

Cook Elementary School

2026-2027

Student Handbook

***How we do the small things is
how we do all things***



Cook Elementary School

1512 N. Elm Street

Sparks, Georgia 31647

Phone: 229.549.6250 Fax: 229.549.8568

Website: ces.cook.k12.ga.us

Mr. Scott Ray, Principal

Mr. John Smith, Assistant Principal

Mr. Courtney Davenport, Assistant Principal

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COOK COUNTY SCHOOLS



Vision

All students will succeed through ***enrollment*** in higher education, ***enlistment*** in the Military, or ***employment*** in the workforce.

Mission Statement

To empower and inspire all learners to achieve

Beliefs

Cultivate a safe and positive environment.

Optimize creativity and learning.

Offer support through family and community partnerships.

Kindle challenging opportunities

Dear Parents, Students, and Members of the Cook Elementary School community:

It is with great excitement and gratitude that I introduce myself as the new principal of Cook Elementary School. I am truly honored to join such a caring and dedicated school community, and I look forward to building strong relationships with our students, families, teachers, and staff. At Cook Elementary, we are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and engaging environment where every child can learn, grow, and succeed. I believe that strong partnerships between home and school are essential, and I am eager to work together to help all of our students reach their fullest potential.

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to serve as your new principal and to become part of the Cook Elementary family. Education has always been my passion, and I am excited to support the wonderful traditions already established while also working toward new opportunities for student success. I look forward to meeting each of you, celebrating achievements together, and making this school year a positive and memorable experience for all.

Thank you for the warm welcome and for the opportunity to serve the students, families, and staff of Cook Elementary School. I am excited for the journey ahead and look forward to a successful year together.!

Sincerely,

Scott Ray, Principal

2026 - 2027 Cook County Contact Information

Cook County Schools Contact Information		
<u>Cook Primary School/Pre-K</u> 1531 Patterson Street Elm Street Adel, GA 31620 Office – 549-7713 Lunchroom – 549-6066 Fax – 549-8312	<u>Cook Elementary School</u> 1512 North Elm Street Sparks, GA 31647 Office – 549-6250 Lunchroom – 549-8568 Fax – 549-8568	<u>Cook Middle School</u> 1601 North Elm Street Sparks, GA 31647 Office -549-5999 Lunchroom – 549-5985 Fax - 549-5986
<u>Cook High School</u> 9900 Hwy 37 Adel, GA 31620 Office – 896-2213 Gym – 236-3612 Fax – 896-3423	<u>Cook County BOE</u> 37 Josey Rd. Adel, GA 31620 Office – 896-2294 Fax – 896-3443	<u>Horizon Academy</u> 1200 N Hutchinson Ave Adel, GA 31620 Office- 896-1293
<u>Transportation</u> 801 Alabama Lane Sparks, GA 31647 Office – 549-6556	<u>School Nutrition</u> 105 E. Mitchell St. Adel, GA 31620 Office - 896-1891 Fax - 896-1861	<u>Maintenance/Facilities</u> 801 Alabama Lane Sparks, GA 31647 Office – 549-7740 Fax – 549-7193

Cook County Board of Education Contact Information			
Joy Folsom, Superintendent Phone: 896-2294 jfolsom@cook.k12.ga.us	Becky Ratts, Assistant Superintendent Phone: 896-2294 bratts@cook.k12.ga.us	Allison Ray, System Technology Coordinator Phone: 896-2296 aray@cook.k12.ga.us	Leslie McElrath, Special Education Director Phone: 896-2296 lmcelrath@cook.k12.ga.us
Henry Acree, Student Services Director Phone: 896-2296 henryacree@cook.k12.ga.us	Gerald Williams, Alternative School Coordinator Phone: 896-2294 geraldwilliams@cook.k12.ga.us	Lana Siska & Lee Browning, Transportation Phone: 549-6556 lanasiska@cook.k12.ga.us	Libby Peters, School Nutrition Director Phone: 896-1891 libbypeters@cook.k12.ga.us
Laural Heard, Professional Learning Director Phone: 896-2294 lrheard@cook.k12.ga.us	Leslie Folsom, Federal Programs Director Phone: 896-2294 lfolsom@cook.k12.ga.us	Larry Young, Maintenance Director Phone: 549-6556 lyoung@cook.k12.ga.us	Tom Broome, Network Administrator Phone: 896-2296 tom@cook.k12.ga.us
Leah Morris, SRO Director Phone: 896-2213 leahmorris@cook.k12.ga.us	Jackie Sparks, Finance Director Phone: 896-2294 jsparks@cook.k12.ga.us	Jennifer Green, Teaching/Learning, Student Advocacy Phone: 896-2213 jennifergreen@cook.k12.ga.us	

2026-2027 Cook Elementary School Directory

Administration	
Principal	Mr. Scott Ray
Assistant Principal	Mr. John Smith
Assistant Principal	Mr. Courtney Davenport

Guidance and Student Services	
Instructional Coach	Mrs. Karen Taylor
Guidance Counselor	Mrs. Sataria Clayton
	Mrs. Tina Daniels
Special Education Coordinator	Mrs. Bonni Young
Parent Coordinator	Mrs. Holly Harrell
School Nurses	Mrs. Michelle Joiner
	Mrs. Niki Sexton
Media Specialist	Mrs. Lauraleigh Shealey
Opportunity Room	Mr. Toby Dorminey

Office Staff	
Bookkeeper	Mrs. Christin Parker
Registrar/Administrative Assistant	Ms. Teresa Parrish
School Resource Officer	Dept. Bob Myers
Receptionist	Mrs. Susan Griffin
Technology	Mr. Chad Mauldin

Faculty		
Third Grade	Fourth Grade Teachers	Fifth Grade
Catherine Bagley	Kynsie Brady	Jaclyn Carter
Kristi Barrett	Carla Brown	Laura Connell
Bridget Brady	Dana Dunn	Alana Dixon
Kelly Donaldson	Christian Harry	Cassey Folsom
Sheri Halfhill	Kaitlin Howell	Jayla Jackson
Charla Hilliard	Haiden Jasinski	Annie Mathis
Staci Howell	Andrea May	Sarah McCranie
Heather Lindsey	Emily Sweat	Alisa Pearson
Sebrina Meeler	Jessica Tillman	Alex Solorzano
Christi Register	Jetta Taylor	Charlene Tabor
Jessica Roetman	Kristina Turner	Mary Clare Tarpley
Morgan Sirmans	Erika VanHouten	Crystal Wiggins
Reagan Workman	Peytyn Williams	
	Carrie Zeigler	

Faculty (Continued)		
Special Education	Specials	Interventions
Randi Bruner Kathy Agerter Myra Fussell	Art Kelly Sumner Music Karlee Oliver Physical Education Hayley Pickle Laura Griffin Technology Kathryn Surrency	ESOL Kelley Felts Gifted Kathy Jones Academic Interventions Tracy Gray Angela Harry Tina Smith Speech Pathologists Emilee Betts Beth White

Paraprofessionals	
Hester Brooks Nikki Carlo Tia King	Cindy Robinson Anna Smith Desiree Spires Lilly Stafford Kortni Taylor

Custodians	
Selena Hayes* Venecia Cervantes *Head Custodian	Betty Lucy Tonya Holloway Reggie Morrison

Food Staff	
Janice Jackson * Armanda Chapman Tyrone Payne *Cafeteria Manager	Lisa Johnson Brittany Benka Iris Upshaw

Informational Links

-  [2026 - 2027 School Calendar](#)
-  [Progress Reports and Reports Card Schedule](#)
-  [Hornet HOP Schedule and Information](#)
-  [CES Code of Conduct](#)
-  [Definition of Terms](#)
-  [Cell Phone and Electronics Policy](#)
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-  [MTSS](#)
-  [Parent Notification Letter](#)
-  [School Attendance Policy](#)
-  [CES Handbook Policy Acknowledgement](#)

Cook Elementary School

2026 - 2027 School Calendar, Semester 1

Pre-Planning	July 28 - August 4
Open House	August 3
First Day of School	August 5
Fall Picture Day	August 26
Labor Day Holiday	September 7
In-service for Teachers	September 8
Homecoming Week	Sept. 28 - Oct. 2
Fall Break	October 9 - 12
In-service for Teachers	October 13
Fall Picture Retakes	October 26
Quarter 1 Awards, Classrooms	October 20 - 22
Red Ribbon Week	October 23 - 30
Trunk or Treat	October 30
Fall Book Fair	November 9 - 13
HPTT Fall Festival	November 12
Thanksgiving Holiday	November 23 - 27
End of Semester 1	December 17
In-service for Teachers	December 18
Christmas Holidays	December 21 - Jan. 1

Cook Elementary School

2026 - 2027 School Calendar, Semester 2

In-service for Teachers	January 4 - 5
Students Return	January 6
Quarter 2 Awards, Classrooms	January 12 - 14
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	January 18
President's Day Holiday	February 15
In-service for Teachers	February 16
Spring Pictures and Class Pictures	February 22
HPTT Winter Jam	February 25
Read Across America Week	March 1 - 5
4th Grade Musical	March 11
March Holiday	March 15
In-service for Teachers	March 16
Quarter 3 Awards, Classrooms	March 23 - 25
Field Day/ Hornet Hop	March 26
Spring Break	March 29 - April 2
HPTT Individual Conferences	April 5 - 8
GMAS Testing Window	March 22 - April 30
Q4 Awards, Classrooms	May 14
Classroom and Grade-level Celebrations	May 17
End of Year Awards	May 18
Last Day of School	May 20
Post-Planning	May 21 - 25

2026 - 2027 Progress Report and Report Card Schedule

Quarter 1	
Progress Reports, Grades Due	September 9
Progress Reports, Go Home	September 11
End of Grading Period	October 8
Grades Due	October 14
Report Cards	October 16
Quarter 2	
Progress Reports, Grades Due	November 11
Progress Reports, Go Home	November 13
End of Grading Period	December 17
Grades Due	December 14
Report Cards	December 17

Quarter 3	
Progress Reports, Grades Due	February 11
Progress Reports, Go Home	February 13
End of Grading Period	March 12
Grades Due	March 16
Report Cards	March 19
Quarter 4	
Progress Reports, Grades Due	April 21
Progress Reports, Go Home	April 23
End of Grading Period	May 20
Grades Due	May 12
Report Cards	May 20



Hornet HOP

(Here, On Time, Positive Behavior)

Dear Parents and Students,

Hornet HOP is ready for another fun filled year at Cook Elementary School. This year we are planning four Hornet HOP Celebrations to recognize students' accomplishments at the end of each quarter. These fun filled celebrations reward students for working hard in class and around the school each day.

Hornet HOP focuses on students being **Here at school, arriving at school On Time, and following all the school rules with Positive Behavior.** During each eight week grading period a student must meet the following criteria in order to attend the celebration:



Here- 3 or less unexcused absences



On Time- 5 or less checkouts/tardies



Positive Behavior- No Office referrals

Now it is up to you. Become a winner by working hard to meet these goals each quarter at CES. Here is a look at the grading periods and Hornet HOP Celebrations:

Hornet Hop Celebrations			
Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
October 8, 2026	December 16, 2026	March 26, 2027	May 19, 2027

We thank you again for your support and look forward to a great year.

Sincerely,
CES Hornet Hop Committee

Code of Conduct

For All Elementary School Students in the Cook County Schools

It is the purpose of the Cook County School District to operate each school in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with that purpose, the Cook County Board of Education has adopted a policy which requires all schools to adopt codes of conduct which requires students to conduct themselves at all times in order to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards of behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board, and to obey student behavior rules established at the school within the district.

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

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

- At school or on school property at any time;
- Off school grounds at any school activity, function, or event and while traveling to and from such events;
- On vehicles provided for transportation by the school system.

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

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

Authority Of The Principal

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

Parental Responsibilities The school anticipates the support of parents in dealing with behavioral problems which may arise. Parental cooperation needs to be apparent to the student/school. **Students are expected to show respect for authority and follow school rules, regulations, and procedures at all times.**

Cook Elementary School strongly encourages parents and guardians to inform children of the consequences of misbehavior at school, including criminal penalties, for violent behavior, underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

Teacher Authority The school superintendent and principal shall fully support the authority of every teacher to remove a student from the classroom. Any teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior which violates the student code of conduct and repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his/her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn shall file a report of such behavior with the principal or the principal's designee. The principal and teacher shall thereafter follow the procedures set forth in Georgia law, specifically O.C.G.A. 20-2-737-738.

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

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

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

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

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Isolation or Time Out
- Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parent
- Parent Conference
- Detention / Saturday School Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Out of School Suspension
- Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Referral to Law Enforcement of Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The School will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

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

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion; however, only a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the COOK County Board of Education policies will determine those punishments.

In the event that a student is referred to a disciplinary tribunal, parents or the student may elect not to contest whether the student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or student waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Also, the tribunal facilitator from the superintendent's office must approve such an agreement or waiver.

Search And Seizure

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

Assembly Behavior- Students are expected to behave appropriately during assemblies. They should remain seated until the program is completed even if the bell rings. Provisions will be made for them to return to class without a tardy. Cat calls and unnecessary noises are not appropriate. Sleeping and talking are not appropriate. Students not behaving appropriately will be disciplined, and he/she will not be allowed to attend future assemblies.

Book Bags- In classrooms, teachers may develop specific policies regarding book bags. On school buses, book bags should always be held securely or placed under the student's seat. All book bags, backpacks, gym bags, etc. should be clearly marked with the student's name so the owner of the item can be identified immediately. Students should never carry large amounts of money to school, and they should not place anything of value in the exterior pockets of book bags or backpacks or in bags that open at the top. Student property, including but not limited to backpacks, book bags, athletic bags, and purses, may be searched by school administrators when reasonable suspicion exists. Any search of a student shall be conducted in a manner designed to preserve the privacy and dignity of the student to the extent possible according to the circumstances of the situation.

Cell Phone & Electronic Device Policy The regulations of electronic devices include the following:

- **Cell phones and ALL electronic devices and accessories may not be used at CES during the school day in accordance with Georgia law.** When traveling in hallways, students must be able to hear directives from school officials. NO earbuds, beat type headsets or large headphones are allowed. **An electronic device is any item that is capable of recording, viewing, or transmitting information.** Violations such as these may be treated as cell phone violations as well.

- Cook Elementary School is not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged electronic items or accessories and school officials will not investigate these matters.
- Emergency phone calls can always be made in the main office; so cell phones are not needed during school hours. **If parents must contact their child, they should call the school office.** The school office staff is excellent at relaying emergency messages from parents to students.

Courtesy When students enter Cook Elementary School, they are a part of the school and reflect upon the school's reputation. As Cook Elementary School wishes to maintain its good reputation, it is important for all students to be polite to fellow students and to treat each other with respect. Faculty, staff members, and adults are to be treated with respect.

Debt Obligations/Financial Responsibility Students are responsible for any debts incurred while attending CCES. These debts may include but are not limited to monies owed to the office, library, athletic department, teachers, or school board. Additional monies owed may include damage assessments, fundraisers, or settlements. Students must clear debts before receiving a locker, parking permit, report card, or diploma. Students having outstanding debt will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities, including graduation, until all debts have been cleared.

Dress Code Conventional dress worn in a traditional manner is the norm for approved dress at Cook Elementary School. It is the student's responsibility to come to school fully clothed and to wear clothes that are not dangerous to health or safety, do not disrupt the learning process, and stay within the school dress code. Extremes in dress and grooming are not permitted. ***Any holes in jeans/shorts above mid thigh should be worn with shorts or leggings underneath.***

Hats, beanies or toboggans, and sunglasses are not permitted inside the building during school. IF SEEN, these items will be confiscated.

Hoods are not to be worn in the school building at any time. Students will be asked to remove their hoods inside the building.

