

Student-Parent INFORMATION GUIDE



**Sumter County School System
2025-2026**

**Dear Sumter County Schools Family,**

We are filled with renewed energy and optimism as we begin the 2025–2026 school year. Each student enters the new year with a clean slate and the opportunity to reach new academic and personal goals. Our dedicated teachers have worked diligently to create a rigorous and supportive learning environment, building on the momentum of those who participated in our summer learning programs.

These efforts are all part of our commitment to preparing every student for success in the classroom and beyond. Our mission is clear:

The mission of Sumter County Schools is to foster a challenging learning environment that creates opportunities for students to graduate college- and career-ready.

The Sumter County Board of Education remains steadfast in its commitment to providing high-quality educational experiences for every student. I encourage you to take full advantage of the programs and resources available throughout the year.

Achieving success also requires maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment. The pages that follow in the Student/Parent Informational Guide and Student Code of Conduct outline the expectations and procedures in place to support this goal. These guidelines are intended to address inappropriate behavior and promote a culture of accountability and support.

Creating a safe and nurturing environment is a shared responsibility. We encourage our students—and families—to speak up when they have concerns. We often remind our students: *"If you see something, say something."* This proactive approach helps us respond effectively and ensures students receive the support they need.

Thank you for entrusting your child's education to Sumter County Schools. I am confident that our educators will nurture and challenge your child to achieve personal, academic, and career success.

Let's work together to make this school year an exceptional one!

Warm regards,
Dr. Marcy Burroughs
Superintendent
Sumter County School

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GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM 2025-2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR

SCSS INSTITUTE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY.....July 30, 2025
SYSTEM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYJuly 31, 2025
TEACHER WORK DAYAUGUST 1, 2025
SCHOLS OPEN-FIRST DAY STUDENTS.....AUGUST 4, 2025
LABOR DAY HOLIDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2025
PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE WEEK.....OCTOBER 6-10, 2025
FALL BREAK FOR STUDENTS OCTOBER 13-17, 2025
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY(No Students)..... OCTOBER 13, 2025
VETERANS’ DAY HOLIDAY NOVEMBER 11, 2025
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS..... NOVEMBER 24-28, 2025

WINTER HOLIDAYS – DECEMBER 22, 2025 – JANUARY 2, 2026
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY JANUARY 5, 2026
TEACHER WORK DAY JANUARY 6, 2026
STUDENTS RETURN JANUARY 7, 2026
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BIRTHDAY HOLIDAY JANUARY 19, 2026
PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE WEEK.....JANUARY 26-30, 2026
PRESIDENT’S DAY/*WEATHER DAY..... FEBRUARY 16, 2026
SPRING BREAKMARCH 23-27, 2026
GOOD FRIDAY/ (*WEATHER DAY) APRIL 3, 2026
MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY MAY 25, 2026
END OF SEMESTER/LAST DAY FOR STUDENTS MAY 27, 2026
TEACHER WORK DAY/LAST DAY FOR TEACHERS MAY 28, 2026
JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY..... JUNE 19, 2026

Grade Reporting Periods		
Nine Week Periods	Progress Report	Report Card
August 4 – October 6	September 8	October 10
October 7 – December 19	November 12	January 9
January 7 – March 10	February 6	March 13
March 11 – May 27	April 21	May 29

THE SUMTER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**BOARD MEMBERS**

District 1 Representative and Vice ChairMrs. Lillian Wideman
 District 2 Representative and Board ChairMrs. Eleanor James
 District 3 Representative..... Ms. Sharon Nelson
 District 4 Representative..... Ms. Jeanette Payne
 District 5 RepresentativeMs. Darla Spencer
 District 6 Representative.....Mrs. Christine Jones

SUPERINTENDENT

Superintendent..... Dr. Marcy Burroughs

CHIEF SCHOOL FINANCIAL OFFICER

Chief School Financial Officer Ms. Tranquil Shepherd

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION DIRECTORY**COORDINATORS & DIRECTORS**

Coordinator of Special Education... Ms. Shirley Mosley – (205) 652-9605
 Director of Pre- Kindergarten & Federal Programs.....Ms. Mary Whitehead – (205) 652-9605
 Director of Career Technical Education.....Dr. Tiana Thompson – (205) 652-9469
 Director of Child Nutrition Program.....Ms. Heather Shambry – (205) 652-1501
 Director of Technology & Accountability Coordinator.....Mrs. Pamela Bass – (205) 652-2271
 Director of Transportation.....Mr. Kelvin Gibson – (205) 652-2940
 Maintenance Supervisor.....Mr. Randy Lard – (205) 652-2940

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION DIRECTORY**SCHOOL**

Livingston Jr. High
 Sumter Central High
 York West End Jr. High
 Bell Brown Career Technical Center

PRINCIPAL

TBD
 Mr. Marcus West
 Mrs. Stacie Pritchett
 Dr. Tiana Thompson

TELEPHONE

(205) 652-2125
 (205) 652-1501
 (205) 392-5901
 (205) 652-9469

EQUAL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

In compliance with applicable outside agency guidelines, statutory and judicial requirements, and Board policy, the Sumter County Board of Education shall place an equal emphasis upon the non-discriminatory provision of educational opportunities for students. The Sumter County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, homeless status, marital status, non-English speaking ability, or migrant status in its programs and activities.

For more information call (205) 652-9605:

District 504 Coordinator – Ms. Shirley Mosley– ext. 1212

Homeless Liaison – Ms. Mary Whitehead– ext. 1101

Sexual Harassment & ADA – Mrs. Deborah Porter– ext. 1105

Special Education Coordinator- Ms. Shirley Mosley– ext. 1212

Title IX/Gender Equity - Mrs. Deborah Porter– ext. 1105

Title IX/Sexual Harassment

School Contact: School Counselor

System Contact: Student Services Coordinator

AHERA

In compliance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM) are inspected every three years. An accredited asbestos inspector performs these reinspections. The accredited management planner recommends managing asbestos-containing building materials. The results of the reinspections are on file in the management plan in the Facilities Department of Sumter County Schools. The file can be reviewed anytime during school hours.

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is accurate at the time of publication. However, Board policies, practices, and procedures are constantly being reviewed and revised to ensure the best educational experience for all students and reflect changes in state or federal laws or regulations. Further, this student/parent informational guide briefly explains the Board's policies and procedures that most frequently affect Sumter County Schools' students. It is not intended to be a detailed statement of Board policy. For a more thorough explanation of Board policy, please refer directly to the Board's policy manual, a copy of which is maintained at the Central Office, at each local school, and on the school system's website.

SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING TIMES

Parents/guardians are expected to take responsibility for assuring that their child arrives before the opening of school and is picked up after the closing of school within the time frames noted below.

SCHOOL HOURS

Official start and end times for Sumter County Schools are as follows:

Livingston Jr. High: 7:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Sumter Central High: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

York West End: 7:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Except for students transported by bus, no students will be permitted to enter the school building more than 15 minutes before the beginning of the school day. Please do not send your child to school before this time, as there will be no certified personnel on duty. All students must leave campus within 20 minutes of the school closing. Students remaining on school grounds after these times will be unsupervised unless they participate in a school-sponsored athletic or extracurricular event. Students participating in the after-school extended day program must report directly to their assigned rooms upon dismissal.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING, DELAYED OPENING, AND EARLY DISMISSAL

Parents and staff will be informed through an automated calling system if schools must close, dismiss early, or delay opening due to weather or unforeseen circumstances. The Sumter County School System website (<https://www.sumter.k12.al.us>), the school system's social media channels, an email to all employees/families, and local media sources will also be used to share information. In the event schools are closed, all schools and the Central Office will be closed to students and employees. All activities and events will be canceled.

SCHOOL VISITORS

All school visitors are required to report to the Principal's office upon arrival at a school campus. The safety of our children at each one of our schools is a paramount concern; therefore, all visitors will be required to sign in and secure a visitor's pass. Parents can visit classrooms when approval is given through the principal's office. Parents will show proof of nontraditional or legal custody upon request from the principal and provide notice to the principal and classroom teacher at least 24 hours before the anticipated visit. So as not to disturb the educational environment for all, student classroom visits should be infrequent and for a limited duration. The principal will have complete discretion over the number and duration of classroom visits allowed. Under no circumstances will visits be permitted during testing.

STUDENT VISITORS

Students enrolled in the school system are not permitted to bring student visitors to school during regular school hours without prior approval by the Principal.

CHECKING STUDENTS OUT OF SCHOOL

All parents/guardians or other authorized persons coming to school to check a student out of school must do so through the Principal's office via the school's approved checkout plan. Such persons are not to go directly to classrooms for this purpose. Schools will not check out students after 2:30 p.m.

BOARD MEETINGS

The Sumter County Board of Education meets regularly on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. at the Central Office, which is located 716 Country Club Rd, Livingston, Alabama 35470. Website: <https://www.sumter.k12.al.us>.

ENROLLING IN A SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOL

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- The Alabama compulsory attendance law requires all children between the ages of six and seventeen to attend school.
- Enrollment in PRE-KINDERGARTEN is open to all children four (4) years of age on or before September 1st who are residents of the school zone in which they abide.
- Enrollment in KINDERGARTEN is open to all children five (5) years of age on or before September 1st who are residents of the school zone in which they reside.
- Enrollment in FIRST GRADE is open to all children six (6) years of age on or before December 31st who are residents of the school zone in which they reside.

ALL STUDENTS WHO SEEK TO ENROLL IN A SCHOOL OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM FOR THE FIRST TIME MUST PRESENT TO THE PRINCIPAL THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS (Policy 6.01):

- An official birth certificate or other document for age verification purposes in kindergarten and 1st grade. (Examples: U.S. or foreign birth certificate; religious, hospital, or physician's statement; baptismal certificate; adoption record; previously verified school records; or other record acceptable to the school principal). Failure of the parent or legal guardian to provide a birth certificate will **not deny, nor delay**, a student's enrollment.
- Proof of residence (copy of power bill, telephone bill, rent receipt, etc.) of the parent(s), legal custodian(s), and/or legal guardian(s) to show residency in the school zone.
- Falsification of residency is prohibited by Alabama Law [Section 13A-10-109]).
- Recent report card or release from last school attended. The school principal shall determine grade placement of students from a private or non-public school or from home education based on state regulations and Sumter County Board of Education rules regarding transfer of credit, as well as other factors, including test data, age, and previous school records.
- Copy of current immunization form (Immunization certificates, required by Alabama law, must be presented to the Principal before a child can enroll in public school unless the child is determined to be McKinney-Vento or qualifies for ESL. Certificates are available from local physicians or local health departments. Only students presenting a Certificate of Medical Exemption or a Certificate of Religious Exemption are excused from this requirement.)
- Valid social security number – Providing a social security number for school enrollment purposes is completely voluntary and failure to do so will not deny, nor delay, a student's enrollment. The use of a social security number is solely for the purpose of identification of a student in our student management system. A unique identification number can be assigned by the local school system for any student whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) do not wish to provide that information.
- Proof of legal guardianship or custody when warranted (see section regarding establishing residency)
- Verification from Principal of transferring school that the student is not currently suspended or expelled. Regardless of age, when a student facing some type of disciplinary action is withdrawn from school prior to receiving the punishment, said student (and his/her parent/legal guardian) should be informed that prior to admission/readmission to any Sumter County school, the disciplinary action would have to be completed. This includes any suspension, work assignment, or referral to the Superintendent or Board of Education for a hearing and applies to students re-enrolling in the Sumter County School System or who are enrolling from another school system.
- Completed enrollment/transfer form.
- Exceptions may be granted as provided in Alabama statutes and federal law.

STUDENTS OVER SEVENTEEN YEARS OF AGE

- Students up to age 19 who are on track to graduate can no longer be denied enrollment in county school systems solely based on their age. School personnel will complete a transcript audit with the student to determine the student's standing with credits and needs to meet graduation requirements.
- Based on the IEP team's decision, students with disabilities may return to the school district up to the age of 21 to address transition services (only applies to students working towards essential and alternate achievement pathways).

CHILDREN OF BOARD EMPLOYEES

The child of any Sumter County Board of Education employee will have the option of attending any K–12 school in the attendance zone of the school or facility to which their parent is assigned.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN (PRE-K)

- In Alabama, students are not required to attend Pre-K and funding is not provided as it is on a comprehensive basis for kindergarten through twelfth grade. The Sumter County School System places a high value on Pre-K programs and will continually strive to provide and expand Pre-K services whenever possible. As such, the opportunity for enrollment into Pre-K classes in the Sumter County School System is on a limited basis.
- A child whose fourth birthday is on or before September 1st shall be eligible to apply for admission to the Pre-K Program.
- Completion of a Pre-K application does not guarantee that a child will be enrolled, but instead places the child on a list for the school's random selection drawing, per Office of School Readiness (OSR) guidelines.
- Eligible special education students (ages 3-5) will be served according to their Individual Education Program (IEP).

PRE-K PROCEDURE FOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE: Regular attendance ensures Pre-K children benefit from participating in a quality early education. Regular attendance, in addition to being a good measure of parent engagement, is a school readiness skill. After a student has acquired a total of ten (10) absences, tardies, or checkouts, the parent is required to meet with the Federal Programs Director to discuss attendance. Any further absences may result in removal from the Pre-K program.

EQUAL ACCESS

- Students who are zoned to attend Sumter County Schools and who are homeless, migrant, immigrant, non-English proficient speaking, in foster care, or disabled shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, provided to other children and youth. Such children will be provided the opportunity to participate in the same state education programs and to meet the same state student performance standards as all other children without being isolated or stigmatized.
- Students will not be prohibited from attendance due to barriers such as:

• Residency requirements	• Transportation	• Lack of immunization
• Legal custody requirements	• Lack of birth certificate	• Legal custody requirements
• Lack of social security number	• Language barriers	• Disabilities

ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR NEW AND RETURNING STUDENTS – POWERSCHOOL ENROLLMENT

The Sumter County School System utilizes an online program called PowerSchool Enrollment, which is a registration program designed to improve efficiency. Implementing this customized online solution will streamline new and annual student registration through seamless integration between PowerSchool Enrollment and the Sumter County School System's student information system (PowerSchool SIS). A direct link to PowerSchool Enrollment may be found at <https://www.sumter.k12.al.us/>.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

A student must attend the school(s) in which his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) has established legal residence, or when a senior whose parent(s) or guardian(s) establishes residence outside the area served by the School System or outside the school zone. At the discretion of the parent(s) or guardian(s), the student may complete his/her senior year at the school he/she currently attends. The School System shall not be responsible for the student's transportation. Exceptions may be granted as provided in Alabama statutes and federal law.

DEFINITION OF LEGAL GUARDIAN

A guardian is defined as a person who has legal custody of a child.

DEFINITION OF RESIDENCE

For school attendance purposes, the definition of residence is that the legal guardian and student physically reside full time, weekdays/nights, and weekends, at a place of abode located within the limits of the school district or zone. All students will register at the school they are assigned to attend. The parent or legal guardian will provide evidence of residence and the school district administration will verify bona fide occupancy.

A parent/legal guardian enrolling a student or entering the school district will be required to verify his/her residence address as a part of the registration process. Students are not legally enrolled until the verification of residence has been completed. When the actual residence of a student comes into question, the Coordinator of Student Services or his/her designee may investigate and in his/her discretion, require additional proof of full-time, actual residency within the attendance zone or county, as the case may be.

ESTABLISHING RESIDENCY

A. Students Living with Parents or Legal Guardians

The parent or legal guardian of a student seeking to enroll in a school will provide the school district with a mortgage document, property deed, or an apartment or home lease AND any one of the items numbered (1) through (4) below as verification of their address.

1. Utility bills (water, gas, electricity);
2. Personal visit by a designated school district official;
3. Filed Homestead Exemption Application form; and/or
4. Any other documentation that will objectively and unequivocally establish that the parent or legal guardian resides within the school district. Any document with a post office box as an address will not be accepted. Neither an affidavit nor a notarize statement will be accepted as proof of residency. If the student has a legal guardian, a copy of the custody order appointing the guardian must be provided to the district. If a petition for guardianship has been filed and the decree is pending, the student or guardian must provide a certified copy of the filed petition for guardianship. Any legal guardianship formed for the purpose of establishing residency for school attendance purposes shall not be recognized.

B. Homeless Children/Unaccompanied Youth

When a child is determined to be homeless as defined by the Stewart B. McKinney, Act 42 USC Sections 11431 (1), 11432 (e)(4), and 11302 (a), the school district will consider and take the enrollment action that is in the best interest of the child pursuant to 42 USC 11432 (e)(3).

C. Students Living with Adults other than Parents or Legal Guardians

The non-parent(s) claiming district residency must meet the same criteria as that of parents or legal guardians as stated in Part A.

The adult must provide the school with legal guardianship or custodial papers and provide documentation fully explaining the reason(s) (other than school attendance zone or district preference) for this arrangement. The Superintendent or his/her designee will make the necessary factual determinations. Examples of situations where guardianship authority of an adult will be recognized to establish residency of the minor include but are not limited to the following:

1. Death or serious illness of the child's parent(s) or guardian
2. Abandonment of the child
3. Child abuse or neglect
4. Seriously unstable family relationships or undesirable conditions in the home of the child's parents or guardians having documented detrimental effect on the child
5. Students enrolled in recognized exchange programs residing with host families and /or
6. Incarceration of a parent.

Any person who has assumed responsibility for the care and custody of the child shall be expected to begin the process of seeking legal guardianship before enrollment of the child and an approximate completion date must be given. Any legal guardianship formed for the purpose of establishing residency for school attendance purposes shall not be recognized.

D. An adult student (at least 19 years of age) may establish a legal residence based on applicable state laws.**DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS AND NON-COMPLIANCE**

The requirements as stated above are minimal, and the Sumter County School System reserves the right to require additional documentation and verification at any time. The Principal of a school is responsible for ensuring that only students eligible to attend that school are in fact enrolled and attending.

Any suspicion of violation of residence requirements will be investigated. Any case that cannot be resolved by the Principal will be referred to the Director of Student Services or designee for additional investigation and further action. Students enrolled in a school without proper residence verification will be withdrawn from the school in which they are illegally enrolled

NOTE: The parent bears the burden of proof when establishing residency. The parent is also responsible for notifying each respective school that their children attend when there is a change in address or contact numbers.

PLACEMENT AND ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY OF TRANSFER STUDENTS**STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM A DIFFERENT ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

The high schools in the Sumter County School System operate on a schedule that allows students to complete seven credits each year. Transfer students who enroll from a different academic calendar will be placed in the most closely matched courses to allow the student to earn the maximum credit possible. **Due to state mandates that require a student to pass specific content in the core courses and state guidelines that will not allow a student to receive credit for a course for which he/she has already received credit, it will at times be impossible to receive seven credits in a transfer year.**

The students must be aware that the later in the semester one enters, the more difficult the task of making up work and/or mastering content necessary for successful completion of all courses. The responsibility for mastering content already presented prior to the student's enrollment rests with the student. Teachers will make information and materials available to students and will assist newly enrolled students in any ways which are practical; however, re-teaching of previous content, administering additional tests, or reviewing the course is not practical.

THE FOLLOWING PLACEMENT PROCEDURES SHALL APPLY TO ALL STUDENTS TRANSFERRING INTO THE SCHOOL SYSTEM:

TRANSFERS FROM ACCREDITED SCHOOLS

1. A student transferring from a public or non-public school accredited by AdvancED Accreditation Commission (NCA Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement, the Northwest Accreditation Commission, and the SACS Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement) will have credits accepted without validation upon receipt of official transcripts. (AAC 290-3-1-.02 (7)(d)).
2. The decision about grade placement (K-12) will be based solely on the grade classification of the student at the school previously attended.

GPA DETERMINATION FOR TRANSFERS FROM ACCREDITED SCHOOLS

1. Transfer student coming in with AP/IB courses:
Students receive the weight indicated on the transcript for AP/IB courses. The transcript is not changed.
However, weight is not to exceed 1.0 for AP/IB and 0.5 for Honors
2. If former school did not give weight for Honors courses, we do not give weight. The transcript is not changed. If additional weight was not added for honors courses at former school, no weight will be added.
EXCEPTION – Weighted credit of 1.0 may be given for AP/IB courses even if former school did not give weight.
3. Students transferring into Sumter County School System for the senior year are not eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian.
4. Accept grades submitted along with grading scale (Cannot change a grade, i.e. if grade submitted is 74-D, cannot change this to a C based on Sumter County School System's grading scale)
5. If former school awarded weight for elective courses, no weight will be awarded by the Sumter County School System.
EXCEPTION – Weighted credit of 1.0 may be given for AP/IB elective courses if former school awarded weight.

TRANSFERS FROM NON-ACCREDITED SCHOOL SETTINGS

Grades K-5 – Using all available records and nationally standardized tests, if available, from the sending school, the Principal or his/her designee shall determine placement. The process for making decisions about grade placement may take into consideration a variety of factors including age, maturity, motor coordination, capacity for learning, and academic progress. If there is a question about a transfer student's placement, he/she may be assigned to a lower grade level for a three (3) to six (6) weeks evaluation period. Based on the student's performance during this evaluation period, placement may then be changed to the appropriate grade level for a probationary period. Final grade placement will be determined after this probationary period.

Grades 6-8 – Using all available records and nationally standardized tests, if available, from the sending school, the Principal or his/her designee shall determine placement.

Grades 9-12 – To allow transfer of credits and/or determine the appropriate class/grade placement of a student transferring to this system from a non-accredited or home school, the following shall be implemented:

1. Credit for all elective courses shall be accepted without validation.
2. Uncontested credit for core courses (English, mathematics, science and social studies) shall be transferred as follows:
 - Using all available records and nationally standardized tests, if available, the principal or his/her designee shall determine the appropriate placement and then notify the student and the parent/guardian.
 - For any initial core course the student completes successfully in this system, he/she shall be permitted to transfer in that subject area all previous credits earned at a non-accredited or home school. (Example: Successful completion of eleventh grade English in this system would allow the student to transfer ninth and tenth grade English if completed successfully at the non-accredited or home school).
3. Contested credit for core courses (English, mathematics, science and social studies) shall be transferred as follows:
 - The principal or designee shall supervise the administration of the school systems' content-based course specific validation test. For each validation test passed, the student shall be placed in the next level core course and credit for the prerequisite course(s) shall be transferred. Once a grade-level course has been validated, all preceding courses in that content area are recorded as validated.
4. In the event of the existence of controversial records/transcripts and/or the absence of any official or notarized records/transcripts, the principal or designee shall supervise the administration of the school systems' content-based course specific validation test. For each validation test passed, the student shall be placed in the next level core course and credit for the prerequisite course(s) shall be transferred. Once a grade-level course has been validated, all preceding courses in that content area are recorded as validated.

SENIOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

Except in the case of a bona fide change in residence or other circumstances equally valid for making an exception, a student is not to be graduated from high school unless he has been in continuous attendance therein during the entire high school year immediately preceding the date of graduation.

STUDENTS ENTERING WHO HAVE NOT ATTENDED ANY SCHOOL PREVIOUSLY THIS YEAR.

Students who are not seventeen and enter after day five.

If it can be documented that a student is transferring from a system which had just started school (no more than five days into the semester) then the student may register. His/her semester average will be calculated by the average of the grades received after registration. The responsibility for mastering content already presented prior to the student's enrollment rests with the student. Teachers will make information and materials available to students and will assist newly enrolled students in any ways which are practical. However, re-teaching of previous content, administering additional tests, or reviewing the course is not practical.

If a student has been truant from this or other school systems, the student will receive a zero for each grade that the student has missed. These zeros will be averaged in with the grades he/she earns from that point.

Students who are over seventeen and enter after day five.

Students up to age 19 who are on track to graduate can no longer be denied enrollment in county school systems solely based on their age. School personnel will complete a transcript audit with the student to determine the student's standing with credits and needs to meet graduation requirements.

Based on the IEP team's decision, students with disabilities may return to the school district up to the age of 21 to address transition services (only applies to students working towards essential and alternate achievement pathways).

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY FOR TRANSFERS ACCORDING TO THE ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

A student that enrolls in one school and later transfers to, or enrolls in, another school shall not be eligible immediately to represent the latter school in any athletic contest. See the section pertaining to Eligibility for Participation in Extracurricular Activities for a detailed explanation. The rules and regulations for athletic eligibility for transfers according to the Alabama High School Athletic Association may be found at www.AHSAA.com

HOMELESS, MIGRANT, NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING, OR DISABLED

Children who are zoned to attend the Sumter County School System and who are homeless, migrant, non-English speaking, immigrant, or disabled will have access to a free, appropriate education. McKinney-Vento homeless, migrant or non-English speaking students and/or their parents/guardians should contact the Sumter County School System's Director of Federal Programs at (205) 652-9605 ext. 1101. Students with disabilities and/or their parents or guardians should contact the Sumter County School System's Special Education Coordinator at (205) 652-9605, ext. 1212.

THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR STUDENTS

Immunization

Students entering school, including those entering pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or 1st grade, those from out of state, and those from nonpublic schools, will be required to submit proof of all up-to-date immunizations as required by law. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to have their children immunized and to provide such proof to the principal of the school that the student is to attend.

Exceptions to Immunization

In the absence of an epidemic or immediate threat, parent(s) or guardian(s) shall file with school authorities a signed, written statement that immunization measures conflict with their religious tenets or practices. Exceptions may also be made due to medical reasons if a student has a written statement from their doctor excusing them from such immunizations.

Hospitalizations

If your child has experienced hospitalization related to an accident/injury or chronic illness, please notify the school administration and/or the school nurse for required accommodations. This will allow for a smooth transition and seamless reentry to school.

Acute and Chronic Health Conditions

Parents/guardians of students attending SCSS must complete a Confidential Student Health Assessment form, which must be kept on file in the school health office. If the student's health information/condition changes, this form must be updated annually or sooner. Any student who has a chronic or severe health condition (diabetes, asthma, seizures, blood disorders, heart problems, etc.) must have information from the student's doctor that defines the condition(s), notes any restrictions/limitations, and provides an emergency plan of care for this student.

Parents or guardians of students with acute or chronic diseases, illnesses, conditions, or issues should contact the school nurse if the child requires assistance.

Based on individual student health information, the school nurse will develop an Individualized Health Care Plan, Specific Action Plan, or Fact Sheet and communicate with school personnel to implement an appropriate plan.

Communicable Diseases

Students may be excluded from school to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. A student with a communicable or contagious disease or parasite shall be ineligible to attend school until such time as appropriate treatment has been administered and/or the student is declared safe to return to school by the school principal or their designee, and/or if cleared by a physician. Students should be fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. A student should not come to school if they have a fever greater than 100 degrees or complain of feeling ill. Students should be free of vomiting, diarrhea, and feeling poorly for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Signs and symptoms when a child should not be at school or in contact with other children may include the following: runny nose with cloudy or yellow/green discharge with congestion and fever; frequent cough or uncontrollable coughing and fever; diarrhea or vomiting and fever; pink eye/red eye with complaint of burning/itching and thick white/yellow drainage; skin infection or skin rash not already evaluated by a doctor; strep throat, scarlet fever, flu, positive COVID-19 test, new loss of taste/smell sensation, sore throat, or other viral/bacterial illnesses. Contagious diseases include, but are not limited to, measles, chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough, flu, COVID-19, viral infections, strep throat, scarlet fever, diphtheria, conjunctivitis, ringworm, impetigo, scabies, rash, and/or skin infection, or other diseases diagnosed as contagious.

School Health Screenings

To ensure that all students can benefit optimally from their educational experiences, school nurses or school-based health programs may perform routine health screenings (vision, hearing, spinal, etc.), mass screenings, state-mandated screenings, or screenings by referral from parents and/or teachers. At times, nursing students from approved nursing programs may observe and/or assist school nurses with screenings. If a parent does NOT authorize the school to screen their child, the parent must notify the child's school nurse in writing.

Heavy Backpacks

For more information about the potential health impact of heavy backpacks and proactive measures to avoid injury, visit www.bacsupport.com.

Meningococcal Disease and Vaccine

- o Meningococcal disease is an illness caused by bacteria. It is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children 2–18 years of age in the U.S. Meningitis is a term that describes inflammation of the tissues surrounding the brain and spinal cord. Meningococcal disease can be very serious, even life-threatening in 48 hours or less. The bacteria that cause meningococcal disease are very common.
- o Symptoms of meningococcal disease are similar to influenza and may include sudden onset of high fever, headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting, rash, increased sensitivity to light, confusion, and severe aches and pain in the muscles, joints, chest, or belly.
- o The disease is spread through exchange of respiratory droplets or saliva with an infected person (e.g., kissing, coughing, sneezing, sharing drinking glasses and eating utensils, close or lengthy contact, and among people who share a room or live in the same household).
- o The meningococcal vaccine is recommended for all children 11-12 years of age, and a booster dose is recommended at age 16-18. High school seniors should also consider obtaining the meningococcal vaccine prior to entering college, especially if they are planning on living in a dormitory. Parents should contact their family physician or the local health department for more information on meningococcal disease and vaccine.

- o Additional resources for information about meningococcal disease and the vaccine can be found on the following websites:
 - o <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html>
 - o adph.org/immunization/assets/meningococcaldiseaseandvaccineflyer.pdf
 - o www.MeningitisB.com

Influenza (Flu) Vaccine: What You Need to Know

- o Influenza (“flu”) is a contagious disease that spreads around the U.S. annually, usually between October and May. Flu is caused by influenza viruses and is spread mainly by coughing, sneezing, and close contact. Anyone can get the flu. Flu strikes suddenly and can last several days.
- o Symptoms vary by age but can include fever/chills, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, cough, headache, and runny or stuffy nose. Flu can also lead to pneumonia and blood infections and cause diarrhea and seizures in children. If you have a medical condition, such as heart or lung disease, flu can make it worse. Flu is more dangerous for some people, especially infants and those with weakened immune systems.
- o The flu vaccine can keep you from getting the flu, make it less severe if you do get it, and keep you from spreading it to your family and other people.
- o A dose of flu vaccine is recommended every flu season. Children 6 months through 8 years of age may need two doses during the same flu season. Everyone else needs only one dose each flu season. Each year, a new flu vaccine is made to protect against three or four viruses likely to cause disease in the upcoming flu season. Some people should not get the vaccine and/or should first discuss it with their family physician. Parents should contact their family physician or the local health department for more information on influenza and the vaccine.
- o Additional resources for information about influenza disease and the vaccine can be found on the following websites:
 - o <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html>
 - o adph.org/immunization/assets/meningococcaldiseaseandvaccineflyer.pdf
 - o www.MeningitisB.com

Tetanus-Diphtheria-Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine Requirement for School

- o Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis are very serious diseases caused by bacteria. Tetanus (lockjaw) is rare in the U.S. It causes painful muscle tightening and stiffness, usually all over the body. Diphtheria is also rare in the U.S. It can cause a thick coating to form in the back of the throat and lead to breathing problems, heart failure, paralysis, and death. Pertussis (whooping cough) causes severe coughing spells, which can cause difficulty breathing, vomiting, and disturbed sleep. It can lead to weight loss, incontinence, rib fractures, pneumonia, and death.
- o Diphtheria and pertussis are spread from person to person through secretions from coughing or sneezing. Tetanus enters the body through cuts, scratches, or wounds.
- o The Tdap vaccine can protect adolescents and adults from tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis.

All students 11 and older entering the 6th grade in Alabama schools must have a tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine. Each pupil 11 or older who enters the 6th grade will be required to have a new certificate of immunization (COI). Adolescents who have already received a booster dose of Td are encouraged to receive a dose of Tdap. Parents should contact their family physician or the local health department for more information.

- o Additional resources for information about tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and the Tdap vaccine can be found on the following websites:
 - o www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/tdap.pdf
 - o www.adph.org/immunization/assets/DTaP.pdf
- o CDC 2021 Immunization Schedules:
 - o www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html

STUDENT MEDICATION PROCEDURES

The goal of the school system regarding the administration of medication during school hours is to assist students in maintaining an optimal state of wellness, thus enhancing the educational experience. During the school year, parents are encouraged to give medication to the student when the student is not in school or participating in school activities. We request that parents give once-a-day (a.m.) medications and “long-acting” or “time- released” a.m. medications to their child. Students are best prepared to learn when their medications are administered at home in the morning. Once- a-day and twice-a-day medication should be given at home. Medication prescribed three times a day should be given at home in the morning, after school, and at bedtime. Contact the nurse’s office if there are other special conditions that need to be cleared by HealthServices.

The following requirements provide schools, parents, students, and health professionals with the guidance necessary to provide safe and proper assistance with medication in schools.

- a. **ALL** medications must be delivered to the school nurse or designated school personnel by the student’s parent or the parent’s designated responsible adult, in the original container. All prescription medication must be in a correctly labeled prescription container (which includes student’s name, licensed prescriber’s name, name of medication, strength, dosage, time interval, route, and date of drug’s discontinuation when applicable).
 - b. All non-prescription medication must be in an original, unopened, sealed container of the drug, identifying the medication and the entire manufacturer’s labeling plus the student’s name (written legibly on the container). Do not under any circumstances send medication to school in a Ziploc bag or container other than the original container. This medication will not be given, and parents will be contacted to pick up the medication.
 - c. The parent shall give the first dose of a new medication or a change in dosage (increase or decrease) of a current medication at home, with the exception of emergency medications (e.g., EpiPen injection) in case of a possible allergic reaction.
 - d. One of the following criteria must be met before any Sumter County Board of Education employee can assist with medication administration in the school setting:
 - The employee must have successfully completed the Alabama State Department of Education and the Alabama Board of Nursing “Curriculum to Teach Unlicensed School Personnel How to Assist with Medications in the School Setting.”
 - The employee must have successfully completed the Alabama Health Services Diabetic Curriculum Training in order to become an Unlicensed Diabetic Assistant (UDA). The UDA will assist the school nurse with the care needed to support students with diabetic medical needs according to the student’s IHP and medical authorizations up to and including the administration of injectable medications specific to the student’s diabetes.
 - Possession of an active Alabama license to practice as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse.
1. For all **prescription and non-prescription** medication delivered to designated school personnel:
 - A completed School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization (PPA) Form signed by the licensed prescriber and parent must be submitted and on file before any prescription or non-prescription medication (non-prescription medicine requires the parent’s signature only; not a licensed prescriber) can be given at school, with the exception of sunscreen and insect repellents. The signed prescriber’s authorization (PPA) is required at the time of the order and remains valid for one calendar year (or as indicated by the prescriber).
 - Students may possess and apply federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulated over-the-counter sunscreen at school and at school-based events.

- If a parent is asking a school board employee to apply sunscreen or insect repellent, the parent must present to the nurse a PPA containing a parent or guardian signature (no licensed prescriber signature required).
- All labeled bottle instructions for sunscreen and insect repellents must be followed.
- The first application of sunscreen products is recommended to be applied at home prior to school when outdoor activity is planned. Sun protective clothing is also recommended.
- If the medication order is changed during the school year by the prescriber, a new School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form (PPA) must be completed by the licensed prescriber and parent/guardian.
- The designated school personnel and parent/guardian must count all medications upon delivery/return to and from school and document the number of tablets, capsules, inhalers, or other forms of medication delivered to and from the school.
- Please provide over-the-counter medication in the smallest quantity/container available, e.g., travel-size bottles of Tylenol, antacids, and Benadryl.
- All over-the-counter medications and supplies/food items needed to assist with medication administration (e.g., special cups/utensils, apple sauce, pudding, juice, crackers, bottled water) must be provided by the parent. The school does not provide/stock over-the-counter medications (e.g., Tylenol, antibiotic ointment, Pepto-Bismol, and hydrocortisone). (Over-the-counter medications can only be kept at school for two weeks at a time (a new PPA form is required after two weeks); if medicine is required for longer than one month a PPA (prescriber/parent authorization form) signed by a licensed prescriber will be required)
- Essential oils, herbal products, dietary supplements, and other natural substances are not recommended to be administered at school without the explicit order of an authorized prescriber, parent authorization, verification that the product is safe to administer to children in the prescribed dosage, and reasonable information regarding therapeutic and untoward effects.
- Medication will not be accepted if the medication appears to be altered or tampered with.

2. Medication Labeling

- For prescription medications, a current pharmacy labeled container is required, which includes the student's name, licensed prescriber's name, name of medication, strength, dosage, time interval, route, and date of drug's discontinuation when applicable. All asthma inhalers must have the prescription label on either the canister or the prescription box. This includes asthma inhalers carried by students who have been approved to carry and self-administer.
- The parent shall provide nonprescription medication in an original, unopened, sealed container of the drug identifying the medication and the entire manufacturer's labeling plus the student's name (written legibly on the container).
- School personnel will not administer medication when there is any discrepancy (e.g., label different from instruction or contents, label is unclear, or label torn). This medication **will not be given** until clarification is obtained.

3. Medication Storage at School

- All medication must be stored in the original pharmacy's or manufacturer's labeled containers in such a manner as to render them safe and effective.
- Medication will be stored in a securely locked, clean container or cabinet unless the licensed prescriber authorizes a different arrangement (including but not limited to asthma inhalers, EpiPens, and emergency medications) for specific students.
- It is recommended that no more than a 30-day, school-day supply of any medication be stored at school.

- The parent shall pick up the student's unused medication (when the medicine is completed, out of date, discontinued, within three days after a field trip, or the last day of the school year). The school nurse or other school personnel designated by the school nurse in the presence of a witness will destroy medications not picked up by the parent/guardian. Any unauthorized medications will be discarded after one week if not retrieved by the parent/guardian.

4. Documentation of Medication

- The school nurse or delegated school personnel and parent must count, and document on the Medication Administration Record, all medications delivered to the school.
- A daily Medication Administration Record will be completed for each medication given to the student.

5. Self-Medication and Carrying Medication by Students

- Upon obtaining permission to self-administer approved medication, a student shall be permitted to self- carry or possess and/or self-administer approved medication (usually emergency medications), according to the orders of the prescriber, at any time while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored event (Kyle Graddy Act, 2019).
- Emergency medications and approved medications must have a current pharmacy label that includes the student's name, licensed prescriber's name, name of medication, strength, dosage, time interval, route, and date of drug's discontinuation when applicable. All asthma inhalers must have the prescription label on either the canister or the prescription box.
- Students must have an order/authorization from a licensed prescriber and signed parent/guardian permission (School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form) to self-medicate and carry medications on their persons (e.g., EpiPen, asthma inhalers, insulin).
- For students who have met the criteria to self-medicate, Sumter County Schools' nurses must be reasonably assured that the student is able to identify and select the appropriate medication, knows the frequency and purpose of the medication ordered, and follows the school's self-medication procedures. (e.g., safety and security precautions, proper labeling).
- A student is not permitted to possess a controlled substance, as defined in the Medication Curriculum, on school property.

6. For students who need to receive medication at school activities away from the school, such as field trips or outside of school hours, the local educational agency will follow guidelines from the Alabama State Department of Education and the Alabama Board of Nursing "Curriculum to Teach Unlicensed School Personnel How to Assist with Medication in the School Setting." The principal will be responsible for ensuring that an actively licensed individual or trained medication assistant will be available as necessitated by the medical needs of the students.

HOMEBOUND SERVICES

The Sumter County School System provides homebound instructional services for eligible students. For students with a disability, or who are suspected of having a disability, the eligibility requirements for homebound services, and the services to be provided during the homebound placement, will be made exclusively by the IEP team or Section 504 team and will be based upon the individual needs of each student. Eligibility for students with a disability, or who are suspected of having a disability, will not be subject to the District's restrictions for homebound services that may apply to students who are not disabled or not suspected of having a disability. For any non-disabled student, eligibility will be considered upon the written documentation provided by a physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist. For non-disabled students, the written documentation provided must justify an expected absence from school of at least four weeks.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

1. An Individual Education Program (IEP) meeting will be conducted with appropriate team membership to determine if homebound instructional services are appropriate based on the student's needs.
2. Homebound services will be considered by the IEP team for students receiving special education services. School staff will convene an IEP meeting to discuss and revise the IEP, as appropriate.
3. Provide a copy of the amended IEP to the Special Education Department.
4. Schedule an IEP Team meeting to review the LRE within the appropriate timeframe.
5. Assure that the homebound teacher is notified of any changes to homebound services after any subsequent IEP Team meeting.

SECTION 504

1. A 504 team meeting will be conducted with appropriate team membership to determine if homebound instructional services are appropriate based on the student's needs.
2. If homebound services are needed, the 504 team will develop a plan for the appropriate services to be provided.
3. Provide a copy of the amended 504 plan to the Director of Student Services.
4. Schedule a 504 Team meeting to review the LRE within 30-45 days.
5. Assure that the homebound teacher is notified of any changes to homebound services after any subsequent 504 Team meeting.

NON-DISABLED

Eligibility for homebound instructional services for students without a disability (students who do not qualify for special education or Section 504) will be considered based upon the written documentation provided by a physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist. For non-disabled students, the written documentation provided must justify an expected absence from school of at least four weeks.

1. The parent or guardian must submit a Homebound Instructional Services Referral Form to the school.
2. The parent or guardian must provide the school with an update from the attending physician every four weeks.
3. The principal and /or principal's designee, in consultation with the Director Federal Programs, will evaluate the request for services and determine eligibility.
4. The Homebound Instructional Services Student Referral form is to be completed and submitted to the central office in a timely manner.
5. A student will be counted absent from school prior to the date services have been approved. After approval for services, a student must be counted present when calculating attendance.
6. The services to be provided will be developed through a collaborative effort of the school principal, classroom teacher(s), parents, and may include any others who have knowledge of the student's individual needs.
7. The student's classroom teachers will work collaboratively with the homebound teacher to provide course content standards, class assignments, and other projects as dictated by the homebound instructional plan.
8. At the conclusion of the student's homebound placement, a transition plan for the student to return to school will include a referral to the local school's 504 team to assure all needs are met.
9. Maintaining good communication throughout the homebound placement is essential, and is a responsibility shared by the parent, school, and homebound teacher.

STUDENT PREGNANCIES

A female student who is or becomes pregnant while attending school shall notify either the counselor, the school nurse, the assistant Principal, or the Principal as soon as the pregnancy has been confirmed. In order to remain in school, a pregnant student will provide the Principal with a written statement from the attending licensed physician, including his/her recommendation concerning the advisability of school attendance of the pregnant student. If a student has difficulty in scheduling an initial appointment, a

student may remain in school until the time of the appointment (not longer than six weeks) with a note from her parent or guardian who would assume liability for her attendance. The student shall provide an additional statement from her physician every four weeks verifying that she is physically able to continue her attendance in school. In no case will a pregnant student be removed from school or intentionally discriminated against solely because of pregnancy.

REGULATIONS APPLICABLE DURING SEMESTER OF DELIVERY

A pregnant student who chooses to remain in school during the semester in which she expects to deliver the child shall be governed by the same attendance policies, appeals, procedures, minimum course requirements, and code of conduct as are applicable to all other students. Some courses, such as physical education, may need accommodations.

ATTENDANCE

In order to continue a responsible relationship with the school and to maintain grades and academic standing during the time the student is out of school to deliver the child, the student should meet the following responsibilities:

1. Remain in school as long as the attending physician determines that it is medically advisable.
2. The student must complete all work assignments as may be assigned by school personnel or homebound teacher as applicable on a timely basis.
3. After the birth of the child, the student must return to school as soon as the attending physician determines that the student is able. A written statement from the student's physician must be presented to school officials certifying that the student is able to resume normal school activities. Following delivery, a student will qualify for homebound instruction for a period of up to six weeks. If delivery complications require homebound instruction for longer than six weeks, a student is eligible to request homebound instruction.

ABSENCES-ANTICIPATED TIME OF LESS THAN FOUR (4) WEEKS

If the anticipated absence from school will not extend beyond a four-week period, the student must schedule a meeting with her teacher to plan a program of schoolwork assignments prepared by her teachers. It shall be the responsibility of the student to insure a member of her family comes to the school weekly to pick up such work.

ABSENCES-ANTICIPATED TIME OF MORE THAN FOUR (4) WEEKS

If the anticipated absence from school will extend beyond a four-week period, the student must meet with school officials to complete application forms and materials to qualify for Homebound Instruction. When a student is classified as "Homebound", she must anticipate an absence from school for more than four weeks and have a statement on file from her physician verifying the illness/condition. Once a student has been approved from homebound instruction, that student is not counted absent in calculating attendance statistics. A student will be counted absent prior to the date that homebound study has been approved.

TECHNOLOGY

RESPONSIBLE USE

The Board provides its students and staff access to various technological resources, including digital devices and Internet connectivity. These resources provide opportunities to enhance learning and improve communication within the school community and with the larger global community. Through the school district's technological resources, users can observe events worldwide, interact with others on various subjects, and access current and in-depth information. The Board intends that students and employees benefit from these resources while remaining within the bounds of safe, legal, and responsible use. Accordingly, the Board establishes this policy to govern student and employee use of school district technological resources. This policy applies regardless of whether such use occurs on or off school district property, and it applies to all school district technological resources, including but not limited to computer networks and connections; the resources, tools, and learning environments made available by or on the networks; and all devices that connect to those networks.

Policy Statement

The primary goal of the technology environment is to support the educational and instructional endeavors of Sumter County Schools students and employees. Using any and all technology resources is a privilege, not a right.

A. Expectations for Use of School Technological Resources

School district technological resources may be used only by students, staff, and others expressly authorized by the Technology Department. Using school district technological resources, including access to the Internet, is a privilege, not a right. Individual users of the school district's technological resources are responsible for their behavior and communications when using those resources. Responsible use of school district technological resources is use that is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of student learning. Each user is responsible for respecting others in the school community and on the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. General student and employee behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable Board policies, the Student Code of Conduct, and other regulations and school rules, apply to using the Internet and other school technological resources. In addition, anyone who uses school district computers or electronic devices or accesses the school network or the Internet using school district resources must comply with the additional rules for responsible use listed in Section B below. These rules are intended to clarify expectations for conduct but should not be construed as all-inclusive. Furthermore, all students must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct. Before using the Internet, all students must be trained in appropriate online behavior.

All students and employees must be informed annually of the requirements of this policy and the methods by which they may obtain a copy of it. Before using school district technological resources, students and employees must annually sign a statement indicating that they understand and will strictly comply with these requirements. Failure to adhere to these requirements will result in disciplinary action, including revocation of user privileges. Under applicable state and federal law, willful misuse may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.

B. Rules for Use of School Technological Resources

1. School district technological resources are provided for school-related purposes.
2. Acceptable uses of such technological resources are limited to responsible, efficient, and legal activities that support learning and teaching. Use of school district technological resources for political purposes or for commercial gain or profit is prohibited. Student personal use of school district technological resources simply for amusement or entertainment is also

3. prohibited. Because some incidental and occasional personal use by employees is inevitable, the Board permits infrequent and brief personal use by employees so long as it occurs on personal time, does not interfere with school district business, and is not otherwise prohibited by Board policy or procedure.
4. Under no circumstance may software purchased by the school district be copied for personal use or in violation of the End User License Agreement (EULA) in force with the software.
5. Students and employees must comply with all applicable laws, including those relating to copyrights and trademarks, confidential information, and public records. Any use that violates state or federal law is strictly prohibited. Plagiarism of Internet resources will be treated in the same manner as any other incidents of plagiarism, as stated in the Student Code of Conduct.
6. No user of technological resources, including a person sending or receiving electronic communications, may engage in creating, intentionally viewing, accessing, downloading, storing, printing, or transmitting images, graphics (including still or moving pictures), sound files, text file documents, messages, or other material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, pornographic, harassing, abusive, or considered to be harmful to minors. All users must comply with all applicable Board policies when using school district technology.
7. The use of anonymous proxies to circumvent content filtering is prohibited.
8. Users may not install or use any Internet-based file-sharing program designed to facilitate sharing of copyrighted material.
9. Users of technological resources may not send electronic communications fraudulently (i.e., by misrepresenting the identity of the sender).
10. Users must respect the privacy of others. When using email, chat rooms, blogs, or other forms of electronic communication, students must not reveal personal identifying information or information that is private or confidential, such as the home address or telephone number, credit or checking account information, or Social Security number of themselves or fellow students. In addition, school employees must not disclose on school district websites or web pages or elsewhere on the Internet any personally identifiable, private, or confidential information concerning students (including names, addresses, or pictures) without the written permission of a parent or guardian or an eligible student, except as otherwise permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or Board policy. Users also may not forward or post personal communications without the author's prior consent.
11. Users may not intentionally or negligently damage computers, computer systems, electronic devices, software, computer networks, or data of any user connected to school district technological resources. Users may not knowingly or negligently transmit computer viruses or self-replicating messages or deliberately try to degrade or disrupt system performance. Users must scan any downloaded files for viruses.
12. Users may not create or introduce games, network communications programs, or any foreign program or software onto any school district computer, electronic device, or network without the express permission of the superintendent or director of instructional technology or designee.
13. Users are prohibited from engaging in unauthorized or unlawful activities, such as "hacking" or using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers, computer systems, or accounts. Users are prohibited from using another individual's ID or password for any technological resource.
14. Users may not read, alter, change, block, execute, or delete files or communications belonging to another user without the owner's express prior permission.
15. Employees shall not use passwords or user IDs for any data system (e.g., PowerSchool SIS, NexGen, time-keeping software, etc.), for an unauthorized or improper purpose.
16. If a user identifies a security problem on a technological resource, they must immediately notify a system administrator. Users must not demonstrate the problem to other users. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access.

