

Lake Cormorant Middle School Gators

2023-2024

Parent and Student
Handbook



“The Swamp”

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Welcome from the Principal

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Welcome back, Gators! The staff and I are so excited to start another journey with all of you for the 2023-2024 school year. We have great things in store for all of our students. We are raising the bar for our students with high expectations for all to prepare them to meet the challenging goals that will prepare them for high school.

I am starting my 7th year as the principal of LCMS. Every year brings excitement, change, challenges, hope, and new journeys with new faces. We welcome new students, new teachers and staff, and new ideas. We will also face any challenges with the determination to overcome any setback our children may face.

Please take time to read the handbook with your student. There is valuable information in this handbook that may answer many questions you may have as the parent/guardian of a middle school student. Your child will need to understand and adhere to the policies in this handbook in order to have a successful school year. The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are designed to benefit all students, keep them safe, and provide the best possible education for all.

Also, I want to encourage all parents to be involved in our school community. Join the PTO and Booster Club and attend meetings. Attend athletic events, band concerts, and choir concerts with your family. Volunteer to serve students at honor roll breakfasts and other school functions. If you are curious what we are doing in the Swamp, be sure to check out happenings through Facebook, Twitter, Schoology, and the school website.

Facebook: Lake Cormorant Middle School

Twitter: @tweetdcs_lcms

School Website: lcm.destotocountyschools.org

It is going to be great year! If I can be of service to you or your student, please call the school at 662-781-0778 or email me at lisa.steiner@dcsms.org.

Sincerely,

Lisa Steiner, Principal
Lake Cormorant Middle School

Notes from Our Assistant Principals

Dr. Jeremiah Burks, Asst. Principal

Dr. Jeremiah Burks has been an educator for more than 25 years. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from Delta State University. He later received a master's degree and specialist's degree, also from Delta State. He received his doctorate from Arkansas State University – Jonesboro in 2010.

Before becoming assistant principal at LCMS, Mr. Burks was assistant principal at Southaven Middle School and Horn Lake High School. Dr. Burks served as a lead teacher, assistant principal, principal, and central office administrator in school districts in both Mississippi and Tennessee.

Dr. Harold Hale, Asst. Principal

Dr. Hale is a graduate of Ocean Springs High School in Ocean Springs, Ms. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Mississippi State University (1999), his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Arkansas State University (2012). And his Doctorate Degree from CUC (2018). He has taught at Myrtle Attendance Center, Tupelo Public Schools, and Horn Lake High School. His wife, Kristy, is also an administrator in the district. They have two wonderful boys, Kasdin and Trapper. Dr. Hale is proud to be a Gator!

"Not all those who wander are lost."
J.R.R Tolkien

Dr. Ashley Rhodes, Asst. Principal

Mrs. Ashley Rhodes is a proud graduate of Horn Lake High School. After she completed her bachelor's degree in English at Tulane University in New Orleans, she spent five years teaching 11th and 12th grade English at Hernando High School. She then moved to Lake Cormorant Middle to serve as a literacy coach during which time she earned her National Board Certification and completed her master's degree in Educational Leadership from Arkansas State University. Over the summer, she completed her doctorate in Educational Leadership at the University of Southern Mississippi and is looking forward to her fourth year as an assistant principal at LCMS.

Mrs. Rhodes lives in Hernando with her husband, Brian. Together, they enjoy traveling and spending time outdoors. She also enjoys reading and spending time with her friends and family.

School Information

Lake Cormorant Middle School
3203 Wilson Mill Road
Lake Cormorant, MS 38632
(662)781-0778

Mrs. Lisa Steiner, Principal
Dr. Harold Hale, Asst. Principal
Dr. Ashley Rhodes, Asst. Principal
Dr. Jeremiah Burks

lisa.steiner@dcsms.org
harold.hale@dcsms.org
ashley.rhodes@dcsms.org
jeremiah.burks@dcsms.org

School Vision

Lake Cormorant Middle School promotes a safe, respectful, challenging, and supportive learning environment that acknowledges the success, achievement, and creativity of all students.

School Mission

- Provide a positive and safe learning environment for all students
- Provide students a rigorous, relevant, and standards-based curriculum
- Inspire students to develop goals and provide them with the tools needed to be successful in reaching those goals
- Model professionalism and provide opportunities for students to develop their talents and character
- Prepare students for high school and college

Parent/School Communication Methods

The school and teachers will communicate with parents/guardians through the following methods:

- Report cards (end of every 9 weeks)
- Progress reports (1x per 9 weeks)
- Parent Portal (parents must register with the school)
- Calls/texts via SchoolStatus
- Auto-dialers from the school
- School and teacher web page
- Email
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Schoology)
- PTO and Booster Club Meetings
- Title I Parent Engagement Events

***To ensure prompt communication, please update contact information with the school any time contact information changes.**

LCMS Faculty and Staff 2023-2024

Lisa Steiner, Principal
Dr. Harold Hale, Assistant Principal
Dr. Ashley Rhodes, Assistant Principal
Dr. Jeremiah Burks, Assistant Principal

Druan Elliot, Bookkeeper
Demetria Nelson, MSIS
Daphne Wims, ADA, Discipline Clerk
Tracy Hooper, Secretary
Charlie Crider, Maintenance