Clothing should be fitted so there is no midriff or underwear showing when standing, bending, seated, or moving. All pants must be worn at the natural waistline.

Sagging pants (worn below the waistline) are not permitted. If belts are worn, they must be buckled. Zippers must be zipped, and fasteners must be fastened.

Note: Administrator discretion applies to all the above.

Dress code discipline will be enforced by both teachers and administrators. Discipline will be assigned and, if necessary, students will be loaned shirts or scrubs to wear or a parent/guardian will be called to bring a change of clothes. Students will not be allowed to remain in the classroom with inappropriate clothing.

Hall Passes Students are expected to stay in class. They should not be in the halls unless they are changing class or have an authorized hall pass **with a legitimate excuse**. Any student, who is in a hall, restroom, etc., should have a **visible authorized pass**. Hall passes are provided for each student and must be used whenever a student requests permission to leave a classroom. Medical excuses for restroom breaks will be required of students with temporary or chronic conditions necessitating more frequent restroom visits.

Internet Policy – Student Use Cook County Board of Education policy requires students and parents to sign a Student Network/Internet User Agreement and Parent Permission Form. Any person who is accessing the Internet with school equipment and services accepts responsibility to abide by the Network/Internet User

Agreement. Not accepting these responsibilities, or any infraction which shows non-compliance, will lead to restrictions or severance of access to services, as well as other possible disciplinary actions.

Off-Campus Behavior Notification from law enforcement, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the court system, or any other social media that a Cook Elementary School student has been taken into custody or charged with a felony or a delinquent act that would be a felony if committed by an adult, will prompt the school principal to collect pertinent information and to make a determination whether the student's continued presence at school presents a potential danger to persons or property at the school or may substantially disrupt the educational process. If such a determination is made, the principal may recommend a suspension or expulsion of longer than ten (10) days. A tribunal of school officials will hold a disciplinary hearing to consider and make final decisions on such recommendations. If a student is adjudicated, or found guilty of a felony offense, the principal will make an immediate recommendation of expulsion or assignment to an off-site program. A tribunal of school officials will hold a disciplinary hearing to consider and make final decisions on such recommendations.

Any student transferring to Cook Elementary School from a juvenile YDC or other disciplinary state facility will be placed in alternative school for a length of time to be determined by the principal. Some misdemeanors (especially of a sexual nature) may result in a student not being allowed to attend school also.

Pep Rally Behavior Any student who is not scheduled to be a part of a pep rally and is on the floor without permission will be disciplined and prohibited from attending future pep rallies.

Restrooms: Students and employees of Cook Elementary School expect and deserve to have clean and sanitary restrooms. Please help keep restrooms clean by flushing toilets and urinals after use. Be courteous by keeping trash off floors. Please report any writing on walls, broken equipment or other problems to a teacher or the front office, so repairs may be requested before further damage or vandalism occurs.

Off Limits Areas

- All parking areas.
- All hallways before school, during lunch, and after school hours (unless authorized by a teacher or administrator).
- Students must remain inside the building at all times unless accompanied by a faculty or staff member.

Specific Student Behavior Code Violations

Academic Dishonesty

Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assignments, or exams.

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty can include administrative detention up to in-school suspension.

Teachers will notify parents. Students must redo assignment.

- **Level 1 Intentional receiving or providing of unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assessments and assignments. May include but is not limited to failure to cite sources.**
- **Level 2 Intentional plagiarism or cheating on a minor classroom assignment or project. Includes but is not limited to Intentional dishonesty on minor classroom projects, assignments, homework, etc.**
- **Level 3 Intentional plagiarism or cheating on a major exam, statewide assessment or project or the falsification of school records. Includes but is not limited to cheating on major exams, statewide assessments or other state mandated academic work; Includes the falsification of school records; forgery; Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on academic dishonesty three or more times during the same year.**

Accessory

Causes someone else to commit a violation, helps in commission of violation; or advises, encourages, hires or procures acts in concert with another to commit violation. Violators are subject to the same interventions and consequences as the students who are actively involved in committing the offense.

Alcohol

Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or consumption or intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol. Students under the influence of alcohol may be included if it results in disciplinary action. Consequences for Alcohol can include in-school suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion. All infractions will be reported to law enforcement and to the Superintendent of Schools.

- **Level 1 Unintentional possession of alcohol. 50**
- **Level 2 Under the influence of alcohol without possession.**
- **Level 3 Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol.**

Arson

Intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary device.

Consequences for Arson can include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion. All infractions will be reported to law enforcement.

- **Level 2 Attempt to commit arson or transporting or possessing incendiary devices to school; includes but not limited to the use of fireworks and trashcan fires without damage to school property.**

- **Level 3 Intentional damage as a result of arson-related activity or the use of an incendiary device and includes but not limited to setting fires to school property.**

Battery

Intentional touching or striking of another person to intentionally cause bodily harm (NOTE: The key difference between battery and fighting is that fighting involves mutual participation.) Consequences for Battery can include administrative detention, Saturday school, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion. Infractions may be reported to law enforcement and to the Superintendent of Schools.

- **Level 1 Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in no bodily injuries. Includes but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping, and other intentional physical confrontations**
- **Level 2 Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in mild or moderate bodily injuries. Includes but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping, and other physical confrontations that result in mild or moderate injuries**
- **Level 3 Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack on school personnel; Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on battery three or more times during the same school year. Includes but not limited to choking, pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping, and other physical confrontations resulting in severe injuries; Includes any physical attack on school personnel; includes incidents serious enough to warrant calling the police or security.**

Bullying

A pattern of behavior, which may include written, verbal, physical acts, or through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology occurring on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, threatening the educational environment, or causing substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm. Consequences for Bullying can include in-school suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion. Infractions may be reported to law enforcement and to the Superintendent of Schools.

- **Level 1 First Offense of bullying as defined in Georgia Code Section 20-2-751.4. Includes but is not limited to a pattern of unwanted teasing, threats, name calling, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, hazing, physical attacks, extortion, social exclusion, coercion, spreading of rumors or falsehoods, gossip, stalking, or using any type of electronic means to harass or intimidate**
- **Level 2 Second incident of bullying as defined in Georgia Code Section 20-2-751.4. Includes but is not limited to a pattern of unwanted teasing, threats, name calling, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, hazing, physical attacks, extortion, social exclusion, coercion, spreading of rumors or falsehoods, gossip, stalking, or using any type of electronic means to harass or intimidate**
- **Level 3 Repeated acts, as defined in Georgia Code Section 20-2-751.4, occurring on**

school property or school possession that is a willful attempt or threat to inflict injury, or apparent means to do so, any display of force that puts victim at fear of harm, any written, verbal or physical act that threatens, harasses, or intimidates; causes another person physical harm; interferes with a student's education; so severe and pervasive intimidated or threatens educational environment.

Breaking/Entering/Burglary

Unlawful or unauthorized forceful entry into a school building or vehicle with or without intent to commit theft. (NOTE: The key difference between breaking and entering—burglary is that trespassing does not include forceful entry.) The consequences for Breaking/Entering/Burglary can include long-term suspension or expulsion. All infractions will be reported to law enforcement and the Superintendent of Schools.

Bus Misconduct

Misconduct on the bus is subject to the same disciplinary measures as misconduct at school.

Classroom Disruptions

Disruptions that include not following classroom behavior matrix rules and /or stops instruction for an extended period of time and requires administrative intervention. Consequences for Classroom Disruptions can include administrative detention, Saturday school, or in-school suspension.

- **Level 1 Minor classroom disruption that includes not following classroom behavior matrix rules.**
- **Level 2 Major classroom disruption that stops instruction for an extended period of time and requires administrative intervention.**

Classroom Disruptions (Outside Classroom)

Disruption outside of the classroom that includes not following hallway, restroom, cafeteria, and other school area behavior matrix rules. Consequences for disruptions outside of the classroom can include administrative detention, Saturday school, or in-school suspension.

- **Level 1 Minor disruption that includes not following hallway, restroom, cafeteria and other school area behavior rules**
- **Level 2 Major disruption outside the classroom that requires administrative intervention.**

Computer/Internet Misuse

Use of a school computer for anything other than instructional purposes or unauthorized use of a computer or computer network with the intention of deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging, or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program(s), or data. Consequences for Computer/Internet misuse is at the discretion of the school administrator and may range from Saturday school to a recommendation for expulsion.

- **Level 2 Unauthorized use of school computer for anything other than instructional purposes. Includes but not limited to computer misuse, using computer to view inappropriate material, and violation of school computer use policy**
- **Level 3 Unauthorized use of a computer or computer network with the intention of**

deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging, obtaining confidential information or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program(s) or data; includes disclosure of a number, code, password, or other means of access to school computers or the school system computer network without proper authorization. Includes but not limited to hacking, using school computer to change or alter school records (grades, attendance, discipline, etc.)

Defiance/Willful Refusal

Failure to comply with instructions, blatant insubordination; willfully and defiantly refuses to immediately follow school staff directives. Consequences for Defiance and/or Willful Refusal can include administrative detention, Saturday school, and in-school suspension.

- **Level 1 Failure to comply with instructions**
- **Level 2 Blatant insubordination; willfully and defiantly refuses to immediately follow school staff directives.**

Disorderly Conduct

Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of the school, of a school function, substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff or others. (Includes disruptive behaviors on school buses). Consequences for Disorderly Conduct can include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion. Infractions may be reported to law enforcement and Superintendent of Schools.

- **Level 1 Creating or contributing to a moderate disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment but doesn't pose a threat to the health or safety of others. Includes but not limited to general bus misbehavior, spitting on property or persons, encouraging disruptive behavior**
- **Level 2 Creating or contributing to a severe disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment but doesn't pose a threat to the health or safety of others; may represent a repeat action.**
- **Level 3 Creating or contributing to a severe disturbance that substantially disrupts the school environment or poses a threat to the health and safety of others. Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on disorderly conduct three or more times during the same school year.**

Disrespect To Teacher/Staff

Actions or words towards school personnel that are generally considered disrespectful actions.

- **Level 1 Actions or words towards school personnel that are generally considered disrespectful actions.**
- **Level 2 Inappropriate language directed towards school personnel.**

Dress Code

Violations of school dress code that includes standards for appropriate school attire.

Drug Possession (Prescribed)

Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sell, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics; or any medication prescribed to a student or purchased over-the-counter and not brought to the office upon arrival at school. Consequences for drug possession can include in-school suspension, long-term suspension, and or expulsion. Infractions will be reported to law enforcement and to the Superintendent of Schools.

- **Level 1 Unintentional possession of prescribed or over the counter medication. Does not include the possession of narcotics or any illegal drugs. Does not include auto-injectable epinephrine as properly administered pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-776.**
- **Level 2 Any medication prescribed to a student or purchased over-the-counter and not brought to the office upon arrival to school. Does not include auto-injectable epinephrine as properly administered pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-776.**
- **Level 3 Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics. Does not include auto-injectable epinephrine as properly administered pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-776.**

Electronic Smoking Device

Any device used to deliver nicotine or any other substance intended for human consumption that may be used by a person to simulate smoking through inhalation of vapor or aerosol from the device.

- **Level 1 Unintentional possession of an electronic smoking device**
- **Level 2 Use or knowledgeable possession of an electronic smoking device**
- **Level 3 Distribution and/or selling of electronic smoking devices: Level 3 may be used for students that violate school policy on electronic smoking devices three or more times during the same school year.**

Anti-Vaping Code

The Cook County School District is committed to the health, safety, and welfare of its students. The District has determined that the use of vapes, vaporizers, e-cigarettes, or other devices used to inhale vapor by means of an electronic device ("vaping") is harmful to the health of students and the good order of the School District. Vaping requires the use of a purpose-made or homemade device that vaporizes oil that may contain flavoring, nicotine, Cannabidiol ("CBD") oil of varying concentrations, tetrahydrocannabinol ("THC") oil of varying concentrations, or other substances that may or may not be legal to possess ("vape"). A vaping device is generally composed of a vaporizer, battery, reservoir for smoking oil, and a battery charger. By way of example and not as a limitation, vaping devices may be called vapes, Juuls, e-cigarettes, e-cigs, dab pens or other brand names.

It will be a violation of the Cook County Discipline Code to possess, use or transfer a vape as provided below.

For purposes of this section, the following definitions will apply:

- Cannabis. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD) are the two primary cannabinoids that occur naturally in the cannabis sativa plant.
- CBD Oil. CBD oil is derived from a cannabis plant called hemp. Hemp contains a very high concentration of CBD and less than .3% by volume of THC.
- Low-THC Oil. Low-THC oil is derived from the cannabis plant that produces marijuana. Low-THC oil contains no more than 5% by volume of THC and may only be possessed or used under a doctor's supervision with a prescription. Possession of Low-THC oil without a valid prescription is a felony.
- THC Oil. THC oil is derived from the cannabis plant and contains more than 5% by volume of THC. Some THC oil may contain up to 98% by volume of THC (3 - 5 times stronger than typical marijuana). Possession of THC oil is a felony.
- Vape. A vape is a purpose-made or homemade device that electronically vaporizes liquid to allow a user to inhale the vapor created in the lungs (i.e. vapes, juuls, e-cigarette, e-cig, dab pen, vape sticks, etc.) Vape will include individually or together vape battery(ies), reservoir(s), vaporizer(s), and/or vape charger(s).
- Vape Juice. Vape juice is a slang term for the liquid used by the vaporizer to create vapor. Vape juice may contain flavored juice, CBD oil, Low THC oil or THC oil.

1. THE USE, ATTEMPT TO POSSESS, OR THE POSSESSION INDIVIDUALLY OR IN CONNECTION WITH OTHERS OF VAPE JUICE CONTAINING NICOTINE OR CBD OIL IN OR OUT OF A VAPE.

Disposition:

- Circumstances will determine which one or more of the following alternatives will be considered:
 - o Counseling with student, parents, and
 - o Use 5 Days OSS
 - o Attempt to Possess 3 Day Oss
 - o Possession Individually 5 Days OSS
 - o Connection with others 3 Days OSS
 - o If the offense occurs on a bus or at a bus stop, in addition to the school disposition, the student may be suspended from bus transportation, 10 school days.

REPORTING None

2. THE USE, ATTEMPT TO POSSESS, OR THE POSSESSION INDIVIDUALLY OR IN CONNECTION WITH OTHERS OF VAPE JUICE CONTAINING NICOTINE OR CBD OIL IN OR OUT OF A VAPE. THE SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT USE, OR ATTEMPT TO POSSESS OR POSSESSION OF A VAPE IN ANY GIVEN SCHOOL YEAR.

Disposition:

An immediate external suspension for Ten days from school; and because of the serious nature of the infraction, a Tribunal **may** be scheduled with a recommendation for long-term assignment to alternative school or expulsion.

If the offense occurs on a bus or at a bus stop, in addition to the school disposition, the student may be suspended from bus transportation Remainder of the school year but no less than 90 days.

Reporting: None

3 THE USE, ATTEMPT TO POSSESS, OR THE POSSESSION INDIVIDUALLY OR IN CONNECTION WITH OTHERS OR THE DISTRIBUTION OF VAPE JUICE CONTAINING LOW-THC OIL OR THC OIL IN OR OUT OF A VAPE.

Electronic Violation

Use of any electronic device, including but not limited to paging devices, cellular phones, smart phones, walkie-talkies, and similar devices for non-instructional purposes during instructional class time or in areas administrative detention, Saturday school, or in-school suspension.

False Reporting

False reporting occurs when a student deliberately provides inaccurate or misleading information about an incident, behavior, or safety concern. All members of the school community must provide truthful and accurate information when reporting incidents or concerns. False reporting undermines trust, wastes resources, and can cause harm. The school encourages reporting of genuine concerns to ensure safety and well-being. Individuals making reports in good faith will be protected from retaliation.