17. Teachers shall make reasonable efforts to supervise students' use of the Internet during instructional time, to ensure that such use is appropriate for the student's age and the circumstances and purpose of the use.
18. Views may be expressed on the Internet or other technological resources as representing the view of the school district or part of the school district only with prior approval by the superintendent or designee.
19. Without permission by the Board, users may not connect any personal technologies such as workstations, wireless access points and routers, etc., to a district-owned and -maintained local, wide, or metro area network. Connection of personal devices such as laptops, iPads, smartphones, PDAs, and printers are not permitted and not supported by SCSS technical staff. The Board is not responsible for the content accessed by users who connect to the Internet via their personal mobile telephone technology (e.g., 3G, 4G service).
20. Students may not use another student's shared personal mobile device (e.g., sharing a 4G LTE hotspot) for gaining access to the Internet.
21. Teachers may not use a personal mobile device to provide Internet access to students (e.g., sharing a 4G LTE hotspot). Such connections are not filtered, and the Board is not responsible for the content accessed by users who connect to the Internet via their personal mobile telephone technology.
22. Users must back up data and other important files regularly.
23. Those who use district-owned and -maintained technologies to access the Internet at home are responsible for both the cost and configuration of such use.
24. Students who are issued district-owned and -maintained technological devices (i-pads, laptops, etc.) must also follow these guidelines:
 - b. Keep the device secure and damage free.
 - c. Use the provided protective case at all times.
 - d. Do not loan out the device, charger, or cords.
 - e. Do not leave the device in a vehicle.
 - f. Do not leave the device unattended.
 - g. Do not eat or drink while using the device or have food or drinks in close proximity to the device.
 - h. Do not check the device as luggage at the airport.
 - i. Do not allow pets near the device.
 - j. Do not place the device on the floor or on a sitting area such as a chair or couch.
 - k. Do not leave the device near table or desk edges.
 - l. Do not stack objects on top of the device.
 - m. Do not leave the device outside.
 - n. Do not use the device near water, such as a pool.
25. Back up data and other important files regularly. SCSS will at times perform maintenance on the devices by imaging. All files not backed up to server storage space or other storage devices will be deleted during this process.

c. Restricted Material on the Internet

The Internet and electronic communications offer fluid environments in which students may access or be exposed to materials and information from diverse and rapidly changing sources, including some that may be harmful to students. The Board recognizes that it is impossible to predict with certainty what information on the Internet students may access or obtain. Nevertheless, school district personnel shall take reasonable precautions to prevent students from accessing material and information that is obscene, pornographic, or otherwise harmful to minors, including violence, nudity, or graphic language that does not serve a legitimate educational purpose. The superintendent shall ensure that technology protection measures are used as provided in the Internet Safety Policy and are disabled or minimized only when law and Board policy permit.

D. Parental Consent

The Board recognizes that parents of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards their children should follow when using media and information sources. Accordingly, before a student can independently access the Internet, the student's parent must be made aware of the possibility that the student could access inappropriate material while engaged in independent use of the Internet. The parent and student must consent to the student's independent access to the Internet and the monitoring of the student's electronic communication by school personnel. This section is not intended to exclude students from accessing the Internet when strict monitoring/restrictions are in place (e.g., online standardized testing).

In addition, in accordance with the Board's goals and visions for technology, students may require accounts in third-party systems for school-related projects designed to assist students in mastering effective and proper online communications or to meet other educational goals. In such cases, accounts will be created in accordance with SCSS's data governance policy and applicable laws (e.g., FERPA).

E. Privacy

No right of privacy exists in the use of technological resources. Users should not assume that files or communications accessed, downloaded, created, or transmitted using school district technological resources or stored on services or hard drives of individual computers will be private. School district administrators or individuals designated by the superintendent may review files, monitor all communication, and intercept email messages to maintain system integrity and to ensure compliance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations. School district personnel shall monitor the online activities of individuals who access the Internet via a school-owned computer. Under certain circumstances, the Board may be required to disclose such electronic information to law enforcement or other third parties, for example, as a response to a document production request in a lawsuit against the Board, as a response to a public records request, or as evidence of illegal activity in a criminal investigation.

F. Security/Care of Property

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Employees are responsible for reporting information security violations to appropriate personnel. Employees should not demonstrate the suspected security violation to other users. Unauthorized attempts to log on to any school system computer on the Board's network as a system administrator may result in cancellation of user privileges and/or additional disciplinary action. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other systems may be denied access. Users of school district technology resources are expected to respect school district property and be responsible when using the equipment. Users are to follow all instructions regarding the maintenance or care of the equipment. Users may be held responsible for any loss or damage caused by intentional or negligent acts when caring for computers while under their control. The school district is responsible for routine maintenance and standard repairs to the school system computers.

G. Personal Websites

The superintendent may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize school district or individual school names, logos, or trademarks without permission.

H. Students

Though school personnel generally do not monitor students' Internet activity conducted on non-school district devices during non-school hours, when the student's online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the schools, the student may be disciplined in accordance with Board policy (Title 16, Chapter 28B of The Code of Alabama 1975).

I. Volunteers

Volunteers are to maintain an appropriate relationship with students at all times. They are encouraged to block students from viewing personal information on volunteer personal websites or online networking profiles to prevent the possibility that students could view materials that are not age-appropriate. An individual volunteer's relationship with the school district may be terminated if the volunteer engages in inappropriate online interaction with students. Volunteers are subject to the School Volunteers Policy.

J. Disclaimer

The Board makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the service it is providing. The Board will not be responsible for any damages suffered by any user. Such damages include but are not limited to, data loss resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions, whether caused by the school district's or the user's negligence, errors, or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk. The school district expressly disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its Internet services.

Digital Citizenship

Digital citizenship is a concept that helps teachers, technology leaders, and parents understand what students/children/technology users should know to use technology appropriately. Digital citizenship is more than just a teaching tool; it is a way to prepare students/technology users for a society full of technology. Digital citizenship includes the norms of appropriate, responsible technology use. Too often, we see students, as well as adults, who misuse and abuse technology but are not sure how to improve their conduct. The issue is more than what the users do not know; it is what is considered appropriate technology usage. **All students will receive digital citizenship expectations provided as part of the code of conduct orientation.**

Technology in the Educational Program

In alliance with state school technology goals, the Board is committed to establishing and supporting 21st-century information and communications technology systems to foster globally competitive, healthy, and responsible students. The Board recognizes the benefits of digital and technology-enabled teaching and learning resources that provide the ability to easily customize curriculum, provide access to current information, and enable access to quality materials at a lower cost than traditional materials. To that end, the Board intends to move to classroom digital and technology-enabled teaching and learning resources aligned with the Alabama Course of Study Standards and Alabama College and Career Ready standards as they become available. In addition, to the extent that funding permits, the Board will endeavor to ensure that all students have access to personal digital and technology-enabled teaching and learning devices to foster the 21st-century skills necessary for future-ready learners.

The Board expects that information and communications technologies will be integrated across the curriculum and used to support student achievement. Such technologies will also support programs and activities that promote safe schools and healthy and responsible students. The curriculum team should provide suggestions for integrating technological resources (as defined in Section A below) into the educational program. School administrators and teachers are encouraged to develop additional strategies for integrating technological resources across the curriculum and utilizing the power of technology to improve learning outcomes while making more efficient use of resources. The strategies should be included in the school improvement plan if they require the transfer of funds or otherwise

relate to any mandatory or optional components of the school improvement plan. The superintendent shall oversee the development and submit to the Board for approval a local school district technology plan aligned with state guidelines and applicable federal rules. The superintendent shall oversee the incorporation of this plan into school district strategic planning efforts and include various stakeholders, such as curriculum leaders, teachers, administrators, and representatives from technology services, instructional technology, finance, and other departments as required. The plan will explore partnerships with business/industry to support student and community needs. Once the Board has approved the plan, the superintendent shall oversee ensuring that expenditures on school information and communications technologies are made in accordance with the technology plan.

A. Selection of Technological Resources

Technological resources include but are not limited to, the following: (1) hardware, including both fixed and mobile technologies and devices such as desktop computers, laptops, netbooks, tablets, e-readers, PDAs, smartphones, and gaming devices; (2) software; (3) network and telecommunications systems and services; (4) Internet access; (5) multimedia-equipped classrooms; (6) computer classrooms and laboratories; and (7) other existing or emerging mobile communications systems. All technological resources must be purchased and used in a manner consistent with applicable law and Board policy, including laws and policies related to copyright, public records, bidding, and other purchase requirements, accessibility for students with disabilities, staff duties, and standards for student behavior.

Technological resources must meet or exceed the following standards before they may be considered for implementation:

- a. Technological resources must support the Alabama Course of Study and Alabama College and Career-Ready standards, or the school district's programs.
- b. Technological resources must support the school's current use of learning and instructional management technologies.
- c. Technological resources must be compatible with the condition of the network and other infrastructure resources. The technology department shall set minimum standards for technological resources that are purchased or donated. Upgrading, hardware conditions, and similar requirements must be maintained to the highest standards.

B. Deployment of Technology to Schools

The superintendent shall oversee the development of the school district's technology deployment plan. The plan will ensure organized, effective, and efficient means of deploying new information and communications technologies. The superintendent shall develop procedures that outline the strategy of the technology deployment plan.

C. Staff Websites for Educational Purposes

The Board will provide numerous avenues through which teachers can facilitate their instructional programs via websites over the Internet. The Board will provide each teacher with a web space where instructional information should be posted. The Board's use of a learning management system (LMS) enables teachers to set up wikis and blogs to promote student interaction. The Board's LMS is the approved venue for hosting district-created online courses and supplemental content. All content posted on these sites remains the intellectual property of the Board.

There are numerous outside websites where employees can bookmark and compile information to support their instructional goals. These sites are not appropriate venues to serve as substitutes for the employees' use of the district-controlled websites and LMS servers. In many cases, information posted on outside sites becomes the property of the site, and the employee no longer has ownership or control of the content. For this reason, employees should not use these non-district-controlled sites to post information for students without prior written approval from the superintendent or designee and the school principal.

D. Electronic Communication and Other Collaborative Tools

The superintendent is authorized to permit instructional personnel to incorporate email, social networking sites, blogs, wikis, video sharing sites, podcasts, video conferencing, online collaborations, PDAs, instant messaging, texting, virtual learning environments, and/or other forms of direct electronic communications or Web 2.0 applications for educational purposes to the extent the superintendent deems appropriate and in accordance with policies governing employee use of social media. The superintendent shall establish parameters and rules for the use of these tools and shall require instruction for students on how to use such tools safely, effectively, and appropriately. Instructional personnel shall make all reasonable attempts to monitor student online activity and shall otherwise comply with the requirements of the Technology Responsible Use policy when using these tools.

Technology-Related Professional Development

The superintendent shall oversee the planning of a program of technology-enabled professional development that prepares the instructional staff for utilizing digital tools and resources. Professional development shall emphasize technology integration and continuous improvement, including ongoing technology-integrated, online-learning activities throughout the course of study. Professional development shall also address the ethical, legal, and practical issues related to social networking and mobile devices in the classroom and other topics deemed necessary by the superintendent or technology director. School improvement teams should identify any staff development appropriations for technology-related professional development in their school improvement plans. The superintendent and technology director should assist schools in coordinating staff development needs.

SCSS Provided Devices

All students will participate in the SCSS one-to-one (1:1) initiative and have access to tablets/i-pads to carry back and forth between school and home. Students are eligible to check out laptops, if needed, upon completion of the following requirements:

- Parent and student signature on the Responsible Use Policy
 - Parent signature on SCSS 1:1 Agreement
 - Parent signature on the Device Responsibility Agreement
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SCSS Provided Devices and Change of School

- When a student withdraws and will not be attending a Sumter County School, the iPad, charging cable, and cover, if applicable, must be checked back in before leaving.
 - When a student transfers to another Sumter County School, the student will return their device before exiting. At the time of transfer, the school must notify the inventory manager and the technology coach or technology leader. That person will see that the laptop or tablet remains at the school.
 - When a student is moved to an alternative placement, the best course of action related to the 1:1 laptop will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
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Responsibility for SCSS Devices

Each device is the property of Sumter County Schools and is individually labeled and inventoried (by asset number and device serial number) to the student to whom it has been loaned. Each student who has checked out a device and their parents/guardians are responsible for proper care and use.

Damage to SCSS Devices

- If a student has a problem with a device, the student should report the issue to the school resource manager or student technology support designee, who will conduct an intake and determine the next steps. These will include referring needed repairs to the SCSS Technology Department, determining responsibility, sending a letter to parents if needed, and referring discipline concerns to school administration.
 - Each student will be held accountable for damage to the device issued to them unless there is clear evidence and documentation that someone else caused the damage.
 - School personnel will determine whether to provide a replacement device on a case-by-case basis. As available inventory allows, students will receive a loaner device while their assigned device is being repaired. The loaner device must be returned when the student's originally assigned device is repaired or replaced.
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Loss or Theft of SCSS-Provided Devices

If a device issued to a student is lost or stolen, the student's parent/guardian must file a report with the police department and provide a copy of the police report to the school.

Wireless Communication Devices

Students are allowed to bring wireless communication devices into school buildings and onto school grounds. Wireless communication devices include: cellphone, tablet, laptop, pager, gaming device, smart watch, AirPods, and any other portable electronic device that has the capability of exchanging voice messaging, or other data communication with another electronic device (Policy 6.20).

Unless one of the exceptions listed below applies, wireless communication devices must be kept in their car or turned off and stored off in a Yondr pouch and placed in the student's locker, backpack, purse, or bag during the instructional day, which includes:

- when school is open and in session;
- during class time, lunch, transitions between classes, and any non-instructional periods; and
- any other times outlined in the Code of Conduct or other rules, or are instructed to do so by school staff.

Exceptions to Uses of Wireless Communication Devices:

Students cannot use, operate, or possess a wireless communication device during the instructional day except under the following limited circumstances:

- The use, operation, and/or possession of the device is specifically included in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or an Individualized Health Plan;
 - The use, operation, and/or possession of the device is for educational or learning purposes under the supervision of school personnel; and
 - The use, operation, and/or possession occurs during an emergency threatening the life or safety of the student or another person.
 - Phones may be used on buses and on school campuses OUTSIDE of the instructional day. The instructional day begins with the tardy bell and ends with the dismissal bell.
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Use of Yondr Pouches

- Each 7th – 12th grader will be assigned a YONDR pouch. They will write their names on their pouch. They will be responsible for ensuring their devices are secured daily.
- Upon arrival, students will turn their electronic devices off, place them in the pouch, and store them in a locker, backpack, purse, bag etc. until the end of the school day.
- Pouches will be unlocked as students leave for the day. Prior access to unlock cases will not be granted.

The school is not responsible for the theft, loss, or damage to any wireless communication devices brought onto campus by a student.

YONDR POUCH VIOLATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

If a student's phone is visible at all during the day (using device or device is not in a YONDR pouch):

First Offense: Student will be asked to report to the office with a referral, surrender device to administrator.

1st Offense Consequence: Student will be asked to report to the office with a referral, surrender device to administrator. Student will be asked to pouch/re-pouch phone and receive warning. Guidelines will be reviewed with the student. Student will be allowed to pick up phone at the end of the day. Student will be assigned to ISS for 3 days.

Second Offense: Student will be asked to report to the office with a referral, surrender device to administrator.

2nd Offense Consequence: Student will be asked to pouch/re-pouch phone. Parent /guardian MUST come pick up phone. Parent/guardian and student must sign an agreement regarding the guidelines and following consequences. Student will be assigned to ISS for 3 days.

Third Offense: Student will be asked to report to the office with a referral, surrender device to administrator.

3rd Offense Consequence: Student will be asked to pouch/re-pouch phone. Parent /guardian MUST come pick up phone. Parent/guardian and student must review the agreement regarding the guidelines and following consequences. Student will be assigned to ISS for 4 days.

Fourth Offense: Student will be asked to report to the office with a referral, surrender device to administrator.

4th Offense Consequence: Student will be asked to pouch/re-pouch phone. Parent /guardian MUST come pick up phone. Parent/guardian and student must review the agreement regarding the guidelines and following consequences. Student will be assigned to ISS for 5 days.

Fifth Offense: Student will be asked to report to the office with a referral, surrender device to administrator.

5th Offense Consequence: Student will be asked to pouch/re-pouch phone. Parent /guardian MUST come pick up phone. Parent/guardian and student must review the agreement regarding the guidelines and following consequences. Student will be assigned to Alternative Learning Program for 5 Days.

Sixth Offense: Student will be asked to report to the office with a referral, surrender device to administrator.

6th Offense Consequence: Student will be asked to pouch/re-pouch phone. Parent /guardian MUST come pick up phone. Parent/guardian and student must review the agreement regarding the guidelines and following consequences. Student will be assigned to Alternative Learning Program for 10 Days.

Subsequent Offenses: Pending Administrative Hearing

REFUSAL TO POUCH DEVICE

If a student refuses to pouch or surrender device to be pouches ...

1. Student will receive Disciplinary Referral.
2. Student will be assigned to Alternative Program pending Administrative Hearing.
3. Parent/Guardian will be contacted to remove student from school premises for the day.

STUDENT DAMAGES YONDR POUCH

If a student damages a pouch....

2. Disciplinary Referral
 3. Assigned to Alternative Learning Program pending Administrative Hearing
 4. Parent/Guardian will be contacted to remove student from school premises for the day.
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CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Board subscribes to the premise that the central purpose of public education is to provide each student the opportunity to develop to his/her maximum potential. To this end, the Board will encourage the development and implementation of educational programs that will educate the total student: mentally, physically, socially, emotionally, culturally, and morally. Thus, the guiding philosophical tenet of the Board in instructionally related matters will be to operate educational programs in which each student will have the opportunity to learn and to grow based on his/her abilities, interests, and motivation. The Board understands that, though all students will not learn all things equally well, all should have an equal opportunity in the pursuit of education; thus, the Board will make every attempt to balance the school system's educational programs to provide for the varied interests and needs of all students and to provide the appropriate courses required by law and by the State Board of Education policies and resolutions.

The Board maintains that curriculum development should be a continuous process that reflects the assessed needs of students in the Sumter County School System and should be based on current educational practices validated by research. The Superintendent or designee(s) shall be responsible for coordinating and maintaining the instructional program in accordance with the provisions of the State Constitution, State statutes, resolutions of the State Board of Education, and policies of the Board.

KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten is available to ALL children who meet the legal age requirement. Kindergarten students are expected to follow the attendance policies of the school system.

ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

English Language Arts	Reading	School Counseling Services
Mathematics	Physical Education	Computer Awareness Health
Social Studies	Science	

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

English Language Arts	Science	Four-Year Plan Development (8 th grade)
Mathematics	Health	
Social Studies	Computer Science Elective	*Extracurricular Activities of Athletics and Clubs
Physical Education	School Counseling Services	

HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

English Language Arts	Health	Physical Education
Mathematics	Career Preparation	Electives
Social Studies	Beginning Kinesiology	Academic Electives
Physical Education	Career & Technical Education	School Counseling Services
Science	Foreign Language	

CAREER CLUSTERS, PATHWAYS, AND COURSEWORK

Career clusters in Alabama's curriculum include courses that identify academic and technical knowledge and skills needed for students to pursue a wide range of career opportunities. Courses provide rigor and relevance for students by linking school-based learning with career-related experiences. Career clusters provide the framework for what students need to know and be able to do. The sixteen clusters are agriculture, food, and natural resources; architecture and construction; arts, audio-visual technology, and communications; business management and administration; education and training; finance; government and public administration; health science; hospitality and tourism; human services; information technology; law, public safety, corrections, and security; manufacturing; marketing; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; and transportation, distribution, and logistics.

All students who are employed through the Work-Based Learning/CO-OP Programs and/or leave the school campus to participate/enroll in a learning environment with business/industry must be prepared to adhere to industry required/OSHA standards or drug testing.

PROMOTION, EARNING CREDITS, AND GRADING

Each teacher is expected to determine the weighted value of individual grades on tests, papers, projects, and other learning/evaluative exercises and to assign grades within accepted standards as stated below. Academic grades cannot be used as punishment for misbehavior nor as a reward for good behavior.

Letter Grade Numerical Grade (100-point scale) Grade Point Average (Policy 7.03)

A	90-100	4.00
B	80-89	3.00
C	70-79	2.00
D	60-69	1.00
F	Below 60	0.00

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY (GRADES K-5)

The process for making decisions about promotion and retention of elementary students should consider various factors, including age, maturity, motor coordination, capacity for learning, and academic progress. The decision-making process should involve the Principal and teacher(s) with THE AUTHORITY FOR DETERMINING PROMOTION AND RETENTION RESTING ENTIRELY WITH THE TEACHER(S) AND PRINCIPAL, except that a kindergarten student may be retained only upon approval/ agreement of the student's parents/guardians. If a student needs to be retained based on the teacher's opinion of the student's academic performance and/or other factors, then the parents/guardians of that student should be informed as early in the school year as possible. In all cases, the decision of whether a student should be promoted or retained shall be made based on which grade placement provides the student a better chance of progressing in his/her educational development.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY (GRADES 6-8)

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 must pass all four courses/subjects (English, mathematics, science, and social studies) and one additional subject. Students who do not pass the required courses/subjects each year will be retained at their current grade level with the following exceptions:

1. Students who do not meet the established criteria for promotion may be retained one time in grades 6- 8 if the student has been previously retained in grades K-5;
2. Students who do not meet the established criteria for promotion may be retained twice in grades 6-8 if the student has not been previously retained in grades K-5;
3. A student should not be retained in middle school if the student will reach his/her sixteenth birthday during the following academic year.

Students will be provided an opportunity to recover up to two courses/subjects during a summer program. Students who do not pass the required core courses/subjects for promotion are strongly encouraged to attend the summer program to pass the required course(s) for promotion. Students may be promoted only at the end of the school year or after attending the summer program. No students will be promoted at midyear.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY (GRADES 9-12)

Students must earn the minimum number of Carnegie units (credits) necessary for grade placement above grade 9 as indicated below:

10th Grade – 5	11th Grade – 12	12th Grade – 19	Graduation (Total) – 24
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PROMOTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Promotion of any student in a special education program with the exception of gifted students must be based on the student's accomplishments of goals stated in the Individualized Education Program in conjunction with all other regular program requirements. However, a special education student (except gifted) may not be placed at any grade level unless the student has attended school for a commensurate number of years equal to the proposed grade placement; that is, for a special education student to be placed at the sixth-grade level, he/she must have been enrolled in school for at least 5 years (Policy: 7.03.3).

CREDIT IMPROVEMENT (GRADES 9-12)

Credit improvement allows students who may need or want to take a course for additional credit an opportunity to do so. Students may attempt credit improvement through obtaining credit, recovering credit and/or repeating credit. The alternative academic and administrative options at and the SCSS Homebound Education Program also utilize credit improvement opportunities for the students.

Admission and eligibility requirements of various organizations are subject to change, and it is the student's responsibility to consult with outside organizations such as universities, the AHSAA, NCAA, etc. to determine how credits earned through credit improvement (advancing credit, obtaining credit, recovering credit and repeating credit) might affect eligibility, admissions, or status.

A credit improvement application is required for participation. The application may be requested from the school. The application must be signed by the parent or guardian, the student, and the high school counselor or administrator.

Credit improvement incorporates the use of technology and curriculum provided through one (or a combination) of the following:

- **ACCESS (Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educations and Students Statewide) Virtual Learning** For more specific information, students should contact their school counselors or visit the ACCESS Virtual Learning website at <http://accessdl.state.al.us/>
NOTE: The NCAA reviews ACCESS courses. Credit Recovery/Credit Advancement courses available through ACCESS are NOT accepted by the NCAA for eligibility purposes.
- **EDGENUITY** – Edgenuity is provided by the Sumter County School System. Specific courses offered through Edgenuity are approved by NCAA. There may be a cost associated with these courses.
- **CORRESPONDENCE/INDEPENDENT STUDY** – Students in grades 9-12 may be approved to take correspondence or independent study courses for credit. Such courses must be offered through institutions recognized by the Alabama State Department of Education or from institutions accredited by a national accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Office of Education. Prior written approval for each correspondence/independent study course must be granted by the school Principal. Correspondence work may be taken only when the curricular offerings deny a student a course he/she particularly needs. It is the student's responsibility to consult with outside organizations such as universities, the AHSAA, NCAA, etc. to determine how credits earned through correspondence/independent study might affect eligibility, admissions, or status.
- **DUAL ENROLLMENT** - Dual enrollment allows eligible high school students to earn credit for a college course on both their high school and college transcripts.

