
11. Any and all other relevant matters and facts associated with the particular infraction, to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Superintendent or designee (assistant superintendent) has the authority to expel any student who commits one of the following violations while on school property or at any school-related activity or off-campus activity or behavior, regardless if that property is owned by Wilkinson County School District or not:

1. Possession of any controlled substance in violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Law;
2. Possession of a knife, handgun, other firearm or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm;
3. Commitment, or attempted commitment, of a violent act (any action which results or could result in death or physical harm to another).
4. Any behavior by student on campus or off campus constituting a felony or violation of the felony laws of the State of Mississippi

Such expulsion shall take effect immediately subject to the constitutional rights of due process and a hearing to be afforded the student upon written request for the same, such hearing to be held in a reasonable period of time. The procedure to be followed in the event of such appeal shall be as set forth under the District's Policy JCAA Due Process.

Upon notification or discovery by the school district that an enrolling student has been expelled or threatened with expulsion from any public or private school or is party to a potential expulsion proceeding, the principal may deny enrollment or admission until the Superintendent (or his designee) has reviewed the student's cumulative record and disciplinary notes and complete disciplinary files of the previous public or private school, to be immediately provided by the students or his/her parent or guardian, and determined to his/her satisfaction and discretion that the student does not constitute a potential threat to the safety of self or others or has participated in successful rehabilitative efforts or requirements of the previously attended school and the Wilkinson County School District. Admission may be tentatively approved for students who are party to an expulsion proceeding pending final disposition, provided the student and his/her parent or guardian have been cooperative with the WCSD in submitting all requested records and in the execution and signing of a waiver or waivers releasing all requested disciplinary or other records to the WCSD. If said proceeding results in expulsion, admittance may be revoked.

When a student is expelled for criminal behavior or activity, the Superintendent shall notify the parent/guardian/custodian, youth court, and law enforcement of such action, in writing.

LEGAL REFERENCE: MS Code 43-21-151, 43-21-261, 37-9-14, 37-15-9; Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 20 USC 2701 et. Seq.; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

School Searches

Students possess the right to be free of unreasonable searches and seizures under the fourth amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Balanced against this right is the school officials' desire to create and maintain a safe and drug free environment consistent with the educational mission of the school. School officials have a duty to use reasonable discretion and judgment to the extent economically practical, and within their authority to protect the health, safety and welfare of all students under their authority.

Students shall not bring to school items, materials, objects, weapons, knives or substances (i.e. drugs, alcohol, cigarettes) which would tend to be considered as harmful or dangerous or as may disrupt the educational function or process of the school if such were known to the general population of the school or public or which are prohibited by school board policies or local rules or by law or common sense. Examples of such items or objects or of substances in this category include but are not limited to: weapons, ammunition, clubs, explosives, firecrackers, knives, guns, replicas of guns, dangerous or pointed or simulative objects, alcoholic beverages, tobacco

products and/or nonprescription drugs or “scheduled substances” as defined by law, or drug paraphernalia or prescription drugs which have not been first carried to and approved by the Principal to the parent(s) in writing.

Reliable circumstances, comments from credible sources, or observed student behavior which may place the safety or health of students or school staff at risk or which could result in substantial property damage also shall constitute “sufficient reason” as probable cause, for school or police officials to conduct a thorough search of all persons or school property or individual property found on campus. A bomb threat, drug possession (or alcohol or weapon possession) are examples of such an emergency. A valid or credible report of a gun in one’s possession or control of an object that resembles a gun is another example. A valid report of drugs or alcohol in one’s possession or control is another example. Where “reasonable suspicion” exists, school district administrators shall have a discretion to conduct a search of said properties or persons, in accord with the law and the need to protect students, staff and visitors.

STUDENT PROPERTY SEARCHES

School authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of students or their property when “reasonable suspicion” (a suspicion based upon factors for which there is a valid reason to believe that a violation of school policy or the law is likely to have – more likely than not – occurred) and facts and reliable reports indicate that a particular student is or has been in possession or control of an item or a substance that represents a violation of school policy or school rules or of the law or that a substantial threat to school decorum and peace or safety exist. Student property shall include, but not be limited to, purses, bookbags, pockets, clothing, bags and vehicles parked on or near the school campus. School authorities reserve the right to conduct random or directed sniff searches with animals of school property, student property and student-driven vehicles where “reasonable suspicion” exists to do so and to utilize detection devices such as metal detectors at all times and without “reasonable suspicion,” and to call upon the expertise of and cooperate with law enforcement in this regard.

With regard to possession of items that may constitute a violation of law, or school policy or rules, school authorities may wish in their discretion to summon or call the appropriate law enforcement agencies in the interest of preserving the integrity of the educational mission of the school and the safety of all on the premises.

STUDENT SEARCHES

The procedures for searching the person or property of the individual students shall be as follows:

- (a) Searches or inspections of students or their property will be authorized by the principal or his designee only.
- (b) A student may be searched by school authorities when school authorities have “reasonable suspicion”, as previously defined, that the search is likely to produce evidence or items or objects or substances that the student has in his or her possession or control that is prohibited by school board policy or rules or by law, as set forth above in this policy. Such search of the student or his/her property shall be conducted in a reasonable manner and in private where possible with a witness or witnesses of the same gender as the student. In the event the student has given additional verbal or written consent to the search, such fact shall be noted in the official report of the principal or school official relative to the student or the investigation or examination.
- (c) Searches based upon “reasonable suspicion” should be no more intrusive than necessary to discover that for which the search was instigated.

(d) Searches based upon “reasonable suspicion” may include, if school authorities think advisable under the circumstances, a frisk or pat-down of student clothing. Frisk or pat-down searches should be conducted by a member of the same sex as the student and in the presence of another staff member and at all times in private where practical (except in exigent or emergency type circumstances).

(e) Locker or personal vehicle searches shall be conducted in the presence of another staff member and in the presence of the student responsible for the contents of the locker, if practical, at the discretion of the principal.

(f) At no time should school officials conduct a search which requires a student to remove more clothing than his shoes or jacket unless the student consents verbally or unless in the discretion of the principal there exists an emergency constituting a threat or danger to the health, welfare or safety of the student, other students or staff or faculty. If school authorities are convinced that a more intrusive search is required to expose contraband or potential weapons, they should advise the proper law enforcement agency and/or the student’s parents, when practical, as soon as possible, of the grounds for their suspicion and conduct the search either with police participation or parental consent, if practical, under the circumstances.

POLICE NOTIFICATION

(a) Student searches which disclose evidence of school misconduct, policy or school rules violations, but not criminal misconduct, should be treated according to applicable school board policies or local school rules or procedures regarding expected conduct.

(b) In the event that a student search discloses evidence of unlawful activity, the principal shall report such activity or acts to the appropriate law enforcement officials as required by law. If law enforcement officials are notified, the student’s parents should be advised of this fact as soon thereafter as possible or practical as law enforcement may direct.

NOTICE OF POLICY

Students and parents/legal guardians are hereby and will be provided notice of the district search policies via student handbook distributed to all students and by public adoption of this policy at a public school board meeting. A copy of said policy shall also be reasonably available for review in the county superintendent’s office and/or principal’s office and on the on-line website or at the specific request of a student or parent or in the school library or office of the principal. This policy shall be deemed effective thirty (30) days from the date of the first reading of approval by the school board.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Zamora v. Pomeroy 639 F. 2nd. 662 (10thDir. 1981); Horton v. Goose Creek Independent School District, F. 2nd470 (5thCir. 1982), cert. denied, 103 S. Ct. 35 (1983); New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325, 105 S. Ct. 733, 83 L. Ed. 2nd720 (1985); Tarter v. Raybuck, 742 F. 2nd977 (6thCir. 1984), cert. denied, 105 S. Ct. 1749 1985; MS Code 37-11-29.

Student Drug and Alcohol Testing

In an effort to protect the health and safety of students from illegal and/or performance-enhancing drug use and abuse and to curtail the use of such drugs, the Board of Education (the “Board”) of Wilkinson County School District (the “District”) adopts the following policy for any student who wants to participate in the Wilkinson County School District’s Student Random Drug Testing Program.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND INTENT

Although the Board of Education, administration, faculty and staff desire that no student use or possess illegal or performance enhancing drugs, we realize that our power to restrict the possession or use of such drugs is limited. Therefore, this policy governs only the use and possession of performance-enhancing and illegal drugs by students participating in the Wilkinson County School District's Voluntary Student Random Drug Testing Program. This policy supplements and complements all other policies, rules and regulations of the District regarding possession or use of illegal drugs, including, but not limited to, all policies and rules concerning reasonable suspicion of the use or possession of such illegal drugs. Implementation and/or application of this policy does not prohibit the application of any other disciplinary policies of the Wilkinson County School District relative to drug violations by students. The policy also supplements and complements all laws and policies with respect to special education students.