Students that provide false statements against students and/or staff will face consequences subject to the following steps:

- **Level 2 False reporting incidents concerning other students.**
 - **Step 1: Office referral, 1-3 days ISS, referral to counselor**
 - **Step 2: Office referral, 3-5 days ISS, referral to counselor**
 - **Step 3: Office referral, 1-3 days OSS, referral to counselor**
- **Level 3 False reporting incidents concerning faculty, staff, or school personnel**
 - **Step 1: Office referral, 1-3 days OSS, referral to counselor, possible referral to law enforcement**
 - **Step 2: Office referral, 3-5 days OSS, referral to counselor, possible referral to law enforcement**
 - **Step 3: Office referral, 10 days OSS pending tribunal, possible referral to law enforcement**

Fighting

Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender and intent to harm. (NOTE: The key difference between fighting and battery is that fighting involves mutual participation.) Consequences can include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, long term suspension, or expulsion. Infractions will be reported to law enforcement and the Superintendent of Schools.

- **Level 1 Physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in no bodily injuries; no injuries.**
- **Level 2 A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to**

harm resulting in mild or moderate bodily injuries. Mild or moderate Injuries may include but are not limited to scratches, bloody noses, bruises, black eyes, and other marks on the body.

- **Level 3 A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in severe bodily injuries. Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on fighting three or more times during the same school year. Repeated physical confrontations resulting in severe injuries that require medical attention.**

Gambling

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

Gang-Related Activities

Any group of three or more persons with a common name or common identifying signs, symbols, tattoos, graffiti, or attire which engage in criminal gang behavior.

- **Level 2 Wearing or possessing gang-related apparel; communicating either verbally or nonverbally to convey membership or affiliation with a gang. Examples include but not limited to possession or wearing of gang-related clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, or using colors to convey gang membership or affiliation; gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc. to convey gang membership or affiliation; committing any other illegal act or other violation of school policies in connection with gang-related activity.**
- **Level 3 The solicitation of others for gang-membership, the defacing of school or personal property with gang-related symbols or slogans, threatening or intimidating on behalf of a gang, the requirement or payment for protection or insurance through a gang. Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to gang activity. Examples include but not limited to soliciting students for gang membership; tagging or defacing school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang; requiring payment for protection, insurance, otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity; inciting other students to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity.**

Homicide

Killing of one human being by another includes but is not limited to shooting, stabbing, choking, bludgeoning, etc. Consequences are long-term suspension or expulsion.

Kidnapping

Unlawful abduction, transportation and/or detention of a person against his/her will. Consequences are long-term suspension or expulsion.

Other-Attendance Related

Repeated or excessive unexcused absences or tardiness; including failure to report to class, skipping class, leaving school without authorization, or failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions.

Other Disciplinary Event

Discipline event not listed in code of conduct that warrants intervention and consequences.

Other Non-Disciplinary Event

This code is used exclusively for the reporting of physical restraint. Event does not warrant consequences, but may warrant intervention to include restraint.

Other-Student Incivility

Insubordination or disrespect to staff members or other students; includes but is not limited to refusal to follow school staff member instructions, use of vulgar or inappropriate language, and misrepresentation of the truth

- **Level 1 Failure to comply with instructions or the inadvertent use of inappropriate language.**
- **Level 2 Blatant insubordination or the use of inappropriate language directed towards school staff or peers**
- **Level 3 Blatant and repeated insubordination or intentional misrepresentation of the truth; Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to student incivility.**

Possession Of Unapproved Items

The use or possession of any unauthorized item disruptive to the school environment. (NOTE: The use of fireworks or incendiary devices must be coded as arson.)

- **Level 1 The possession of any unauthorized item. Does not include the possession of fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous. Includes but is not limited to possession of toys, gadgets, personal items, etc.; includes possession of pepper spray.**
- **Level 2 The use of any unauthorized item (i.e. toys, mobile devices, or gadgets). Does not include the possession of fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous. Includes but is not limited to use of toys, gadgets, personal items, etc.**
- **Level 3 The use or possession of unauthorized items including but not limited to matches, lighters, toy guns, or other items that can be construed as dangerous or harmful to the learning environment; Includes the possession of fireworks but the use of fireworks should be coded as Arson; Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to unapproved items. Includes but are not limited to matches, lighters, or the possession of fireworks, bullets, stink bombs, CO2 cartridges; includes the use of pepper spray with injury.**

Repeated Offenses

Collection of state reportable offenses occurring within a single academic year. Students provided Tier 1 through 3 interventions with no evidence of progress.

Robbery

The taking of, or attempting to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization

under confrontational circumstances by force, or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. (NOTE: The key difference between robbery and larceny/theft is that the threat of physical harm or actual physical harm is involved in a robbery).

- **Level 2 Robbery without the use of a weapon; taking something by force or threat of force**
- **Level 3 Robbery with the use of a weapon. Weapons may include but are not limited to guns, knives, clubs, razor blades, etc.**

Serious Bodily Injury

Bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

Sexual Battery

Please refer to the following website for complete definition and example.

https://www.gadoe.org/schoolsafetyclimate/Documents/Discipline%20Matrix_January%202020.pdf

Harassment

Non-physical and unwelcome sexual advances, lewd gestures or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature; requests for sexual favors; possession of sexually explicit images; gender-based harassment

that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment. Includes harassment based on race, national origin, disability and sexual orientation.

- **Level 1 Comments that perpetuate gender stereotypes or suggestive jokes that are not directed towards specific individuals. Includes but not limited to insensitive or sexually suggestive comments or jokes. Includes harassment based on race, national origin, disability and sexual orientation.**
- **Level 2 Comments that perpetuate gender stereotypes, suggestive jokes or lewd gestures that are directed towards specific individuals or groups of individuals. Includes but not limited to insensitive or sexually suggestive comments or jokes. Includes harassment based on race, national origin, disability and sexual orientation.**
- **Level 3 Physical or non-physical sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on sexual harassment three or more times during the same school year. Includes harassment based on race, national origin, disability and sexual orientation.**

Sexual Offense

Unlawful sexual behavior, sexual contact without force or threat of force, or possession of sexually explicit images; can be consensual.

Please refer to the following website for complete definition and example.

https://www.gadoe.org/schoolsafetyclimate/Documents/Discipline%20Matrix_January%202020.pdf

Taunting

Teasing, taunting, demeaning others, picking, emotional stress (not on a repeated basis).

Theft/Larceny

The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity (e.g., school) without threat, violence, or bodily harm. (NOTE: The key difference between theft/larceny and robbery is that the threat of physical harm or actual physical harm is involved in robbery).

- **Level 1 The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value between \$25 and \$100. Includes but not limited to theft by taking, theft by receiving stolen property, and theft by deception.**
- **Level 2 The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value between \$100 and \$250. Includes but not limited to theft by taking, theft by receiving stolen property, and theft by deception.**
- **Level 3 The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value exceeding \$250. Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on larceny/theft three or more times during the same school year. Includes but not limited to theft by taking, theft by receiving stolen property, and theft by deception.**

Threat/Intimidation

Any threat through written or verbal language or act with creates a fear of harm and/or conveys a serious expression of intent to harm or violence without displaying a weapon and without subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.

- **Level 2 Physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack. Examples include but are not limited to physical, verbal or electronic threats.**
- **Level 3 School-wide physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack; Note: Students that display a pattern of behavior that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, threatening the educational environment, or causing substantial physical harm, threat of harm or visibly bodily harm may be coded as bullying. Includes but not limited to bomb threats or unauthorized pulling of the fire alarm.**

Tobacco Possession

Possession, use, distribution or sell of tobacco products on school grounds at school-sponsored events and on transportation to and from school.

- **Level 1 Unintentional possession of tobacco products**
- **Level 2 Use of or knowledgeable possession of tobacco products**
- **Level 3 Distribution and/or selling of tobacco products; Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on tobacco three or more times during the same school year.**

Trespassing

Entering or remaining on a public school campus or school board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose of entry. (NOTE: The key difference trespassing and

breaking/entering/burglary is that trespassing does not include forceful entry into the facility.)

- **Level 2 Entering or remaining on school grounds or facilities without authorization and with no lawful purpose**
- **Level 3 Entering or remaining on school grounds or facilities without authorization and with no lawful purpose. Refusing to leave school grounds after a request from school personnel; Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on trespassing three or more times during the same school year.**

Vandalism

The willful and/or malicious destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property without the consent.

- **Level 2 Participating in the minor destruction, damage or defacement of school property or private property without permission**
- **Level 3 Participation in the willful/malicious destruction, damage or defacement of school property or private property without permission; Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on vandalism three or more times during the same school year.**

Violence Against A Teacher

Intentional physical attack against a teacher with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack against a teacher

- **Level 3 Intentional physical attack against a teacher with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack against a teacher.**

Weapons/Knife

The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife, dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor or razor blade. (OCGA 16-11-127.1).

- **Level 2 Unintentional possession of a knife or knife-like item without intent to harm or intimidate**
- **Level 3 Intentional possession, use or intention to use of a knife or knife-like item with the intent to harm or intimidate**

Weapons/Handgun

Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a handgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. Possession of a firearm that has a short stock and is designed to be held and fired by the use of a single hand; and any combination of parts from which a firearm described above can be assembled.

Weapons/Other

The possession, use, or intention to use any instrument or object that is used or intended to be used in a manner that may inflict bodily harm (does not include knives or firearms). Unintentional possession

consequences can include in-school suspension.

Intentional possession consequences are long-term suspension or expulsion. Infractions will be reported to law enforcement and the Superintendent of Schools.

- **Level 2 Unintentional possession of a weapon, other than a knife or firearm, or simile of a weapon with intent to harm or intimidate.**
- **Level 3 Intentional possession and use of any weapon, other than a knife or firearm, with intent to harm or intimidate.**

Weapons/Rifle

Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a rifle or shotgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. The term "rifle" means a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire only a single projectile through a rifled bore for each single pull of the trigger.

Weapons/Other Firearms

Intentional or unintentional possession or use of any firearms other than rifle, shotgun, or handguns (including starter pistols) and any other destructive device which includes explosives. Includes any weapon (including starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive; the frame or receiver of any weapon described above; any firearm

muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device, which includes any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas (i.e. bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge more than 4 ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge or more than 1/4 ounce, mine or similar device); any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than 1/2 inch in diameter; any combination or parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. (NOTE: This does not include toy guns, cap guns, bb guns, pellet guns, or Class-C common fireworks). {Pursuant to Gun-Free Schools Act—Public Law 107-110, Section 4141}.

Code of Conduct Steps

Level 1 Consequences:

The following consequences for Level 1 Violations may include, but are not limited to:

1st Referral- Parent Contact, Extended Timeout- ½ day

2nd- Parent Contact, Referral to Counselor, ½ day ISS

3rd- Parent Contact, 1 day ISS

4th- Parent Contact, 2 days ISS, Excessive Referral Letter

5th- Parent Contact, 3 days ISS, Excessive Referral Letter

6th- Parent Contact, 5 days ISS, Excessive Referral Letter, Behavior Contract Signed

7th- Parent Contact, Implement Behavior Contract Step 1= 10 days ISS

8th- Parent Contact, Implement Behavior Contract Step 2= 2 days OSS

9th- Parent Contact, Implement Behavior Contract Step 3= 4 days OSS

10th- Parent Contact, Implement Behavior Contract Step 4=referral to disciplinary hearing, 10 days OSS pending hearing

Level 2 Consequences:

The following consequences for Level 2 violations may include, but are not limited to:

1st- Parent Contact, ½ day - 1 day ISS

2nd- Parent Contact, Referral to Counselor, 2 day ISS

3rd- Parent Contact, 3 days ISS

4th- Parent Contact, 5 days ISS, Excessive Referral Letter, Behavior Contract Signed

5th- Parent Contact, Implement Behavior Contract Step 1= 10 day ISS

6th- Parent Contact, Implement Behavior Contract Step 2= 2 days OSS

7th- Parent Contact, Implement Behavior Contract Step 3= 4 days OSS

8th- Parent Contact, Implement Behavior Contract Step 4=referral to disciplinary hearing, 10 days OSS pending hearing

Level 3 Consequences:

The following consequences for Level 3 violations may include, but are not limited to:

1st- Parent Contact, 1-3 days OSS, Referral to Counselor

2nd- Parent Contact, 3-5 days OSS, Excessive Referral Letter

3rd- Parent Contact, 5-10 days OSS pending Tribunal

Definition of Terms

Assault: Any serious threat or attempt to physically harm another person or any act which reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: threatening language or swinging at someone in an attempt to strike).

Battery: Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person. (Example: when one physically attacks or “beats up on” another person). This term should be used only when the intent is to do bodily harm and the attack is serious enough to warrant calling law enforcement or bringing in security.

Bullying: In accordance with Georgia law, bullying is defined as (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so, or (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm.

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

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

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

Dress Code: The current dress code is explained in the Student Handbook.

Drug: The term drug does not include prescriptions issued to the individual, aspirin or similar medications and/or cold medications that are taken according to product use recommendations and board policy. Caffeine pills are considered drugs. All medications that are taken at school must be brought to the appropriate staff person responsible for administering them in containers clearly labeled as to the name of the student, the name of the medication, and the appropriate dosage.

Expulsion: Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school quarter or semester. Only a disciplinary tribunal may take such action.

Extortion: Obtaining money or goods from another student by violence, threats, or misuse of authority.

False Reporting: False reporting occurs when a student deliberately provides inaccurate or misleading information about an incident, behavior, or safety concern

Fighting: Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender and or no major injury. This term does not include verbal confrontations, tussles, or other minor confrontations.

Fireworks: The term “fireworks” means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles

containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance.

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

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

Suspension: Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed 10 days (short-term) or for a period greater than 10 days (long-term, which may be imposed only by a disciplinary tribunal). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school- sponsored activities including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.

Theft: The offense of taking or the misappropriation of any property of another with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

Waiver: A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.

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

Bullying Policy

If necessary, counseling and other interventions should also be provided to address the social- emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of students who are victims of bullying and students who commit an offense of bullying.

Students, parents/guardians and other stakeholders may report incidents of bullying to an administrator, teacher, counselor or other staff member by using the school district's complaint procedures or by calling the Georgia Department of Education's 1-877 SAY-STOP (1-877-729-7867) School Safety Hotline. Please note: Any form of electronic bullying (cyberbullying) using school equipment, school networks, e-mail systems or committed at school is strictly prohibited.

The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited, to the following:

- All staff, students and their parents will receive a summary of this policy prohibiting bullying at the beginning of the school year as part of the student code of conduct.
- The school shall keep a report of bullying and the results of an investigation confidential.
- Staff are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur or upon receipt of any report of bullying.
- People witnessing or experiencing bullying are encouraged to report the incident to the school principal designee.

The following actions will be taken when bullying is reported:

1. Investigate

Upon receipt of any report of bullying, schools will direct an immediate investigation involving appropriate personnel. The investigation should begin no later than the following school day. The investigation shall include interviewing the alleged perpetrator(s) and victim(s), identified witnesses, teacher(s) and staff members and reviewing video surveillance if available. School police, school counselors, school social workers and/or other support staff should be utilized for their expertise as determined by the circumstances of the matter.

2. Notify

At an appropriate time during or after the investigation, parents/guardians of the accused and the victim must be notified. If the incident involves an injury or similar situation, appropriate medical attention should be provided and the parent/guardian should be notified immediately.

3. Discipline

Upon confirming that bullying has occurred, the accused student should be charged with bullying and given an age-appropriate consequence which shall include, at minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling as appropriate under the circumstances.

Students in grades six through twelve found to have committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year shall be assigned to an alternative school through appropriate due process by disciplinary hearing officers, panels, or tribunals.