CREDIT ACCELERATION – OBTAINING CREDIT

Students who may need or want to take a course for additional credit may participate in this program. Students can attempt credit obtainment in math, English, science, social studies and elective classes. Unlike credit advancement, students will take the course in its entirety; therefore, a pretest will not be administered. Credit obtainment is an alternative to the traditional approach to course completion. Using this program, students must take the entire course and the course is not weighted. There is not a limit on the number of credits that a student can earn through this program.

Students eligible for credit obtainment will:

- Be a transfer student whose deficit in the required credit(s) is not due to failure of the course OR
- Be a student who exhibits the desire to earn more than the traditional credits allotted in the school year

Whether or not a credit obtained for a course through this program is approved by NCAA depends on how the instruction is provided.

RECOVERING CREDIT

In accordance with guidelines established by the Alabama State Department of Education, the Sumter County School System offers students who have received failing grades in courses that are required for graduation an opportunity to recover the lost credit through a standards-based approach that will target specific knowledge and skill deficits instead of requiring students to repeat the entire course.

In order to be accepted, students will 40-59 in the course they seek to recover credit;

- Only complete the standards from the course that caused them to fail. The identification of the standards that caused the student to fail is performed through a computer-based course and skill-specific diagnostic tool. This prevents the student from having to redo the entire course and allows them to recover the lost credit in a much shorter timeframe;
- Provide their own transportation to credit recovery classes when attending the after-school sessions;

The maximum grade a student can receive in Credit Recovery is a 60. The original failing grade shall stay on the permanent record and be included in computing the student's overall Grade Point Average. The credit recovery grade shall be included in computing the student's overall Grade Point Average.

Transfer students from non-AdvancED accredited schools who fail the validation tests with a score of 40-59 for any core courses are also eligible for Credit Recovery.

Any credit obtained for a course through this program is not approved by NCAA.

REPEATING CREDIT

This program is primarily for those students who made less than a 40 in the class they failed. Using this program, students must retake the entire course. Instruction may be provided traditionally or non-traditionally. Also, students who are eligible for Credit Recovery, but want to try and achieve higher than a 60 on their transcript for a course they failed may choose this option because students will be expected to complete all objectives from the course they failed.

Whether or not a credit obtained for a course through this program is approved by NCAA depends on how the instruction is provided. For example, a course taken through ACCESS Virtual Learning is approved by NCAA, but a course taken through Edgenuity is currently not approved by NCAA.

VIRTUAL LEARNING PROGRAM

Through the SCSS Virtual Learning Program, the Sumter County School System provides students in grades 9-12 the option to complete courses by way of an online, virtual platform through ACCESS Virtual Learning. To be a full-time virtual student, a student must meet specific requirements. The virtual courses, which align with the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards, offer students the benefits of time, flexibility and program customization. Students who utilize the virtual program also assume increased responsibility in personal time management, organization, self-direction, and personal discipline to complete course and school requirements. A direct link to the SCSS Virtual Learning Program Handbook may be found in the Students & Families Section of <https://www.sumter.k12.al.us/> (Policy 7.08)

Special Note: A principal may recommend students in grades Kindergarten-12 to the Superintendent or his/her designee for Virtual Learning due to safety concerns.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

SUMMER PROGRAM -CREDIT IMPROVEMENT (GRADES 9-12)

The Sumter County Board of Education may operate summer programs when needed to serve the educational goals of the Sumter County School System. All summer sessions will comply with Alabama law and the current administrative code. The following procedures apply to the operation of summer schools by the Sumter County School System:

1. Prior to enrolling in a summer program course, the student must obtain written permission for each class from his or her principal or the principal's designee. Credits earned without prior approval of the principal or the principal's designee will not be recognized.
2. Summer program course content is determined by the Alabama Course of Study/Alabama College and Career Ready Standards for the particular course; mastery of the course content is determined by the teacher in the same manner as for a course taught during the regular school year.
3. A student shall not earn credit toward graduation for a course that duplicates course content for which credit has already been awarded. A student shall not earn credit toward graduation for a course whose content is subsumed by a course for which credit has already been awarded. 290-3-1-02(8)(c)1-2

SUMMER PROGRAM (GRADES 6-8)

Summer program courses are intended for makeup work only. Failed courses must be retaken on a course-by- course basis. A student who does not pass course work may attend an Alabama State Department of Education approved summer program. The following procedures apply to the operation of summer programs by the Sumter County School System:

1. A student may make up no more than two (2) courses in any given summer program session (Policy 7.03.7)
2. Students must obtain the written permission of the school principal or the principal's designee to enroll in summer program courses.

DETERMINING PROMOTION AND RETENTION USING SUMMER SCHOOL CREDIT (GRADES 6-12)

Summer school grades may not be averaged with regular school year grades to determine passage or failure of a course or a portion of a course. Promotion and retention determinations for students are made by the appropriate school staff in accordance with Policy 7.03.5.

SUMMER PROGRAM AVAILABILITY AND COSTS (GRADES 6-12)

The Sumter County School System receives no funding for summer programs; therefore, the costs associated with the operation of summer programs may be borne by the enrolled students.

ERRORS AND OMISSIONS (GRADES 6-12)

The student and parent(s) or guardian(s) are to be held responsible for errors in subject selection and appropriate approvals unless the above procedures are followed.

UNIFORM GRADING SCALE

A numerical system will be used as the uniform grading scale. The key to grades should be listed on the report cards and permanent records. Each teacher should have a minimum of one grade per week (homework, daily work, tests, etc.) for each week in a grading period. Grades may not vary from this scale (Policy: 7.03.1).

A = 90 – 100% B = 80 – 89% C = 70 – 79% D = 60 – 69% F = 0 – 59%

REPORT CARDS

Reports cards are for transmitting an evaluation of student progress to the student and his/her parents/guardians. Report cards and progress reports for elementary, middle, and high schools will be issued at least four (4) times during the scholastic year. (Policy: 7.03.4). Teachers should have a minimum of one weekly grade (homework, daily assignments, tests, etc.) for each student in each grading period.

POWERSCHOOL PARENT PORTAL

The PowerSchool Parent Portal provides parents and students with a way to check grades, assignments, attendance, and discipline using the internet. To use the program, you must first register for an account on the PowerSchool Parent Portal website. To access the site, go to <https://sumterco.powerschool.com/public/home.html/>. The PowerSchool Parent Portal can be accessed through any device with internet access, including smartphones and iPads.

FINAL COURSE GRADE (GRADES 9-12)

HALF-CREDIT, TWO NINE-WEEK COURSES

For one-half credit, two nine-week grading period courses, a mandatory comprehensive exam will be administered at the end of the first nine-week grading period. The weight assigned to the comprehensive exam will be determined by the teacher of the course and will not exceed 20% of the nine-week grade. The comprehensive final exam administered at the conclusion of the course will count 20% of the final grade for the course. The first nine-weeks grade will count as 40% of the final grade, the second nine-weeks grade will count as 40% of the final grade, and the comprehensive final exam will count as 20% of the final grade.

Mandatory comprehensive final examinations are administered to all students except those students meeting the exemption criteria. The final course grade for students in grades 9-12 who meet the exemption criteria will be determined from the nine-week grade.

ONE-CREDIT, TWO NINE-WEEK COURSES

For one credit, two nine-week grading period courses, a mandatory comprehensive nine-weeks exam will be administered at the end of the first nine-week grading period. The weight assigned to the comprehensive exam will be determined by the teacher of the course and will not exceed 20% of the nine-week grade. The comprehensive final exam administered at the conclusion of the course will count 20% of the final grade for the course. The first nine-weeks grade will count as 40% of the final grade, the second nine-weeks grade will count as 40% of the final grade, and the comprehensive final exam will count as 20% of the final grade.

Mandatory comprehensive final examinations are administered to all students except those students meeting the exemption criteria. The final course grade for students in grades 9-12 who meet exemption criteria will be determined from the average of the two nine weeks' grades.

ONE-CREDIT, FOUR NINE-WEEK COURSES

For one credit, four nine-week grading period courses, mandatory comprehensive exams will be administered at the end of the first, second, and third nine-week grading periods. The weight assigned to each comprehensive exam will be determined by the teacher of the course and will not exceed 20% of the nine-week grade. The comprehensive final exam administered at the conclusion of the course will count 20% of the final grade for the course. The sum of the four nine weeks' averages will be added to the course final exam grade. This total will be divided by five to get the course final grade.

Mandatory comprehensive final examinations are administered to all students except those students meeting the exemption criteria. The final course grade for students in grades 9-12 who meet exemption criteria will be determined from the average of the four nine weeks' grades.

DROPPING COURSES

A student may withdraw from a course during the first five (5) days of the course with the permission of the Principal. Schedules will not be changed after the fifth day of the term/semester. A fee of \$10.00 is required for any schedule change initiated by the student. No schedule changes will be made in contradiction to teacher recommendations.

REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL EXAMINATIONS

REQUIRED EXAMINATIONS – SCHOOL GENERATED

The periodic use of teacher-made examinations assists school system personnel in evaluating student learning and achievement and provides a means for assessing the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process in the schools. Hence, the Board encourages teachers to ensure that students are provided with meaningful opportunities to engage in the preparation for and completion of comprehensive examinations.

Comprehensive exams must be administered at the end of each nine-week grading period in all courses. Comprehensive exams may not be given early.

The grade earned on each comprehensive nine-week exam (excluding the comprehensive final exam administered during the conclusion of the last nine-weeks of a course) shall be used in calculating each nine-week grade. The weight assigned to each comprehensive nine-week exam will be determined by the teacher of the course and will not exceed 20% of the nine-week grade.

Grades 6-8

The comprehensive final exam administered at the conclusion of the course will count ten percent (10%) of final grade for the course. Written examinations or other assessment techniques which measure student mastery of the content may be used. Assessments may include portfolios, products, performances, research papers, or projects.

Grades 9-12

The comprehensive final exam administered at the conclusion of the course will count twenty percent (20%) of final grade for the course. Written examinations or other assessment techniques which measure student mastery of the content may be used. Assessments may include portfolios, products, performances, research papers, or projects.

Teachers should have a minimum of one weekly grade (homework, daily assignments, tests, etc.) for each student in each grading period.

EXAM EXEMPTION (GRADES 9-12) FOR ONE-HALF CREDIT AND ONE CREDIT TWO NINE-WEEK COURSES

In order to be exempt from a final exam at the end of a one-half credit, two nine-week grading period course and/or a one credit, two nine-week grading period course, a 9-12 grade student must:

- Possess an A (90-100) average with 3 or fewer unexcused absences, or
- Possess a B (80-89) average with 2 or fewer unexcused absences, or
- Possess a C (70-79) average with 1 or fewer unexcused absences, AND
- Have no discipline referrals that result in detention, in-school intervention, or suspension during the term/semester.

The final course grade for students in grades 9-12 who meet exemption criteria will be determined from the average of the two nine-week grading period for a full credit course and from the one nine-weeks grade for a one-half credit course.

EXAM EXEMPTION (GRADES 9-12) FOR ONE CREDIT FOUR NINE-WEEK COURSES

In order to be exempt from a final exam at the end of a one credit, four nine-week grading period course, a 9-12 grade student must:

- Possess an A (90-100) average with 6 or fewer unexcused absences, or
- Possess a B (80-89) average with 4 or fewer unexcused absences, or
- Possess a C (70-79) average with 2 or fewer unexcused absences, AND
- Have no discipline referrals that result in detention, in-school intervention, or suspension during the school year.

The final course grade for students in grades 9-12 who meet exemption criteria will be determined from the average of the four nine-week grading periods for a full credit course.

EXAM EXEMPTION (GRADES 6-8) FOR ONE SEMESTER TWO NINE-WEEK COURSE

In order to be exempt from a final exam at the end of a one semester, two nine-week grading period course a 6-8 grade student must:

- Possess an A (90-100) average with 3 or fewer unexcused absences, or
- Possess a B (80-89) average with 2 or fewer unexcused absences, or
- Possess a C (70-79) average with 1 or fewer unexcused absences, AND
- Have no discipline referrals that result in detention, in-school intervention, or suspension during the term/semester.

The final course grade for students in grades 6-8 who meet exemption criteria will be determined from the average of the two nine-week grading periods.

EXAM EXEMPTION (GRADES 6-8) FOR ONE YEAR FOUR NINE-WEEK COURSE

In order to be exempt from a final exam at the end of a one credit, four nine-week grading period course, a 6-8 grade student must:

- Possess an A (90-100) average with 6 or fewer unexcused absences, or
- Possess a B (80-89) average with 4 or fewer unexcused absences, or
- Possess a C (70-79) average with 2 or fewer unexcused absences, AND
- Have no discipline referrals that result in detention, in-school intervention, or suspension during the school year.

The final course grade for students in grades 6-8 who meet exemption criteria will be determined from the average of the four nine-week grading periods.

REQUIRED EXAMINATIONS – SYSTEM AND STATE GENERATED

LEARNING TODAY | LEADING TOMORROW – 40

In addition to teacher-administered course exams, the Sumter County School System implements system-wide formative and benchmark assessments. The district also administers all summative assessments required by the Alabama State Department of Education.

Civics Test (Grade 12)

According to Senate Bill 32, all Alabama graduating seniors must pass the Civics test. The locally developed Civics test must use items that are published annually by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) – along with state and local history, government, and geography components of the high school curriculum. The Civics Test is administered through the U.S. Government/Economics class.

Two assessments required by the Alabama State Department of Education and/or the Sumter County School System to help systems determine students' college and career readiness are the ACT plus Writing and the ACT WorkKeys.

PreACT (Grade 10)

All tenth-grade students take the PreACT in the Fall of 2024. The PreACT test provides students with practice for the ACT test and measures progress towards college readiness. The PreACT score and predicted ACT score ranges align to the ACT 1-36 scale. Students may opt to share their information with colleges and scholarship agencies. The ACT Interest Inventory results provide students with a personalized view of interests with college and career alignment. The valuable results from these tools provide actionable insights to help educators, parents and students make important decisions for the future.

ACT plus Writing (Grade 11)

Eleventh grade students in the Sumter County School System take the ACT plus Writing on in the Spring of 2026. This provides all students one opportunity to test at their local school free of charge. The ACT plus Writing assessment contains four curriculum-based tests that measure academic achievement in English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning as well as a component to measure a student's writing skills. The assessment measures academic development based upon a student's skills in applying content knowledge and reasoning skills acquired in his or her course work. ACT plus Writing is an assessment used for college admission. **More information, including additional testing dates and sample test questions, may be found at www.act.org.**

In addition, the Alabama State Department of Education provides all high school juniors, free of charge, ACT's online prep program. This online service provides students with practice tests with real ACT test questions, practice essays for the ACT Writing Test (with real-time scoring), comprehensive content review for each of the ACT's four required tests—English, Math, Reading, and Science, a diagnostic test and a personalized study plan. The website to access this program is www.actonlineprep.org. See your school counselor for more information.

ACT Fee Waivers for National Test Dates

Students testing on a national test date and who cannot afford the registration fee for the ACT or ACT with Writing, may be eligible for an ACT Fee Waiver.

Students must meet all of the following requirements:

1. Currently enrolled in high school in the 11th or 12th grade.
2. Either a United States citizen or testing in the US, US territories, or Puerto Rico.
3. Meet one or more indicators of economic need listed on the ACT Fee Waiver form.

Eligible students may use a maximum of four separate fee waivers – two to be used in the 11th grade; two to be used in 12th grade. The waivers can be used in any combination – full test or specific subject area retest. The waiver is used once students register, even if they do not test on the requested test date.

ACT WorkKeys (Grade 12)

Twelfth grade students in the Sumter County School System will take the ACT WorkKeys in the Fall of 2025. ACT WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system that helps employers select, hire, train, develop, and retain a high-performance workforce. As part of ACT's Work Readiness System, ACT WorkKeys has helped students build their skills to increase global competitiveness and develop successful career pathways. Successful completion of ACT WorkKeys assessments in Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information can lead to earning ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), a portable credential. All seniors have access to ACT WorkKeys Curriculum online to assist with preparation for success on this assessment. In addition, the Alabama State Department of Education provides all high school students, free of charge, ACT WorkKeys Curriculum. This complete interactive online training system is designed to help users reach foundational career readiness, enhance users' cognitive skills, and offer introductory models based on the National Career Clusters Framework. The courses are based on the same skills and skill progressions found in the ACT WorkKeys assessment system.

DIGITAL DEVICE POLICY IN A STANDARDIZED TESTING SETTING

The possession of a digital device (including but not limited to cell phones, watches, MP3 players, cameras, or other telecommunication devices capable of capturing or relaying information) is strictly prohibited during the administration of a secure test. If a student is observed in possession of a digital device during the administration of a secure test, the device will be confiscated. If a student is observed using a digital device during the administration of a secure test, testing for the student will cease, the device will be confiscated and is subject to search, the student will be dismissed from testing, and the student's test will be invalidated. Additional disciplinary action may be taken by the school system.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SEARCH OF DIGITAL DEVICE SEIZED DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF A SECURE TEST:

- Assuming that a student is observed in the possession of or use of a digital device during the administration of a secure test, the device will be confiscated by the test administrator. "Smart phones" should temporarily be turned off to help prevent any remote-access data-wipe.
- The test administrator should deliver the device as soon as practicable to a school administrator.
- A "chain of custody" list should be kept to record everyone who had possession of the device and when the device was transferred to someone else. The device should be stored by the school administrator in a secure location until the next step is taken.
- For the purposes of determining whether a search of a digital device should take place, the school administrator should:
 - Learn the facts regarding the seizure of the device from the test administrator, and
 - Determine whether it is reasonable under all the circumstances to believe that the student could have been using the device to cheat or for some other unpermitted purpose.
- If the school administrator determines that the student was merely in possession of the digital device, then it may be returned to the student in accordance with the Sumter County School System's procedure.
- If the school administrator believes that it is reasonable to suspect that the student was using the device for an impermissible purpose then he or she may search the device, limiting the search to only what is necessary to reasonably determine whether the student was cheating, copying secure test information, or violating a school rule.
- The school administrator should follow the local policy requirements regarding the search of student property.

- If no wrongful activity is discovered on the device then it may be returned to the student in accordance with the Sumter County School System's procedure.
- If wrongful activity is discovered on the device regarding the test at issue or, if other wrongful activity is inadvertently discovered on the device, then the school administrator should secure the device by storing it in a locked and secure location, turn off the device's network connectivity, then notify the Test Coordinator or Superintendent as appropriate.
- Following a search in which wrongful activity is discovered, and when the device is a "smart phone," the device should be turned off after the search to help prevent a potential remote-access data-wipe.
- Any disciplinary actions should be taken in accordance with the school system's disciplinary policy.
- Test irregularity reports should be completed in accordance with the Alabama State Department of Education's student assessment handbook.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS, DEVICES, AND FEES

RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEXTBOOKS AND SCHOOL PROVIDED TECHNOLOGY

All textbooks and electronic devices (i.e. e-readers, laptops, etc...) that are furnished free of charge to all students are the property of the State of Alabama and /or the Board. A receipt shall be signed by each student upon textbook issuance by school officials. Parents/guardians are responsible for every free textbook and other materials issued to their children. **Parents/guardians of any student to whom free textbooks, electronic devices or other materials are issued shall be held liable for any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from normal use of such textbooks and materials.**

STUDENT FEES

ELEMENTARY GRADES

In accordance with law, no fees of any kind shall be mandated for collection from students attending kindergarten through grade five. Voluntary contributions may be solicited, Grades K-5, only upon approval of the local school Principal.

GRADES 6-12

Reasonable fees may be charged for courses that are not required by the State Course of Study for graduation in grades 6-12. Reasonable fees may be charged for project-based learning (i.e. Academic Scholars Program in middle schools) throughout the school year.

STUDENT ACTIVITY FEES

Students shall not be assessed fees for the purpose of supporting general student activities. Individual clubs may assess fees directly associated with club activities when approved by the school Principal, club sponsor, and members. Participation in and financial support of student activities shall be on a voluntary basis by all students. All fees to support student activities shall be approved by the local school principal, the activity sponsor, and club members.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTION (RTI) AND PROBLEM-SOLVING TEAMS (PSTs)

The purpose of Response to Instruction (RTI) is to improve educational outcomes for all students. Specifically, RTI provides early intervention to struggling learners in general education settings. RTI provides a continuum of evidence-based, tiered interventions with increasing levels of intensity and duration. The central components of RTI provide procedures that will assist Problem Solving Teams (PSTs) in their team meetings, data collection, and monitoring of a student's response to instruction. Response to Instruction is defined as an instructional framework that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, gifted, supplemental, and special education services in providing high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that is matched to students' academic, social emotional, and behavioral needs. RTI combines core instruction, assessment, and intervention within a multi-tiered system to increase student achievement and reduce behavior problems (ALSDE, 2009).

CHILD FIND – SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires all school districts serving children with disabilities to develop and implement procedures that ensure that all children within their jurisdiction, birth to twenty-one, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who need special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. Child Find also applies to children with disabilities who attend private schools, including children attending religious schools, within the district's jurisdiction, highly mobile children with disabilities (e.g., migrant children), homeless children, or children who are wards of the State, and children who are suspected of having a disability and are in need of special education, even though they have not failed, been retained in a course or grade or are advancing from grade to grade. If your child is birth-five and you suspect your child has a disability and may require special education services, please contact the Sumter County Special Education Department at (205) 652-9605 ext. 1212. If you suspect your school age child has a disability and may require Special Education services, please contact your child's local school.

GIFTED SERVICES

Intellectually gifted children and youth are those who perform or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. These children and youth require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Children and youth possessing these abilities can be found in all populations across all economic strata and in all areas of human endeavor. A student may be referred and considered for gifted services by school personnel, parents/guardians, or self. All second-grade students will be observed as potential gifted referrals using a gifted behavior checklist. For each student referral, information is gathered in the following three areas:

Aptitude – Aptitude is assessed through an individual or group test of intelligence or creativity.

Characteristics – A behavior rating scale designed to assess gifted behaviors is completed.

Performance – At least three indicators of performance at a gifted level must be evaluated. These may include, but are not limited to, achievement test scores, grades, products, work samples, and/or portfolios.

The scores from the assessments used are entered on a matrix where points are assigned according to criteria established by the Alabama State Department of Education. The total number of points earned determines if the student qualifies for gifted services.

Gifted services for elementary students in grades K-2 in the Sumter County School System consist of regular classroom accommodations with consultation from a gifted teacher. The general education teacher will consult with the gifted teacher for differentiation to meet the special needs of gifted students.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Special education services are provided for exceptional students in accordance with the federal and state mandates concerning education for students with disabilities. Procedures for evaluation and eligibility are provided to each school within the system. Alabama State Department of Education criteria are used to determine a student's eligibility in one of the following areas of special education:

Autism	Gifted	Other Health Impairment
Deaf/Blindness	Specific Learning Disability	Speech & Language Impairment
Developmental Delay	Intellectual Disability	Traumatic Brain Injury
Emotional Disability	Orthopedic Impairment	Visual Impairment
Hearing Impairment	Multiple Disabilities	

Cooperative agreements and contracts are made with other service agencies to provide services that enhance the educational progress of exceptional students. Information regarding referral procedures and/or classes may be obtained from the Department of Special Education by telephoning (205) 652- 9605 ext. 1212.

CHILD FIND – SECTION 504 SERVICES

The Sumter County School System has a duty to locate, evaluate and identify any child residing in the district who qualifies for Section 504 accommodations or services. Children eligible for Section 504 accommodations or services include those children who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. If you suspect your child has a disability and may require Section 504 accommodations, or if you would like additional information, please contact your child's teacher or call the Special Education Coordinator at (205) 652-9605 ext. 1212.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

The intent of the law is to keep students and parents fully informed concerning decisions about identification and placement and to inform students and parents of their rights.