The purpose of this policy is four-fold:

1. To educate students about the serious physical, mental and emotional harm caused by illegal drug use,
2. To alert students with possible substance abuse problems to the potential harms that drug use poses for their physical, mental and emotional well-being,
3. To prevent injury, illness and harm to students that may arise as a result of illegal and performance enhancing drug use,
4. To offer students school activities free of the effects of illegal and performance-enhancing drug use.

The administration shall adopt regulations to implement this policy.

Procedures

A professional testing laboratory chosen by the District will administer the drug testing. The testing laboratory must use scientifically validated toxicological testing methods, have detailed, written specifications to assure chain of custody of the specimens and use proper laboratory control and scientific testing. A medical review officer of the testing laboratory shall review all positive test results.

The testing laboratory shall conduct all aspects of the drug-testing program, including the taking of urine or other necessary specimens, so as to safeguard the student's personal and privacy rights to the maximum degree practicable. The test specimen shall be obtained in a manner designed to minimize intrusiveness to the student. If at any time during the sampling procedure the testing laboratory employee has reason to believe or suspect that a student is tampering with the specimen, the testing laboratory employee may stop the procedure to determine if a new sample should be obtained.

If the testing laboratory reports positive test results for prescription medications to a student's parents or guardians, a Voluntary Student or his/her parents or guardians may submit additional information to the testing laboratory within 48 hours of notification of the student of the positive test results.

The professional testing laboratory shall confirm an initial positive test result by a second test of the same before a report is made to the District. The laboratory will inform the principal of the school and the Superintendent or his designee of positive test results. After a report of positive test results is made to the District, the principal will schedule a conference with the student and parents or guardian about the positive drug test results.

Wilkinson County School District is committed to cooperating with parents/guardians in an effort to help students avoid illegal drug use. The Wilkinson County School District believes accountability is a powerful tool to help students avoid using drugs and that early detection and intervention can save lives.

Drugs and Alcohol (Possession or Reasonable Suspicion)

Students are prohibited from carrying, possessing in any manner or attempting to possess, using or selling alcoholic beverages, morphine, marijuana, medical marijuana, cannabis derivatives, cocaine, opium, heroin, their derivatives or compounds, drugs commonly called LSD, “pep” pills, tranquilizers, any other narcotic drugs, barbiturates, substances ingredients or compounds which, when taken orally, intravenously, inhaled, or consumed in any other manner, may cause the person to be under the influence thereof or any other controlled substance regulated by law. This will include any substance which is falsely represented to be a controlled or counterfeit substance.

Likewise, no student shall act in, aid, abet, assist, distribute or conceal the possession, and or the consumption, the purchase or the distribution of any drugs or alcoholic beverages by another student or students.

PROVISIONS

The provisions of this policy shall not apply to any student who is under the care of a licensed physician and who is taking medication which is prescribed under the supervision and direction of such licensed physician. The district does not allow the use of medical cannabis or cannabis derivatives while on district property or events. With regard to prescription medications refer to Wilkinson County School District medication policy JGCD.

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all students during the period of time that they are under and/or subject to the jurisdiction of the Wilkinson County School District, while participating in or going to or from any school-related activity, at any place where an interscholastic athletic contest is taking place, during the course of any field trip, during the course of any trip sponsored by the Board, while under the supervision and direction of any teacher, principal or other authority of this school district, or when such conduct does or may threaten to interfere with or disrupt the educational process or pose a threat to the safety of the student or others.

This policy supplements all other disciplinary policies of the Wilkinson County School District relative to drug or alcohol violations. Implementation and/or application of this policy does not prohibit the application of any other disciplinary policies of the Wilkinson County School District relative to drug or alcohol violations by students and/or staff.

NOTE: If a student appears incoherent, semi-conscious, unconscious, convulsive, appears to be hallucinating, is in respiratory distress indicating danger or injury to the health and safety of the student, Wilkinson County School District personnel shall seek immediate medical attention before any other actions under this policy are undertaken. The health of the student shall be given priority.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND INTENT

Although the Board of Education, administration, faculty, and staff desire that no student use or possess illegal or performance-enhancing drugs, we realize that our power to restrict the possession or use of such drugs is limited. Therefore, this policy governs only the use and possession of performance-enhancing and illegal drugs or alcohol by students participating in certain extracurricular activities. This policy supplements and complements all other laws, policies, rules, and regulations of the state or District regarding possession or use of illegal drugs, including, but not limited to, all policies, rules, and laws concerning reasonable suspicion of the use or possession of such illegal drugs. The policy also supplements and complements all laws and policies with respect to special education students.

Participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities in the District is a privilege. Students respect those students who participate in these activities and see them as examples. Participating students represent the District and their community. Accordingly, students in these activities carry a responsibility to themselves, their fellow students, their school, their families, and their community to set the highest possible examples of conduct, sportsmanship, and training, which includes avoiding the use or possession of illegal and performance-enhancing drugs. Therefore, all students so participating do agree to refrain from such activity by enrollment in the school district or the extracurricular activity.

The purposes of this policy are six-fold:

1. To educate students about the serious physical, mental and emotional harm caused by illegal drug, alcohol, or steroid use.
2. To alert students with possible substance abuse problems to the potential harms that drug use poses for their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.
3. To offer students the privilege of competition and participation in extracurricular activities as an incentive to stop using such substances.
4. To ensure that students adhere to a training program or health regimen that prohibits illegal and performance-enhancing drugs, alcohol or steroids.
5. To prevent injury, illness and harm to students that may arise as a result of illegal and performance-enhancing drug, alcohol, or steroid use.
6. To offer students school activities free of the effects of illegal and performance-enhancing drug use.

Illegal and performance-enhancing drug, alcohol, or steroid use of any kind is incompatible with the physical, mental, and emotional demands placed upon participants in extracurricular activities and with the positive image these students project to other students and to the community on behalf of the District.

The administration shall adopt regulations to implement this policy.

Wilkinson County School District is committed to cooperating with parents/guardians in an effort to help students avoid illegal drug use. The Wilkinson County School District believes accountability is a powerful tool to help students avoid using drugs and that early detection and intervention can save lives.

GANG ACTIVITY

It is unlawful in the State of Mississippi to organize fraternities, sororities, or secret societies in the public high schools; for a public school student to be a member of such organizations; and to

solicit student membership in such organizations. Students in violation of this policy are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Gang activity which initiates, promotes, or advocates activities that threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property on school grounds or which disrupts the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of apparel, jewelry, accessory or manner of grooming which, by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute which implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger and is to be discouraged by school officials.

Students displaying interest, involvement, or affiliation with a gang shall be subject to disciplinary action and will be encouraged to seek involvement in authorized school organizations to enhance self-esteem and promote activity that can have a positive impact on the student.

LEGAL REFERENCE: MS Code 37-11-37, 37-11-39, 37-11-41, 37-11-43, 37-11-45.

BULLYING

The Board of Trustees of the Wilkinson County School District prohibits bullying or harassing behavior of students, school employees, or volunteers. The Wilkinson County School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other students or other school employees.

I. Definitions

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that: (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's education, including, but not limited to, educational performance, opportunities, or benefits.

A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

The above conduct constitutes bullying if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence a disruption to the operation of the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official. Retaliation or reprisal against any person, including a victim, a witness, or another person who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying or harassing behavior, is prohibited.

The Wilkinson County School District recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take “reasonable actions” as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. “Reasonable action” includes, but is not limited to, promptly reporting the bullying or harassing behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor or other school employee.

These procedures shall be appropriately placed in the District personnel policy handbooks, school handbooks that include discipline policies and procedures, and any other policy or procedure that deals with student or employee behavior.

The School Board directs the superintendent or designee to design and implement procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors.

REFERENCE: *Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated, §37-11-67 and § 37-11-69*

SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE PROGRAM

The purpose of any rule or regulation related to school transportation service developed by the Wilkinson County School District is to insure the safety of our students and to provide for an orderly operation of school buses. Parents, students and school personnel can be most effective in promoting safety and orderly conduct when they work together toward the common goal of ensuring that students are transported safely and economically to and from school.

****SEE THE DISCIPLINE MATRIX**

Note: During times of pandemic, epidemic, or community spread of communicable disease, face masks/coverings will be required on buses since social distancing is not possible. Face masks/coverings must follow the requirements of JCDB Dress Code for Students.

LEGAL REFERENCE: *Ingraham v. Wright 97 S.Ct. 1401 (1977).*

Student Transportation

Parking Permits - Prior to driving a car to school, a student must present a valid driver license, proof of insurance, and parent consent form in order to obtain a parking permit. Parking permits may be obtained from the Principal’s Office for \$10.00. No student will be allowed to park a motor vehicle on campus without a parking permit. Anyone parked in an unauthorized area without a permit is subject to being towed at the owner's expense.