Schools should clearly communicate to all parties that retaliation following a report of bullying is strictly prohibited and may result in strong disciplinary action.

4. Follow Up

Follow up is important to the accused and the victim. Implement a planned method to provide after-care and follow up. Reiterate to all the previously stated prohibition on retaliation.

Cell Phone and Electronics Policy

Cook County Schools Electronic Device Procedures for Grades K–12
In compliance with HB 340 - Distraction Free Education Act

Purpose

To provide a better learning environment in which students are focused and distraction-free, reduce stress and negative drama associated with social media, and provide an atmosphere where student interaction leads to positive interpersonal relationships. These procedures outline the access and use of personal electronic devices for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade while on school premises during school hours.

Procedure Statement

Students in grades K–12 are not permitted to access or use personal electronic devices while on school premises during school hours, including but not limited to cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, e-readers, headphones, earbuds, and other devices with functionalities such as wireless communication, internet access, messaging, video recording, gaming, social media access, or data transmission. For K-8, this includes classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, restrooms, and playgrounds. For 9-12, this includes classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, restrooms, and outside areas except during class transitions and lunch times. Any student found in violation of these procedures shall be subject to progressive consequences as outlined in each school's student handbook.

Definitions

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

School Hours for K-8: For students in grades K-8, instructional time shall include all scheduled instructional time, breaks, transitions, assemblies, and other school-related activities occurring from the time the student is on the school premises until the student leaves the school premises by car or bus. K-5 and 6-8 instructional hours as defined in the student handbook each year.

School Hours for 9-12: For students in grades 9–12, instructional time begins with the bell that signals the start of each instructional block and ends with the bell that signals dismissal. Students are permitted to use cell phones only during class transitions and lunch times. Instructional time includes all scheduled academic classes, assemblies, and other school-related instructional activities.

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

Exceptions

Students with documented medical needs that require access to their personal electronic devices are allowed to utilize the device as necessary to fulfill the requirements of their respective program or plan with prior administrative approval.

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

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is considered a personal electronic device?

Personal electronic devices include but are not limited to: cell phones, smart watches, tablets, e-readers, ear buds, and other devices with functionalities such as wireless communication, internet access, messaging, video recording, gaming, social media access, or data transmission during school hours.

What are considered to be “school hours” for K-5?

Bell to bell. The period beginning with the first bell signaling the start of instruction time shall include all scheduled instructional time, breaks, transitions, assemblies, and other school related activities occurring between the start and end of the school day. Instructional hours are defined in the Student Handbook each year.

What is considered “accessing” a personal electronic device?

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

School Cell Phone Procedure

In order to maintain a focused and respectful learning environment, students are expected to follow all school policies regarding cell phone use. The following progressive discipline policy will be enforced for any violations:

Important Notes:

The district or individual schools within the district shall not assume any responsibility or liability for the theft, loss, or damage to a personal electronic device.

Emergency contact with students can always be made through the front office.

Exceptions may be made for documented medical or learning needs, with prior administrative approval.

Step 1: Office Warning and Parent Notification

The **cell phone is collected** and secured by school administration.

Parent/guardian must pick up the phone in person from the School Administration or School Resource Officer.

Students are reminded of the cell phone policy.

A **minor offense referral** is issued and documented in the student's behavior record.

Step 2: Office Referral

An office **referral** is issued and documented in the student's behavior record.

The **cell phone is collected** by staff or administration.

Parent/guardian must pick up the phone in person from the School Administration or School Resource Officer.

Step 3: Office Referral

An office referral is issued and documented in the student's behavior record.

The student will receive 1 day of ISS and a behavior plan will be initiated.

The **cell phone is collected** by staff or administration.

Parent/guardian must pick up the phone in person from the School Administration or School Resource Officer.

Step 4: Office Referral

An office referral is issued and documented in the student's behavior record.

The student will receive up to 10 days of ISS and the behavior plan will be adjusted as needed.

The **cell phone is collected** by staff or administration.

Parent/guardian must pick up the phone in person from the School Administration or School Resource Officer.

Step 5: Office Referral (Repeat/Serious Offense)

Refer to Student Code of Conduct regarding Repeat/Serious Offenses

General School Information

School Hours

Normal school hours for students are from 8:00 a.m. – 2:40 p.m. Students arriving after 8:29 a.m. will be considered tardy. Students arriving after 8:29 a.m., will be considered to be checked-in.

Teacher work hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Employees designated for specific morning duty will work from 7:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

STUDENTS ARE NOT TO ARRIVE AT SCHOOL IN THE PARENT DROP OFF AREA BEFORE 7:30 A.M. THE DOORS WILL BE LOCKED UNTIL 7:25 A.M. BUSES WILL BEGIN DROPPING OFF STUDENTS AT 7:20 A.M.

STUDENTS MUST BE PICKED UP BY 3:20 P.M.

Students will not be supervised prior to 7:20 a.m. or after 3:20 p.m. After 3:00 please pick up at the front entrance.

Visitors

Parents are always welcome to visit the school. We invite you to visit your child's room and get acquainted with the teacher. For the protection of the students and security of the school, it is required that any person entering the school building during the day **come directly to the office and present identification** before going to any other part of the school.

- Students who are not enrolled are not allowed to come to school to stay for a visit.
- Students are not to bring cousins, friends, etc. to school to visit or spend the day.
- Visitors will receive a pass in the office and be asked to sign in and out.
- Visitors must park in front of the school. All visitors must enter and exit through the main entrance only. Forgotten books, lunches, etc. may be left at the office for delivery. This is simply a safety measure.
- Unauthorized or disruptive visitors may be subject to criminal charges. Under these Georgia Laws: (Criminal Trespass 16-7-21 and Disrupting Public School 20-3-1181)
- Parent conferences should be arranged by calling the school office. Conferences may only be held before or after school or during a teacher's planning time. This time must be agreeable with both parties. Administrators will not be available for conferences until 8:00 a.m. They will be monitoring and supervising students.
- Parents/guardians that wish to eat lunch with their children, may do so in a designated area of the lunchroom. Parents/guardians may only eat lunch with their children and may not pull other students to the designated lunch area.

Check in and Check out Procedures

Check-in Procedure:

Students may be dropped off as tardy until 8:30 a.m. Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. must be checked in by their parents or guardian. Do not send your child to check in by themselves.

Check-out Procedure:

Parents must check students out through the office. Students should not be checked out early except for emergencies, hardships, or appointments. Students who routinely check out early will be referred to an administrator and may be subject to the Attendance Policy. When checking a student out, parents/guardians must provide the receptionist with picture identification. Identification **MUST** be presented in order to check out your child. If you should fax a request for a change in the way a student goes home, we must have a picture identification attached to the fax. We are not able to honor call-in requests to change the way a student goes home. Faxes or notes should be brought in prior to 1:00 p.m. This is for the protection of the student.

- **STUDENTS MAY NOT BE CHECKED OUT AFTER 2:00 P.M. DUE TO THE REGULAR AFTERNOON CONGESTION. PARENTS MAY NOT REMOVE STUDENTS FROM LOADED BUSES.**
- **WE DO NOT ACCEPT TELEPHONE MESSAGES THAT ASK FOR A STUDENT TO GO HOME A DIFFERENT WAY THAN HE OR SHE CAME TO SCHOOL. THE MESSAGE MUST BE IN WRITING FROM THE PARENT. THIS IS FOR YOUR CHILD'S OWN SAFETY.**

Car Riders and Pickup Procedures

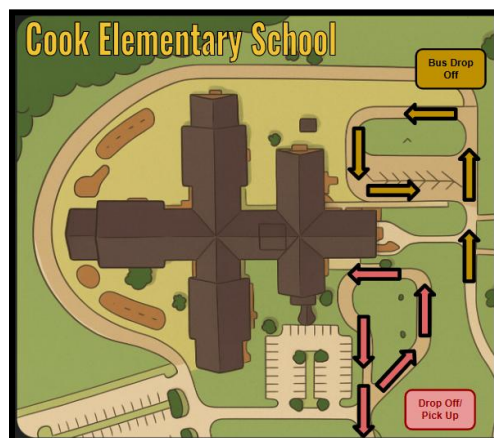
Morning Procedure:

All students who are car riders will report to school at or after 7:30 a.m. The doors will not open until 7:25 a.m. Please do not leave your child unattended. Please abide by this procedure; it helps both of us to keep your child safe. The first bell rings at 7:55 and the tardy bell rings at 8:00.

Afternoon Procedure:

All pick-up and first bell bus students will be dismissed at 2:40 daily. All second bell bus students will be dismissed approximately at 2:50. **You will not be permitted to walk up or come to the front entrance to pick up your child.**

Traffic Flow



All buses are to use the circular drive in the back of the lunchroom. All cars are to use the front drive. In order to keep our traffic flowing smoothly, we are asking parents who transport their children **not** to come in the entrance where the buses enter. In the mornings, buses will drop students off at the back of the lunchroom so that they may go on to breakfast. Students eating breakfast **should not** go to their classrooms first, but go directly to the lunchroom. Teachers will be in their classrooms each morning by 7:30 a.m. In the afternoon, students will leave the building as follows:

2:40 p.m. First bell bus students

2:40 p.m. Walkers and pick-ups will leave the building.

2:50 p.m. Second bell bus students

Students must be picked up at the office **before** 3:20 p.m. Students that are persistently late being picked up may be transported to the Cook County Sheriff's Office to wait for a parent.

Lunch and Breakfast

Well-balanced nutritious breakfasts and lunches are served in the cafeteria each day. **Lunch and breakfast will be offered to each student at no cost.**

Breakfast is served beginning at 7:20 a.m. Those students wishing to eat breakfast should enter the cafeteria as quickly as they can after arriving on campus. DROP OFF STUDENTS WHO GET TO THE CAFETERIA AFTER 7:55 A.M. WILL BE TOO LATE FOR BREAKFAST.

Cook County School District (CCSD) will no longer allow parents or students to bring, drop-off or deliver food and beverage that originates from outside eating establishments due to a USDA non-competition regulation. This regulation protects school cafeterias from the competition of outside food establishments, and since food services in our CCSD the system is completely self-supported through sales within our schools, allowing outside items serve as direct competition for their business. Students may continue to bring lunches prepared from home.

Parent and Student Contacts

Emergency phone calls can always be made in the main office; therefore, cell phones are not needed during school hours. If parents must contact their child, they should call the school office.

NOTE: Cell phones used by students after 3:00 p.m. must be outside of all school buildings.

Video and Photography Notification

At various times during the school year, your student might be photographed or videotaped participating in activities at Cook Elementary School such as yearbook pictures, activities, and award presentations. These pictures may be published in the Adel News Tribune or used through the school social media accounts.

As a parent you have the right to participate in the decision whether to allow your student to be videotaped or photographed. If you do not give permission, please sign on the appropriate line on the letter that must be returned.

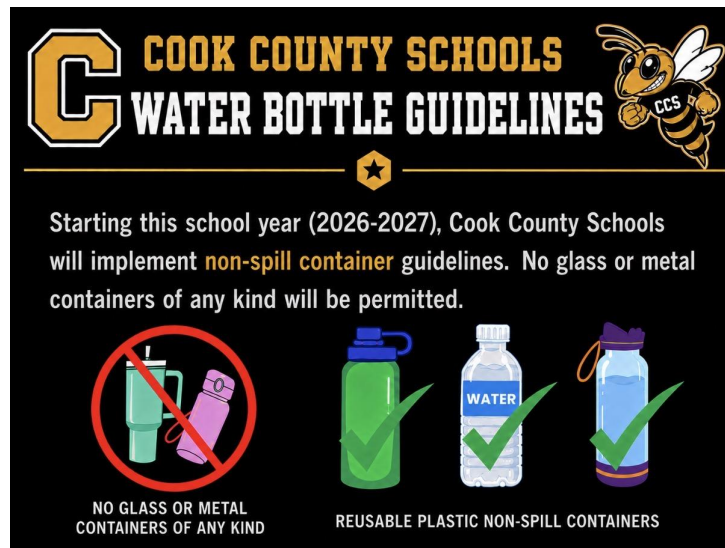
Lost and Damaged Books and Materials

Taking care of school books and materials is the student's responsibility. Damaged books or materials must be replaced at the expense of the student and parent. The lost/damaged book must be paid for before another is issued. After reasonable effort by school officials to recover funds, the student's report card will be held.

Marked Belongings

Each child's belongings including school supplies should be plainly marked to avoid loss or exchange. Students are not allowed to sell or trade items at school.

No toys, small gadgets, cell phones or electronic devices should be brought to school. The school is not responsible for any loss of personal property and will not assume liability. These items will be taken up by the teacher or administrator and held until the parent comes to get them. Unlabeled and unclaimed items will be disposed of at the end of the year.



Care of School and Personal Property

We try to instill in students pride, in the appearance of our school. Students must not mark, damage, or otherwise misuse school furniture, walls, ceilings, floors, or equipment. Penalties for vandalism are addressed in the Code of Conduct. Students must not tamper with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, plants, trees, or any electrical systems in or outside the school. Anyone who willfully destroys school property through vandalism, arson, or larceny will be reported to the proper law enforcement agency.

Field Trip Policy

Students are required to have written permission from their parents or guardian to participate in an out of town field trip. Permission will be obtained at the beginning of the year for all short bus trips.

Participation in field trips is contingent upon good behavior. If, for some reason, your child is not allowed to participate, you will be notified. Parents will not be allowed to ride the school bus when we have field trips. Parents may not transport their child on field trips. Students leaving field trips with parents must be checked out by the parent. This may be done by notifying the teacher and completing the necessary checkout form prior to the field trip.

Medicine

If your child has medication that he or she needs to take at school, bring it to school with written permission for your child to take it. The medication has to be in the original prescription container. The medication will be kept in the nurse's clinic. Aspirin, ointment, or salves are administered only with written permission from parents. The Cook County School System has a school nurse located at CES.

Moment of Reflection

In compliance with Georgia Law, at the opening of school every day, the entire school will conduct a brief period of quiet reflection for 60 seconds. This is not intended to be a religious service or exercise but shall be considered as an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day. This will be done over the intercom along with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Balloons and Flowers

Students who receive balloons and flowers at school for special occasions must make arrangements for their parents to pick them up after school. This pertains to bus students only.

Internet use While at School

The Cook County Board of Education working with the Cook County Schools Administration has provided internet access for all students in the school system. The use of the internet connects teachers, staff and students to each other and to people and materials worldwide. It is the policy of the Board to support resources that enhance learning; however, the Board will not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through the internet.

At Cook Elementary School, the privilege of use of the internet is provided under the direct supervision of the teachers. Students' access without supervision is not allowed. A student's misuse or abuse of this privilege will result in two days in ISS under the Code of Conduct as stated in the CES Agenda and/or loss of the privilege to be determined by the CES Administration.

As a parent you have the right to participate in the decision whether to allow your student this supervised access to the internet. You should review this privilege and its accompanying responsibilities with your student. If you do not give permission, please sign on the appropriate line on the letter that must be returned.

Bus Rider's Safety Management Plan

Dear Parent:

The CCSD provides transportation to and from school as a courtesy for eligible students residing in the district. The State of Georgia prescribes the conditions governing school bus operations and funds the service by allowing the District a given amount for eligible students transported.

Eligible students are defined by State statute as those residing in the District at least two miles from the school they should attend, as measured by the nearest practical route. The nearest practical route is the nearest traveled public road which may or may not be the road used by the school bus. However, in Cook County, we transport all students regardless of the distance that they may live from the school. Address eligibility is continually audited year round so that we may determine whether a student is riding the proper bus. CCSD does not run buses on private roads.