The Special Education Coordinator is the Section 504 Coordinator for the Sumter County School System and is responsible for assuring that the school system complies with requirements outlined in Section 504 concerning students with disabilities. Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with qualifying disabilities have the right to receive a free appropriate public education, which includes the right to an education with students without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

In particular, the enabling regulations for Section 504, as set out in 34 CFR Part 104, provide parents and/or students with the following rights:

- Your child has the right to an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment that is designed to meet his/her individual education needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.
- Your child has the right to free educational services, except for those fees that are imposed on nondisabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student.
- Your child has a right to nondiscrimination and to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for nondisabled students.
- Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to an initial Section 504 placement and any subsequent significant change of placement.
- Placement decisions must be made by a group of persons (i.e., the Section 504 committee), 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.
- You have the right to examine relevant records prior to any action by the District in regard to the identification evaluation, or placement of your child upon request.
- You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the District's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement. You have the right to participate and be represented by an attorney at your expense.
- You have the right to obtain copies of your child's educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records.
- You have the right to receive a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records.
- You have the right to request amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child.
- You may challenge the actions of the District's Section 504 Committee in regard to your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, by filing a complaint with the District's Section 504 Coordinator within 30 calendar days from the time you received written notice of the Section 504 Committee's actions(s). A due process hearing will be scheduled before an impartial hearing officer and you will be notified in writing of the date, time, and place for the hearing. You have the right to participate in the hearing and to be represented by counsel if you choose. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer, you have a right to request a review of the decision in a court of competent jurisdiction.
- On Section 504 matters other than your child's identification, evaluation, and/or placement, you likewise have a right to file a complaint with the District's Section 504 Coordinator, who will investigate the allegations to the extent warranted by the nature of the complaint in an effort to reach a prompt and equitable resolution.
- You have a right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights. The contact information is as follows: Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 61 Forsyth Street S.W., Suite 19T70, Atlanta, GA 30303-3104. Telephone: (404) 562-6350. Fax: (404) 562- 6455. Email: OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

The Sumter County School System expands the learning options available to intellectually gifted and highly motivated students by offering additional opportunities for creative and analytical educational experiences. These opportunities include Advanced Placement (AP) courses through ACCESS and electives, and Early Admission/Dual Enrollment College Credit Programs.

The high school students are served through advanced level courses. Academically talented students may take college-level courses for college credit upon recommendation. Some college-bound students may choose to take these courses as an intensive preparation for college work. Advanced Placement examinations are provided for students whose goal is college credit. Examination results are sent to individual colleges or universities for use in determining student placement. Dual enrollment and dual credit opportunities are available to eligible senior high students. High school students with special talents in fine arts, sports, leadership, or other areas may select from among a variety of elective courses according to their individual needs and preferences.

COLLEGE COURSES- DUAL ENROLLMENT/DUAL CREDIT (DE/DC)

The Alabama State Department of Education has authorized the establishment of dual enrollment programs between public colleges and universities and local boards of education.

The following dual enrollment option may be offered:

Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit (DE/DC) is available to students who would like to earn both high school and college credits for the equivalent course(s). DE/DC courses will be added to the high school transcript and **will** be calculated into the overall GPA.

The Sumter County School System currently has dual enrollment/dual credit agreements with the following colleges and universities:

- Shelton State Community College
- The University of Alabama
- The University of West Alabama
- Wallace State Community College

Each post-secondary institution listed above requires applications, transcripts, and a variety of documentation to be accepted for and enrolled in dual enrollment programs. High School Counselors may assist students with the completion and submission of these documents; however, questions regarding courses for post-secondary pathways (i.e. Nursing, Business Office Management) should be addressed with the dual enrollment officials at each institution. High School Counselors are not employed by the post-secondary institutions and are not responsible for advising students on post-secondary pathways.

ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURE

Parents wishing to appeal either of the following two areas may do so by submitting supporting information in writing, to the school principal:

- a. A teacher's decision relative to a final grade for a course/subject
- b. Placement by the principal in a specific course (e.g., Honors Language Arts)
 - The notice of appeal and supporting information must be received within five school days after the receipt of the report card or course placement. The following procedures will be followed in responding to all appeals.
 - The principal will investigate and notify the parents, within seven school days of receipt of the appeal, of their decision.



- If the appeal is not resolved at the school level, the parent may notify the superintendent within five school days of receiving the principal's decision. The principal will forward all information considered in the decision to the superintendent.
- The superintendent or their designee will review all supporting evidence and make a final decision. The parents will have the opportunity to submit their position in writing, along with all supporting evidence, to the superintendent or their designee. The superintendent or their designee may request a conference with the parents and/or student. The decision with reference to the appeal will be communicated to the parents and the principal by the superintendent or their designee in writing. The decision of the superintendent or their designee is final and cannot be appealed.

ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

(Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-02(8) and (8)(a))

GRADUATING CLASS OF 2026 and 2027 OPTION A

COURSE REQUIREMENTS		
English Language Arts	Four credits to include:	Credits
	English 9	1
	English 10	1
	English 11	1
	English 12	1
	English Language Arts credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
English Language Arts Total Credits		4
Mathematics	Three credits to include:	Credits
	Geometry or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra I or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra II, or its equivalent/substitute	1
	One credit from:	
	Alabama Course of Study: Mathematics or mathematics-credit eligible courses from Career and Technical Education/Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses	1
Mathematics Total Credits		4
Science	Two credits to include:	Credits
	Biology	1
	A physical science (Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science)	1
	Two credits from:	
	Alabama Course of Study: Science or science credit-eligible courses from Career and Technical Education/Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses	2
	Science Total Credits	
Social Studies	Four credits to include:	Credits
	World History	1
	United States History I	1
	United States History II	1
	United States Government	0.5
	Economics	0.5
	Social Studies-credit eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
	Students are required to earn a passing score on the Civics Exam.	
Social Studies Total Credits		4
Physical Education	Beginning Kinesiology or Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)	1
Career Preparedness		1
Health Education		0.5
Arts Education		3
Career and Technical Education		
World Languages		2.5
Electives		
Total Credits		24

* Effective with the graduating Class of 2022, the following requirements shall be fulfilled on behalf of the graduating senior as part of the graduating senior's transition into postsecondary education, training, or the workforce: Submit to the United States Department of Education a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Certify a non-participation waiver, in writing, to the superintendent of the local education agency if the graduating senior chooses not to complete and submit FAFSA.

**Effective with the graduating Class of 2026, the Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway shall be issued to students who earn the required credits and earn one or more of the college and career readiness indicators approved by the Alabama State Board of Education.

February 11, 2025

ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

(Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-02(8) and (8)(a))

GRADUATING CLASS OF 2026 and 2027 OPTION B

COURSE REQUIREMENTS		
English Language Arts	Four credits to include:	Credits
	English 9	1
	English 10	1
	English 11	1
	English 12	1
	English Language Arts credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
English Language Arts Total Credits		4
Mathematics	Two credits to include:	Credits
	Geometry or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra I or its equivalent/substitute	1
Mathematics Total Credits		2
Science	Two credits to include:	Credits
	Biology	1
	A physical science (Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science)	1
Science Total Credits		2
Social Studies	Four credits to include:	Credits
	World History	1
	United States History I	1
	United States History II	1
	United States Government	0.5
	Economics	0.5
	Social Studies credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
Civics Exam Requirement	Students are required to earn a passing score on the <i>Civics Exam</i> .	
Social Studies Total Credits		4
Physical Education	Beginning Kinesiology or Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)	1
Career Preparedness		1
Health Education		0.5
Career and Technical Education	Credits must be earned from an approved CTE Program of Study, resulting in CTE Completer status.	3
Electives		6.5
Total Credits		24

* Effective with the graduating Class of 2022, the following requirements shall be fulfilled on behalf of the graduating senior as part of the graduating senior's transition into postsecondary education, training, or the workforce: Submit to the United States Department of Education a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Certify a non-participation waiver, in writing, to the superintendent of the local education agency if the graduating senior chooses not to complete and submit FAFSA.

**Effective with the graduating Class of 2026, the Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway shall be issued to students who earn the required credits and earn one or more of the college and career readiness indicators approved by the Alabama State Board of Education.

*As approved by the State of Alabama's Legislature, all students (beginning with the Class of 2026) must meet at least one College and Career Readiness Indicator to be eligible for graduation. As defined by Alabama State Department of Education, recognized College and Career Readiness Indicators offered in the Sumter County School System include:

- ACT Benchmark (English = 18, Math = 22, Reading = 22, Science Reasoning =23)
- Qualifying AP Score (3, 4, or 5 on a scale of 1-5)
- Silver Level or higher on the ACT WorkKeys Assessment (A score of at least 4 on all three areas of the assessment)
- College credit taken and passed while in high school
- Career and Technical Program Credential
- Career and Technical Program Completer
- Enlistment in the Armed Forces before graduation
- Completion of a Youth Apprenticeship

DIPLOMA PATHWAYS

ALTERNATE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS PATHWAY

The Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway allows students access to credit-eligible courses. Students meet the required courses in English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Math. Students participate in:

- AAS Life Skills
- AAS Pre-Vocational
- AAS Vocational
- AAS Community-Based Work Instruction

Students in this pathway take the Alabama Alternate Assessment. The AAS pathway is only an option for students who are eligible for and receive special education services.

ESSENTIALS PATHWAY

The Essential Pathway allows students access to credit-eligible courses to meet the required courses. Students meet the required courses in English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Math. In addition, students meet the requirements for graduation through Community-Based Work Training, Career Technical Education (CTE) courses, Workforce Essentials or Transition Skills II, Cooperative Education and/or Essentials Career Preparation.

Students who take four or more Essentials core course must complete all requirements of the pathway including the work component. This pathway is designed to allow students to participate in career/competitive employment.

This pathway is accepted by most community colleges but may not be accepted by most four-year institutions. This pathway is not accepted by NCAA for eligibility purposes.

The Essentials pathway is only an option for students who are eligible for and receive special education services.

GENERAL EDUCATION PATHWAY

The General Education Pathway allows students access to general education, Advanced Placement (AP) and dual enrollment courses leading to the Alabama High School Diploma. This diploma is designed to prepare students for college and career.

According to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), only students whose coursework is fully aligned to the state's core academic content standards or those with the most significant cognitive disabilities will count as graduates in calculating the USDOE Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate for the state, school systems and local schools.

GENERAL INFORMATION OF SENIORS

PARTICIPATION IN THE GRADUATION CEREMONY

Upon completion of high school, the type of diploma or certificate a student can receive is dependent upon his or her successful completion of the required number of Carnegie units.

ALL REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE GRADUATION CEREMONY.

IN ADDITION, PARTICIPATION IN THE PRACTICE FOR THE GRADUATION CEREMONY IS MANDATORY. ANY STUDENT WHO FAILS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PRACTICE FOR THE GRADUATION CEREMONY WILL BE DENIED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GRADUATION CEREMONY. FEES MUST BE EITHER PAID IN FULL OR A PAYMENT PLAN ESTABLISHED WITH THE PRINCIPAL PRIOR TO THE GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR A STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GRADUATION CEREMONY.

All students earning a high school diploma in the Sumter County School System must have a minimum of 24 units.

OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WHO DO NOT MEET GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

REGULAR PROGRAM STUDENTS classified as seniors and who have NOT earned the graduation credits necessary for graduation may continue to pursue the credits needed for graduation until the age of 21. When the required number of credits has been earned, the student will be issued the earned diploma and be eligible to participate in the next scheduled graduation ceremony. If the required number of credits needed for graduation has not been earned before the student has reached the age of 21, the student may pursue the GED through an Adult Education Program.

VALEDICTORIANS, AND SALUTATORIANS

In an effort to encourage academic excellence and achievement on the part of students throughout the school system, the Board directs that each high school principal, with the assistance of appropriate staff members, select a valedictorian, a salutatorian, and honor graduates as a way of appropriately honoring those students who have pursued and attained high academic goals. Following are the criteria for determining who may be eligible for these honors (Policy 7.12.2):

CRITERIA FOR VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

- The candidates for valedictorian and salutatorian for the graduating class must qualify for the most advanced academic diploma offered and have been enrolled at the high school for a minimum of one semester prior to the date of graduation.
- The student with the highest numerical grade average who qualifies to receive an Academic Distinction to the Alabama High School Diploma will be the class valedictorian.
- The student with the second highest numerical grade average who qualifies to receive an Academic Distinction to the Alabama High School Diploma will be the class salutatorian.
- In the case of a tie (after carrying the grade average to 4 decimal places rounded off), students having the same average will be recognized as co-valedictorians or co-salutatorians.
- The numerical grade average for the candidates will be computed on course work taken beginning with the freshman year through the second term/semester of the senior year. All final grades for half-credit and full credit courses will be used.

- Advanced Placement (AP) grades will be weighted by adding 10 points to each final grade earned in an AP class. All honors grades will be weighted by adding 5 points to each final grade earned in an honors class. In the case of a transfer student who has AP grades, only those courses recognized as AP by The College Board will be weighted. If a student fails an AP course, no weighted credit will be added to the configuration. Students must take a comprehensive final exam in each honors course to receive the weighted credit and are required to take the National AP Exam developed by the College Board in each AP course to receive the weighted credit.
- Dual enrollment grades will be weighted by adding 10 points to each final grade earned in a dual enrollment class.
- The candidates for other end-of-year honors must have been enrolled prior to the beginning of the second term of the senior year.
- If letter grades are present on a candidate's transcript, the candidate must have the respective school(s) attended submit the grades in numerical form. If officials of the school that the student attended cannot or will not convert the letter grades to numerical grades, then the letter grades will be converted to numerical grades as follows:

A+ = 99	B+ = 89	C+ = 79	D+ = 69	F = 55
A = 95	B = 85	C = 75	D = 65	
A- = 90	B- = 80	C- = 70	D- = 60	

Issues or uncertainties regarding eligibility or grade calculation will be resolved by the school principal in consultation with the Superintendent (Policy 7.12.2b)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

School-sponsored clubs and organizations shall be under the direct control of school officials. Such clubs and organizations shall not be affiliated or associated with any political or religious organization or any organization which denies membership on the basis of race, creed, color, or political beliefs. All school-sponsored clubs and organizations shall be sponsored by a member of the faculty approved by the school's Principal and shall have a constitution approved by the Student Council (Student Government Association) or by the school's Principal.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Effective student governments are the forums for the training and involvement of students in the democratic processes. Members of the school community share the responsibility for shaping governments into positive instruments for student involvement.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES ARE TO:

- elect student government officers and representatives who are responsive to the needs of the school and who will work constructively toward the resolution of such needs;
- become knowledgeable of School Board and individual school policies governing the actions of students;
- conduct election campaigns in a positive, mature manner, with all due respect for their opponents;
- attend regularly scheduled meetings, if an elected student representative, and exhibit appropriate conduct at all times.

STUDENT RIGHTS ARE TO:

- form and operate a student government within the respective schools under the supervision of a faculty advisor;
 - have access to policies of the School Board in the individual school;
 - seek office in student government, or any school organization, regardless of race, sex, color, creed, or political beliefs;
 - attend, as student government officers and representatives, official student government meetings upon approval of such meetings by the school Principal
-

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Education is the process of inquiry and learning, acquiring and imparting knowledge, and exchanging ideas. One of the important roles of the school is to provide effective avenues through which students may express themselves on a wide range of subjects. Official student publications, such as school newspapers, should include viewpoints representative of the student body.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES ARE TO:

- refrain from publishing libelous and obscene materials;
- to seek full information on the topics about which they write; and
- observe normally accepted rules for responsible journalism under the guidance of the faculty advisor.

STUDENT RIGHTS ARE TO:

- participate in the development and distribution of publications as a part of the educational process
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STUDENT ABSENCES AND PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Students who are away from school because of participation in official school sponsored activities shall be marked present and allowed to make up missed work. Students who are absent from school for an excused or unexcused reason shall not be allowed to participate in any school extracurricular or co-curricular activities that day (athletic contests, cheerleading, band, scholars' bowl, beauty walk, prom, etc.) unless that absence is approved in advance by the school principal.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Sumter County Board of Education recognizes the value of athletics and other extracurricular activities as they relate to the total education of students. The Sumter County Board of Education also recognizes and supports high academic standards and the necessity of developing a framework to assess annually the progress of each student who participates in athletics or extracurricular activities toward graduating from high school on schedule with his/her class. The Sumter County Board of Education prescribes the following regulations for eligibility:

1. **Students must be enrolled in a school of the school system**
2. Extracurricular activities associated with athletics are defined as those recognized and sanctioned by the Alabama High School Athletic Association, and other extracurricular activities are defined as those that are sanctioned by a public school that are not related to a student's academic requirements or success in a course.
3. Regular curricular activities are defined as those that are required for satisfactory course completion.
4. Students entering grades 10 - 12 must, for the last two (2) terms/semesters of attendance and summer school, if applicable, have a passing grade and earn the appropriate number of credits in each of six (6) subjects that total six (6) Carnegie units of credit, including four (4) credits from the four (4) core subjects composed of English, science, social studies, and mathematics with a numerical composite average of 70. Students entering grades 8 and 9 must, for the last two terms/semesters of attendance and summer school, if applicable, have a passing grade in five (5) subjects with a composite numerical average of 70. Students promoted to the seventh grade for the first time are eligible. (A term/semester is defined as one-half of a school year as defined by the local Board of Education adopted school year calendar.)
5. Physical education may count as only one (1) unit per year.
6. Eligibility shall be determined on the first day of the local school year and shall remain in effect for one (1) complete school year. Students deemed ineligible at the beginning of the school year by virtue of having failed to meet the requirements outlined in item #3 may regain their eligibility either by successfully completing the required courses through an accredited program by September 1st OR at the end of the first term/semester by meeting the requirements for eligibility in the two most recently completed terms/semesters, including summer school. Eligibility restoration must be determined no later than five (5) days after the beginning of the succeeding term/semester.* An ineligible student may not become eligible after the fifth day of each term/semester.
7. Bona fide transfers may be handled according to rules of the Alabama High School Athletic Association for sports and rules to be developed by the local Board of Education as they pertain to other extracurricular activities. The rules and regulations for athletic eligibility for transfers according to the Alabama High School Athletic Association may be found at www.AHSAA.com.
8. Each eligible student must have a minimum composite numerical average of 70 on six (6) Carnegie units from the preceding year, including summer school. Summer school work passed may substitute for regular school work repeated in computing the 70 average.

9. Each eligible student involved in athletics must meet the definition of a regular student as defined by the Alabama High School Athletic Association.
10. Any student who earns more than four (4) credits in the core curriculum in any given year or who accumulates a total in excess of the required four (4) per year may be exempt from earning the four (4) core courses in the succeeding year as long as that student remains on track for graduation with his/her class and the grade was not previously used in calculating eligibility.
11. Sixth-grade students are eligible for non-athletic extra-curricular activities. Students promoted to the seventh grade for the first time are eligible for all extra-curricular activities.
12. School sponsors are required to submit a request for each curricular activity that occurs outside the regular school day and/or school to the Principal, Superintendent, and the local Board of Education for approval.
13. Each request for full participation by all students, regardless of academic standing, in a curricular activity shall be granted if the Principal, Superintendent, and the local Board of Education approve participation in the activity as an extension of a course requirement and it is an event sanctioned by a state/national subject matter association.
14. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this regulation, activities offered by the school through mathematics, science, band, choral music, and other courses at events such as athletic events (pre-game, game, halftime, or other breaks), club conventions, parades, amusement park trips and competitions, trips by tour companies, performances at various meetings, etc., are extracurricular, and students academically ineligible under this policy shall not be allowed to participate.

*Unit calculations for regaining eligibility at the end of the first term/semester may not coincide exactly with units for graduation for students in schools on a different academic calendar. (Policy 6.05.3).

NCAA INITIAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

NCAA DIVISION I

- Sixteen (16) core courses are required (for subject-area requirements see chart at http://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/2018DIEC_Requirements_Fact_Sheet_20180117.pdf).
 - Ten of the 16 core courses must be completed before the seventh semester (senior year) of high school.
 - Seven of the 10 core courses must be English, math or natural/physical science.
- Earn a core-course GPA of at least 2.30
- Earn the ACT/SAT score matching your core-course GPA on the Division I sliding scale
- See http://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/2018DIEC_Requirements_Fact_Sheet_20180117.pdf
- Graduate high school

NCAA DIVISION II

- Division II currently requires 16 core courses.
- Earn a core-course GPA of at least 2.200.
- Earn the ACT/SAT score matching your core-course GPA on the Division II full qualifier sliding scale. See http://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/2018DIEC_Requirements_Fact_Sheet_20180117.pdf
- Graduate high school.

The NCAA core GPA is calculated using NCAA core courses only.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A student's individual rights and associated responsibilities must be viewed in relationship to the health, safety, and welfare of the majority of students in each school. It is our intent to develop, with our students and parents, a better understanding of some of the rules and regulations of the Sumter County School System.

FREE SPEECH/EXPRESSION

Citizens in our democracy are guaranteed self-expression under the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution; therefore, in a democratic society one of the basic purposes of education is to prepare students for responsible self-expression.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES ARE TO:

- respect the rights of other individuals;
- to express disagreements in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others and does not interfere with the orderly educational process;
- act in a manner that preserves the dignity of patriotic observances;
- respect the religious beliefs of others;
- plan for, seek approval of, and conduct activities that are consistent with the educational objectives of the school.

STUDENT RIGHTS ARE TO:

- form and express viewpoints through speaking and writing in a manner that is not obscene, slanderous, or libelous;
- affirm their identity with American ideals (i.e., pledging allegiance to the American Flag);
- refrain from any activity that violates the precepts of their religion

PRIVACY AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

Federal and State laws and recent court rulings uphold the authority of school officials to conduct reasonable searches and seizures of property when there are "reasonable grounds." The law permits the Sumter County Board of Education, its employees, agents, or designees to conduct reasonable searches of students and to seize student property to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students.

DRESS CODE

Sumter County Schools require all students to wear uniforms. The rules concerning dress and grooming are mandatory for all students attending Sumter County Schools. Students who fail to follow these rules will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in Code of Conduct 1.13, "Non-conformity to Dress Code."

Section 1: Students Must Wear

- Shirts: Polo style in white or designated school color. They must cover the midriff, not be low-cut in front or back, and be made of opaque fabric.
- Bottoms: Khaki or black pants or skirts. Must be opaque fabric. Dresses and skirts must be fingertip length.
- Shoes: For safety reasons, shoes that are secured to the foot and not easily fall off are highly encouraged.

Section 2: Students Should Not Wear

- Leggings, joggers, yoga pants, and “skinny jeans”
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity)
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class.
- Spaghetti straps or strapless tops
- Hats or head coverings, except as a religious observance
- Sleepwear (pajama tops and/or bottoms, onesies, etc.)
- House slippers or shoes intended for indoors only, crocs, slides, or flip flops
- Sunglasses (indoors)
- Hoods, hoodies, bonnets, caps, hair wraps or scarfs, etc.

BACKPACK POLICY

To enhance school safety, all students are required to carry either a **fully mesh** or **fully clear** backpack while on campus. Traditional opaque backpacks are not permitted. Parents and students are asked to ensure compliance with this requirement before the start of the school year.

STUDENT SEARCHES BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS

SCHOOL PROPERTY

School officials shall inspect or search lockers or desks only if there is a reasonable cause to believe that articles are kept there that may endanger other individuals in the school or that such articles possessed are contrary to law or the regulations of the Board.

STUDENT SEARCHES

School officials (school Principal or approved designee under the direction of the school Principal only) may make searches of a student and/or personal belongings, if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the student is carrying articles that may endanger other individuals in the school of that such articles possessed are contrary to law of the regulations of the Board. If a student is searched, it shall be in private by a school official of the same sex with a certified staff member of the same sex present. More thorough searches with approval from the Superintendent may be conducted if the Principal or designee determines that a search of more than a student's pockets, jacket, cap, outer shirt, shoes, socks, belts, purse, book bag, other outer garments and articles, and electronic devices be done by officials of the same gender as the student and in a respectful manner. The Principal or designee shall notify the student's parent/guardian prior to the search, and the parent/guardian shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be present. Refusing a search may lead to disciplinary action (Policy 6.15c).

AUTOMOBILES

Vehicles driven onto school property by students are subject to search by the Principal or designee if the Principal or designee reasonably suspects that the contents of the vehicle may present a threat or a potential threat to the health, safety or welfare of other students, staff, or to the school in general. In the case of a locked vehicle, every effort will be made to have the vehicle unlocked by the student before proceeding with the search. A student who refuses to cooperate in allowing a search of a vehicle brought by him or her on school property shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including long-term suspension. Student will lose all parking privileges on school campus and will be ineligible for parking permits (Policy 6.15b).

IMPOUNDMENT

If a search as noted above reveals items specifically prohibited by law, Board policies/regulations, or school regulations, such items shall be retained and notification of such action given to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) (Policy: 6.15d).