Student Parking Lot - The student parking lot is off limits to a student during the school day. Students are not allowed to assemble in the parking lot or sit in a car before, during, or immediately after school hours. The WCHS Student Parking decal must be visible at all times through a windshield of the vehicle. Any student who loses his/her permit must purchase a replacement. Students needing to drive a car to school for one day may obtain and display a visitor pass in the same manner as stated above.

Students may not drive off paved surfaces or on sidewalks. The speed limit within the parking area is 10 mph. Wilkinson County High School is not responsible for any personal items that are stolen, lost, or damaged. Students who demonstrate inappropriate behavior while driving, including but not limited to reckless driving, driving under the influence, or engaging in behavior that poses a threat to the safety of themselves or others, may have their driving privileges revoked.

Wilkinson County High School students will travel by bus to and from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Career and Technical Education Center.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In accordance with Title IX of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as amended in 1972, Section 703, no student in Wilkinson County School District shall be subjected to sexual harassment.

It is the intent of the school district to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment of any kind. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment are prohibited.

Legitimate allegations of violations of this policy may be made to the appropriate building Title IX contacts or the district Title IX coordinator, with fear of reprisal.

Employees/students in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary actions.

Dress Code for Students (April 2026)

The Board encourages students to be dressed and groomed in a manner which reflects good taste, decency, and pride in appearance as this will contribute to the maintenance of a proper learning environment and will portray a favorable image of the individual and the school.

Safety, health, sanitation, individual dignity, respect for the educational process, and a non-disruptive learning environment provide the basis for the dress code. If the clothing, hair, cosmetics, jewelry, or general appearance of a student constitutes a health threat or possible distraction to the educational process, the teacher may counsel with the student about the attire or grooming. The principal or his designee may take disciplinary action as appropriate to maintain standards of dress and grooming in the school, which shall include, but not be limited to, suspension from classes or school or expulsion. The principal shall have the discretion and final authority in declaring whether or not clothing or grooming is in violation of this dress code. Compliance with this student dress and grooming code shall be the responsibility of the individual and parents to comply within guidelines established and this policy.

Wilkinson County Elementary School – **Hunter Green**

Wilkinson County Jr. High (7th & 8th Grade) – **Orange**

Wilkinson County High School – **White/Gray**

- Solid colored shirts and button down dress shirts based on the student's home school must possess the Wilkinson County School District logo and may be long or short-sleeved.
- Book bags **MUST** be clear or mesh.
- Sunglasses, hats, caps, headbands, bonnets, curlers, or other headgear shall not be worn in the buildings, unless prescribed by a doctor. Head gear (caps, hats, bandannas, "doo" rags, towels) or any "gang" paraphernalia is prohibited. The only exceptions to any head gear includes a hair net or cap required where long hair poses a health or safety threat near open flames, moving machines, or in food preparation classes or hair bows.
- Closed toe shoes with closed heels **MUST** be worn at **ALL** times. House slippers, slides, shower shoes, Crocs, clogs, sandals, and flip flops are **NOT** permitted. Steel toe boots are permitted for welding and construction students **ONLY**. No roller shoes of any type are permitted.
- Clothing, including face masks/coverings, with suggestive, obscene, or disruptive, or vulgar designs, pictures, symbols, slogans, or statements that cause a disruption to or detract from the educational process are not permitted. This shall include, but not be limited to: nude/semi-nude figures; pictures or logos of alcoholic beverages or cigarettes, obscene gestures or words, or words/pictures that depict prohibited

substances or actions; gang marks, drawings, designs or emblems; figures in sexually suggestive postures.

- No see-through clothing or halter tops shall be worn. Shirts/blouses must cover the stomach and top of the shoulders.
- Jewelry worn in such a manner that the instructional environment, safety and/or health of a student may be jeopardized is forbidden, as determined at the discretion of the principal.
- A solid color t-shirt, as long as it is one of the school colors- hunter green, orange, or white-may be worn as an undergarment. This may be short or long-sleeved, regular or mock/turtleneck. Under shirts **MUST** be tucked in.
- Hemmed uniform bottoms **SHALL NOT** be more than or shorter than six inches while standing from the middle of the kneecap khaki or black shorts, capri pants, and trousers. Cargo pants, joggers, sweat pants, zip-off, tights, pajama pants, leggings, and/or jeggings are **NOT** permitted. Jeans are **ONLY** permitted on days designated by the principal or Superintendent.
- Pants should be worn at the waist and shirts are to be worn tucked into pants, skirts, slacks, or skorts (ALL STUDENTS). “Low-riding” and/or “sagging” is prohibited.
- Khaki colored skorts and jumpers are acceptable at Wilkinson County Elementary School **ONLY**.
- Black or brown belts **MUST** be worn and buckled appropriately for pants that have belt loops. Belts must be free of insignias (i.e Gucci, large rodeo buckles, etc.)
- Students are prohibited from wearing additional “patches,” pins, or ear rings that may be considered lewd, profane, obscene, suggestive, vulgar; which may harass, threaten, intimidate, or demean other groups or which display illegal merchandise or contraband.
- Tattoos that are considered lewd, profane, obscene, suggestive, and/or vulgar cannot be visible; they must be covered.
- Pierced ears for earrings are permitted. Other body piercings must be concealed at all times.
- The district does not require the outer garment (coat) or shoes as part of the mandatory uniform dress code; however, Hoodies are **NOT** permitted.
- Any dress or personal appearance that the administration has evidence is disruptive, inappropriate, or presents a safety hazard to students or as a possible disruption to the educational/instructional process will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the discretion of the principal.
- The principal or his/her designee may take disciplinary action as appropriate to maintain standards of dress and grooming in the school, which shall include, but is not limited to, suspension from classes or school or expulsion. The principal shall have final authority in declaring whether or not clothing or grooming is in violation of this dress code, subject only to a final decision by the superintendent and appeal to the Board from such a decision.
- If a student disciplined under this policy believes their clothing expression has been targeted based on its viewpoint, then the student may appeal a decision to the school board to be heard by the school board or its designated hearing officer at or before the next meeting of the school board.

- Transfer students (ONLY) will be given five (5) days to comply with the WCSD uniform policy.
- Safety, health, sanitation, individual dignity, respect for the educational process and a non-disruptive learning environment provide the basis for the dress code. If the clothing, hair, cosmetics, jewelry, or general appearance of a student constitutes a health threat, the teacher may counsel with the student about the attire or grooming.
- Compliance with this student dress and grooming code shall be the responsibility of the individual and parents with guidelines established.

EXCEPTIONS

- Students who are members of school sponsored clubs and organizations, JROTC, Allied Health, and other Career & Technical programs will be allowed to wear their designated clothing/uniforms as instructed by their teacher and approved by the principal.
- Athletic teams, cheerleaders, band members, and academic teams will be allowed to practice/compete in their designated uniform/equipment as approved by the sponsors, coaches, and principal.
- Physical education classes will be given, by their teacher, a defined type and color of shorts and shirts to wear during class.
- Transfer students will have five (5) days from enrollment to adhere to the dress code.
- Special Services students' dress shall be governed by their Individualized Education Plan when applicable.

The principal may designate certain days during the year as “Free Dress” days, and students will not have to wear uniforms on those days ONLY.

Student Records

Permanent records and cumulative folders shall be collected, maintained, and disseminated in compliance with state law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the confidentiality section of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and State regulations. Information in the permanent record and cumulative folder of individual students shall include:

1. Date of birth (verified by certified birth certificate)
2. Record of attendance
3. Grades
4. Immunization records
5. Other data as prescribed by the State Board of Education

PERMANENT RECORD

The permanent record, while active, shall be kept in a fire resistant container in the school office. A record is considered active as long as the child is enrolled or, if the child withdraws, until the class of which he was a member has graduated.

Once the permanent record is no longer active, it can be placed in a central fire resistant depository designated by the Board or at the school last attended. The permanent record SHALL NEVER be destroyed (unless complete copies of inactive records have been made on photographic film or microfilm) and is ALWAYS kept on file by the district.

CUMULATIVE FOLDER

The cumulative folder shall be kept in the school wherein the student is in attendance. If the student transfers to another school, the cumulative folder shall be furnished to the head of the school to which the student transfers. The cumulative folder may be destroyed by order of the Board in not less than five (5) years after the permanent record of the student has become inactive.

ACCESS/RELEASE OF RECORDS

Both the permanent record and cumulative folder shall be available to school officials, including teachers within the district who have a legitimate educational interest in the pupil. In no case shall such records be available to the general public nor shall any personally identifiable information be released without the consent of the eligible student, parent or guardian of the student except to the following parties provided the data will be used as specified in the request:

1. Officials of other schools or school systems in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, upon condition that the student's parents be notified of the transfer, receive a copy of the record if desired, and have an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of a record;
2. Other school officials, including teachers within the District who have been declared to have legitimate educational interest, a list of whom shall be maintained by the principal;
3. Authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Secretary of Education, the Commissioner of Education, the Directory of the National Institute of Education, the Assistant Secretary for Education, or State educational authorities;
4. In connection with a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid;
5. State and local officials or authorities to which such information is specifically required to be reported or disclosed pursuant to State statute;
6. Organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, and improving instruction, if such studies are conducted in such a manner as to not permit the personal identification of students and their parents by persons other than representatives of such organization;
7. Accrediting organizations in order to carry out their accrediting functions;
8. Parents of a dependent student of such parents, as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954; or
9. In compliance with judicial order, or pursuant to any lawfully issued subpoena, upon condition that parents and the students are notified of all such orders of subpoenas in advance of the compliance therewith by the educational institution.