In order to meet the conditions outlined by the State and provide safe, prompt movement of students, the School district has adopted standard regulations and procedures and has provided restrictive measures for violations of the rules. For your information, these guidelines and regulations are outlined in this handbook.

The School District is pleased to provide transportation for its eligible students and solicits your assistance in helping create a safe and healthy operation. You may do so by reading this handbook and acknowledge receipt by completing a consent form provided by the bus driver and return this form within three days to the bus driver. We ask your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior for those who ride buses.

If you need information concerning bus routes, call the Transportation office.

Thank You

Bus Safety Information

Parents or guardians are responsible for the safety, conduct, and timely arrival of their children to, from, and at the designated school bus stop before the arrival of the school bus for pick-up and transport to school and the timely departure of the child after the school bus leaves the designated school bus stop after transporting the children from school.

School bus transportation plays a critical role in the education of our nation's students and is the direct link between a neighborhood and the classroom. More than 25 million children ride the yellow bus every school day. Here are tips to keep our children safe at the bus stop from the National Association for Pupil Transportation.

Getting Ready for School

Have your children put everything they carry in a backpack or school bag so that they won't drop things along the way.

- Encourage them to wear bright, contrasting colors so they will be more easily seen by drivers.
- Make sure children leave home on time so they can arrive at the bus stop before it is due, ideally at least five minutes early. Running after or in front of a bus is dangerous.

Walking to the Bus Stop

Walk young children to the bus stop or encourage children to walk in groups. There is safety in numbers; groups are easier for drivers to see.

- Practice good pedestrian behavior: walk on the sidewalk, and if there is no sidewalk stay out of the street. If you must walk in the street, walk single file, face traffic and stay as close to the edge of the road as you can.
- Stop and look left, right and then left again if you must cross the street. Do the same thing at drive -ways and alleys. Exaggerate your head turns and narrate your actions so your child knows you are looking left, right and left.

At the Bus Stop

- Have children wait in a location where the driver can see them while driving down the street. Try to avoid waiting in a house or car.
- Do not let children play in the street. Playing with balls or other toys that could roll into the street is also dangerous.

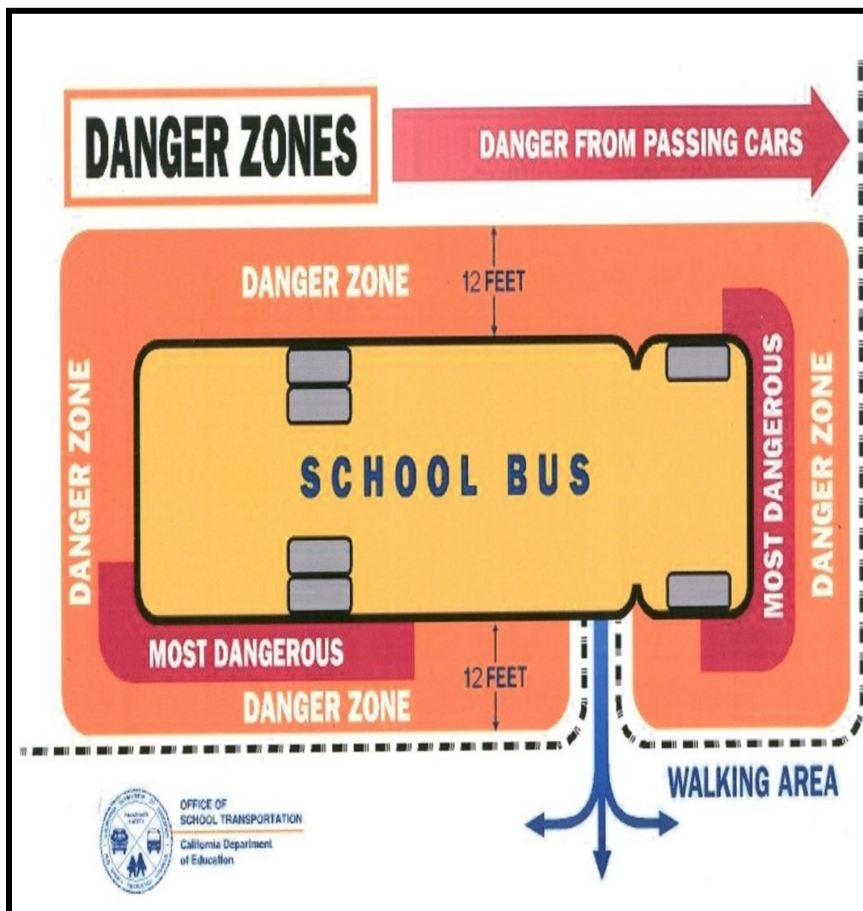
Getting On and Off the Bus

- Warn children that if they drop something getting on and off the bus, they should never pick it up. Instead, they should tell the driver and follow the driver's instructions.
- Remind children to look to the right before they step off the bus.
- If you meet your child at the bus stop after school, wait on the side where the child will be dropped off, not across the street. Children can be so excited to see you after school that they dash across the street and forget the safety rules.

Mobile Devices

Cell phones and other electronic devices can be permitted on the school bus as long as:

- The Bus driver has given permission to use electronic devices on the bus.
- They are in backpacks or other holders, keeping hands free to use handrails while boarding and departing the bus.
- Sound is muted or headphones, earbuds, or similar devices are used.
- Content does not violate the law or school district policy and procedures.
- Students cannot communicate with others or use the video feature on cellphones while on the bus.
- Use of the device does not create a distraction for the driver.



Please take time to familiarize yourself with the areas around the bus. Also, take time to explain to your child(ren) the areas that present a safety hazard to them as they are loading and unloading the bus.

School Buses are Like Traffic Signals



School Bus Expectations

School Bus Expectations			
	Loading	Riding	Unloading
Be Safe	• Walk • Wait for the door to open • Use the handrail • One stair at a time	• Stay seated • Keep aisle clear • No eating or drinking • Face forward	• Stay seated until the door opens • Unload single file • One stair at a time • Walk at least 12 feet from the bus
Be Responsible	• Be on time • Be in line • Be ready • Find your seat	• Back pack in your lap • Stay seated • Pay attention • Use cell phone and other devices properly	• Get off at your assigned stop • Be ready • Leave a clean seat
Be Respectful	• Use good manners • Indoor voices • Be respectful of others	• Follow the driver's instructions • Silent cell phones • Use indoor voices • Treat others kindly	• Listen to the adults • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Exit Quietly

1. Obey bus driver instructions at all times
2. Remain seated, facing forward
3. Be respectful by keeping hands to self and using appropriate language
4. Do not throw items inside the bus or out of the window
5. Keep all noise levels low, including voices, cell phones, or anything the bus driver indicates is too loud or distracting
6. Bus drivers have the right to assign seats to students.
7. Obey bus driver's rules that may be posted on the bus.

Driver will enforce disciplinary rules for SAFETY, RESPECT, and RESPONSIBILITY

PARENTS & STUDENTS: Remember these important safety policies:

- A. Cell phones, audio, video recording, or any other items determined by the driver to cause disruptive or unsafe conditions may not be transported. Students are responsible for any and all electronics brought onto the bus.
- B. Please note - the bus driver will give your child(ren) a Consent Form/Receipt of Handbook form that must be completed, signed and returned to the bus driver within 3 days.

- C. Students must depart the bus at their designated bus stop except when the student has a signed bus stop assignment form from the parent/guardian, approved through the school office, giving permission to get off at another stop. No more than two bus stops may be authorized for each student.
- D. Students are responsible to use seatbelts when provided.
- E. Parents or guardians are responsible for the safety, conduct, and timely arrival of their children to, from, and at the designated school bus stop before the arrival of the school bus for pick up.
- F. Students, parents, or guardians shall arrive at least 10 minutes prior to pick-up or drop off scheduled bus stop times.
- G. PreK students may not be left unattended or released without an authorized adult at a bus stop. By registering students for home-to-school transportation, parents acknowledge all other grades have the ability to get themselves home.
- H. Parents may be financially responsible for any damage done by their student.
- I. Prohibited Items: Live animals, weapons, skateboards, scooters, bikes, balloons, glass containers. Large products should be transported by parent/guardian.

School Bus Discipline Procedures

COOK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION

The Cook County District Transportation system exists to provide safe and efficient transportation to and from each child's educational learning environment. Students who have the opportunity to ride district school buses may do so as long as they display behavior that is reasonable and safe. Choosing to engage in unacceptable behavior will result in loss of bus service. As per Georgia law "Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right."

- Every time a student violates a bus rule raises the chance a driver is distracted.
- Therefore, every time a student violates a bus rule directly raises the chance of a bus being in an accident.

The responsibility for student supervision by the District shall begin when the lights are activated on the bus in the morning and is retained until the child leaves the bus at the end of the day; or until released to the parent/guardian in a manner consistent with guidelines on release of students. Drivers are responsible for student conduct on their bus.

The Student Transportation Code of Conduct, as well as, each school Student Code of Conduct is in effect on the bus and at bus stops. When necessary, the Transportation Supervisor will conduct a preliminary investigation for violations of these rules that have occurred on the school bus or at bus stops. All student codes of conduct are in accordance with the Cook County School District Board Policy JICDA-R Code of Conduct.

The following information is a guideline for disciplinary actions when rules are violated. These

guidelines are subject to change depending upon the severity of the student's actions. The transportation administrator and Student Services Director will review as required disciplinary consequences so it's effective and fair to all stakeholders to ensure a safe, orderly, and effective bus environment. Any violation of District school bus policy could be recommended for an expulsion hearing or could be removed from all Cook County public school buses for the remainder of the school year.

Prohibited Items

- Tobacco
- Live animals or insects
- Glass containers
- Alcoholic beverages
- Weapons, explosive devices, harmful drugs or chemicals
- Objects that do not fit in the student's lap or on the floor between the knees without extending above chin level.
- Matches or cigarette lighters
- Food or drinks (eating or drinking on the bus is not permitted.)
- All electronic equipment including cell phones must be turned off
- Any balls not in backpacks (footballs, soccer, basketballs, tennis, etc.)
- Backpacks with wheels and handles
- Aerosol sprays of any kind
- Cosmetics out on the bus (perfume, lipstick, fingernail polish, etc.)

Bus Discipline

Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will apply to all routes. Decisions regarding a student's ability to ride the bus in connection with co-curricular and extra-curricular events (i.e., field trips or competitions) will be the sole discretion of the school district. Parents or guardians will be notified of any suspension of bus privileges.

Special Ed. students will receive discipline in conjunction with the student's I.E.P.

Based on the severity of a student's conduct, more serious consequences may be imposed at any time. Depending on the nature of the offense, consequences such as suspension or expulsion from school may also result from school bus/bus stop misconduct.

Records of school bus/bus stop misconduct will be forwarded to the individual school building and will be retained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of serious misconduct will be provided to the School SRO and Student Services. Records may also be maintained in the transportation office.

Students damaging school buses will be responsible for the damage. Failure to pay such damages/ restitution (or make arrangements to pay) within two weeks will result in the loss of bus privileges until damages are paid.

In cases involving criminal conduct (i.e., assault, weapons, possession or vandalism), the transportation office will press charges on the student involved and will inform the Superintendent, local law enforcement officials and the Director, Student Services

Except as otherwise set forth herein, the general progressive discipline plan for bus misbehavior is as follows:

1st Violation: A documented warning from the Principal or Designee. Parent contacted and documented. Disciplinary action will be at the principal's discretion based on the severity of the rules infraction.

2nd Violation: Bus suspension for PK – 3 and Elementary three (3) days, Middle School three (3) days. High School three (3) days

3th Violation: Bus suspension for PK – 3 and Elementary five (5) days, Middle School five (5) days. High School five (5) days

4th Violation: Bus suspension for PK – 3 and Elementary seven (7) day, Middle School seven (7) days. High School seven (7) days

5th Violation: Bus suspension for PK – 3 and Elementary ten (10) days, Middle School ten (10) days. High School ten (10) days

6th Violation: Bus suspension for Primary, Elementary, Middle, and High School students, A disciplinary hearing will be called. Students are prohibited from riding the bus pending their disciplinary hearing.

Once students have reached the cumulative number of referrals based on grade level he/she will automatically be suspended from bus school, pending hearing with the District Hearing Officer.

During the period of bus suspension, parents/guardians will be responsible for providing the student's transportation to/from school. Bus suspension is not an excused absence or tardy. If a student causes damage to a school bus, parents/ guardians will be required to repay the cost of any damage to the bus. At the discretion of the principal, parents/guardians may be asked to meet with school officials to develop a school bus behavior contract for the student.

Minor Infractions

Level 1: Disruptive Conduct

Disruptive conduct includes any activity in which a student engages in behavior that tends to impede the orderly operation of, or, disturbs school bus operating procedures or activities.

Acts of disruptive conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Delaying the operation of the school bus
- Lying to the driver or aide/monitor
- Using profanity among other students
- Failing to carry out directions issued by a staff person with supervisory responsibility
- Getting on or off the bus at an unauthorized stop without driver or aide/monitor permission
- Eating or drinking on the bus without driver or aide/monitor permission
- Standing or sitting improperly while the bus is moving
- Pushing, tripping, engaging in general horseplay
- Encouraging others to misbehave
- Littering
- Not sitting in an assigned seat on the bus
- Violating other non-safety-related procedures

During the period of bus suspension, parents/guardians will be responsible for providing the student's transportation to/from school. Bus suspension is not an excused absence or tardy. If a student causes damage to a school bus, parents/ guardians will be required to repay the cost of any damage to the bus. At the discretion of the principal, parents/guardians may be asked to meet with school officials to develop a school bus behavior contract for the student.

Major Infractions

Level 2: Disorderly Conduct

Disorderly conduct includes those activities in which students engage that are directed against persons or property and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of themselves or others. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both administrative sanctions and court proceedings

Acts of disorderly conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Fighting (physical contact) * Automatic Removal*
- Stealing (under 50) student will be responsible for restoring the property
- Making threats against others;
- Defacing property (damage 50-100 dollars student will be responsible for restoring the property before they can ride bus)
- Spitting, harassing, threatening, intimidating, or physically abusing or hitting anyone • Using profanity, abusive language, and/or obscene gestures directed at school official (Min 5 Days

- off bus)
- Acting in a manner that interferes with the safe operation of the school bus
- Refusing to obey school personnel or agents (such as volunteer aides or chaperons) whose responsibilities include the supervision of students (Min 5 Days off bus)
- Occupying or blocking the school bus in any way with the intent to deprive others of its use;
- Operating an electronic devices radio or other audio device, a video, or other such devices that jeopardies the safety of others
- Tobacco /Vapors Pipes/ Electronic Cigarettes (Follow vaping Policy)
- Verbal sexual harassment * Administrative referral*
- Acting in any other manner that interferes with the safe delivery of student transportation services. (Min 5 Days off bus)
- Blatant refusal to obey a reasonable request of school administrator/ transportation administrator consequence as appropriate by administrator (Min 5 Days off bus)

Fighting on a bus is among the most serious offenses committed by students, as it endangers everyone riding the bus by causing the driver's attention to be diverted. Fighting on a school bus may result in immediate suspension from the bus and/or school with no prior warning or progressive disciplinary action being taken.

During the period of bus suspension, parents/guardians will be responsible for providing the student's transportation to/from school. Bus suspension is not an excused absence or tardy. If a student causes damage to a school bus, parents/ guardians will be required to repay the cost of any damage to the bus. At the discretion of the principal, parents/guardians may be asked to meet with school officials to develop a school bus behavior contract for the student.

Major Infractions

Level 3: Criminal Conduct (along with school discipline plan)

Criminal conduct includes those activities in which students engage that result in violence to themselves or to another's person or property or that pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of themselves or others in or around the school bus and at the school bus stop while the bus is present. These activities usually require administrative actions that result not only in the immediate permanent removal of the student from the school bus and the school but also in the intervention of law enforcement authorities and/or in action by the board.