SEARCHES BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS

To provide and maintain a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and visitors, the Board may permit law enforcement agencies to make periodic, unannounced visits, as applicable law allows, to any public school in the Sumter County School System for the purpose of detecting the presence of illegal drugs or weapons. The possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, or weapons will result in immediate suspension from school and possible criminal charges being brought against the student(s). In addition, staff and visitors are subject to possible criminal charges if found in possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, or weapons. These visits by law enforcement officials should be conducted with the knowledge and cooperation of the local school Principal and Superintendent or his/her designee (Policy: 6.15a).

INTERROGATIONS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS

INTERROGATIONS AT THE REQUEST OF SCHOOL OFFICIALS

When the Principal or his/her designee has evidence and/or reasonable cause to believe that a crime has been committed on-campus by one or more students, law enforcement officials, to include juvenile authorities, may be requested to come to the school to investigate the incident. Such investigations may include interrogation of students. In the event a student is to be interrogated about a crime committed on-campus, the law enforcement official must read the Miranda rights pertaining to the

student being interviewed. The juvenile Miranda rights are distinguished from the adult Miranda rights based on the student's right to contact a parent/guardian through the provided reasonable means. The decision to contact a parent/guardian is solely up to the student to be interviewed. A waiver of the Miranda rights is available to the student who agrees to an immediate interview. School officials have no duty to notify the parent/guardian of any student to be interviewed. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted by the student through reasonable means or cannot be present within a reasonable time, the law enforcement official may proceed with the interview in the absence of the parent (Attorney General Ruling, December 9, 1974). School officials have no duty to intervene in the interview process on the ground that the parent cannot be reached. A school official must be present at the interview, but cannot refuse the law enforcement officer permission to conduct the interview.

INTERROGATIONS AT THE REQUEST OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS

When law enforcement officers make it known that they wish to talk to a student concerning an off-campus crime while under the supervision of the school, the student will be called to the office of the Principal. The law enforcement officer must read the student the juvenile Miranda rights from which the student becomes aware of the distinguished right to notify a parent/guardian of the impending investigation. Neither the law enforcement officer nor the school Principal or his/her designee has the duty to contact the student's parent/guardian. The decision to communicate with a parent/guardian is a decision to be made only by the student to be interviewed. The student may exercise the right to communicate with a parent/guardian through provided reasonable means. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted through the provided reasonable means or cannot be present within a reasonable time, the law enforcement officials may proceed with the interview (Attorney General ruling, December 9, 1974). The student may sign a waiver to the Miranda rights and agree to an immediate interview with a law enforcement officer. If the parent wants to be present, then the law enforcement officer can take the student in custody and conduct the interview with the parent present.

RANDOM DRILLS USING WEAPONS DETECTORS, METAL DETECTORS AND/OR CANINE UNITS

To provide and maintain a safe and secure environment for students, school personnel, and authorized visitors random drills using metal detectors and/or canine units may be utilized. Metal detectors may be employed by trained school Board employees and/or law enforcement officials at the request and approval of the local school Principal and Superintendent or his/her designee. Canine units may be employed by trained law enforcement officials at the request and approval of the local school Principal and Superintendent or his/her designee. (Policy: 4.02.5)

SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

To provide and maintain a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and authorized visitors, the Sumter County Board of Education may use surveillance equipment on properties owned and/or maintained by the school system. Properties include buildings and grounds as well as vehicles owned and/or operated by the school system. Equipment shall not be used where there is an expectation of privacy (i.e., bathrooms, gyms, locker rooms, private offices, and classrooms). All school personnel, students, and parents shall be informed that they are subject to being videotaped while in school buildings, on school grounds, at school events, and on system-owned/maintained vehicles. Any information obtained through the use of surveillance equipment shall be used only by Sumter County School System administration for school safety, disciplinary matters, law enforcement, or other lawful purposes [The Code of Alabama, 16-4-7, 16-6B3, -4, -6 (1975); Alabama Administrative Code 290-4-1-.01(4, 5) Alabama State Department of Education, September 2, 1997; (Sumter County: May 1, 2000)]. (Policy: 4.01.1).

RULES OF CONDUCT FOR TRANSPORTED STUDENTS

The Transportation Department exists for the benefit of the students of Sumter County Schools. While not all students ride to and from school on a bus, all students benefit from the use of transportation for field trips, athletic events, or other extracurricular activities.

Any student behavior that distracts the driver from safely operating the bus or requires the driver to stop the bus to correct behavior, restore order, or request assistance will be reported to the school administrator for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including revocation of bus riding privileges. Should misconduct on a SCSS school bus create a danger to the driver or students, the bus driver is authorized to pull the bus over in a safe place or drive immediately to the nearest school or police department and request assistance.

Students and parents/guardians should note the following information:

1. Transportation services are a privilege, not a right.
2. The bus driver is in charge of the bus at all times.
3. Students will treat the driver, other riders, and the school bus itself with respect.
4. Transportation is available to all enrolled Sumter County Schools students who live beyond the legally prescribed two-mile no-transport zone of their zoned school, or to those students with an authorized exception.
5. All students must complete a student information card for the Transportation Department.
6. A student will ordinarily be transported to or from a bus stop in proximity to their home residence. If a student is to be transported from school to an address other than the home residence, the student must go to the same address every day.
7. Students are assigned to a particular school bus by the appropriate Transportation Department personnel. Students are not permitted to ride any bus other than their regularly

8. assigned bus without written request from the parent to the school administrator, and without written permission from the school administrator, in coordination with the Transportation Department. Special authorization covers only students authorized to ride a bus and will not displace any other student from their assigned bus.
9. The locations of all bus stops will be determined at the sole discretion of the Transportation Department. Any request for a new stop or a change of a stop location must be made to the Transportation Department, where the final decision will be made according to state and national guidelines. **School bus drivers are not permitted to make changes in bus stop locations or times.**
10. Students may be assigned a seat by the bus driver, within the driver's discretion. Should they receive an assignment by the driver, the student must sit in that seat unless otherwise directed by the driver or school system administrator.
11. Video cameras are placed on all schools' buses as a tool for school personnel to monitor behavior and shall not limit the bus driver's authority or the discretion of school administrators in enforcing the provisions of the Code of Conduct and the Rules of Conduct for Transported Students.
12. Any carry-on equipment (e.g., book bags, band instruments or uniforms, sports equipment or bags, science projects, school fundraiser items, personal items, etc.) must be held by the student owner or safely placed under the student's seat, must not interfere with either the seating or the safety of other students on the bus, and must not block the aisles or emergency exits.
13. Preschool students assigned to a school bus must be accompanied to the bus stop by a responsible adult; likewise, a responsible adult must meet the preschool student at the bus stop. **Failure to comply with these requirements will result in denial of bus privileges.**
14. Any student willfully damaging or destroying school bus property will be disciplined according to the SCSS Code of Conduct and will bear the cost of repairs.
15. A school bus is considered an extension of the classroom. Student safety while on the school bus is of critical importance; therefore, any behavioral issues interfering with that safety will not be tolerated. Please refer to "Classification of Violations" for appropriate disciplinary actions for school bus behavioral issues.

Bus Rules of Conduct/ Personal Safety at Bus Stops

1. Students must be at the bus stop approximately 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time of their bus in the morning.
2. Students must stand at least 10 feet away from the road and in front of where the bus stops so that the driver can maintain clear visibility of the students.
3. Students should form a single-file line and board the bus in an orderly manner.
4. There should be no horseplay, pushing, shoving, or other dangerous behavior at the bus stop or while on the bus. If it is necessary to cross a road before boarding the bus, the student should:
 - a. Remain on the side of the road and wait for the driver's signal to cross the road **after** the bus has come to a complete stop and has activated the red lights, stop arm, and crossing control gate.
 - b. Upon seeing the clear signal of the school bus driver, look both right and left to make sure that all traffic has stopped and quickly proceed across the road at least 10 feet in front of the bus, and in front of the crossing control gate.
 - c. Board the bus and take a seat quickly.
5. **NEVER** run after the bus once it has begun moving away from the stop.
6. **NEVER** attempt to chase the bus down or beat it to the next stop, either running or in a car.
7. Remain seated throughout the route.
8. Keep your hands and feet to yourself and away from aisles and windows.

9. No food or drink on the bus. Dispose of any trash in the trash can.
10. When exiting the bus, students should wait until the bus has completely stopped before standing up.
11. Carefully walk down the bus steps and move quickly away from the bus toward the school or residence.
12. If it is necessary to cross the road after getting off the bus, the student should:
 - a. Move toward the front of the bus and stop at least 10 feet up on the side of the road beyond the crossing control gate.
 - b. Wait for the bus driver to signal that it is safe to cross the road.
 - c. Move quickly across in front of the bus, being careful to watch traffic in both directions while crossing.
 - d. Move away from the road and toward the school or residence.

BUS INFRACTIONS

- 1st Offense: Warning (Parent Contact)
- 2nd Offense 1-3 days bus suspension
- 3rd Offense: 3-5 days bus suspension
- 4th Offense: 5-10 days bus suspension

Parents will be notified by telephone or mail when a student is suspended from the bus. When a student is suspended from the bus, he/she is suspended from all school buses. Exceptions may be made for those students attending the Career and Technical Center.

Fighting on the bus will result in more severe disciplinary action. Fighting endangers EVERYONE and will not be tolerated. Students who fight on the bus will be disciplined as outlined in the Code of Conduct section of the handbook.

STEPS FOR PARENTS REGARDING STUDENT BUS INFRACTION

Step 1: Contact the principal at the school that your child attends.

Step 2: The principal will contact the transportation director.

Step 3: The transportation director will take meetings at the student's base school. A parent should not come to the transportation office to gain information about the discipline recommended by the school administrators.

Students who do not conduct themselves properly will not be allowed to ride the bus. Students may be subjected to disciplinary action provided by district policies, including but not limited to suspension and expulsion from school or from the bus for misconduct on the bus.

As per the Charles "Chuck" Poland, Jr. Act—ALABAMA ACT 2013-347, there is no trespassing on school buses. Any unauthorized person boarding a bus will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Punishment could result in a fine of up to \$6,000 and up to one year in jail.

STUDENT RECORDS

A well-developed student record file contains information needed for making appropriate educational decisions for the students. Student records are to be treated confidentially and should contain information that is relevant, accurate, and appropriate.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND GUARDIANS ARE TO:

- inform the school of any information that may be useful in making appropriate educational decisions;
- authorize the release of pertinent information to those individuals or agencies who are working actively and constructively for the benefit of the student; release of records of students 17 years of age or younger who attend an elementary or secondary school requires the signature of the parent/guardian except when released to other educational institutions or when subpoenaed by the courts.

RIGHTS OF STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND GUARDIANS ARE TO:

- inspect, review, and challenge the information contained in records directly relating to the student;
- be protected by legal provisions which prohibit the release of personal identifiable information to other than legally authorized persons without the consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible student; eligible students are those 18 years of age or older.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. Generally, the school must have written permission from the parent or eligible student before releasing any information from a student's records; however, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties:

- School employees who have a need-to-know;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations doing certain studies for the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- Individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas;
- Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile system, pursuant to specific state laws.

The Sumter County School System designates the following as "directory" information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number

Schools may also disclose, without consent, "directory" type information. **Should parents decide not to release directory information for their child, they must notify the school Principal in writing within ten (10) days of the beginning of the school year or within 10 days of enrollment for transfer students. A new request for non-release must be completed each school year.**

STUDENT GRIEVANCES

The Sumter County Board of Education believes that the students have both the right and responsibility to express school-related concerns and grievances to the faculty and the administration. Therefore, students shall be assured the opportunity for an orderly review of grievances. Students should request an appointment with the Principal or his/her designees which will not interfere with the regularly scheduled classes or school activities. The faculty and administration will strive to resolve student grievances at the most immediate level of supervision. In all cases when the student's grievance cannot be resolved at the local school, students shall follow the system's grievance procedure.

STUDENT USE OF MOTORIZED VEHICLES

Student use of motorized vehicles is limited to high school campuses. Students operating motorized vehicles on school premises shall do so in accordance with Alabama traffic laws and such rules and regulations as may be formulated by local school officials. The privilege to operate a private vehicle on school property will be revoked if safety rules are violated. Students may be required to present evidence of an Alabama driver's license before they are authorized to bring a vehicle on school premises. In an effort to maintain order and safety in and on school parking facilities, school personnel are authorized to secure and require students operating motorized vehicles on campus to purchase parking decals, numbers, etc.

Violation of this policy may result in arrest and prosecution in accordance with Alabama law and/or disciplinary action by local school officials.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

The state of Alabama legislative support for character education started in 1995, Act(s) 1975 Code of Alabama, Section 16-6B-2(h); 1995 Accountability Law, Act 5-313. The State Board of Education and all local boards shall develop and implement a comprehensive character education program for all grades to consist of not less than ten minutes instruction per day focusing upon the students' development of the following character traits: courage, patriotism, citizenship, honesty, fairness, respect for others, kindness, cooperation, self-respect, self-control, courtesy, compassion, tolerance, diligence, generosity, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, respect for the environment, patience, creativity, sportsmanship, loyalty, and perseverance. Each plan of instruction shall include the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag" (1995 Accountability Law).

HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, AND BULLYING

The Sumter County Board of Education is committed to protecting its students from harassment, sexual harassment, violence, threats of violence, intimidation, bullying, cyberbullying, cyberstalking, and discrimination. The Board believes that all students are entitled to a safe school experience in which students can realize their maximum potential and engage fully in the learning process.

Conduct that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, violence, threats of violence, intimidation, bullying, cyberbullying, cyberstalking, or discrimination, as defined in the Board's policy manual, is strictly prohibited. Sumter County Schools will take appropriate action to prevent, correct, and, where warranted, discipline behavior that violates this policy.

Students who believe they have been harassed, sexually harassed, bullied, or discriminated against, or have knowledge of harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, or discrimination against another

student, are encouraged to report the problem, verbally or in writing, to the principal, counselor, coordinator of student services, superintendent, or other faculty member. No student shall be subjected to harassment, sexual harassment, violence, threats of violence, intimidation, bullying, cyberbullying, cyberstalking, or discrimination by employees, students, or third parties. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including any sanction, penalty, or consequence available to school officials under the Student Code of Conduct. Any employee who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with Board policy and state and federal law. Third parties who violate this policy will be dealt with on a case- by-case basis by the school system administration. For a detailed statement of the Board's policies concerning harassment, sexual harassment, violence, threats of violence, intimidation, bullying, cyberbullying, cyberstalking, or discrimination, including descriptions of prohibited conduct, reporting methods, investigative procedures, and disciplinary consequences, please refer to the Board's policy manual, a copy of which is maintained at the Board's Central Office, at each local school, and on the SCSS website; as well as the Student Code of Conduct contained herein.

STUDENT BULLYING PREVENTION

(THE JAMARI TERRELL WILLIAMS STUDENT BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY)

It is the policy of the Board that no student shall engage in or be subjected to bullying, violence, threats of violence, or intimidation by any other student that is based on any of the specific characteristics that have been identified by the Sumter County Board of Education in this policy. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary sanctions.

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

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

Bullying, intimidation, violence or threats of violence are prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary consequences and sanctions if the perpetrator of such action is found to have based the prohibited action on one or more of the following personal characteristics of the victim of such conduct:

- The student's race;
 - The student's sex;
 - The student's sexual orientation;
 - The student's religion;
 - The student's national origin; or
 - The student's disability.
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REPORTING, INVESTIGATION, AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

- Complaints alleging violations of this policy must be made on Board-approved complaint forms available on the Sumter County School System website (<https://www.sumter.k12.fl.us>), the local school website, or the school office. The complaint must be delivered to the principal or principal's designee by either mail or personal delivery. Incidental or minor violations of this policy may be presented and resolved informally.
 - Upon receipt of the complaint, the principal or the principal's designee will determine if the complaint alleges a serious violation of this policy. If the principal or the principal's designee determines that the complaint alleges a serious violation, the principal or the designee will undertake an investigation of the complaint in a reasonably prompt time period. The investigation will entail the gathering of relevant facts and evidence taking into account the circumstances of the complaint. If the investigation establishes a violation, appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be imposed on the offending student(s). Other measures that are reasonably calculated to prevent a recurrence of the violation(s) may also be imposed by the principal or the school system.
 - Any reprisal or retaliation against any student who has reported a violation of this policy or sought relief provided by this policy are prohibited and are themselves a violation of this policy. Any confirmed acts of reprisal or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary sanctions that may include any sanction, penalty, or consequence that is available to school officials under the Code of Student Conduct. A student who deliberately, recklessly, and falsely accuses another student of a violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.
 - The complaint form developed to report violations of this policy will include a provision for reporting a threat of suicide by a student. If a threat of suicide is reported, the principal or the principal's designee is authorized to inform the student's parent or guardian of the report unless at the discretion of the school principal or the principal's designee the apparent cause of the threat of suicide is child abuse or other significant harm from a parent or guardian.
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SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

It is the policy of the Board that sexual harassment of a student by other students or employees is unlawful behavior and will not be permitted in the school setting. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of the student's academic progress or completion of a school-related activity; OR
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis in evaluating the student's performance in a course of study or other school-related activity; OR
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

A student who feels that he or she has been sexually harassed should report the incident to the school Principal. The student may request that the school Principal appoint a designee of the same sex to hear his/her complaint. The complaint should be made within ten (10) calendar days following the incident or the latest occurrence in the series of such incidents. The complaint may be made to the Principal in person or may be made in writing, signed by the complainant and then delivered to the reporting officer by the Principal. If such report is first made verbally, then it will be the responsibility of the Principal or reporting officer to reduce the same to writing and to have the complainant sign the written complaint (Policy: 6.10).

CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the policy of the Board for the principal of the school and their faculty to use whatever reasonable and lawful system of discipline will most effectively meet the needs of the children in the school. This system may include such measures as consultation with parents and pupils, suspension from school, detention halls, recommendation for alternative placement, and/or expulsion from school (Board action necessary for expulsion), and other procedures decided upon by the principal and their faculty.

JURISDICTION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

Students enrolled in the Sumter County School System are subject to the policies of the Sumter County Board of Education and to the rules and regulations of the schools.

This authority applies to all school-sponsored activities, including but not necessarily limited to:

- regular school activities;
- transportation on school buses;
- field trips;
- athletic functions;
- activities during which appropriate school personnel have supervisory responsibility for students;
- off school property if the conduct interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operations of a school or a school-sponsored activity or event.

All school regulations and prohibitions pertain to motorized vehicles driven or parked on school property. In addition to the foregoing, jurisdictional control over the student may be extended to the immediate vicinity of the school when the conduct of the student is deemed to have a detrimental effect on the health, safety, and welfare of the school. The authority of the school officials to control student conduct off school grounds and outside school hours is well settled in the law. When the students are engaged in a school-sponsored activity, the authority of the school officials is the same as if the activity took place on school property.

STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THEIR CONDUCT

Students enrolled in the Sumter County School System are to obey all school policies, rules, and regulations and become familiar with the contents of the **Student-Parent Information Guide**.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity ensures students possess the responsibility to acquire skills honestly in the classroom that aids them in college and the workforce. Academic integrity also guarantees students a quality learning experience in which work is evaluated fairly and hard work is recognized and valued. Students in the Sumter County School System are expected to submit original work and give credit to other peoples' ideas. Maintaining academic integrity involves:

- Creating and expressing your own ideas in course work;
- Acknowledging all sources of information;
- Completing assignments independently or acknowledging collaboration;
- Accurately reporting results when conducting your own research or with respect to labs;
- Honesty during examinations.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Students are responsible for their own work. Students who share homework assignments are often unprepared for classroom assignments and exams. Cheating in any form is unacceptable. Students must understand that plagiarism is not only a form of cheating, but it is also against the law.

Any action that misleadingly implies someone else's work is your own is plagiarism. Some examples of plagiarism are:

- Submit a paper to be graded or reviewed that you have not written on your own.
 - Copy answers or text from another classmate and submit it as your own.
 - Quote or paraphrase from another paper without crediting the original author.
 - Cite data without crediting the original source.
 - Propose another author's idea as if it were your own.
 - Fabricate references or using incorrect references.
 - Submit someone else's presentation, program, spreadsheet, or other file with only minor alterations.
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Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Assignments

Students may use AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, etc.) **only with teacher permission** and in alignment with assignment instructions. The use of AI to **generate or complete assignments without explicit authorization** is considered **academic dishonesty** and will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Key Guidelines:

- AI tools may be used **as a support** (e.g., for grammar checking or idea generation) if approved by the teacher.
- Any AI-generated content used in an assignment must be **clearly cited or acknowledged**.
- Submitting work entirely or partially generated by AI **without teacher approval** is prohibited.

STUDENT DUE PROCESS

The Board of Education will adhere to the basic tenets of due process when carrying out the procedures contained in this guide. Furthermore, the Board and the education staff employed by the Board will comply with the legal elements of due process, which include procedural due process and substantive due process. With regard to procedural due process, students will be informed of the rules and regulations applicable to them; will receive adequate notice of any charges that they have violated those rules and regulations; and will be given an appropriate opportunity to be heard on any disciplinary matter. With regard to substantive due process, the rules and regulations adopted by the Board are reasonably related to the legitimate purpose and function of the school system.

Following an alleged student disciplinary incident or infraction, the principal, or his or her designee, may consider all of the following factors before recommending or initiating disciplinary action against a student: the age of the student, the disciplinary history of the student, the seriousness of the violation or behavior, and/or whether a lesser intervention would appropriately address the behavior of the student.

Following an alleged violation of the code of student conduct or an alleged violation of state law that results in a recommendation for the long-term alternative school placement, long-term suspension, or expulsion of a student, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The student is afforded an opportunity for a disciplinary hearing before the Hearing Officer to determine whether the alleged violation has occurred.
2. The student, and his or her parent or guardian, receive reasonable written notice of the disciplinary hearing, delivered to them personally or by mail. If the written notice is not responded to by a parent or guardian, the hearing shall be waived. The notice shall include:
 - a. A statement of the time, place, and nature of the hearing;
 - b. A short and plain statement detailing the alleged conduct, the provision of the code of student conduct or state law allegedly violated, and any recommended discipline;
 - c. A statement outlining the rights of the student at the hearing; and
 - d. An optional waiver of the disciplinary hearing indicating the parent or guardian's assent to the alleged violation or violations and to the recommended discipline.
3. If the notice has been responded to by a parent or guardian, the disciplinary **hearing shall occur within 10 school days** after the initial suspension from school, unless good cause is otherwise shown or upon agreement of the parties.
4. The student may be represented at the hearing by legal counsel or another advocate of the student's choice at the student's expense.
5. At least **five days before the hearing**, the student, parent or guardian, and legal counsel or advocate of the student may review any audio or video recording of the incident and, consistent with federal and state student records laws and regulations, any records, documents, or other information that may be presented as evidence at the hearing, including written statements made by witnesses related to the alleged incident leading to the suspension or expulsion.

6. Representatives from the school seeking the proposed disciplinary action shall offer evidence at the hearing that the student violated the code of student conduct or state law.
7. The student, parent or guardian, or legal counsel or advocate may present a defense, question adverse witnesses who are present at the hearing and offering testimony, excluding students under 14 years of age, and offer evidence, including oral testimony from supporting witnesses, written statements, and other documentary evidence and audio or video recordings at the hearing. **The anonymity of witnesses shall be protected. Witnesses shall not be compelled to attend and/or testify in hearings.**
8. Each party to the hearing, upon request, shall receive an electronic or written record of the hearing from the Hearing Officer.
9. The student and parent or guardian of the student shall receive a written decision from the local board of education, or its designee, within five school days after the hearing. The written decision shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following information:
 - a. The basis for the decision, including a reference to the provision of the code of student conduct or state law that the student is accused of violating.
 - b. A statement detailing the information that shall be included in the official record of the student.
 - c. A statement detailing the right of the student to appeal the decision pursuant to the code of student conduct of the local board of education, Section 12-15-115, and notice of the procedures necessary to file an appeal.

If the student withdraws from Sumter County Schools while disciplinary action is pending, then returns to the school system, disciplinary action will resume. The student's conduct while not enrolled in Sumter County Schools may be considered in determining the appropriate discipline.

DUE PROCESS HEARING REQUIRED

LONG-TERM ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENT

The placement of a student in alternative school for **more** than 15 school days per incidence

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

The exclusion of a student from his or her regular school environment for **more** than 10, and less than 90, school days per incidence

EXPULSION

The exclusion of a student from his or her regular school environment for **more** than 90, and less than 180, school days per incidence

DUE PROCESS HEARING NOT REQUIRED

- In School Suspension (ISS) Placement
- Virtual School Placement

Board policies, rules, regulations, and other information contained in this guide deal with matters of legitimate interest with the intent of protecting the health, safety, and educational welfare of students and personnel and ensuring the efficient operation of the schools.