Transcripts of courses and grades may be furnished when requested by the parent/guardian.

PARENTAL ACCESS TO RECORDS

The Board ensures that the parent/guardian of a student shall have full and free access to review all official records directly related to the student. Further, the parent/guardian can obtain a copy of said record at a fee not to exceed the cost of duplication, can request an explanation or interpretation of those records, and can challenge the content of said records through a hearing process. Whenever a student has attained the age of eighteen, or is attending an institution of

post secondary education, the required consent and rights accorded to the parent shall thereafter only be required of and accorded to the student.

Requests for access to records should be made by parents/guardians or eligible students in writing to the principal. Access shall be granted within a reasonable time but in no case more than forty-five days after receipt of the request. Parents/guardians shall not be required to waive their right to access records.

Parents that have completed the Parental Use and Responsibility Acknowledgement Form as well as provided valid personal identification to appropriate school officials may be given access to the Active Parent Portal of Central Access. This on-line service will allow parents the opportunity to view a variety of student information such as grades and student attendance.

MILITARY ACCESS TO RECORDS

Recognizing the challenges faced by military recruiters, Congress recently passed legislation that requires high schools to provide to military recruiters, upon request, access to secondary school students and directory information on those students. Both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the National Defense Authorization Act reflect these requirements.

In accordance with those Acts, military recruiters are entitled to receive the name, address, and telephone listing of juniors and seniors in high school. This requirement is consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which protects the privacy of student education records. Student directory information will be used specifically for armed services recruiting purposes and for informing our students of scholarship opportunities.

Wilkinson County School District parents have the right to request that the information not be disclosed without prior written consent. This request is called an “Opt Out” request and may be completed at the school counselor’s office.

CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION

Where the consent of a parent or eligible student is required for the release of education records, it shall be in writing, be signed and dated by the person giving such consent and shall include a specification of the records to be released, the reasons for such release and the names of the parties to whom such records will be released. Further, a copy of the records to be released shall be provided on request to the student’s parents or the student if the age of eighteen has been attained or the student is in a post-secondary institution.

AUTHORITY OF PARENT TO GIVE CONSENT

Any parent of a student may give a written parental consent. Where parents are separated or divorced, a written parental consent may be obtained from either parent, subject to any agreement between such parents or court order governing the rights of such parents. In the case of a student whose legal guardian is an institution, a party independent of the institution shall be appointed pursuant to State and local law to give a written parental consent.

If parental consent is not given and the refusal seems to fit a pattern of child neglect or abuse, this refusal will be considered as evidence for a decision to refer the entire case to the proper legal authorities for resolution.

RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The District shall give public notice annually of the categories of information which it has designated as directory information and shall allow fourteen days after such notice has been given for a parent to inform the District that any or all of the information designated should not be released without the parent’s prior consent.

RECORD OF ACCESS

Each counselor shall maintain a record, kept with the education records of each student, which will indicate all parties other than those specified who have requested or obtained access to a student's education records, such access having been granted in accord with provisions heretofore set. The record shall list specifically the legitimate interest that each such party has in obtaining the information.

Such record of access shall be available only to parents or eligible students, be the principal and his assistants who are responsible for the custody of such records and to persons or organizations authorized heretofore.

AMENDMENT OF RECORDS

Parents of students and eligible students shall have opportunity to a hearing to challenge the content of education records in order to ensure that the records are not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of students, and to provide an opportunity for the correction or deletion of any such inaccurate, misleading or otherwise inappropriate data contained therein and to insert into such records a written explanation of the parents and eligible students respecting the content of such records.

INFORMAL HEARING

The principal should attempt to settle a dispute with the parent of a student or an eligible student regarding the content of the student's education records through informal meetings and discussions with the parent or eligible student.

Such a meeting shall be held within fourteen days of receipt of a written or personal request by the parent or eligible student for the meeting, unless extenuating circumstances dictate a longer period of time. If the request to amend is denied, the parent/guardian or eligible student shall be notified of the decision and the right to a formal hearing.

FORMAL HEARING

Upon the written request of either party (the principal or the parent or eligible student), a formal hearing shall be conducted as follows:

1. The hearing shall be conducted within fourteen days of the request for the hearing.
2. The hearing shall be conducted, and the decision rendered, by an institutional official or other party who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing;
3. The parents or eligible student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised under the challenge;
4. The decision shall be rendered in writing within 15 days of the conclusion of the hearing;
5. Parents or eligible students shall be afforded full rights to place in the record a statement setting forth reasons for disagreement with any material contained therein;
6. The decision of the hearing officer shall be final, subject to Board and judicial review;
7. Relative to the special education program only, if as a result of the hearing, the officer decides that the records are accurate, parents may request that the State Department of Education special education director appoint a hearing officer to review the case. The parents and local agency shall have an opportunity to present

evidence relative to the case. The hearing officer's decision is binding on both parties subject only to appropriate administrative or judicial review.

DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

The District may destroy any records, (if not otherwise precluded by law) except that access be granted prior to the destruction of education records where the parents or eligible student has requested such access.

Relative to the special education program only, all personally identifiable data, except that which is kept in accordance with law, will be destroyed within a period of five years following the end of services to a child, except for records required by the law to be kept.

Files will be purged within 60 days following an individual's graduation or termination of services, except permanent records as required by statute.

Parents will be informed prior to destruction of the information and of their right to receive a copy of this information.

COLLECTION OF DATA

Collection of data within each school shall be made under the supervision of the principal and shall be made by only those individuals trained to do so.

STORAGE OF RECORDS

All records which contain personally identifiable data, other than directory information and materials necessary to daily instruction, shall be maintained and stored in a secure and fire-resistant container or location. For security purposes, the cumulative folders and permanent records SHALL be maintained by the counselor and be kept in separate locations.

NOTIFICATION BY DISTRICT

The District shall annually and publicly inform parents and eligible students of the following:

1. The types of education records and information contained therein which are directly related to students and maintained by the institutions;
2. The name and position of the official responsible for the maintenance of each type of record, the persons who have access to those records and the purposes for which they have access;
3. The policies of the institution for reviewing those records;
4. The procedures for challenging the content of education records;
5. The procedures established by the District for hearings to challenge content of records maintained by the District;
6. The categories of information which have been designated as directory information.

The notice provided to a parent or eligible student under this section shall be in the language of the parent or eligible student.

COMPLAINTS

A parent/guardian or eligible student may file a written complaint regarding an alleged violation by the District of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. All such complaints should be directed to:

**Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605**

LEGAL REFERENCES: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC Section 1232; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Elementary and Secondary Education Act; National Defense Authorization Act.

CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE

The Board specifically finds in its discretionary judgment that to maintain an appropriate educational and learning environment for the students and teachers that it is in the best interest of the students, the learning process, and environment of the school district that these rules and policies be hereby adopted and disseminated:

The use of any electronic communication devices including, but not limited to, cellular phones, personal digital assistant devices, lasers, related communication products or devices, or other electronic items by students is prohibited during the administration of scheduled statewide tests and in any classroom setting or instructional setting or endeavor of the school district or other prohibited setting as determined by the principal or County Superintendent of Education located upon any campus of the Wilkinson County School District, except when used in conjunction with direct teacher supervision of students during instruction and at the request of the teacher or principal.

Any student violating this policy (by use of such device in an instructional or educational setting, gymnasium or classroom setting or interior building setting where students may be instructed or supervised) shall be subject to having such equipment or communication device or cellular telephone temporarily confiscated by any school official (the principal or his/her designee or authority) and/or temporary or permanent suspension from the possession of such device for the remainder of the school year.

Consequences for possession of a cell phone and/or other prohibited electronic equipment:

1st offense Device confiscated until the end of the day

2nd offense Device confiscated or held in the office for 5 days

3rd offense Device confiscated, held in the office for 10 days, and/or ISS for 1-2 days

4th offense Student no longer permitted to bring an electronic device on the premises

Any electronic communication device used during any administration of statewide tests may be confiscated for the duration of the school year and may result in suspension of the student from the regular school environment for the remainder of the year and possible placement into the alternative school setting.

Provided further that for sufficiently documented safety or medical or health reasons, the principal of each school upon approval of the County Superintendent of Education shall have discretion and authority to grant exceptions to this policy.