Acts of criminal conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assault or battery
- Extortion
- A bomb threat or other threat that directly endangers the safety of a person or the school bus
- The possession, use, or transfer of a weapon
- Sexual offenses physical (school SRO will be notified)
- The defacement or vandalism of property that results damages over \$100 (student will be responsible for restoring the property)
- The theft, possession, or sale of stolen property (over \$50 student will be responsible for restoring the property)
- Arson or the threat of arson

- Threat to the bus driver, aide/monitor, a teacher, principal, or the district's designee.
- Furnishing, selling, or possessing controlled substances unauthorized substances, as defined by board policy (drugs, narcotics, or poison, prescriptions)
- Violation of the District Drug Policy. (Suspension or expulsion from school and bus)

The Board adopts the stipulations of the Drug Act passed by the Georgia Legislature. This act states that it is unlawful for any person to knowingly or intentionally possess a controlled substance (depressant, stimulant, counterfeit or illegal drug). Any students who violate this act are subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school and prosecution by law enforcement officers.

Students are not allowed to knowingly possess, use, transmit, or to be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, nor to knowingly possess, use or transmit paraphernalia related to the illegal use of drugs: on the school grounds during and immediately after school hours; on the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school group; OR, off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event. Drug Paraphernalia: Possession is construed to mean on the person himself, in his locker, books, desk, book bag, or any other student property, which at the time is or was on school property. "Paraphernalia" means any instrument,

Consequences for level three Violation will result in automatic suspension from bus school and will result in referral to the District Hearing Office.

Promotion Standards and Criteria

The following data and criteria will be considered when determining if your child is promoted or retained

Promotion Criteria		
Third Grade Promotion Criteria	Fourth Grade Promotion Criteria	Fifth Grade Promotion Criteria
Georgia Milestones Achieve a level 2, 3, or 4 on the Language Arts and Math sections. Lexile 520L-820L Report Card Yearly average of 70% or higher in Reading/Language Arts (ELA), Math, Science, and Social Studies. Classroom Performance	Georgia Milestones Achieve a level 2, 3, or 4 on the Language Arts and Math sections. Lexile 740L-940L Report Card Yearly average of 70% or higher in Reading/Language Arts (ELA), Math, Science, and Social Studies. Classroom Performance	Georgia Milestones Achieve a level 2, 3, or 4 on the Language Arts and Math sections. Lexile 830L-1010L Report Card Yearly average of 70% or higher in Reading/Language Arts (ELA), Math, Science, and Social Studies. Classroom Performance

Georgia Milestones and Promotion, Placement, and Retention Law
The Georgia Promotion, Placement, and Retention law (O.C.G.A., Section 20-2-282 through 20-2-285) and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11 mandate the following:
- All third-grade students must achieve grade level scores on the state-adopted assessment in Reading to be promoted. - All fifth-grade students must have achieved grade level scores in Reading and Mathematics on the state-adopted assessment to be promoted.

Georgia Milestones Testing

Georgia Milestones Testing

The Georgia Milestones Assessments System (Georgia Milestones) is a comprehensive summary assessment program spanning grades 3 through high school. Georgia Milestones measure how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards in Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. Students in grades 3 through 5 will take end-of-grade assessments in Language Arts and Math. The content areas of Science and Social Studies will be assessed in grade 5. State law mandates all third, fourth and fifth grade students achieve a passing score on the Language Arts and Math Sections. The testing schedule will be sent home.

Georgia Milestones Testing Dates

Georgia Milestones Testing

Georgia Milestones Testing	
Testing Window	April 5, 2026 through May 14, 2027
	*Exact testing dates will be shared at a later date

Seclusion or Restraint of Students

Seclusion or Restraint of Students

Cook County Schools shall require that all schools and programs within the district comply with State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.35 concerning "seclusion" and "restraint," as those terms are defined within the rule.

Rationale:

Cook County Schools is committed to the mission of providing a safe learning environment for all students. However, it may be necessary at some times to utilize physical restraint of a student in situations of immediate danger. This policy provides the requirements regarding the use of physical restraint of students.

Definition:

Physical restraint is direct physical contact from an adult that prevents or significantly reduces a student's movement.

Physical restraint does not include providing limited physical contact and/or redirection to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing guidance to a location, or providing comfort.

Use:

Physical restraint of a student may be used only in those situations in which a student is an immediate danger to self or others and is not responsive to less intensive behavioral interventions including verbal directives or other de-escalation techniques.

Physical restraint will be terminated when the student is no longer an immediate danger to self or others or if the student is observed to be in severe distress.

Requirements:

The designated staff members must be trained in the use of physical restraint utilizing a common restraint curriculum selected for Cook County Schools. The curriculum will include information about positive techniques, prevention strategies and de-escalation strategies as well as restraint techniques. Staff members will not participate in a restraint prior to being trained in the restraint curriculum and in this policy.

Parents will be provided information about the program's policy governing the use of physical restraint.

Parents will be notified in writing within one school day when physical restraint is

used with their student.

Each use of restraint will be documented by staff participating in or supervising the restraint using the Cook County Schools incident report form.

A log of the use of physical restraint will be maintained by each school site administrator and will be submitted regularly to the special education director.

Incident reports will be reviewed by Cook County leadership staff or restraint curriculum trainers on a minimum of a monthly basis.

Reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that incidents of physical restraint are observed by another staff member who is trained in the restraint curriculum.

Documentation of training in the restraint curriculum will be maintained by each school site principal and submitted to the special education director at the completion of each training activity. No Cook County staff member shall participate in the restraint of a student without being trained according to Cook County's chosen restraint curriculum.

Students in immediate danger to himself/herself or others will be moved if possible by the team to a supervised area until behavior is no longer a threat to himself/herself or others.

Prohibited Actions:

The use of prone restraint, mechanical restraint and chemical restraint is prohibited.

The use of seclusion is prohibited. Seclusion is a procedure that isolates and confines the student in a separate area until he or she is no longer an immediate danger to himself/herself or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a form of discipline or punishment, when the student cannot be safely restrained, or when the use would be contraindicated due to the student's psychiatric, medical, or physical conditions as described in the student's educational records

Weapons

It is the policy of the Cook County Board of Education that a student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

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

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

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

Reporting Requirements All employees must report violations of this policy to the principal or assistant principal of the school. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that a report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the appropriate law enforcement authority (School Resource Officer).

The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any activity involving weapons.

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

504 Plan Information

Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your local system's Section 504 Coordinator at the following address: Cook County Schools, 1109 N. Parrish Ave Adel, Ga 31620.

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

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive

environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.

10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time; file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Section 504 Procedural Safeguards

Overview

Any student or parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system's Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.

Hearing Request

The Request for the Hearing must include the following:

- a. The name of the student.
- b. The address of the residence of the student.
- c. The name of the school the student is attending.
- d. The decision that is the subject of the hearing.
- e. The requested reasons for review.
- f. The proposed remedy sought by the grievant.
- g. The name and contact information of the grievant.

Within 10 business days from receiving the grievant's Request for Hearing, the Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place

for a hearing. If the written Request for Hearing does not contain the necessary information noted above, the Section 504 Coordinator will inform the grievant of the specific information needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will be stayed until the Request for Hearing contains the necessary information noted above.

Mediation

The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues detailed by the grievant in his or her Request for Hearing. Mediation is voluntary and both the grievant and school system must agree to participate. The grievant may terminate the mediation at any time. If the mediation is terminated without an agreement, the school system will follow the procedures for conducting an impartial hearing without an additional Request for Hearing.

Parent Involvement at CES

Parent Involvement Policy

Cook Elementary School affirms and assures the rights of parents and teachers of children being served in activities funded by Title I, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and the Parent Involvement Policy of Cook County. Parents are given opportunities to participate in the design and implementation of these activities. All parents and teachers of eligible Title I children will be invited to an Annual Public Meeting. The annual public meeting will provide an opportunity for those parents and teachers to have input into the design and implementation of the Title I Project and provide parents an opportunity to establish mechanisms for maintaining on-going communications among parents, teachers, and agency officials. Additional activities held periodically during the school year may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Notify parents if the school has been identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The notification must include the following elements:
 - An explanation of what identification means, and how the school compares to other schools of the same size;
 - The reason for the identification;
 - What the Cook County Board of Education and Georgia State Department of education is doing to help the school address the problem of low achievement;
 - The parent's options regarding their right to seek a transfer of their children or to seek supplemental educational services.
2. Report Cards and Progress Reports – Report cards are issued every eight weeks. Progress Reports will be issued four weeks into the eight weeks. The dates these reports are sent home are listed in the Student Handbook.
3. Parent Conferences are held every eight weeks for the students who are not passing the criteria.
4. Parents Teacher Organization meetings – We will have at least two per year. An explanation of The Georgia Standards of Excellence and the Georgia Milestones will be provided.
5. School Council Meetings – Four meetings are held per year. These meetings are open to the public so that parents and community members may come together with teachers and administrators to reach a better understanding of what is needed for school improvement.

6. Mentoring Program – This program features parents and community members coming into the school to mentor students who are at risk.
7. Cook Elementary School Website – This web site enables parents to access their students' grades, special activities, and teachers' email addresses.

PACES Program

Program to Accelerate, Challenge, and Enrich Students

Gifted Education Cook County Schools

Definition

The definition of a student eligible for a gifted education Services in Georgia may be found in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated. This section defines services for students as intellectually gifted. The definition is expanded in Georgia Board of Education Rules 160-4-2-.08 Gifted Education and 160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students. The latter states in section (2) definitions, (a) Gifted Student: "...a student who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual, creative and/or artistic ability(ies), possesses exceptional leadership skills, or excels in specific academic fields and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities."

Referral Procedures

Student referrals shall be non-discriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or economic background. Students may be referred in the following ways:

1. Automatic Referral: Any student who scores 90% on state adopted norm referenced test on any total reading, total math, or total battery shall be referred for further testing. Reasonable consideration shall be applied to this referral procedure concerning the number of times a given student should be referred after mental ability testing indicates he/she is not qualified. Factors to be considered include difference between obtained score and required score; possibility of detriment to the student's self-esteem; and social or developmental factors that indicate the need for additional testing.
2. A teacher or any responsible person who has knowledge of the student's intellectual functioning may also refer a student for testing. This may include teachers, parents, self or peers.
3. Re-evaluation of Ineligible Students: Unless there is compelling evidence that a child's performance level has changed, a two year waiting period is recommended.

Wellness Plan

The Cook County Board of Education (CCBOE) will be taking the lead in limiting student access to unhealthy snacks and beverages as part of our CCBOE Initiative for Healthy Children. The Beverage Companies will begin restocking all our beverage machines on all campuses with healthier drinks, including water, sports drinks, etc. and juices with a minimum of 10% juice. Currently, no beverage machines are accessible to elementary students.

This CCBOE initiative meets the requirements of the new state regulations for food made available to children in our schools. We share in the community's concern about nutrition, unhealthy eating habits, and childhood obesity. While the schools are not totally responsible for what children eat, we can do our part to point them in much healthier directions that will benefit them throughout their lives.

We are requiring all campuses to eliminate unhealthy foods – which the United States Department of Agriculture calls “food of minimal nutritional value (FMNV).” Campuses not in compliance with state regulations will be subject to severe state penalties, including reimbursement for food service accounts.

Even though our elementary school students do not have access to these foods through vending machines, we want to make sure that teachers are mindful not to distribute these unhealthy foods to students as rewards and that the cafeteria does not sell them as extra snacks. It is important that your Parent Teacher Organizations and other school organizations know that students are not to receive these foods during the school day or on field trips.

We will eliminate carbonated drinks, sugary candies, high-fat candy bars, chewing gum, and other non-nutritional food items. We will promote bottled water, milk, fruit juices, sport drinks, pretzels, nutritional granola bars, light popcorn, and additional healthy choices.

All students will benefit through this important change in their lifestyles. These healthy food choices will promote a calmer, more productive classroom environment.

The policy (EEE) may be found in its entirety through the Cook County School Website at www.cook.k12.ga.us. “This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

Cook County Schools Board Policy Manual is available through the Cook County Website at: www.cook.k12.ga.us. Please view the above mentioned policies in their entirety.

FERPA Regulations

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

These rights are:

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

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. [Optional] Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-8520 [NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

The School District has designated the following information as directory information

- (a) Student's name, address, & telephone number;
- (b) Student's date and place of birth;
- (c) Student's e-mail address;
- (d) Student's participation in official school activities and sports;
- (e) Weight and height of members of an athletic team;
- (f) Dates of attendance at schools within the district;
- (g) Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in district schools;
- (h) Photograph; and
- (i) Grade level.

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. In addition, two federal laws require school districts receiving federal financial assistance to provide military recruiters, upon request, with students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers unless parents have advised the school district that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. You have the right to refuse to allow all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to refuse to allow it to be disclosed to the public upon request without your prior written consent. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the principal of the school at which the student is enrolled in writing within 10 business days after officially enrolling in school or within 10 business days of the date of the release of this notice.

- (5) You are also notified that from time to time students may be photographed, videoed, or interviewed by the news media at school or at some school activity or event. The principal will take reasonable steps to control access to students by the media or other individuals not affiliated with the school or district. However, your submission of a written objection does not constitute a guarantee that your student will not be photographed, videoed, or interviewed, or that such information will not be posted on websites or social media sites not affiliated with the school or district, or in circumstances which are not within the knowledge or control of the principal.
- (6) You have the right to file with the U. S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

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

- (7) The Georgia Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act affords parents and eligible students the right to file a complaint with the school district regarding a possible violation of rights under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-667 or under other federal or state student data privacy and security laws. Such complaints may be filed with:

Superintendent of Cook County Schools
1109 N. Parrish Ave.
Adel, GA 31620

Non-Discrimination Statement

It is the policy of Cook County Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, color, disability, religion or national origin in any program or activity, employment, admission, service, treatment, admissions to facilities or access to any program or activity operated by the Board or in the employment practices of the Board. It is the express policy of the Board to comply with all appropriate laws and regulations relating to discrimination now in effect or hereafter enacted including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 and all accompanying regulations.

Title IX Information

The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education program and activities, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"). Such a requirement to not discriminate extends to admission and employment.

Effective August 14, 2020, pursuant to federal regulations implementing Title IX published in 2020 scheduled to become effective on August 14, 2020, any complaint involving "sexual harassment" as defined by those federal regulations that occurs in a District education program or activity against a person in the United States shall be addressed pursuant to the District Title IX Grievance Procedure. Should such federal regulations not be implemented for any reason, all such complaints involving a student complainant shall continue to be addressed in the appropriate District policy.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be directed to the Assistant Secretary of the Office for Civil Rights, United States Department of Education, or to the following:

Henry Acree, Title IX Coordinator for Student Matters

Director of Student Services

1109 North Parrish Ave

Adel, GA 31620

Phone: 229-896-2294

henryacree@cook.k12.ga.us

Title IX Grievance Process

Equitable Complaint Processes: Under Title IX, both the accuser and accused have equal rights, such as the right to:

Have an adviser of choice present during the process (this includes an attorney if allowed at all by schools)

Present evidence or have witnesses speak on their behalf

Have timely access to information that will be used at the hearing

Be present at pre-hearing meetings that provide an opportunity to present their testimony

Receive the final hearing decision in writing at the same time as the other party without being required to sign a non-disclosure agreement

Have the right to appeal a final decision (The 2017 Interim Guidance states that a school may choose to allow appeals solely by the responding party or by both parties.

Title IX Forms:

Complaint Form: For employees or students to begin a Title IX sexual harassment complaint.

Appeal Form: After a decision or dismissal of Title IX sexual complaint is issued, either party may appeal using this form.