CLASSIFICATION OF VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Code of Student Conduct are grouped into three classes: minor, intermediate, and major (outlined as Class I, II, and III, respectively). Before determining the classification of a violation, the principal or designee will consult with the involved students and school personnel. Once the classification of the violation is determined, the principal or designee will implement the appropriate disciplinary procedure. The initial disciplinary action will be coded with the information the principal or designee has available to them at the time of discipline. However, the principal or designee has the authority to reclassify the disciplinary infraction and/or amend the disciplinary action as warranted if new facts or evidence are discovered. This may include adding or removing offenses, changing the coding of the offense(s), consideration of aggravating or mitigating circumstances (see below), and/or modifying the discipline related to the offense. Should additional investigation produce facts supporting modification of the charges or action, the parent and student will receive notification. The principal or designee may suspend a student pending a full investigation. Each teacher will deal with general classroom disruption through effective classroom management and involvement of parents or school counselors. Only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective, or the disruption is severe, should the student be referred to the principal or their designee.

AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Any student committing one of the offenses listed herein, whether Class I, II, or III, based on one or more of the following characteristics of the victim of such offense, will be subject to additional, or more severe, disciplinary action. Offenses committed based on one of these characteristics allows the discipline to be escalated up one class (i.e. from a Class I offense to a Class II, from a Class II to a Class III, and from a Class III where expulsion is not normally a consideration to a Class III with an expulsion consideration)

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1) race; | 7) age | 13) sexual orientation; |
| 2) color; | 8) ethnicity | 14) family background; |
| 3) gender; | 9) genetic information; | 15) gender nonconformity; |
| 4) religion; | 10) socioeconomic status; | 16) marital status; |
| 5) national origin; | 11) family background | 17) physical appearance; or |
| 6) disability | 12) linguistic preference | 18) conduct directed toward a Board employee |

MINOR OFFENSES—CLASS I**Code Offense: Description**

- 1.11 Disorderly conduct:** Any act that disrupts or has the potential to disrupt the conduct of a school function or the orderly learning environment.
- 1.12 Excessive tardiness:** Three or more incidents of reporting late to school, class, or an assigned area.
- 1.13 Nonconformity to dress code:** Failure to comply with the dress code set forth in this handbook.
- 1.14 Inappropriate public display of affection:** Including, but not limited to, embracing and kissing.
- 1.15 Minor disruption on a school bus:** Failure to comply with the Rules of Conduct for Transported Students set forth in this handbook.
- 1.16 Continued refusal to complete class assignments and/or failure to follow instructions:** This includes, but is not limited to, failure to carry correspondence home; continuous refusal to bring notebook, pencil, books, or other classroom materials; and failure to obey directions in the hallways, at assemblies, etc.
- 1.17 Unauthorized use of school or personal property:** Including but not limited to the use of computers, personal technology devices, online services, or websites to access distracting, irrelevant, or inappropriate content, or for any other reason other than instructional purposes.
- 1.18 Littering:** Knowingly depositing rubbish, refuse, waste, garbage, paper, glass, cans, bottles, trash, debris, or any foreign substance of whatever kind and description on Board property.
- 1.19 Defacing school property:** Spoiling the appearance of Board property by drawing, writing, or otherwise altering the appearance of it.
- 1.20 Displaying unsportsmanlike conduct at school athletic events:** Commission of any act contrary to the generally understood principles of sportsmanship, whether as a participant or spectator.
- 1.21 Ordering or accepting food from a food delivery service:** Students may not order or accept any orders from a restaurant or food delivery service (Door Dash, Uber Eats, etc.).
- 1.22 Leaving Doors Opened:** Students may not leave external doors open or ajar, prop doors open, or allow entry to anyone not identifiable as a student or faculty/staff.
- 1.23 Any other offense that the principal may reasonably deem to fall within this category after investigation and consideration of all relevant circumstances.**

CLASS I ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES:

Administrative responses for Class I violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

Pre-K

Pre-K students are expected to adhere to the Sumter County Schools Parent/Student Code of Conduct. Failure to adhere may result in administrative responses per class offense. The Superintendent or his/her designee will make the final decision which could result in dismissal from the Pre-K program.

Elementary Students

- Student conference/written warning
- In-school intervention
- Parent contact/conference
- Before-/after-school detention
- Denial of bus privileges
- Out-of-school suspension not to exceed one day
- Assignment to in-school intervention
- Response to instruction plan for behavior
- Positive behavior support program interventions
- Counselor referral
- Social worker referral

Middle and High School Students

- Parent contact/conference
- In-school intervention
- Before-/after-school detention
- Denial of bus privileges
- Work assignments before or after school, in-school intervention
- Out-of-school suspension not to exceed one day
- Assignment to an alternative educational program apart from the normal setting
- Positive behavior support program interventions
- Suspension/in-school intervention combination
- Counselor referral
- Social worker referral

Before determining the appropriate administrative response, the principal or their designee will consider the student's prior disciplinary history.

INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES—CLASS II**Code Offense: Description**

- 2.20 Trespassing:** To enter or remain on Board property without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry, including students under suspension or expulsion, and unauthorized persons who enter or remain on Board property after being directed to leave by an authorized Board employee.
- 2.21 Fighting:** Participation in a fight involving physical violence where there are only two participants, but no one main offender. This does not include verbal confrontations, tussles, or major confrontations.

- 2.22 Excessive disorderly conduct:** Any disruptive act that substantially disrupts or has the potential to substantially disrupt the conduct of a school function, or the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others.
- 2.23 Defiance of authority:** Opposition to or disregard of an order of instruction from a school board employee or others having legal authority (policeman, fireman) openly expressed in words or actions.
- 2.24 Disruptive demonstrations:** Demonstrations which could cause harm or serious inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm.
- 2.25 Unjustified activation of a fire alarm system, fire extinguisher, AED, emergency, or security system:** Knowingly triggering an emergency system without reasonable cause.
- 2.26 Inciting or participating in a disturbance:** Leading, encouraging, or assisting in a major disturbance which results in one or more of the following: destruction/damage to property or injury to others; or, a substantial disruption of the learning environment; or, which poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others.
- 2.27 Persistent, willful disobedience:** Recurring, intentional violation of the Code of Conduct that disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function; or, behavior that disrupts the orderly learning environment; or, poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others.
- 2.28 Profanity or Vulgarity:** The use of obscene, abusive, vulgar, or irreverent language.
- 2.29 Gambling:** To bet on the outcome of a game, contest, or other event; play a game of chance for stakes; or take a risk in the hopes of gaining an advantage where the stakes are \$100 or less.
- 2.30 Leaving class or campus without official permission:** Leaving class or school without permission or skipping class or school.
- 2.31 Misuse of personal technology devices (PTDs):** Any violation of the Cell Phone/Personal Technology Devices policy, as set forth in this handbook.
- 2.32 Vandalism:** The willful destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property, without the consent of the owner or person having control over it and causing damage of \$200 or less. This includes graffiti, carving initials in school furniture, etc. If a student is deemed responsible for vandalism of Sumter County School property, the child and/or their parents may be responsible for restitution.
- 2.33 Petty theft:** The unlawful taking of another's property valued at \$100 or less.
- 2.34 Possession of stolen property:** The possession of stolen property valued at or less than \$100 with knowledge that it is stolen.
- 2.35 Extortion by threat:** Maliciously threatening an injury to the person, property, or reputation of another, with the intent to extort money or any pecuniary advantage whatsoever, or with the intent to compel the person so threatened, or any person, to do any act or refrain from doing any act against their will. **Note:** Completion of the threat by the victim complying with the demands, or the carrying out of the threats against the victim, constitutes a Class III offense.

- 2.36 Unauthorized organizations:** Any campus participation in non-sanctioned fraternities, sororities, secret societies, gangs, or non-affiliated school clubs.
- 2.37 Academic dishonesty:** Cheating, including both giving and receiving information on an academic assignment; plagiarism, i.e., use of another's words, ideas, or data without acknowledgment; or use of artificial intelligence, such as Chat GPT or the like; or fabrication/falsification, distorting, or inventing the origin or content of information used as authority. The student may receive reduced credit or no credit on the particular assignment, along with other appropriate disciplinary action, at the discretion of the classroom teacher.
- 2.38 Forgery:** The student (a) alters any writing of another without their authority; (b) makes, completes, executes, authenticates, issues, or transfers any writing so that it purports to be the act of another who did not authorize that act, or to have been executed at a time or place or in a numbered sequence other than was in fact the case, or to be a copy of an original when or if such original existed; or (c) alters the contents of any writing that the student knows to be forged in a manner specified above.
- 2.39 Continuous disruption on bus:** Continual failure to comply with the Rules of Conduct for Transported Students as set forth in this handbook.
- 2.40 Computer records, destruction:** The destruction of computer records by an individual who has no right to do so nor any reasonable grounds to believe that they have such a right.
- 2.41 Possession and/or use of prescription or non-prescription medication, inhalants, or other over-the-counter drugs:** Failure to comply with the Student Medication Procedures set forth in this handbook.
- 2.42 Unauthorized recording/distribution:** Creating, publishing, or forwarding video or audio recording of a student, Board employee, or authorized guest of the school system, without that individual's permission.
- 2.43 Possession or viewing of pornographic, suggestive, or inappropriate material:** Possession or viewing of any visual depiction or electronic image of sexual conduct, nudity, or material that appeals to a person's prurient interests.
- 2.44 Possession of a fake/toy weapon:** Possession, use, intent to use any instrument or object which resembles a weapon or firearm as described in 3.42 or 3.45.
- 2.45 Use of insults or slurs:** Oral or written affronts of a nature set forth in "Aggravating Circumstances" above.
- 2.46 Unauthorized use or tampering of a computer or computer system:** Unauthorized usage or tampering with the Sumter County Schools' computer system/network or the computer or PTD of another student, faculty member, or staff. This includes, but is not limited to, distribution of restricted passwords, unauthorized access to restricted computer sites, intentionally tampering with another student's work, intentionally damaging and/or sabotaging computer equipment belonging to the system, and other misuse of computers.
- 2.47 Fleeing or evading a school board employee:** To intentionally flee or evade, by any means, any Board employee who the student knows is directing them to stop or is attempting to get their attention.
- 2.48 Repeated and/or excessive commission of Class I disciplinary infractions.**
- 2.49** Any other offense that the principal or designee may deem reasonable to fall within this category after investigation and consideration of relevant circumstances.

CLASS II ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES

Administrative responses for Class II violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

Pre-K

Pre-k students are expected to adhere to the Sumter County Schools Parent/Student Code of Conduct. Failure to adhere may result in administrative responses per class offense. The Superintendent or his/her designee will make the final decision which could result in dismissal from the pre-k program.

Elementary Students

- Parent contact/conference
- Student conference/written warning
- Before-/after-school detention
- Out-of-school suspension not to exceed two (five) days, with parent or guardian conference before the student may return to school
- Assignment to in-school intervention
- Response to Instruction referral
- Positive behavior support program interventions
- Counselor referral
- Social worker referral
- Denial of bus privileges

Middle and High School Students

- In-school suspension
- Suspension of up to five days, with parent or guardian conference before the student may return to school
- Out-of-school suspension/in-school suspension combination
- Disciplinary probation
- Before-/after-school detention
- Work assignments before or after school
- Positive behavior support program interventions
- Counselor referral
- Social worker referral
- Denial of bus privileges
- Placement in the Board's alternative educational program
- Recommendation for expulsion.

Before determining the appropriate administrative response, the principal or their designee will consider the student's prior disciplinary history.

MAJOR OFFENSES—CLASS III

Code Offense: Description

- 3.28 Homicide:** Killing of one human being by another, either intentionally or through negligence.
- 3.29 Sexual battery:** Sexual contact forcibly and/or against the person's will; or, where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of their youth, or because of temporary or permanent mental incapacity. **Note:** "sexual contact" is defined as the intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person with an intent to abuse, humiliate, harass, degrade, or arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person.

- 3.30 Kidnapping:** The unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against their will or of a minor without the consent of their parent.
- 3.31 Robbery:** The taking 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.
- 3.32 Aggravated battery:** Intentionally or recklessly causing great bodily harm, disability, or permanent disfigurement; or any battery with use of a weapon regardless of the injuries sustained.
- 3.33 Battery of a Board Employee:** A student who either intentionally, or recklessly, causes physical contact with a Board employee OR has physical contact with a Board employee during the commission of a disciplinary infraction.
- 3.34 Assault on Board employee:** Any act causing a Board employee to reasonably fear an attack or imminent physical harm.
- 3.35 Violence/threat of violence:** The infliction of force with the intent to cause injury to another or damage to the property of another; or an expression of an intention to inflict violence on another.
- 3.36 Intimidation:** A threat or other action that is intended to or could reasonably cause fear or apprehension in another, especially for the purpose of coercing or deterring a student from participating in or taking advantage of any school program, benefit, activity, or opportunity for which the student is or would be eligible.
- 3.37 Aggravated fighting:** Participation in a fight where there is no one main offender, and **any one or more of the following:**
- Involves more than two individuals;
 - causes a major disruption;
 - at least one of the participants sustains a serious physical injury. If any one participant sustains a serious physical injury, all participants are guilty of a Class III offense.
- 3.38 Battery:** A student who either intentionally, or recklessly, causes physical contact with another OR has physical contact with another during the commission of a disciplinary infraction.
- 3.39 Assault:** Any act causing another to reasonably fear an attack or imminent physical harm.
- 3.40 Offensive touching of another person:** Touching without permission, either directly or through the clothing, another person's, genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks, OR touching any part of another person if done with an intent to harass, annoy, or alarm that person.
- 3.41 Bomb threats:** To unlawfully place any person in fear of bodily harm, or interfere with the educational environment, by threat of explosives by any means of communication, regardless of whether or not a bomb actually exists.
- 3.42 Possession of firearm:** Carrying a firearm is a violation of the Safe Schools Act of 2013: Any weapon that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device or any machine gun. A destructive device is any bomb, grenade, mine, rocket, missile, pipe bomb, or similar device containing some type of explosive and is capable of causing bodily harm or property damage. Includes firearms of any kind (loaded or unloaded), including, but not limited to, hand, zip, pistol, rifle, shotgun, starter gun, flare gun, etc.

- 3.43 Discharging of any firearm:** The discharge of any firearm as defined in the preceding section.
- 3.44 Possession of a fake/toy weapon with intent to deceive:** possession, use, or intent to use any instrument or object which resembles a weapon or firearm as described in 3.43 or 3.45 for the purpose of leading others to believe the student is in possession of an actual weapon or firearm.
- 3.45 Possession of weapon:** Possession, use, or intent to use, any instrument or object used in fighting; an instrument of offensive or defensive combat, to inflict harm on another person, or to intimidate any person Including, but not limited to, instruments with sharp cutting edges, chemical weapons or devices (mace/pepper spray), electrical weapons or devices (stun guns), or blunt instruments capable of being used as a weapon etc.
- 3.46 Burglary:** The unlawful entry into a building or other structure with intent to commit an offense therein.
- 3.47 Grand theft:** The unlawful taking of another's property, valued at more than \$100.
- 3.48 Arson:** Intentionally damaging property or putting property at risk of damage by starting or maintaining a fire or causing an explosion.
- 3.49 Drugs:** The unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or CBD product (including, but not limited to, Delta-8), or equipment and devices used for preparing or taking drugs, narcotics, or CBD products. This includes being under the influence of or possessing drugs or substances represented as drugs. This also includes prescription or over-the-counter medication if abused by the student or the possession of said drugs at the school without a properly completed School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form.
- 3.50 Harassment:** Behavior intended to pressure or intimidate, including, but not limited to, written, electronic, verbal, non-verbal, or physical acts that (a) place a person in reasonable fear of harm to their person or damage to their property; (b) have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student; (c) have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of a school; (d) have the effect of creating a hostile environment; or, (e) have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.
- 3.51 Bullying:** Any written, electronic, verbal, non-verbal, or physical behavior or action against another, including but not limited to any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture that a reasonable person should know will have the effect of:
- placing another in reasonable fear of substantial harm to their emotional or physical well-being or substantial harm to their property; or
 - creating a hostile, threatening, humiliating, or abusive educational environment due to their actions or due to a power differential between the bully and the target; or
 - interfering with a student having a safe school environment that is necessary to facilitate educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or perpetuating bullying by inciting, soliciting, or coercing an individual or group to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional, psychological, or physical harm to another person.

- 3.52 Cyberbullying:** An act of harassment, intimidation, discrimination, or bullying committed using digital technology, including but not limited to email, blogs, cell phone, social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), chat rooms, instant messaging, or the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or PTD.
- 3.53 Cyberstalking:** To engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of email or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person, and serving no legitimate purpose.
- 3.54 Sexual harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- 3.55 Sexual offense:** Mutual engagement in sexual intercourse, sexual contact, or behavior or conduct intended to result in sexual gratification without force or threat of force.
- 3.56 Explosives:** Preparing, possessing, or igniting an explosive on Board property likely to cause bodily injury or property damage. This includes fireworks, firecrackers, and any various devices detonated to release destructive material such as gas or smoke.
- 3.57 Criminal mischief/vandalism:** The willful destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property, without the consent of the owner or person having control over it, and causing damage in excess of \$200. If a student is deemed responsible for vandalism of Sumter County School the child and/or their parents are responsible for restitution.
- 3.58 Alcohol:** The manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or use of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol. This includes being intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol while under the Board's jurisdiction.
- 3.59 Indecent exposure:** Exposure of a student's genitals, breasts, or buttocks.
- 3.60 Gambling:** To bet on the outcome of a game, contest, or other event; play a game of chance for stakes; or take a risk in the hopes of gaining an advantage where the stakes exceed \$100.
- 3.61 Extortion by act:** Completion of a threat as described in 2.35.
- 3.62 Other criminal acts:** Commission of any criminal act, not herein listed, as defined by the laws of the Cities of Livingston, York, State of Alabama, or United States of America.
- 3.63 Dissemination of obscene matter:** To expose, exhibit, show, or in any way display, by electronic means or otherwise, any visual depiction of sexual conduct, nudity, or material that appeals to a person's prurient interests. This includes, but is not limited to, a visual depiction of the person disseminating the obscene material.
- 3.64 Video recording and/or sharing recordings of school fights or sexual activity:** Recording, filming, and/or sharing of a school fight and/or any sexual activity via text message, social media, chat room, group text thread, messaging app, or the like.
- 3.65 Distribution of explicit images:** No student shall distribute, display, solicit, possess, or produce a sexually or pornographic explicit image of any individual, including sexually explicit images of a child. This prohibition applies whether or not the image is of an identifiable person nor whether the age of the individual can be determined. This prohibition includes images of known and unknown individuals and those generated by artificial intelligence.

- 3.66 Possession or use of tobacco and vaping products:** Possession, use, distribution, or sale/transfer of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vape cartridges, vape pens, lighters, matches, or similar products.
- 3.67 Defiance of authority while in the commission of a disciplinary offense:** Continuing to engage in a disciplinary infraction after a Board employee has directed the student to cease the activity.
- 3.68 Repeated and/or excessive commission of Class I or Class II disciplinary infractions.**
- 3.69** Any other offense that the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after investigation and consideration of all relevant circumstances.

CLASS III ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES

Administrative responses for Class III offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Out-of-school suspension not to exceed ten days
- In-school suspension
- After-school detention hall
- Denial of bus privileges
- Counselor referral
- Social worker referral
- Suspension/in-school suspension combination
- Threat assessment
- Disciplinary Probation
- Placement in the Board's alternative educational program
- Recommendation for expulsion

Pre-K

Pre-k students are expected to adhere to the Sumter County Schools Parent/Student Code of Conduct. Failure to adhere may result in administrative responses per class offense. The Superintendent or his/her designee will make the final decision which could result in dismissal from the pre-k program.

DEFINITIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES TO DISCIPLINARY INFRACTIONS

Before School Detention/After-School Detention Hall

The principal or designee has the authority to assign students to a designated room (detention hall) on campus at the end of the regular school day for a reasonable and specified period of time as a disciplinary action. The parent or guardian is responsible for providing transportation in these cases. A reasonable attempt will be made to notify the parents or guardian prior to the assignment of a student to detention. If the parents or guardian can be notified on the day of the misbehavior, the student will be assigned on that day; if not, the student will be assigned for the following day.

Disciplinary Probation

Disciplinary probation is a period of time specified by the principal or designee during which a student must correct their behavior while abiding by all regulations that govern student behavior. The principal or designee has the authority to place a student on disciplinary probation for a reasonable and specified period of time. The staff members involved in the action will assist in monitoring the student's adjustment to the school environment. The principal and appropriate central office staff will establish probation standards that will describe the conditions under which the student will correct their behavior within a reasonable and specific period of time. School counseling, parent involvement, and other forms of assistance will be a part of the probation standards agreements.

In-School Suspension Program

In-school suspension is a structured disciplinary action in which a student is isolated or removed from regular classroom activities but is not dismissed from the school setting. The principal or designee has the authority to assign students to the in-school suspension program for a reasonable and specified period of time.

Suspension

The Board defines suspension as “the temporary removal of a student from a school for violation of school policies, rules, or regulations, or otherwise causing interference with or disruption of the orderly operations of the school.” The principal or designee will have the authority to suspend a student from school. During the suspension period, suspended students cannot attend school functions, participate in extracurricular/athletic activities, or enter school property for any reason.

Suspension/In-School Suspension Combination

The principal or designee has the authority to assign students to a combination of in-school and out-of-school suspension not to exceed three (3) days of out of school suspension and ten (10) days of in school suspension.

Alternative Program

The alternative program for SCSS is a transient program for students who have committed certain behavioral offenses.

Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as “the removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend public school under conditions set by the School Board.” The superintendent or their designee will review any referral for expulsion and may request a conference with the necessary parties.

Alternative Program

PROCEDURE FOR PARTICULAR DISCIPLINARY DISPOSITIONS

Students are assigned to the alternative program by the local school principal or their designee. Students will be assigned for a minimum period of 30 days but may remain longer based on the determination of the Alternative Program teacher, based on attendance, behavior, and grades while assigned to the alternative program, and progress made toward correcting the behavior to earn the required points to exit the alternative program.

No student who has previously completed an assignment to the alternative program may be assigned for a subsequent school placement within four (4) years without first appearing before the Board for consideration of expulsion.

If a student currently attending the alternative program commits a Class II or Class III disciplinary infraction, they will be referred to the Superintendent for consideration of a recommendation for an expulsion hearing.

While assigned to the alternative program, students will not be allowed to attend Sumter County School functions, participate in extracurricular/athletic activities, or enter school property for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to, school dances, homecoming activities, prom, and/or graduation exercises.

School Board Hearing - Appealing Alternative Placement

A student or parent may appeal a placement to the Alternative Program before the Board of Education. This hearing is a basic hearing which is meant to protect the student's due process

rights. There is no opportunity for cross examination and the student may not be represented by counsel. After notice is received by the Superintendent or their designee that the student wishes to appeal against the disciplinary recommendation, the student will receive written notice advising them of the date, time, and place of the hearing. They will be advised of their right to attend the hearing, present evidence, and call witnesses. The student may be represented at the hearing by a parent listed on their birth certificate, legally adoptive parent, or court-appointed guardian. No other third parties may attend the hearing unless they are called as a witness. At the hearing, evidence will first be presented in support of Alternative Placement. The student will then be allowed to present evidence and make their request regarding the disciplinary disposition. Once the presentation of evidence is complete, the Board will deliberate in private and decide what action it will take on the appeal. In making its decision, the Board will only consider the evidence presented during the hearing. The student and their parents will be notified of the Board's decision the following day, both by phone and in writing. If the decision of the Board is for the student to remain in the Alternative Program, the decision will specify the duration.

Expulsion

If the decision of the superintendent is to recommend expulsion, a hearing before the School Board will be scheduled. Following the hearing, the Board will decide whether to approve the superintendent's recommendation or take some other action. In accordance with the Alabama state law requiring compulsory attendance, the Board makes the final disposition of an expulsion recommendation.

The expulsion of a student will prohibit the student from attending any school in Sumter County Schools during the period of expulsion.

1. A student may lose academic credit if:
 - a. They are expelled prior to taking nine-week or semester examinations.
 - b. They are removed from the school attendance roll through the expulsion process.
2. A student cannot request makeup work if they are expelled from school. Any student while expelled from school cannot visit or otherwise be in attendance on any school campus in the SCS system.