USE OF TOBACCO AND SMOKING DEVICES

Tobacco and/or smoking device use presents a safety hazard on school property and a health hazard to the user and other individuals in the facility. Hence, smoking or the use of tobacco and smoking devices in any form by students is not permitted on school property or at any school sponsored activity. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action that include, but not limited to, suspension and/or expulsion.

WCSD HEALTH SERVICES

Updated Student Health records should be completed and returned on all WCSD students annually by parents/guardians.

Student Health Services–Medicines

The school nurse and principal may administer prescription medicines to students in their charge only under the following conditions:

1. The parent/guardian must request in writing that such service be provided by completing a WCSD “Consent for Medications at School” form (one form per medication).
2. The parent/guardian requests must include prescriber authorization (to be completed by a physician or licensed practitioner) and include the name of the prescribing physician, the name of the medicine, the dosage prescribed, the route to be taken, and the time(s)/frequency to be given for both over the counter or prescription medication(s).
3. Medicines checked in at the school must be in their original prescription or unopened over the counter container with the information label attached.
4. The first dose of any medication registered at the school must be given by the parent/guardian at home to ensure there are no adverse drug reactions. All medication(s) registered at school must be taken in the presence of the principal and/or their designee.
5. The parent/guardian consent for medication(s) at school and the physician order for the medication must be kept on file for a period of one full year.
6. Medications not picked up at the end of the school year on or before the last day of school will be discarded.
7. Under no circumstances are students to transport or carry medication(s) to or from school (with the exception of asthma inhalers and epinephrine pens if WCSD policy to carry these medications has been followed). All medications must be registered in the school nurse’s office by the parent/guardian. Any student found transporting, carrying, or dispensing over the counter or prescription medication(s) of any kind will be subject to suspension or other disciplinary action.

All medications so entrusted to the school shall be kept in a secure, specific limited access storage space designated by the principal.

ASTHMA INHALERS

A student with asthma shall be permitted to possess and self-administer asthma medications at school and school-sponsored activities/programs under the following conditions:

1. The parent/guardian gives written authorization for self-administration of asthma medication and acknowledges that the school shall incur no liability and the

parent/guardian shall indemnify and hold harmless the school and its employees against any claims relating to self-administration of asthma medications by signing a WCSD “Consent for Medications at School” form or School Asthma Plan.

2. The parent/guardian provides an asthma action plan from the student’s health care practitioner indicating that the student has asthma and has been instructed on self-administration of asthma medications. This plan must also include: the name and purpose of the medication, severity of asthma condition (mild, moderate, severe), the prescribed dosage, the time(s) the medication can be administered, any special circumstances regarding administration of the medication, steps to take in the event of an emergency or life threatening event, and the length of time for which the medication is prescribed.
3. If a student uses his/her medication in a manner other than prescribed, he/she may be subject to disciplinary action under the school codes. The disciplinary action shall not limit or restrict the student's immediate access to the medication.

The permission for self-administration of asthma medications shall be in effect for the school year in which it is granted, necessitating renewal each school year. Inhalers or asthma medication(s) not picked up at the end of the school year on or before the last day of school will be discarded. WCSD will not be responsible for any equipment not picked up on or before the last day of school.

EPINEPHRINE PENS

A student with severe allergies shall be permitted to possess and self-administer epinephrine medications at school and school-sponsored activities/programs under the following conditions:

1. The parent/guardian gives written authorization for self-administration of epinephrine medication and acknowledges that the school shall incur no liability and the parent/guardian shall indemnify and hold harmless the school and its employees against any claims relating to self-administration of epinephrine medications by signing a WCSD “Consent for Medications at School” form or School Allergy Plan.
2. The parent/guardian provides information from the student’s health care practitioner indicating that the student has severe allergies and has been instructed on self-administration of epinephrine medications. This plan must also include: the name and purpose of the medication, the allergen to which the child is allergic to, the prescribed dosage, the time(s) the medication can be administered, any special circumstances regarding administration of the medication, steps to take in the event of an emergency or life threatening event, and the length of time for which the medication is prescribed.
3. If a student uses his/her medication in a manner other than prescribed, he/she may be subject to disciplinary action under the school codes. The disciplinary action shall not limit or restrict the student's immediate access to the medication.
4. The school board authorizes the school nurse or trained school employee to administer auto-injectable epinephrine to a student who the school nurse or trained school employee, in good faith, believes is having an anaphylactic reaction, whether or not the student has a prescription for epinephrine.

The WCSD will follow all regulations set forth in state law 37-11-71. The permission for self-administration of epinephrine medications shall be in effect for the school year in which it is granted, necessitating renewal each school year. Epi-Pens or Epinephrine medication(s) not

picked up at the end of the school year on or before the last day of school will be discarded.

Definitions:

1. "Auto-injectable epinephrine" means a medical device for the immediate administration of epinephrine to a person at risk for anaphylaxis.
2. "Asthma and anaphylaxis medication" means inhaled bronchodilator and auto-injectable epinephrine.
3. "Self-administration of prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication" means a student's discretionary use of prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Wilkinson County School District does not allow the administration or use of medical cannabis while on district or school property or at school district events. Students are absolutely prohibited from possessing any form of medical marijuana or cannabis derivatives. Possession of such items will result in disciplinary actions as outlined in WCSD Board Policy and notification of local law enforcement when applicable. School district personnel will adhere to district policies and procedures regarding giving medicine at school.

Many illnesses can be stopped before they spread by reminding everyone to practice frequent hand washing, blowing noses into tissues, covering mouths when coughing or sneezing, and asking other parents about sick symptoms in their children before arranging playdates and carpools. Even the best hygiene practices can not avoid the spread of all illnesses at school. Sometimes staying home is the only way to benefit our children, our communities, and ourselves. Please refer to the following guidelines when trying to determine if your child should stay home or go to school when sick.

Communicable Diseases

Students who are infected with chronic and/or infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, shall attend the school and classroom to which they would be assigned if they were not infected. Decisions about any changes in the educational program of a student infected with a chronic/infectious disease shall be made on a case-by-case basis, relying on the best available scientific evidence and medical advice.

Procedure for Determining Appropriate Educational Program for Students with Chronic/Infectious Diseases:

The superintendent should be informed that a student is infected with a chronic/infectious disease and shall instigate this standard procedure to ensure the safety of persons in the school setting and to plan an appropriate educational program for the person with the illness.

The superintendent shall determine whether the person who is infected has a primary or secondary infection that constitutes a recognized risk of transmission in a school setting. This shall be accomplished by consulting with the infected person's physician, a qualified public health official who is responsible for such determination, and the infected student's parent or guardian. This group will be consulted for anticipating the needs of the infected student.

The superintendent shall not alter the student's educational program unless there is an infection present that constitutes a medically recognized risk of transmission in the school setting. Further, the privilege of participating in physical education, athletic programs, competitive sports and recess is not conditional on the student's medical status relative to the infectious disease. Reasonable recommendations will be made to allow infected students to participate in school sponsored physical activities. The status of the case shall be periodically reviewed by the

superintendent or his designee through consultation with the student's parent/guardian, physician and/or public health official. The following shall be included in the decision-making process:

1. Age of the affected student
2. School setting
3. Student's control of bodily secretions
4. Risk of infection to the affected student by other persons
5. Need for special educational services

If the student has an infection that constitutes a medically recognized risk of transmission in the school setting, the superintendent shall consult with individuals as described above to develop an educational plan tailored to the infected student's needs. The plan shall be medically, legally, educationally and ethically sound. Periodic review shall be a part of the implementation of the plan with revisions made as deemed appropriate by the superintendent.

The superintendent shall consult with the school board attorney to make certain that any official action is consistent with federal and state law relative to these issues. Once a decision has been made, a fair and confidential process for appealing the decision shall be made available to the parent/guardian.

Utmost confidentiality shall be observed throughout this process by every employee. The people who shall know the identity of a student who is infected with a chronic/infectious disease (such as HIV/AIDS) are those who will determine whether the infection constitutes a medically recognized risk of transmission in the school setting. They are as follows:

1. Superintendent or his designee
2. Physician of the infected person
3. Public health official (identity released to this official only if necessary)
4. School principal (identity released to this official only with parental permission)

Others may be notified of the identity of the infected person if the decision-makers feel it is essential to protect the health of the infected student, upon obtaining written, specific consent for notifying these additional persons from the infected student's parent/guardian.

All information related to the case shall be kept in a locked file by the superintendent with access granted only to those persons who have written consent of the infected student's parent/guardian and emergency medical personnel. Any staff member who violates confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable to a lawsuit. Information regarding disease status shall not be added to a student's permanent educational record without written consent.

Testing:

Mandatory screening for communicable diseases that are not spread by casual, everyday contact, such as HIV infection, shall not be a condition for school entry or attendance.