Informal Resolution Permission Form

Title IX Training Materials

Training for Non-Administrators

Training for Administrators

Training for Title IX Coordinators

Training for Investigators

Training for Decision Makers

MTSS

Overview and Introduction

This manual was compiled to guide teachers, administrators, and parents through the process of applying the federal mandate of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). MTSS is a “tiered system of support that integrates assessment and intervention within a school-wide, multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavioral problems. MTSS promotes systems alignment to increase efficiency and effectiveness of resources. A Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a data-driven prevention framework that uses Assessment (Screening and Progress Monitoring) to identify and predict students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes or who experience social/emotional needs, and/or behavioral concerns that impact learning.

In Cook County, all students participate in standards based learning. Students requiring interventions to meet individual learning expectations will receive support through a systematic and purposeful process. The number of students requiring interventions will decrease as the level of intensity of the intervention increases.

In this manual, you will find the Cook County Multi-Tiered System of Supports, steps to implement the process and forms that should be used at each tier for documentation and interventions.

To keep appropriate faculty and staff abreast of the MTSS process and any updates, bi-annual training will be conducted. In addition, building level MTSS coordinators will report to the District MTSS Director the need for any technical assistance to support compliant practices. If the proper procedures are not followed, administration will be informed and a Professional Development Plan may be put into place. In order to determine what interventions are appropriate for each school the District MTSS Director, Interventionists, and Administrators at each school collaborate to identify all interventions.

MTSS Vocabulary

- **Benchmarks**-Data points that show where students are performing.
- **Progress Monitoring**-Monitoring a child’s progress and recording data that reflects progress over a period of time.
- **Probes/CBM/Curriculum Based Monitoring**-Quick assessments administered to show where a student is performing and how he/she is progressing.
- **Intervention**-Instruction/Program that is in addition to and different from what the student would normally receive.
- **Differentiation**- Planning instruction to meet the needs of learners who are performing at various levels.
- **Fidelity**-Instruction, interventions, and strategies performed as they were intended (standards based classroom, scripted interventions).

Review of the Tier System

- Tier I: Primary Level of Prevention-Instruction/Core Curriculum (80% of students)

- Tier II: Secondary Level of Prevention-Intervention (15 % of students)
- Tier III: Tertiary Level of Prevention-Intensive Intervention (3-5% of students)

Tier I

Tier I includes ALL students. Tier I instruction is effective, explicitly taught standards based instruction. Differentiated instruction is essential. All students participate in universal screenings at least 3 times per year. Interventions implemented through Tier I are appropriate for all students within the class.

Tier I Team

Standing: Administrator

Required: Grade level teachers

Tier I Process

- Prior to the start of school, "at risk" students are identified using the following:
 - Georgia Milestones Beginner or Developing Learner (EOC & EOG)
 - Entrance Rubric
 - Lexile Scores
 - Exact Path Diagnostics
- Universal screening for Reading and Math will be used in all grades 3 times per year. Team meetings will be held and screening data will be used to determine which students, by class, have not achieved the benchmark skills required for the specific grade and time of year.
- For behavior, school wide discipline data will be reviewed at least 3 times during the year.
- Teachers implement universal research-based strategies/interventions for nine weeks
- The teacher monitors the targeted students' progress and compares individual progress to the class average. If the student is not progressing, the teacher should document Tier I research based strategies and recommend during a regular team meeting that the student move to Tier II.
- If a teacher suspects a student has a vision or hearing concern, this issue should be ruled out through a vision and hearing screening before moving to the next tier.

Tier I Key points

- Interventions are provided solely by the classroom teacher/paraprofessional.
- Student performance is monitored for 1 full grading period.
- Only when the teacher has data to show that they have not been successful with an individual student through class-wide strategies and differentiation should he/she proceed with a recommendation for Tier II.
- Team meetings should be held at minimum one time per grading period in order to review data.
- Problem areas in which less than 80% of the students in the class met the standard should be considered a delivery of instruction problem and not a student problem.
- In most cases, a minimum of two follow-up meetings with required documentation are needed before considering moving to the next Tier.

It is important to remember that even though instruction and interventions are universal and appropriate for all students at Tier I, it is still imperative that the teacher identify "at-risk" students based on universal screenings, document research-based strategies in the lesson plan, and monitor the "at-risk" students' progress in Tier I, so that in the event that the student does need to progress to Tier II, there is documentation of Tier I instruction/interventions for those students.

Tier II

The purpose of Tier II is to support individual students in the general education classroom who have not met benchmarks through the whole class model of Tier I. Tier II targets students who exhibit significant deviation from their grade-level peers in academic or behavioral issues and who are learning at a slower rate and falling behind.

Tier II Team

Standing: Administration/Academic Instructional Supervisors, Referring Teacher

Required: Grade Level Teacher, MTSS team chair

Optional: Nurse, ESOL Teacher, Early Intervention Program Teacher, School Psychologist, School Level MTSS representative, Counselor, other appropriate personnel

Strongly Encouraged: Parent/Guardian

Tier II Progression Requirements

- There must be a severe discrepancy between the child's present performances relative to the class.
- The child's rate of progress must be severely below that of classroom peers.
- The teacher must have implemented Tier I research-based strategies with fidelity.
- These must be documented and supported by data. (Appendices B, D, and F2)
- In most cases, a minimum of 4-6 data points demonstrating lack of progress in the area of deficit are required before moving to the next Tier.
- For EL-Y students, a WAPT and at least 1 ACCESS or ELLIS scores are required before moving to the next Tier.

Tier II Process

- The grade level/subject area team, during regular meetings, will identify students who would benefit from Tier II small group instruction. This decision will be based on classroom performance, lack of progress at Tier I and student performance. The team will complete a Tier 2 Referral form. (See Appendix D1)
- Students receive additional instruction through differentiated instruction, scaffolding, or flexible groups for a minimum of two times per week. (See Appendices A1-A-4 for examples of Tier II instruction and Appendices D2-D5 and F2 for progress monitoring forms).
- For students with behavior concerns, a functional behavior assessment could be completed. (See Appendices B1 & B2)
- In most cases, tier II students will be progress monitored for academics a minimum of every 2 weeks per grading period.
- For behavior concerns, weekly behavior trackers will be utilized for progress monitoring with formal observations conducted every 2 weeks. (See Appendices B1& B2)
- If after a minimum of 4-6 data points of progress monitoring data; regression or no progress is indicated, the MTSS school level team should meet to determine if more intensity in delivery, time, or instruction is required, or if a different strategy should be implemented. At least 2 different strategies should be used before student is moved to Tier III. (See Appendices D2-D5 for minutes sheet and other documentation forms)
- If after 2 separate Tier II interventions the student continues to struggle, Tier III support may be required.
- The team will set up a meeting to determine if Tier III is necessary. **A parent/Guardian and the school psychologist must be invited to this meeting.** (See Appendix E1 appropriate forms)

Tier II Key Points

- Homogeneity and flexibility to move from one group to another is crucial.

- It is recommended that Tier II intervention initiatives be standard intervention protocols available across the school. (See Appendices A1-A4)
- Additional instruction is provided to same-ability small groups of students **IN ADDITION** to core instruction and Tier I strategies.
- Functional behavior assessments could be completed for each change in strategy for students with behavior concerns. (See Appendices B1 & B2)

Remember: Tier II is flexible and fluid. Students can and will move into and out of Tiers I and II.

A Note on EL-M Students

The student should be considered an EL-M for the two calendar year requirement. Remember that during the monitoring period if the student is struggling, then other appropriate instructional supports, including MTSS, should be implemented. If those additional instructional supports do not resolve the issue, the MTSS committee should review the documentation and if appropriate, implement more intensive, Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Following a documented period of Tier 3 MTSS support, if the issues continue and data support the belief that language proficiency is the root of the problem, the MTSS committee may determine that the student should be re-entered into the ESOL program. No re-screening is necessary to do so during the monitoring period.

Tier III

Tier III is designed for students with low-content area skills and/or a sustained lack of adequate progress when provided with primary and secondary interventions. Interventions are intensive and targeted to specific deficiency areas. If students are not making the expected levels of progress in Tier II, they are referred to the school's Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) which comprises Tier III. Prevention through intervention is stressed in all tiers. MTSS is a problem-solving process in every Georgia school. Its purpose is to find ways around roadblocks to success for any student referred to it. Alternative strategies for increasing the student's academic, social, and behavioral performance are identified, reviewed, and implemented. Interventions should remain in place during the referral and evaluation process while data continues to be collected.

Tier III Team

Standing: Administration/Academic Instructional Supervisors, Referring Teacher

Required: **Parent/Guardian**, Grade level teacher, School level MTSS representative, School Psychologist and/or Speech Pathologist, Early Intervention Program Teacher

Optional: Nurse, ESOL Teacher, and Counselor

***Note: Parent/Guardian must be invited, however, the meeting can still be held if the parent does not attend.**

Tier III Progression Requirements

- There must be a severe discrepancy between the child's present performances relative to the class.
- The child's rate of progress must be severely below that of classroom peers.
- The teacher must have implemented Tier II research-based strategies with fidelity and integrity.
- These must be documented and supported by data. (Appendices B, E, and F2)
- For EL-Y students, a WAPT and at least 2 ACCESS scores are required before moving to the next Tier.

Tier III Process

- The grade level/subject area team, during regular meetings, will identify students who would benefit from Tier III interventions. This decision will be based on classroom performance, lack of progress at Tier II and student performance.
- Once it is determined that Tier III is appropriate, the school level Tier III representative or school counselor will set up a Tier III meeting inviting the Parent/Guardian and School Psychologist and/or Speech Pathologist. (Appendix E3)
- A Tier III referral form and Work Sample Analysis form must be completed prior to the meeting. (See appendices E1 and F1).
- During a Tier III meeting that includes parent and school psychologist or speech pathologist, baseline and progress monitoring data from Tier 2 are analyzed to create specific goals for student improvement. The team will identify no more than 2 specific interventions in each area of deficit to utilize with the student. (See Appendix E3 for minutes page and goals sheet)
- The team develops a plan for implementation that includes a timeline detailing how long the intervention will be implemented and dates for progress monitoring. Who, what, when, where, and how the intervention will be implemented with fidelity will be discussed and determined. (See Appendices E3 and F2)
- The school psychologist or speech pathologist will also help determine the need for additional information on the student.
- The main difference between Tier II and Tier III is not the interventions, but the frequency, duration, and progress monitoring requirements. At Tier III, Interventions should be daily or as outlined by the research based intervention program used. (See Appendices B, E, and F2) for progress monitoring forms)
- In most cases, Tier III students will be progress monitored through specific programs for academics and behavior trackers for behavior every week for 6 weeks or as outlined by the research based intervention program used.
- Once Tier III interventions have been implemented for an appropriate amount of time as determined by the MTSS team, the team shall reconvene to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. If the student continues to show marked difficulties and continues to show a lack of response to interventions, the team may determine that a referral for Section 504 or special education services is warranted. If after a minimum of 4 data points of progress monitoring data; regression or no progress is indicated, the MTSS school level team should meet to determine if more intensity in delivery, time, or instruction is required, or if a different strategy should be implemented before student is referred for a Section 504 or special education evaluation (See Appendices E1-E5 for minute's sheet and referral forms).

Tier III Key Points

- Tier III interventions are sustained, intensive, scientifically based interventions.
- Groups should be no more than 1-3 students per teacher unless otherwise specified by the research based intervention program used.
- If a student is successful at Tier III but only with the supports provided, referral to special education should still be considered.

Referral for Student Evaluation:

Named case manager from the MTSS team shall complete a referral packet for either Section 504 or special education evaluation, which will be turned in to the school level MTSS representative. The school level MTSS representative shall review the packet to ensure its completion. Incomplete packets will be returned to the case manager. Completed packets will be forwarded to the school psychologist who will request additional data as needed. (See Appendix F4 for referral packet forms). Prior to a child being referred for Section 504 or Special Education, the student goes through various levels or tiers in the school's Multi-Tier Support System.

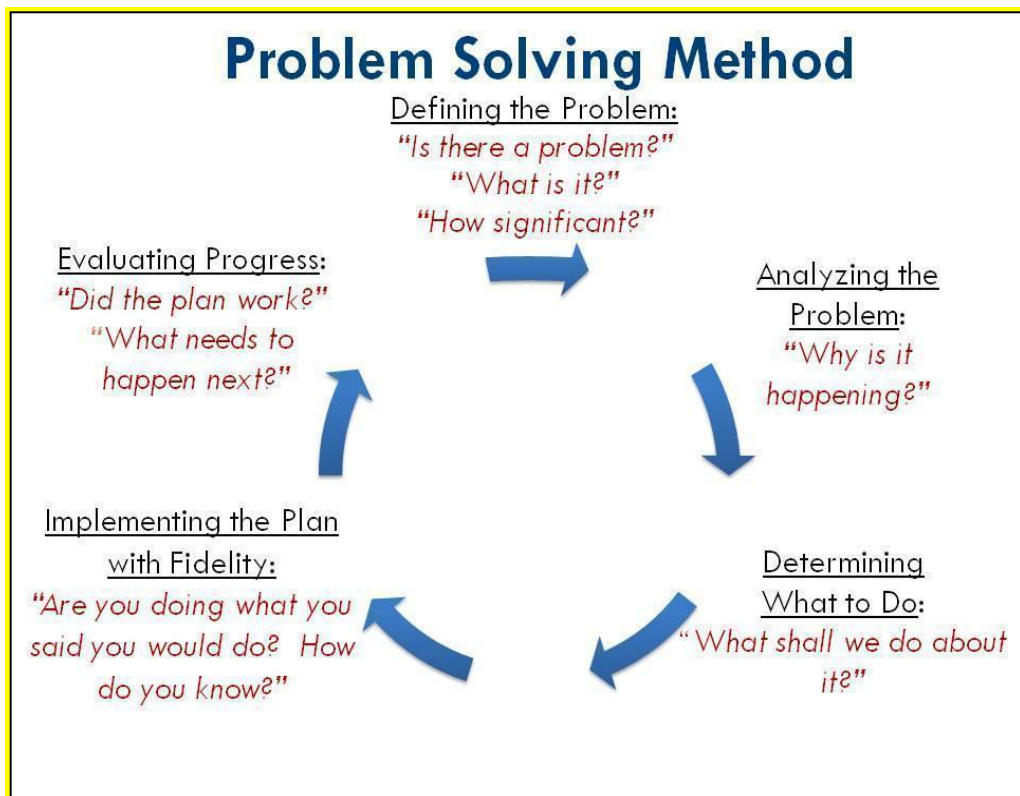
Prevention through intervention is stressed in all tiers. Documentation of Tier II and Tier III interventions will be included in the referral packet if a child is referred for a special education or Section 504 evaluation.

MTSS team should have attempted reasonable alternative strategies and interventions. If those strategies have not been successful and data supports the potential need for additional supports, MTSS team may make a referral for evaluation to determine if physical/emotional/academic problems may be interfering with a student's school progress. For information on the behavioral steps of MTSS please review the behavior team information for each school at the end of the manual.

Crisis Referral

Consultation with the Special Education Director is required to consider a by-pass and crisis placement. This is a rare occurrence.

1. Attempts to notify the parents during the school day should be made and documented by the classroom teacher and/or principal.
2. The Crisis intervention will be documented on an MTSS Minutes form. The student will remain in the school in which the child attends; the child should be supervised full time, in and out of the classroom; and the student should not be in this placement for longer than 30 days. This is intended for crises only.
3. The student should be immediately referred to the school's MTSS. In MTSS, a Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan can be developed. The MTSS and Special Education Staff will assemble an abbreviated Initial Referral packet as well as notify the School Psychologist so that the evaluation can be expedited.