School Board Hearing - Expulsion

If the superintendent recommends expulsion, a hearing will be scheduled before the Board of Education. Written notice will be given to the student and parent that expulsion has been recommended and advising them of the date, time, and place of the hearing. They will be advised of their right to attend the hearing, to be represented by an attorney or other representative, to present evidence and call witnesses, and, when warranted, to cross-examine witnesses. At the hearing, evidence will first be presented in support of the superintendent's recommendation that the student be expelled. The student will then be allowed to present evidence as to why they should not be expelled, following which the superintendent may present rebuttal evidence. Once the presentation of evidence has been completed, the Board will deliberate in private and decide what action it will take on the superintendent's recommendation for expulsion. In making its decision, the Board will consider only the evidence presented during the hearing. The student and their parents will be notified of the Board's decision the following day, both by phone and in writing. If the decision of the Board is to expel the student, the decision will specify the duration of the expulsion.

HEARING OFFICER REVIEW

The Hearing Officer will review the following disciplinary offenses: 3.28 (Homicide), 3.29 (Sexual Battery), 3.30-3.35 (Kidnapping, Robbery, Aggravated Battery, Battery on School Board Employee, Assault on School Board Employee, and Violence/Threat of Violence), 3.41-3.45 (Bomb Threats, Possession of a Firearm, Discharging a Firearm, Possession of a fake/toy weapon with intent to deceive, and Possession of a weapon), 3.48 (Arson), 3.49 (Drugs), 3.54 (Sexual Harassment), 3.56 (Explosives), 3.58 (Alcohol), and (Extortion by Act). The Hearing Officer will also review any alternative school placement and any recommendation for expulsion. The Hearing Officer will have two (2) school days after notification of the discipline to review the recommended disciplinary action and note any inconsistencies in administration or application of discipline. In the event of an inconsistency, the Hearing Officer shall conference with the principal assigning discipline. The Hearing Officer shall render a decision on the disciplinary action, with discretion to void the recommended disciplinary action, enter a less severe sanction, or enter a more severe sanction, including a recommendation for expulsion. In the event the recommended disciplinary action is modified, written notice of this modification shall be provided to the student, parent/guardian, and principal or designee within the two (2) day period. Prior to entering a more severe sanction, the Hearing Officer will meet with the student and give him/her an opportunity to be heard regarding the disciplinary matter (an opportunity to tell their side of the story). Discipline for the offense will not be stayed or delayed while review is pending.

In conducting their review, the Hearing Officer should evaluate the following:

- Is the offense correctly coded per the Student Code of Conduct?
- Is there sufficient evidence to establish that it is more likely than not that the student committed the alleged disciplinary infraction?
- Do the facts alleged warrant the disciplinary consequence?
- Is the disciplinary consequence an available administrative response for the offense committed?
- Is the disciplinary consequence consistent with action taken system wide under similar circumstances?
- If the recommendation is to attend the alternative program, is there an available placement spot?

This list is non-exhaustive. The Hearing Officer may consider other factors in conjunction with this analysis.

DISCIPLINARY APPEALS PROCEDURE

The following conditions are applicable to the appeal of any disciplinary action:

1. At each level of appeal, the parent must provide written notice stating the reason(s) for the appeal and a proposed resolution.
2. Discipline for the offense will not be stayed or delayed while the appeal is pending.
3. No issue or evidence may be presented on appeal that was not presented at the time of the initial disciplinary decision unless it could not have been discovered through reasonable inquiry at that time.
4. At each level of appeal, the judgment of the person/body hearing the appeal can be substituted for the underlying decision. For example, the appellate decision may void the initial disciplinary action, affirm it without change, enter a less severe sanction, **or enter a more severe sanction, including expulsion.**

In-School Discipline Appeal

Any administrative response, as set forth in this handbook, other than out-of-school suspension or alternative placement, may be appealed by providing written notice to the building principal or their designee within three school days of the disciplinary action. The principal or their designee will then schedule a conference with the student/parent to discuss the disciplinary action. If the parent or legal- aged student is not satisfied with the principal's decision following the conference, that decision may be appealed by providing written notice within three (3) school days to the Hearing Officer. The Hearing Officer will review the discipline and conference with the principal, their designee, and/or the student/parent if they deem necessary. The decision of the Hearing Officer will be final and cannot be appealed further administratively.

Any out-of-school suspension may be appealed by providing written notice to the building principal or their designee within three (3) school days of the disciplinary action. The principal or their designee will then schedule a conference with the student/parent to discuss the disciplinary action. If the parent or legal- aged student is not satisfied with the principal's decision following the conference, that decision may be appealed by providing written notice within three (3) school days to the Hearing Officer. The Hearing Officer will review the discipline and conference with the principal, their designee, and/or the student/parent if they deem necessary. The Hearing Officer will issue a written decision regarding the appeal. The decision of the Hearing Officer will be final and cannot be appealed further administratively.

Alternative Placement Appeal

A student assigned to the alternative program may appeal by providing written notice to the Hearing Officer within three (3) school days of the disciplinary action, stating the reasons for the appeal. The Student Disciplinary Committee will schedule a meeting to hear the appeal. The committee will review the action and confer with the principal, their designee, or the student and/or parent, if deemed necessary. The Student Disciplinary Committee may affirm the Hearing Officer's or their designee's decision or alter the discipline. The Student Disciplinary Committee shall issue a written decision regarding the appeal.

Representation at Appeal Hearing: Only the parent(s) listed on the birth certificate, legally adoptive parent(s), or the court-appointed legal guardian(s) of the student will be allowed to represent the student at a disciplinary appeal hearing, along with the student.

Once an appeal hearing date is set, failure by the parent or guardian to attend the hearing will result in unexcused absences for the student from that point until the appeal is resolved.

STUDENTS WITH AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

The IEP team determines any change to the least restrictive environment (LRE) of a student receiving special education services and can determine a change of placement up to 30 days in an alternative program. The IEP team will consider the current IEP, current behavior intervention plan, and the manifestation of the disability prior to placement of the student in an alternative setting.

If the IEP team determines alternative placement, upon completion of assigned days, the IEP team will reconvene prior to the return of the student to the home school to review/revise the current IEP and BIP to best support the student in the traditional school setting.

1. Prior to the administration of discipline to any student, the school official authorized to administer discipline shall ascertain, on the basis of reasonably available data, whether the student has been classified as a disabled student within the meaning of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

2. Students with disabilities shall be subject to imposition of reasonable disciplinary measures in furtherance of the school's legitimate interests in maintaining order and harmony in providing an atmosphere conducive to learning for all students. However, disciplinary decisions affecting disabled students shall be made with reference to and in consideration of the following factors as indicated by each student's Individual Education Plan(IEP):
 - a. The nature of the student's disabling condition and the appropriateness of the discipline contemplated in light of that condition;
 - b. The cause or causes of the disciplinary problem;
 - c. The disciplinary history of the child;
 - d. The availability and advisability of alternative disciplinary response to traditional ones;
 - e. Recommendations, if any from a teacher and appropriate exceptional education staff;
 - f. Such other rules and regulations governing disciplinary practices and procedures needed to comply with state and federal law, rules and regulations;
 - g. Environmental and other circumstances ordinarily taken into account in fashioning appropriate discipline for non-disabled students.
 - h. Guidelines and recommendations in the student's Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) where applicable.
3. Suspensions of disabled students shall conform to generally applicable substantive and procedural criteria but shall not exceed ten consecutive school days without prior consultation with the Exceptional Education Department. Students with disabilities are responsible for adhering to the same rules of conduct as regular education students. Special education students should not be suspended for more than ten (10) days without a manifestation determination review. Students with disabilities may be suspended for more than 10 days; however, they are entitled to receive a free and appropriate education on the eleventh (11th) day.
4. In no event shall disciplinary action resulting in permanent or indefinite cessation of educational services to disabled students be proposed or approved without prior consultation with the Exceptional Education Department.

Discipline Procedures for Student Under a Section 504 Plan

A student who has a Section 504 Plan may not be subjected to a disciplinary change in placement for more than 10 school days unless the Section 504 Team first determines that the behavior giving rise to the discipline was not substantially related to the student's disabling condition or due to an inappropriate implementation of the plan. This process is carried out in an evaluation of behavior, including a manifestation determination/evaluation. (Form M- SCSS 504 Manual). Suspensions for less than 10 school days may be effectuated without holding a Section 504 Team Meeting. However, a series of short suspensions over the course of the school year that would amount to a total of more than 10 school days may require that a Section 504 manifestation determination meeting be held.

When making the manifestation determination, a Section 504 Team, must meet to address the following:

- Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to, the student's disability?
- Was the misconduct a direct result of the District's failure to implement the Section 504 Plan?

If the Section 504 Team determines that there is no substantial relationship between the conduct and the student's disability and that the Section 504 Plan was properly implemented, the school may proceed to discipline the student in the same manner as it would a non-disabled student.

If the Section 504 Team determines that there is a substantial link between the conduct and the student's disability or that the Section 504 Plan was not properly implemented, the Section 504 Team must review and/or revise the Section 504 Plan to address the student's conduct. In such a situation, the student's placement would not be changed without consent of the parent/guardian of the student. An agreed upon change of placement may occur as a result of disciplinary infractions involving drugs, weapons, or behavior that has substantially injured or endangered the safety of the student or others. Notice of the Section 504 Team's decision regarding the manifestation determination will be provided to the parent. (Form M-SCSS 504 Manual).

Note: A student who is currently using illegal drugs or alcohol, and is to be disciplined by the school for such behavior loses the procedural protections provided by Section 504, including the right to a manifestation determination review prior to a change in placement for disciplinary reasons. This would hold true even if the disabling condition could be related to their conduct.

STUDENTS CHARGED AS AN ADULT OR COMMIT SERIOUS CRIME(S)

If a student is charged as an adult or is alleged to have committed a serious crime, regardless of age, their parent/guardian should contact the Hearing Officer or designee to determine appropriate school placement during this time. Identified students will not be allowed back on any school property until the appropriate placement is determined.

READMISSION

When a student returns to school after suspension, alternative placement, or expulsion, the readmission must be preceded by a conference with the principal or their designee. The conference must include the parents or guardian unless otherwise approved by the principal. The superintendent or their designee may choose to attend the readmission conference.

Probation officers from Juvenile and Family Court and/or social workers from the Department of Human Resources must accompany an adjudicated or aftercare student to the coordinator of attendance's office when such student seeks enrollment or re-enrollment in any school in the SCSS system. This process will assist school officials in pupil accounting as well as build support for the student. Appropriate representatives from the agencies will accompany the student to the school for enrollment.

Transfers from Outside Sumter County Schools

Students transferring into Sumter County Schools with unresolved disciplinary issues, e.g., pending hearings, expulsion, or alternative placement, may not enroll until the discipline status is resolved. A meeting with the Hearing Officer and/or truancy officer or designee must be held to determine enrollment and placement of the student. This also applies to students who withdraw from Sumter County Schools with a pending disciplinary action.

Students Returning from Department Youth Services (DYS) and Other Residential Placements Each student returning from a DYS placement or other residential placement will meet with administrators from the Office of Learning Supports to determine if a transition through an alternative program is a viable option. Students who are placed for a transition reentry in an alternative setting will be placed on a point progression system to transition back successfully to their home schools. Students who receive special education services will need to be referred to their Individual Education Program (IEP) team to address a change in least restrictive environment before the student can be considered for alternative programs.

SUICIDE

The suicide protocol of the Sumter County Schools will be followed when a verbal or written threat of suicide is witnessed or reported, or an attempt is made known. The protocol is outlined on the SCSS website: “The Jason Flatt Safety Plan Protocol”.

SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS DRUG AND ALCOHOL SCREENING PROGRAM

Sumter County Schools recognizes that students who participate in extracurricular activities are assets to the sports and academic components of our educational institutions. Further, students who possess campus parking passes are responsible for the safety of themselves and others while operating a motor vehicle. Collectively, these two groups of students will be referred to as “Activity Students.” To assist its Activity Students in maximizing their skills and talents and afford them every opportunity to remain drug free in order to help protect themselves, as well as other students with whom they come in contact, Sumter County Schools has implemented the following Drug and Alcohol Screening Program. This program is enacted as a preventive measure and as a deterrent to Activity Students who may be thinking of trying alcohol or drugs. Except where specifically prohibited by law, the guidelines contained within this document may be changed by the school system at any time. Students covered by this policy and procedures will be informed of changes. This policy in no way circumvents nor may be used in place of Board policy and school rules pertaining to use, possession, and distribution of alcohol or drugs at school or school-sponsored events.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

1. To create and maintain a safe, drug-free environment for all Activity Students.
2. To encourage any Activity Student with a dependence on, or addiction to, alcohol or other drugs to seek help in overcoming the problem.
3. To reduce the likelihood of incidents of accidental personal injury and/or damage to students or property.
4. To minimize the likelihood that school property will be used for illicit drug activities.
5. To discourage drug and alcohol use by Activity Students, both on and off the school campus and/or while driving on any of our campuses.

Substance abuse can be a serious threat to the school system, as well as to its students, visitors, and employees. Though the percentage of substance-abusing Activity Students may be relatively small, practical experience and research indicate that appropriate precautions are necessary. It is the belief of Sumter County Schools that the benefits derived from the policy objectives outweigh the potential inconvenience to Activity Students. The school system earnestly solicits the understanding and cooperation of all students and parents, especially those participating in extracurricular activities, in implementing this policy.

Sumter County Schools requires that all students report to school, extracurricular activities, and competitive events without any alcohol or illegal or mind-altering substances in their systems. No Activity Student shall use alcohol or other mood-altering substances while participating in any extracurricular activities or competitive events or while under the care and supervision of the school system. Further, outside conduct of a substance abuse-related nature that affects an Activity Student’s athletic, academic, or other extracurricular performance is prohibited.

Activity Students must inform their faculty sponsor, coach, assistant coach, or the designated school representative when they are legitimately taking medication that may affect their ability to practice, compete, or participate in other extracurricular activities, in order to avoid creating safety problems and violating this policy.

ENFORCEMENT

In order to enforce these rules, Sumter County Schools reserves the right to require all Activity Students to submit, at any time prior to, during, or following an extracurricular activity or while under the supervision or care of the school system, to drug and/or alcohol tests to determine the presence of prohibited substances.

Pursuant to school system policy and regulations, a student applying to participate in an extracurricular activity, or Activity Student (defined as any student, male or female, who is a member of any school- sponsored extracurricular activity program or a student who is provided the privilege of operating a private motor vehicle on school property for the purpose of parking) may be tested prior to beginning the activity of their choice. All current Activity Students may be required to undergo testing at scheduled physical examinations, and/or where the school has reasonable suspicion to believe an Activity Student has violated its Alcohol and Drug Policy, and/or on a random basis without advance notice. Parents of non-Activity Students may opt their children into the program. For this policy, these students will be titled as Volunteer Students.

This policy will be applied to Activity Students and Volunteer Students at the high school (grades 9 through 12) levels.

Violation of these rules, including testing positive, will subject the Activity Student to discipline, including suspension from student athletic or other extracurricular activities and/or forfeiture of parking privileges. Refusal to cooperate with the School in any test investigation will result in discipline, including immediate suspension from participating in extracurricular activities.

ACTIONS FOR FAILED DRUG/ALCOHOL SCREENS

First Positive

The first time an Activity Student tests positive on an alcohol/drug test, the student's parents will be notified, and the student must complete 25 hours of community service, approved by the principal, within 60 days of the failed test. The Activity Student must also retake and test negative on another alcohol or drug test within 30 days. The Activity Student will be responsible for the costs of any retest, which must be conducted through the school's drug testing provider. If there is no retest conducted within 30 days, the Activity Student will be disciplined as if they had tested positive on a second occasion.

Second Positive

A second positive test result for an Activity Student will result in an automatic 14-day suspension from participation in extracurricular activities and a forfeiture of parking privileges for that same period. In order for privileges to be reinstated, the Activity Student must first retake and test negative on another alcohol or drug test. The Activity Student will be responsible for the cost of this retest, and it must be conducted through the school's drug testing provider. If there is no retest conducted within 30 days, the Activity Student will be disciplined as if they had tested positive on a third occasion.

The student will be referred to a center for drug/alcohol evaluation and treatment. The student will also be required to complete 40 hours of community service, as approved by the principal, within 90 days of the failed test.

Third Positive

A third and any subsequent positive test results for an Activity Student will result in a 100-day ban from all extracurricular activities and forfeiture of parking privileges. In order for privileges to be reinstated, the Activity Student must first retake and test negative on another alcohol or drug

test. The Activity Student will be responsible for the cost of this retest, which must be conducted through the school's drug testing provider. During the suspension, the Activity Student will be required to complete 60 hours of community service and will again be referred to a center for drug/alcohol evaluation and treatment.

After the first positive test, an Activity Student will be retested on each occasion that random drug screening is conducted at their then-assigned school until exiting the Sumter County Schools system. The Activity Student will be responsible for the costs of any retest and must have the retest conducted through the school's drug testing provider.

No Activity Student testing positive, refusing to test, refusing to cooperate with testing, or being in violation of this policy will be penalized academically. Information, including testing positive, will not be released to criminal or juvenile authorities absent compulsion by valid state or federal laws. This policy is developed to be of a non-punitive nature, and the school will work with the student and/or their parents or guardians when there is any violation of this policy and procedures.

All information, interviews, reports, statements, memoranda, and test results, written or otherwise, received by the school through its drug and alcohol testing program are confidential communications and may not be used or received in evidence, obtained in discovery, or disclosed in any public or private proceedings except in the following:

- (a) As directed by the specific, written consent of the student authorizing release of the information to an identified person.
- (b) To a covered Activity Student decision maker in a lawsuit, grievance, or other proceeding initiated by or on behalf of the individual. Any questions should be directed to the person assigned as the school's designated school representative (DSR).



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, _____, enrolled in _____
 (Name of Student) (Name of School)

School, and my parent/guardian, hereby acknowledge by our signature that we have received and read, or had read to us, the *Student/Parent Resource Guide and Code of Student Conduct*.

(Signed) _____
 Student Date

(Signed) _____
 Parent Guardian Date

(Signed) _____
 Parent Guardian Date

Note: The student is to sign the above statement. If the student lives with both parents, both parents are also to sign the statement. If the student lives with only one parent or guardian, only one is to sign with the student.

**Please detach this page after signing and have the student return it to the homeroom teacher.
 This form will be placed in the student's cumulative folder.**



Policy Consent/Release Form

TO BE SIGNED AND RETURNED ONLY BY ACTIVITY STUDENTS, AS DEFINED HEREIN, IN GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 AND THEIR PARENT OR GUARDIAN.

I have read the above statement of policy and agree to abide by Sumter County Schools' drug and alcohol rules. I agree to submit to drug and/or alcohol tests at any time as a condition of my initial or continued participation in extracurricular activities, on-campus parking, and/or the volunteer program. I authorize any laboratory or medical provider to release test results to Sumter County Schools and its Medical Review Officer. I authorize the Medical Review Officer to release final test results to the school system.

I also expressly authorize Sumter County Schools or its MRO to release any test-related information, including positive results:

- (a) As directed by my specific, written consent authorizing release of the information to an identified person.
- (b) To my decision maker in a lawsuit, grievance, or other proceeding initiated by me or on my behalf.

I understand that this agreement in no way limits my right to terminate or be terminated from participation in extracurricular activities.

Activity Student

Date

Parent or Guardian

Date

Witness

Date



STUDENT'S AGREEMENT

Every student, regardless of age, must read and sign below:

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the terms of the foregoing Responsible Use and Technology in the Educational Program policies. Should I commit any violation or in any way misuse my access to Sumter County Schools' computer network and the Internet, I understand and agree that my access privilege may be revoked, and disciplinary action may be taken against me.

User place an "X" in the correct blank: I am 18 or older _____ I am under 18 _____

If I am signing this agreement when I am under 18, I understand that when I turn 18, this agreement will continue to be in full force and effect and agree to abide by these policies.

Student Name (PRINT CLEARLY)

Student Signature

Date

PARENT(S) OR GUARDIAN(S) AGREEMENT

Student's Name***To be read and signed by parent(s) or guardian(s) of students who are under 18:***

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read, understand, and agree that my child or ward shall comply with the terms of Sumter County Schools' Responsible Use and Technology in the Educational Program policies for the student's access to the school system's computer network and the Internet. I understand that access is being provided to students for educational purposes only. However, I also understand that it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all offensive and controversial materials and understand my child or ward's responsibility for abiding by the policies. I am therefore signing this agreement and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the school, the school system, teachers, and other staff against all claims, damages, losses, and costs, of whatever kind, that may result from my child's or ward's use of their access to such networks or their violation of the foregoing policies. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision of my child or ward's use of their access account if and when such access is not in the school setting. I hereby give permission for my child or ward to use the building-approved account to access Sumter County Schools' computer network and the Internet.

Parent or Guardian Name(s) (PRINT CLEARLY)

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date



Automated Communication Consent Form

I consent to receive automatically dialed calls/messages from Sumter County Schools for information that is deemed important at the phone numbers I have provided, including my wireless/cell phone number(s):

Phone Number:	Phone Type:	Cell/Mobile Text Messages:
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Cell/Mobile	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Cell/Mobile	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Cell/Mobile	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Cell/Mobile	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Cell/Mobile	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

I understand that these calls/messages are treated by my telephone service provider/carrier the same as other general calls/messages I receive for billing purposes according to the phone service plan I maintain with my service provider.

I understand that I may revoke my consent at any time.

In the event of an emergency, calls **may** be initiated for emergency purposes or exempted by rule or order by the Federal Communications Commission under paragraph (2)(B).

Parent/Guardian Signature

Printed Name

Date

Student Name

School



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DRIVE MOTOR VEHICLE, RELEASE, WAIVER OF LIABILITY, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

The undersigned expressly authorize such travel and represent to the School System that the Student has in effect a valid driver's license issued by the State of Alabama allowing the Student to drive, which is not suspended or revoked. Also, there is in full force and effect a policy of liability insurance covering such motor vehicles in such amount as required by the State of Alabama. Such insurance (or comparable policy) will be kept in effect so long as Students remain enrolled in Sumter County Schools. Attached is a photocopy of Student's driver's license and an insurance card or other proof of liability coverage.

In the event of suspension, cancellation, or revocation of either the driver's license or insurance policy, the undersigned shall immediately notify the School System. In such an event, any permission granted by the School System to Students shall immediately be terminated.

The undersigned acknowledge and agree that if the School System grants this request, Student will be the only occupant in Student's vehicle during such travel.

The undersigned voluntarily release and waive any and all claims against School System, both present and future, arising out of or in any way connected with Student's use of a vehicle pursuant to this authorization, including, but not limited to, claims for breach of contract, express or implied, or for acts or failure to act, or for negligence, including any and all claims for property damage, personal injury, or wrongful death. The undersigned do hereby release, waive, and discharge School System and covenant that they will not institute any suit, claim, or action against School System for any loss, damage, or injury, to person or property, arising out of School System's grant of permission to Student to drive a vehicle, whether such is caused by Student, School System, or a third party. The undersigned also agree to indemnify and save harm against School System of any and all claims of damages, loss or injury, costs, or expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, that arise out of, or are made as a result of, Student's use of a vehicle pursuant to this request.

The undersigned have read and voluntarily executed this document, including the release, waiver of liability, and indemnity agreement. No oral representations, statements, or inducements apart from this written document have been made. We agree that this request is voluntary, and the undersigned assume all risks of loss, damage, or injury that might be sustained as a result of Student's operation of a vehicle pursuant to permission granted by School System. The undersigned agree that the foregoing release, waiver, and indemnity agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by laws of the State of Alabama and that if any portion is held invalid, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

Student _____

Parent/Guardian of Student _____

ATTACH PHOTOGRAPH OF DRIVER'S LICENSE AND PROOF OF INSURANCE

Accepted by School System

Dated this the _____ day of _____, 20_____

Device Responsibility Agreement to be signed by all parents/guardians

By signing below, I agree to the following:

I have received a copy of the Code of Conduct Addendum that includes these guidelines that apply if a SCSS device is issued to my child:

- Each device is property of Sumter County Schools, and is individually labeled and inventoried (by asset number and device serial number) to the individual student to whom it has been loaned.
- **Each student who has checked out a device and their parents/guardians** are responsible for proper care and use of the device.
- If a SCSS device, charging cable, and/or protective cover issued to a student is lost or stolen, the student's parent/guardian must file a report with the police department and provide a copy of the police report to the school.
- I will abide by these guidelines and will pay any associated costs.
- I will supervise my child's use of the SCSS device, charging cable, and protective cover (where applicable) issued to them.
- Students who intentionally damage their device will not receive another device.

Printed Student Name: _____

School: _____

Grade: _____

Printed Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

INTENTIONALLY LEFT

BLANK