Infection Control:

The district shall follow the most current guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for preventing transmission of infectious diseases at all times and in all settings. The precautions include:

1. Wash hands with soap and water after contact with bodily fluids as soon as possible.

2. Clean all spills of blood and other bodily fluids immediately with disinfectant (1 part bleach to 9 parts water).
3. Wear gloves when cleaning up blood spills and when in contact with bodily fluids. Gloves shall be worn when it is reasonably anticipated that the employee may have hand contact with blood, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, and other potentially infectious materials.
4. Alert the district safety officer if a situation occurs that presents a reasonable risk of transmitting an infection.
5. Counsel any person exposed to an infectious agent to seek appropriate medical evaluation. Alert parent/guardian if the person exposed is a student.
6. The infected student will have access to voluntary, confidential, age appropriate counseling.

The schools will keep supplies needed for meeting these infection control guidelines reasonably accessible to employees.

Legal Reference: U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines; Center for Disease Control (CDC)

FEVER

Fever is a symptom of illness and not an actual diagnosis. Fever usually indicates that the body is battling an infection. A child with a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater must stay home from school until the fever is gone. If your child appears sick with fever, call your doctor to have your child evaluated. Fever reducers such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen, while effective in lowering temperatures, only mask underlying infection and does not remedy the child's illness. Please be sure your child is fever-free, without the use of fever reducers, for 24 hours before allowing him/her to return to school. Time out of school may be longer, depending upon a diagnosis and/or physician recommendation. WCSD reserves the right to send students home who exhibit elevated temperatures and/or other symptoms related to infectious diseases.

COUGH

Cough alone may not prevent your child from attending school unless it is interfering with a child's sleep or ability to participate in school activities. If the cough is productive and has phlegm or is associated with fever or trouble breathing, keep your child home from school and arrange to have the child seen by their pediatrician immediately.

SORE THROAT

Children can attend school with mild sore throats if no other symptoms are occurring. A doctor should evaluate any child with a sore throat associated with fever, vomiting, abdominal pain, or difficulty swallowing before returning to school. A child with a diagnosis of strep throat needs to stay out of school until antibiotics and fever free without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours.

VOMITING OR DIARRHEA

A child with vomiting, with or without diarrhea, needs to stay home from school. Your child can return to school when the symptoms have stopped and the child can tolerate a regular diet. Please keep your child home until he/she has been without vomiting or diarrhea (less than 3 episodes) for 24 hours. Once an episode of vomiting or diarrhea has occurred at school, the student will be sent home and may return to school after the above criteria is met.

RED, SWOLLEN, DRAINING EYES (CONJUNCTIVITIS)

If your child wakes up with one or both eyes stuck together with drainage or crust, if the eye(s) become red or swollen, if they are painful and/or itchy, then your child should remain home and be evaluated by a physician as soon as possible. This could be contagious. If your child is sent home with red eye(s) or discharge, your child may return to school 24 hours after treatment is started or when there is no drainage from the eye(s).

RINGWORM

Ringworm is caused by a fungus that grows on the skin, not by a worm. Ringworm is characterized by a round pink/red rash with a raised, rough, scaly border. As the rash grows outward, getting larger as the infection spreads, the center tends to clear. Left untreated, it is usually somewhat itchy. Students with ringworm should not have to miss school. They should, however, receive treatment for the condition either topically with an over the counter medication or orally with a prescription medication. Skin to skin contact with others should be avoided to prevent the spread of infection. In order to stay at school, students with ringworm(s) must keep the infected area covered with a band-aid or dressing while at school. Ringworm of the body can be spread on towels, clothing, or sports equipment. Ringworm of the scalp can spread from child to child when children share hats, combs, or brushes. Personal hygiene is important in preventing the spread of ringworm. **Note:** Ringworm on the scalp or nails requires oral medication, which must be prescribed by a medical professional.

SCABIES

Scabies is an infestation of the skin by the human itch mite. The most common symptoms of scabies are intense itching and a pimple-like rash. The mite is spread by direct, prolonged, skin-to-skin contact with a person who has scabies. Scabies is treated with medication, which is prescribed by a doctor. The student may return to school after 24 hours of treatment.

STAPH (STAPHYLOCOCCUS)

Staph is a common germ that lives on the skin and in nasal passages that can cause skin infections. Staph is treated with antibiotics prescribed by a doctor. The affected area should be covered while at school unless the infection is around the nose or the mouth. If the infection is around the nose or mouth, the student may not return to school until there is no drainage and they have received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.

MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM

Molluscum Contagiosum is a common skin disease that is caused by a virus. The disease is generally mild and should not be a reason for concern or worry. People with this skin disease can cause the bumps to spread to different parts of their body by touching or scratching a bump and then touching another part of the body. The virus can also be spread from person to person. The bump(s) must be covered with clothing or a bandage while the child is at school to prevent transmission to others.

RASHES

Many rashes will resolve spontaneously and are not reason alone to keep a child home from school. Any rash associated with symptoms such as trouble breathing, swallowing, fever, or ill appearance should be evaluated by your child's physician immediately. Rashes that are itchy or scaly may be contagious and should be evaluated by your child's physician before sending a child back to school.

HEAD LICE

If a student is found to have lice (live bugs) at school, parents will be notified and the student will be sent home that day. The student can return to school the next day once an FDA approved over the counter treatment or prescription product for lice is used, and proof of treatment (empty bottle or receipt) must be submitted. Parents should consult with their healthcare provider or a pharmacist to make sure treatment is appropriate for the student and for treatment recommendations. MS Code 41-79-21 states that any student in any public elementary or secondary school having head lice on more than three occurrences during the school year must be reported to the county health department for help treating lice. The student will not be allowed to return to school until he/she has been to the Wilkinson County Health Department and has no nits. If lice (live bugs) have been found on three consecutive occasions and the student has already been seen by the County Health Department and the student is still found to have lice (live bugs) at school, the student will be required to see their primary care physician for treatment options. Parents must provide the school with a letter from the physician in order to return to school. If the problem continues to be recurrent, the school principal or administrator shall determine whether or not a DHS referral will be warranted based on the number of days of school missed.

Note: Parents or guardians are reminded that a successful treatment regimen for lice includes the use of over the counter or prescription shampoo as directed, removal of all nits (gray/white eggs attached to the hair shaft), and treatment/cleaning of the home (i.e., laundering bed linens, vacuuming carpet and couches, containing stuffed animals).

FEE POLICY

The School Board hereby authorizes principals to charge reasonable fees, but not more than the actual cost, for the following categories:

1. Supplemental instructional materials and supplies, excluding textbooks;
2. Other fees designated by the superintendent as fees related to a valid curriculum educational objective, including transportation; and
3. Extracurricular activities and any other educational activities of the school district which are not designated by the superintendent as valid curriculum educational objectives, such as band trips and athletic events.

Legal Reference: MS Code 37-7-335; 37-7-301(ff)

EMERGENCY CLOSING

This school board recognizes and accepts its duty and authority to maintain and operate all the schools under its control for such length of time during the year as may be required.

Upon application from the school board, the superintendent of schools may close any school because of an epidemic prevailing in the school district or because of the death, resignation, sickness or dismissal of a teacher or teachers or because of any other emergency necessitating the closing of the school. The superintendent is hereby authorized to declare an emergency and to close schools and district offices or dismiss them early in event of natural disaster, inclement weather or other emergencies which threaten the safety, health, or welfare, of students or staff members.

The superintendent will take such action only after consultation with transportation, emergency management, weather authorities or other agencies as necessitated by the circumstances. The superintendent shall notify the school board of the decision to close the schools. However, all such schools closed shall operate for the required full time after being reopened during the

scholastic year, unless the school board of the local school district submits a plan to alter the school term that is approved by the State Board of Education.

DISASTER EMERGENCY

If this school board determines that it is not economically feasible or practicable to operate any school within the district for the full one hundred eighty (180) days required for a scholastic year as contemplated due to an enemy attack, a man made, technological or natural disaster, or extreme weather emergency in which the Governor has declared a disaster or state of emergency or the President of the United States has declared an emergency or major disaster to exist in this state, the school board may notify the State Department of Education of the disaster or weather emergency and submit a plan for altering the school term.

If the State Board of Education finds the disaster or extreme weather emergency to be the cause of the school not operating for the contemplated school term and that such school was in a school district covered by the Governor's or President's disaster or state of emergency declaration, it may permit that school board to operate the schools in its district for less than one hundred eighty (180) days; however, in no instance of a declared disaster or state of emergency under the provisions of this subsection shall a school board receive payment from the State Department of Education for per pupil expenditure for pupils in average daily attendance in excess of ten (10) days.

Should it become necessary to close any or all of the schools by reason of weather or other emergency condition, the superintendent will notify principals and the media prior to 6:00 a.m. if possible. If no such announcement is made, it should be concluded that all schools will operate as scheduled.

EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

The district shall provide sufficient notice (before the close of the prior school day) to staff and students for any weather-related or other unforeseen virtual days. When instances occur that make virtual learning impractical, the district shall either make up any missed days or use the days as weather days as allowed under Mississippi law.