Supervision/Monitoring plan for MTSS

Tier I

Three times a year (September, January, and May) a data team (District MTSS Coordinator, School Administrators, Special Education Director, teachers, interventionists, and school level MTSS team members analyze the school data)

Tier II

Every 6-8 weeks a school level data team (School Administrator, school level MTSS team members, interventionists, and referring teacher) invite each student's parent to meet to discuss each student being served in Tier 2 to go over the student's progress being monitored. Minutes and sign in sheets are completed at these meetings. Generally, at least 4 to 6 data points are collected before consideration to move to Tier III.

Tier III

Every 4-6 weeks a school level data team (District MTSS Coordinator, School Administrator, school level MTSS team members, interventionists, and referring teacher) invite each student's parent to meet to discuss each student being served in Tier 3 to go over the student's progress being monitored. Minutes and sign in sheets are completed at these meetings. Generally, at least 4 to 6 data points are collected before a referral for Section 504 or special education evaluation is considered.

Parent Notification Letter

Parent Notification Letter

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

Dear Parents,

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

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

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the Federal Programs Director at 229-896-2294.

Sincerely,



Dr. Becky Ratts

Federal Programs Director

School Attendance Policy

Student Attendance Protocol

**Cook County Schools
2026 - 2027**

****UPDATE****

Please click the following link to access the most up-to-date information and the current version of this document.

[2026-2027 Student Attendance Protocol](#)

This document includes a protocol for addressing and decreasing the incidence of truancy in Cook County. This protocol reflects commitments that various local agencies, offices, and individuals have made to promote the educational progress of children and families in Cook County.

This protocol was created by a local Student Attendance Protocol Committee, which included representatives of the following entities:

- Cook County Superior Court
- Cook County Juvenile Court
- Cook County District Attorney's Office
- Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice
- Cook County Board of Education Representatives
- Cook County Board of Education Attorney
- Cook County Sheriff's Office
- Cook County Department of Family and Children's Services
- Cook County Health Department
- Cook County CCY (Family Connection)
- Cook County Chamber of Commerce
- Chief of Police from Adel, Lenox, and Sparks

The purpose of the committee is to make recommendations to the Cook County Board of Education regarding attendance policy and procedures, as well as to create guidelines for collaboration between local and state agencies having an interest or function related to educational achievement and school attendance in Cook County.

The Student Attendance Protocol Committee has agreed upon procedures, which are intended to allow the reduction of truancy at the individual, family, and community levels. It is understood, however, that these procedures are general guidelines, and extenuating circumstances may be considered, as allowable by law, for each student and family. In addition, it is understood that each state and local agency involved must first adhere to its own policies, which were considered in the development of this protocol.

Operational Authority

The Student Attendance Protocol Committee is operational under authority of the chief superior court judge as defined in O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.2. Following adoption of this written protocol and filing with the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE), the committee will meet quarterly during its first year and

twice annually thereafter for the purpose of evaluating compliance and effectiveness, and to modify the protocol as appropriate.

Tardies and Early Checkout Definition of Terms

Tardy to School: Any student arriving at school following the ringing bell, chime, or other audible signal established by the Principal and intended to indicate the start of the school day. Any student who is on school property but is not in his or her assigned classroom or other authorized area following the bell, chime, or other audible signal will be considered tardy to school.

Tardy to Class: A student is “tardy to class” when he/she arrives to class following the ringing bell, chime or other audible signal indicating the beginning of instructional time.

Excused Tardy: A tardy resulting from events beyond a student’s control shall be determined excused by the Principal or designee. Events may include an accident, road closed due to an accident, area power outage, late bus, or other incidents. Documentation is required to excuse a tardy. .

Unexcused Tardy: Incidents including over-sleeping, heavy traffic, errands, delays at a train crossing, or similar excuses determined by the Principal or designee as unacceptable are unexcused. Documentation will not obligate the Principal or designee to excuse an unexcused tardy.

Early Checkout: Leaving school prior to the end of instructional time and/or the end of the official school day.

- Excused: Early checkouts for emergency, illness, or other reasons that the Principal deems necessary or reasonable. Documentation is required to excuse an early dismissal. Records will be kept at each school to document the number of days a student misses due to early checkouts. Excessive incidents of unexcused early checkout may result in disciplinary action or referral to the RTI as the Principal deems necessary.
- Unexcused: Early checkouts for reasons other than those approved by the Principal. Excessive incidents of unexcused early checkout may result in disciplinary action or referral to the RTI as the Principal deems necessary.

Official School Start/End Time: The time designated by the principal and advertised to students and parents as the official start or end of the school day. Correct time will be the time as determined accurate by the school principal, indicated on a designed school clock, and displayed in a prominent location.

Response to Intervention (RTI)/Behavior Analysis Team (BAT): An interdisciplinary group that uses a systematic process to address learning, behavior, and/or attendance problems of K-12 students in a school.

Unexcused Tardies and Early Checkouts:

Students accumulating three (3) days of unexcused tardies to school will receive a referral to the Principal or Principal’s designee for violation of Board Policy JCDA: Student Code of Conduct

At the school system’s discretion, students establishing a pattern of early checkouts may be referred to

the Principal or Principal's designee for disciplinary or other appropriate action. Students leaving early or arriving late to class may be counted present in the class or classes missed if they are present more than 45 minutes of the entire instructional period.

Consequences and Penalties for Unexcused Tardies/Early Checkouts

The Principal or Principal's designee may assign consequences and penalties for unexcused tardies and/or early checkouts that may include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Third Tardy:** Written notification from administration to notify parent(s), guardian(s) or other person(s) having control or charge of the student of possible consequences for continued tardies.
- **Fourth to Ninth Tardies:**
Elementary and Middle School Students: Referral(s) to the Principal or the Principal's designee for Disciplinary consequences, counselor's referral or other appropriate action.
- High School Students: Upon a student's fourth (4th) tardy, a disciplinary referral will be made to the Principal or Principal's designee. Consequences may include loss of driving privileges, detention, in-school suspension, or other action in accordance with local school system policy.
- **Ten or More Tardies:** Ten or more tardies may result in immediate referral to support agencies outside the school system as the Principal deems appropriate. Among these agencies are the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), law enforcement, Juvenile Court, Family and/or Youth Connections, or other external agencies.

Truant Students Definition of Terms

Truant: Any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences.

Exception for Suspension: School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Excused Absences: Local board of education shall adopt policies and procedures excusing students from school under the following circumstances, as a minimum:

- Personal illness (Excessive or extended absences may require an excuse from medical doctor)
- Circumstances where attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others
- Serious illness in a student's immediate family
- A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school
- Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety
- Local boards of education may allow a period not to exceed one day for registering to vote or voting in a public election
- Local boards of education shall count students present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly
- **Only five parental notes will be considered for an excused absence**

Grades and Absences: Final student course grades shall not be penalized because of absences if the following conditions are met.

- Absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons.
- Make up work for excused absences were completed satisfactorily. Local boards of education are not required to provide make-up work for unexcused absences.

Absence Reduction Plan: The board of education adopts the following policies and/or procedures to reduce unexcused absences.

Parental Notification: Statement of Receipt

- The school system will provide the parent(s), guardian(s), or other person(s) having control or charge of each student enrolled in public school with a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance.

Consequences and Penalties for Violation of Compulsory Attendance

The Principal or Principal's designee may assign consequences and penalties for unexcused absences and/or early checkouts at any time if he/she deems necessary. Consequences and penalties may include, but are not limited to the following:

Five Unexcused Absences in the School Calendar Year:

- Schools will notify the parent(s), guardian(s) or other person(s) who has control or charge of the student when such student has accumulated five unexcused absences in the school calendar year.
- Notice of five accumulated absences will include notification of the penalties and consequences of such absences.
- After five unexcused absences in the school calendar year, each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense.

Notification

- Schools will make two reasonable attempts by phone, conference, letter, email, or other appropriate means to notify the parent(s), guardian(s) or other person(s) who has control or charge of the student when five unexcused absences in an academic year have occurred and of the penalties and consequences for violation of compulsory attendance.
- If two reasonable attempts to notify the parent(s), guardian(s) or other person(s) who has control or charge of the student have been unsuccessful, the school will send written notice via first class mail. Such notification will include a reminder of previous notice to the parent(s), guardian(s), or other person(s) having control or charge of each student enrolled in public school containing a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance.

Six or More Unexcused Absences in an Academic Year

Six Unexcused Absences: Students accumulating six (6) days of unexcused absences in a semester will receive a referral to the Principal or administrative designee for violation of Board Policy JCDA: Student Code of

Conduct. Upon a student's accumulation of six (6) or more unexcused absences in the school calendar year, a referral will be made to the Principal or designee for Student Support Team (SST) intervention. Prior to the first SST meeting, a school social worker, school nurse or other appropriate staff member will attempt contact with the student and parent(s), guardian(s) or other person(s) who has control or charge of the student.

The school social worker will participate as part of the SST to assist with the development of interventions and strategies for improvement of the student's school attendance.

Ten Unexcused Absences: Upon a student's accumulation of ten (10) unexcused absences in the school calendar year, the school social worker will refer the student and parent to Cook County Truancy Education and Mediation (TEAM) for contracted participation in the TEAM truancy diversion program. The school social worker will serve to coordinate efforts between the

school SST and TEAM in monitoring attendance.

Violation of TEAM Truancy Diversion Contract or refusal to participate in the TEAM truancy diversion program may result in immediate referral to the appropriate court, including but not limited to one or more of the following:

- Students ages six (6) to seventeen (17) and their parent(s), guardian(s), or other person(s) having control or charge of the student to the Juvenile Court for possible Protective Order or other appropriate disposition.
- Parent(s), guardian(s), or other person(s) having control or charge of students ages six (6) to seventeen (17) to State Court for Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance.

Attendance

Students shall be counted in attendance if they are actually present at school at the time the attendance is taken or are away from school on a school day and engaged in an educational activity that constitutes a part of the school-approved instructional program for the student. (Rule 160-5-1-.10).

Excused/Unexcused Absences

Excused absences from school are granted under the following circumstances:

- Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others.
- A serious illness or death in a student's family necessitating absence from school.
- A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
- Celebrating religious holidays necessitating absence from school.
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
- A period not to exceed one day is allowed, for registering to vote or voting in a public election.

Absences are **unexcused** for all other reasons, including but not limited to: missing the bus, oversleeping, power outage, vacations, trips, family visits, car trouble, baby-sitting, and running errands.

School-Related Absences

Students will be allowed no more than five (5) days of absence per term for school-sponsored non-instructional activities, with the exception of absences required due to state and/or national competitions approved by the Cook County Board of Education. It is the student's responsibility to request, through the principal, that the Board of Education approve school related absences in excess of five.

Students must make prior arrangements to make up all work that will be missed. Students must have prior approval from all of their teachers to be absent from classes for these activities. Non-approval may only be given if the student has had in excess of 5 days absence for school-sponsored non-instructional activities.

Students should have all teachers complete a gold slip prior to having their parent/guardian sign the slip. Gold slips will be used to document a school-related absence. All gold slips are to be returned to the teacher/sponsor, not to the front office.

Absence Notes

Documentation is required when a student returns from an absence. The fact that attendance was impractical or inadvisable must be attested to by a written statement from the student's parent/guardian or a licensed physician within five (5) days of the student's return. These written statements must be turned in to the Attendance Office or the absence will be documented as unexcused. If an absence was due to a court appearance, a copy of the subpoena or other court document must be provided.

Documentation for each day of absence (parent notes, medical excuses, etc.) must be on file within five school days following the student's return from an absence.

Notification of Absence

An automated notification will be sent out daily at the end of the first block if your child is not in class.

After the third (3rd) unexcused absence of a student, a letter will be mailed to the parent/legal guardian. This letter will include the number of days missed, express the school's concern about the number of unexcused absences, and request a parent conference.

Any student who has three (3) unexcused absences from a class will be referred to the school system's social worker and the attendance officer.

After the fifth (5th) unexcused absence in a class during a term, the student shall have a letter of non-credit mailed to his/her parents/legal guardians from the school.

Failure to receive these written notices in no manner absolves the parents/legal guardians of the responsibility in complying with all system/school attendance policies.

In the event of prolonged absences due to extenuating circumstances, students and/or parents/legal guardians have the right to request a conference with the Attendance Administrator to discuss attendance and/or non-credit issues.

If a student has a serious medical or legal problem, the student's parent/guardian should notify an administrator and the student's counselor. In the event of prolonged illness, the services of the homebound teacher should be requested.

Students who miss more than 20 minutes of a class period will be counted absent for that class.

Late Work Policy

The policy that will be followed by all classes for turning in late assignments will be as follows:

1. Assignments turned in **one** day late will be reduced by **ten (10)** points.
2. Assignments turned in **two** days late will be reduced by **twenty (20)** points.
3. Assignments turned in **three** days late will be reduced by **thirty (30)** points.

After a three (3) day period, the teacher is allowed to give the student a Zero (0). If the teacher chooses to allow the student to turn in assignments beyond the three day period, this is done so at the sole discretion of the individual teacher.

Students in Advanced, Honors, and/or Accelerated classes have the opportunity to turn in work one day late with a twenty (20) point deduction. After this, the teacher may give a zero for the assignment.

CES Handbook Information and Policy Acknowledgement

**Cook County School District
37 Josey Rd.
Adel, Georgia 31620
229-896-2294**

Joy Folsom, Superintendent

Cook County Schools			
Mrs. Jeanne Dixon	Mr. Scott Ray	Dr. Mary Sue Ward	Dr. Joi Williams
Cook Primary School Principal	Cook Elementary School Principal	Cook Middle School Principal	Cook High School Principal

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your son or daughter has access to the Cook Elementary School Handbook located on the Cook Elementary School Website. If you are unable to access the handbook electronically, a hard copy can be provided in the front office. The handbook includes rules, procedures, attendance policies, promotion criteria, and other pertinent information about the school. It also has the school calendar listed with important dates for the school year. Specific information detailed in the handbook is noted below. We encourage you to review all the contents of this handbook with your child.

The Student Code of Conduct for the 2026-2027 school term is a major part of the handbook. Please review the Code of Conduct with your son or daughter, sign the acknowledgement below, and return this letter to the school. Failure to return this letter will not relieve a student or the parent/guardian from the responsibility to know the contents of the Cook County Code of Conduct and will not excuse the student's non-compliance with the Code of Conduct.

The Cook County School District (CCSD) believes in educating the 21st century students by allowing them to access technology through different means. The CCSD encourages and supports appropriate and responsible use of technology and will take reasonable measures to ensure that students are protected and that the technology aligns with educational objectives. A copy of the Cook Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy can be viewed and/or obtained at all schools and at www.cook.k12.ga.us

Cook Elementary School Handbook Acknowledgement

Student Handbook and Code of Conduct

I am aware of the contents of the Cook County School Handbook that includes the Parent's Right to Know, Student Code of Conduct, Bus Conduct, and Attendance and Promotion/Retention Policies. I have reviewed the contents with my child. If I have further questions or concerns, I will make an appointment for a parent conference and/or call the school for more information.

Permission to Publish

I **understand** my child's name, photograph, video image, and student work for publication to acknowledge achievements and accomplishments will be in the newspaper, the yearbook, on our school website/social media pages, and on appropriate educational sites. ** If you do not want your child's information published, you must notify the school principal in a written letter.

Permission to Use the Computer Network

I **understand** my child will use the CCSD network in all of the following ways: Internet services, student email, Google Apps for Education, and all other educational apps.

Permission to Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT)

I **understand** my child can bring his/her own portable, wireless device to school. (The school is not responsible for any damage, lost, or stolen items.)

****All permission given will remain in effect unless changed explicitly in writing by a parent/guardian.****

STUDENT'S NAME (print clearly)_____

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE_____

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S NAME (print clearly)_____

PARENT /GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE _____

Date_____