Each principal will be responsible for developing a system of notification and action for the staff members under his supervision.

1. In the event of emergency school closings, all assistant principals, secretaries, cafeteria managers and custodians will report for duty, if safely possible, until released by the principal.
2. All principals will remain on their respective campuses until released by the superintendent.
3. All central office, maintenance and bus garage personnel will report for duty until released by the superintendent.

Should severe weather or an emergency condition develop during the school day requiring the emergency closing of schools, notification of the dismissal time for students will be the same procedure as that utilized before school. Certified and classified personnel will be dismissed at the direction of the principal subject to the completion of all assigned duties for that school day.

Should schools not be closed when severe weather or emergency conditions exist, the judgment of parents, regarding their children's exposure, will be respected.

EMERGENCIES

The administrative staff at each school building shall maintain a current School Safety/Crisis Management plan approved by the School Board annually, inclusive of procedures to follow for fire, hazardous weather, tornado, earthquake, nuclear attack, civil disorder, or other crisis situation. The warning system and appropriate procedure shall be known and provided to all personnel in the respective schools. Regular safety drills should be planned and executed in accordance with applicable emergency management guidelines and specific school procedures. The principals and teachers in each building shall familiarize the students with the crisis management and civil defense operations plans, which include actions to be taken in case of fire, tornado, hazardous weather condition, earthquake, nuclear attack, civil disorder, or other crisis situation.

LEGAL REFERENCE: *MS Code 37-11-5, MS Public School Accountability Standards.*

Public Conduct Policy

VISITATION ON CAMPUS

The Wilkinson County Board of Education welcomes visitors to the schools of the District. All persons entering a school building other than for attendance at a scheduled activity open to the general public must report directly to the office of the principal to request a visitor's permit. Such permits are not required of students of that school or employees of the Wilkinson County School District. Persons failing to comply with this policy will be considered trespassers and shall be liable for prosecution. The principal shall have the right to deny visitation rights to any individual if in the judgment of the principal the visit might negatively affect the classroom procedures and/or might endanger public health.

PROHIBITION OF TOBACCO and SMOKING DEVICE USE

The Wilkinson County Board of Education recognizes that the use of tobacco products and smoking devices represents a health and safety hazard which can have serious consequences for both the user and non-user and the safety of the District. In order to protect the students, staff and guests of the District from an environment that may be harmful to them, the Board hereby prohibits the use of tobacco products and smoking devices by all staff members, employees, students, visitors or guests on all public school property throughout the Wilkinson County School District. Any violators of this policy will be subject to being issued a citation by law enforcement officers and/or being fined. Anyone convicted under this act will be recorded as violating a criminal statute.

It is specifically directed that the ban on the use of tobacco products and smoking devices be in effect twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and will apply to anyone present on District property without exception.

It is further understood that this policy will be in addition to existing Board policy concerning the prohibition of the use of tobacco products by students on school property and school buses.

PROHIBITION OF WEAPONS

The Board recognizes that the possession of handguns, firearms or other dangerous instruments or weapons on school premises or at school functions by persons other than duly authorized law enforcement officials creates an unreasonable and unwarranted potential risk of injury or death to District employees, students, visitors and guests and further creates an unreasonable and

unwarranted potential risk of damage to properties of District employees, students, visitors and guests.

Because of such dangers, the Board hereby prohibits the possession of handguns, firearms or weapons or instruments that could possibly be used as a weapon in any form and as otherwise defined by district policy, by any student, employee of the district or any other visitor or individual on school property or at school functions, regardless of whether any such person possesses a valid permit to carry such handgun, firearm or weapon.

It is the responsibility of every employee to report to his/her principal or immediate supervisor or the person responsible for supervising a school event any knowledge of the possession of a handgun or other weapon on school premises or at any school-related activity by any individual. Appropriate steps shall then be taken to carry out the intent of this policy, including notification of police officials, so that persons in possession of such weapons promptly leave school premises or activities and/or are refused admittance to school buildings.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

All complaints pertaining to schools made by patrons or citizens should be made first to the principal of the school. If not settled there, concerns should be directed to the Superintendent and, if need be, to the Board for final action.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Close communication between home and school is an important factor in establishing a highly effective school program. Planned conferences between parents and teachers are vital in establishing close cooperation and a useful link to improve student achievement.

Conferences via telephone, electronic mail, or personal contact between parents and teachers provide an opportunity for a mutual exchange of information and ideas for constructively impacting the educational experience of the child. If a parent requests a conference, the teacher must respond within 24 hours of receiving the request with a date and time for the conference.

All conferences shall be scheduled during teacher conference periods or immediately before or after school and to be determined by the teacher.

Teachers may request and principals may require attendance of a counselor or other personnel at scheduled conferences. The teacher shall maintain a file relative to all conferences.

Campus Visitors

All visitors to campus are **REQUIRED** to report to the front office, sign in, and be granted permission to proceed on campus.

Conferences with teachers must be pre-arranged and conducted during the teacher's planning period unless prior authorization has been granted from the school's administrator.

Instructional time will not be interrupted for visits with students except in the case of an emergency. These emergencies must be verified by the campus administrator.

FUND-RAISING

The Board recognizes that it may become necessary for schools or organizations within or outside the schools to engage in fund-raising activities in order to meet identified curricular or extracurricular needs of the students. These efforts are permissible under the following guidelines:

1. the principal must approve any fundraising project prior to its beginning, taking into consideration the cost/benefit ratio and whether or not the project is appropriate or beneficial to the official or extracurricular programs of the school;
2. any proceeds of the fundraising activities shall be treated as “activity funds” and are accounted for under those procedures;
3. fundraising activities conducted for the sale of school pictures, the rental of caps and gowns, or the sale of graduation invitations shall contain a disclosure statement advising that a portion of the proceeds of the sales or rentals shall be contributed to the student activity fund, if the school is to receive a commission, rebate or fee; (EXAMPLE – NOTICE: This sale is being conducted as a fundraising event. A portion of the sales price will be contributed to the student activity fund.)
4. principals may approve charging a reasonable fee for participation in an extracurricular activity for academic or non-academic credit for necessary and required equipment such as safety equipment, band instruments, and uniforms;
5. the principal may approve, at his discretion, the conduct or participation in fundraising activities on behalf of or in connection with a tax-exempt charitable organization, remitting all monies collected to said charitable organization;
6. the principal must approve any sale or rental of items to students even if such is not conducted for fundraising purposes for the school, taking into consideration the benefit to students, the cost to parents, and the method of payment to the vendor;
7. the principal may authorize collection of funds for organizations outside the school (PTO, boosters, etc.) at his discretion, setting guidelines for utilization of school personnel during school hours for this purpose and relinquishing accountability for these funds to the identified outside organization;
8. the principal shall establish prices to be charged by the school for admission to extracurricular activity events (athletic games, etc.) according to the guidelines established by the Mississippi High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) with the utilization of pre-numbered tickets required if it is anticipated that the event will generate gross receipts in excess of \$100.

LEGAL REFERENCE: *MS Code 37-7-301; Financial Accounting Manual for Mississippi School Districts, July 1, 1992.*

Gifts to Schools

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT/DONATED ASSETS

Items and donations contributed to the Wilkinson County School District will become the property of the district and shall be subject to the same controls and regulations which govern the use or disposal of all district owned property. The Board reserves the right to reject any contribution to the district which does not serve to enhance or extend the work of the schools. All donations and contributions (monies and personal property) in an amount of \$500 or more shall be formally submitted to the Board for acknowledgement and acceptance. The Minutes shall reflect the contributor, amount, and purpose for the donation, if any. Any monies donated shall be deposited into the appropriate fund.

The principal shall have the authority to accept and acknowledge all donations and contributions (monies and personal property) to their school valued at less than \$500 on the date of donation. Any such monies shall be received into the school’s activity fund and deposited in that bank account.

Crowdfunding Projects:

“Crowdfunding” is defined as an internet-based request for resources from individuals and organizations to support activities or projects that enhance an educational program. It is the preference of the Wilkinson County School Board that employees utilize sites funding supplies or equipment rather than monetary donations.

The following guidelines apply to any crowdfunding project:

1. Any person (including employees) or entity acting on behalf of any school, or the district as a whole, and wishing to conduct crowdfunding, online fundraising, or any other online donation campaign for the benefit of any school, or the district as a whole, shall begin the process by seeking PRIOR written approval from the school principal. Written approval must be obtained using the district’s crowdfunding application.
2. All items (monies and personal property) obtained through crowdfunding projects using the school or district name are to become the property of Wilkinson County School District.
3. All monetary donations should be recorded by the school bookkeeper in the School Activity Fund. No school banking information should ever be disclosed by individuals to anyone outside the district. A check should be requested to be mailed to the school in the name of the school and not to an individual.
4. Crowdfunding items in an amount of \$500 or more shall be formally submitted to the school board for acknowledgement and acceptance.
5. Inventory policies and procedures of the district apply to property obtained through crowdfunding projects.
6. Any cost of installation is the responsibility of the donor unless otherwise agreed to by the school district.
7. Some crowdfunding sites are tax deductible and some are not. It is not the responsibility of the school or school district to determine if the donation is tax deductible. The district will not provide a Form 990 for crowdfunding donations.
8. Crowdfunding that would obligate the school system to future operating or upkeep costs must be approved by the school board.
9. Teachers and employees must comply with student privacy and other requirements set out in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and all other applicable laws and regulations. Thus, student images, names, and descriptions which would cause students to be identifiable or would allow logical deductions about disabilities or other factors deemed to be within the student sphere or privacy must not be used on such websites or elsewhere unless written, parental permission is secured in advance.

LEGAL REF.: Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards

CROSS REF.: Policy DM Fixed Assets

Policy JK Fund Raising – Students

Deliveries for Students

Students shall NOT receive deliveries of flowers, balloons, food, etc. during any part of the school day.

TITLE I PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

All schools are encouraged to have a formal parent-teacher association/organization in which parents, teachers and administrators work together for the support and improvement of the schools.

Each school's association/organization must have formalized by-laws that receive principal and membership approval.

ESEA PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

PART I: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

1) The Wilkinson County School District recognizes the importance of a positive parent/school partnership and encourages all schools to involve parents in the educational program. This parent and family engagement policy was developed with input from parents, teachers, administrators and students. It is reviewed annually and revised as needed. The Wilkinson County School District agrees to implement the following statutory requirements in schools currently being served as school-wide Title I schools:

- a) The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the engagement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- b) Consistent with section 1116, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental engagement policies meet the requirements of section 1116(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1116(d) of the ESEA.
- c) The school district will incorporate this district-wide parent and family engagement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- d) In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental engagement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- e) If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the Mississippi Department of Education.
- f) The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the one (1) percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental engagement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the one (1) percent reserved goes directly to the schools, with priority given to high-need schools.
- g) The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

The term "parental involvement" means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

- (1) That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;

- (2) That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- (3) That parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;
- (4) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1116 of the ESEA.

PART II: DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT-WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

- 1) The Wilkinson County School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district-wide parental engagement plan under section 1112 of ESEA:
 - a) Establishing a district-wide Parental Engagement Steering Committee. This Steering Committee will jointly develop, with district staff, the district parental engagement plan.
 - b) Developing a Strategic Plan for each school that includes strategies for increasing parental/community engagement. Parents and staff members develop the school's Strategic Plan.
- 2) The Wilkinson County School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school support and improvement under section 1111(d) of the ESEA:
 - a) Hosting an "Open House" for all parents early in the school year at each school building. Parents meet with classroom teacher, Title I teachers, and itinerant staff to learn about curriculum, annual objectives, and teacher expectations.
 - b) Scheduling parent-teacher conferences twice a year in every school in the district. Conferences may also be scheduled whenever a parent or teacher deems a conference would be necessary or beneficial.
- 3) The Wilkinson County School District will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:
 - a) Providing timely support, information, and services to staff in participating Title I programs
 - b) Hosting "School Attendance Zone Meetings" to discuss individual strategic plans, student test scores, and strategies for communicating and involving parents in their child's education.
 - c) Designating a Parent/School Liaison at the District level to encourage and support parent engagement activities.
 - d) Developing a Stakeholder committee, which includes parents, to develop, monitor and revise program activities.
 - e) Hosting meetings, events, celebrations, and conferences that invite parents and community members to learn more about program goals and activities.
 - f) Offering parent workshops on a variety of topics specific to each program such as literacy, child development, drug and alcohol issues, arts education, and technology integration.

4) The Wilkinson County School District will take the following actions to conduct, with the engagement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the quality of the Title I schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental engagement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, and disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parent and family engagement policies.

a) Conducting annual surveys of parents to evaluate the effectiveness of parental engagement activities provided by each school and the district.

b) Utilizing survey results in the strategic planning process for each school and the district. Each school has a designated Parent/School Liaison who will assist in the evaluation and planning process.

c) Offering each parent in the district the opportunity to provide feedback to the school and district staff on program activities and parental engagement plans.

5) The Wilkinson County School District will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental engagement, in order to ensure effective engagement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following—

(1) Mississippi's academic content standards,

(2) Mississippi's student academic achievement standards,

(3) Mississippi's and the local academic assessments including alternate assessments,

(4) The requirements of Part A,

(5) How to monitor a child's progress, and

(6) How to work with educators.

The Wilkinson County School District will provide assistance on these topics by undertaking the actions described below:

(a) Providing appropriate training for parents in appropriate settings so that parents can learn about child development, state and district academic standards and assessments, and show parents how to work with their children to improve their children's achievement including monitoring a child's progress and working with teachers/school staff.

(b) Arranging meetings at flexible times to maximize the opportunities for parents to participate.

(c) Coordinating workshops and classes and providing information on statewide and out-of-state conferences that focus on improving parental engagement in their child's education.

(d) Providing, with the assistance of its schools, materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental engagement, by sponsoring programs for parents and community members on a variety of topics such as

literacy, child development, drug and alcohol issues, and technology throughout the school year.

(e) Educating teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

(1) Sponsoring programs for parents and community members on a variety of topics such as early childhood development, literacy, child psychology and proper healthcare throughout the school year.

(2) Offering programs to parents of preschool age children in collaboration with local and state services.

(f) Sending information related to the school and parent-programs, meetings, and other activities to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand by:

(1) Providing documents of a professional quality,

(2) Complying with all federal requirements for parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children.

PART III: DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT-WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

1) In addition, the Wilkinson County School District will provide additional services to the parents and community through the school year. These activities may include, but are not limited to:

a) Involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training;

b) Providing necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training;

c) Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;

d) Training parents to enhance the engagement of other parents;

e) In order to maximize parental engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school;

- f) Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental engagement;
- g) Establishing a district wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental engagement in Title I, Part A programs;
- h) Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental engagement activities; and
- i) Providing other reasonable support for parental engagement activities under section 1116 as parents may request.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Section 1116

Asbestos Notification

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 was enacted to provide guidance and establish requirements for the effective management and abatement of asbestos hazards in schools.

One of AHERA requirements is this notification, which is intended to inform the public that Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) is present in the schools. This notice is not intended to provide comprehensive information concerning the ACM and specific hazards.

In accordance with AHERA regulations, the Wilkinson County School District performs several activities with regards to Asbestos in schools. These activities include an initial asbestos inspection and development of a Management Plan. The Management Plan addresses how identified Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) will be handled (abated or managed in place).

To provide continuing management of the asbestos in our schools, all asbestos containing materials (ACM) are inspected every six months by an environmental consulting firm from Jackson, Mississippi. Any changes in the ACM are being recorded in a surveillance report as part of the management plan.

A copy of this surveillance report, along with a copy of the management plan and all supplementary information is located in the principal's office at each school. In addition, a copy of all management plans for all district schools is maintained in the Wilkinson County Superintendent's Office, located at 488 Main Street, Post Office Box 785, Woodville, Mississippi 39669. These documents are available for review at either of these locations.

FORMS

Consent Form for Administration of Medication

To: Parent/Guardian:

The Wilkinson County School District requires that all students who require prescription or non-prescription medication(s) during school hours to do the following:

- Present this written consent form signed by the parent/guardian and completed by a physician to the school office.
- Parent/guardian must bring original prescription bottle, properly labeled by a legally registered pharmacist. Each school will have designated personnel who will be dispensing the medication(s) to your child.

MEDICATION(S) may be given by the designated school official **provided** that the prescribing physician completes the district medication permission request form. If there is a change in medication, please send a note to the school from the physician notifying the school of the change.

Name of Student _____ Date of Birth _____

School _____

Homeroom Teacher _____

List any known drug allergies/reactions:

To Be Completed by Physician

Medication Name	Dosage	Route	Frequency/ Time	Start Date	End Date	Special Instruction

Office/Clinic Name: _____ Date: _____

Name of Physician _____

Signature of Physician _____

To be completed by parent

I, _____ give permission for my child _____ to receive the above medication(s) as written by a physician. I will not hold the Wilkinson County School District, its employees and agents, liable for any injuries to my child or ward and for any damages or losses of any kind resulting from the administration of the above medication to my child or ward.

Parent Signature

Date

**Wilkinson County School District
2026-2027 Student Handbook
Acknowledgement Form**

Parents and Students,

It is the responsibility of parents, guardians, and students to familiarize themselves with this handbook. After carefully reviewing the contents of this Student Handbook with your child, please sign the acknowledgment form and return to your child's homeroom teacher.

Your signature indicates that you agree to abide by the content set forth in this handbook. Failure to sign this acknowledgement form does not relieve the student from abiding by the student handbook.

Student's Name:

(Please print)

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Student Signature:

Parent's Name:

(Please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Please complete this form and return it to your child's homeroom teacher.