Miranda Roberts, Counselor
Mark Christ, Counseling Intern
Brittany Griffith, STC/MTSS
Megan Stanford, Library
Adam Davis, Computer Tech
Hayley Keriwala, EL
Keir Brown, Student/Teacher Success Coach, Title I, Dance
Amy Davis, Math Lead Teacher, Title I
Amanda Berg, Math Tutor, Title I
Susan Kizer, ELA Tutor, Title I
Nikki Trower, Math Coach, Title I
Cynthia Morrow, 6th grade Social Studies, Gifted
Jamie Barnes, 6th grade Social Studies
Jordan McNickle, 6th grade Science
Meg McCown, 6th grade Science, Gifted
Ryan Hill, 6th grade Math
Briana Wilson, 6th grade Math
Jennifer Card, 6th grade Math
Courtney Cox, 6th grade ELA
Laura Middleton, 6th grade ELA
Casey Faggard, 6th grade ELA
Katie Box, 7th grade U.S. History
Kolby Busby, U.S. History, P.E., Football
Meosha Stuckey, 7th grade Science
Katie Hudson, 7th grade science
Melony Beasley, 7th grade Math
Jana Malone, 7th grade ELA, Yearbook
Mackenzie Alexander, 7th grade ELA
Michal White, 7th grade ELA
Austin Bradley, 8th grade ELA, Adv. ELA

Andrew Holder, 8th grade Mississippi Studies
Tanner Kuntz, 8th grade World Geography, Football
Dylan Brunenkant, 8th grade Science, Football
Caitlynn Busby, 8th grade Science, Volleyball
Garrison Pounders, 7th Grade Acc. Math, 8th grade Adv./Acc. math
Mark Van Voorst, 7th/8th grade Math
Dusty Holliday, 8th grade Math
Casandra Panico, 8th grade Math, Dance
Yvonna Macon, 8th grade ELA, Girls' Basketball
Krystal Morrow, 8th grade ELA
Melissa Fuller, Cyber I/II, Volleyball
Justin Strawn, Cyber I, Boys' and Girls' Soccer
DeJuan Clark, RAMP, Boys' Basketball
William Kirksey, PE, Football, Boys' Basketball, Track
Dr. O'Neal Douglass, Head Band Director, Choir
Jon Young, Asst. Band Director

Lyndsi Blanton, SPED/Met Chair
Tiffany Watson, SPED 8th grade
Casey Townsend, SPED 7th grade
Jessica Arakaki, SPED Community Based Classroom
Taneshia Buford, 6th – 8th SPED
Joanna Lantrip, 6th grade SPED
Tina Gaines, SPED 6th grade, Girls' Basketball
Jamie Fiveash, SPED Resource
Kasie Howard-Teel, SPED 8th grade
Melanie Riley, 7th Grade SPED, Cheer
Crisann Mays, Speech
Lori Tenorio, Therapeutic Interventionist
Jenese Norman, Mental Health Therapist

Julius Black, Assistant, Football
Sharla Brown, Assistant
Jennifer Morgan, Assistant
Jenna Weaver, Assistant, Boys' and Girls' Soccer
Glorianne Winter, Assistant

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: J - Students
Policy Code: JAA - Equal Educational Opportunities

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Each student in the DeSoto County School District will have equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, sex, handicap, religion or marital status. No student shall be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, athletics, counseling, employment assistance, or extra-curricular activities.

Further, the DeSoto County School District prohibits sexual harassment of or by any student. This policy applies to conduct during and relating to school and school-sponsored activities. Any student who engages in the sexual harassment of anyone in the school setting may be subject to disciplinary action.

REF.: MS Code § 37-15-35 (1970)
Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards

Last Review Date: _____
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008
Approved/Revised Date:

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: B - School Board Operations
Policy Code: BAAB - Non-Discrimination Policy

NONDISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

The DeSoto County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups:

Compliance Coordinator
Office of Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
DeSoto County Schools
5 East South Street
Hernando, MS 38632
662-429-5271

The Compliance Coordinator has been designated to address all inquiries regarding the following Federal policies:

Title VI – race, color, ethnicity, and national origin
Title IX – sex and pregnancy
Section 504 of Americans with Disabilities Act
Title II
Age Discrimination Act
Boy Scouts

After initial investigation, all inquiries shall be directed to the appropriate person(s). A thorough investigation shall be conducted in accordance with DeSoto County School Board Policy GAF: Staff Grievances and Complaints.

Last Review Date: _____
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008
Approved/Revised Date: 12/6/2018

LCMS Cell Phone Policy

- **Cell phones are not allowed to be out or used at school during school hours**
- Cell phones are not needed for any class
- If a student is ill, the student should first see then nurse who will contact the parent regarding the student's condition.
- Students wishing to call home, should report to the office and request permission from the front desk to use the school phone. (Note: No child is denied the ability to speak with a parent. However, if the student is calling the parent in regard to an issue, administration needs to be made aware of the situation).
- Parents who need to contact their student should do so by calling the school. Texting or calling your child during class could result in his/her phone being confiscated in accordance with school and district policy.

Cell Phone Policy and Consequences

- 1st offense will result in confiscation of the device with parental contact. The device will be returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- 2nd offense will result in confiscation of the device and a mandatory parent conference with the device being returned to the parent at the conference.
- 3rd offense will result in confiscation of the device, returned only to a parent, 3 days of ALC, and phone turned in daily for 10 days to front office. (Failure to turn in phone will result in additional days of ALC).
- 4th offense will result in a school suspension for 3 days, and phone turned in daily for the remainder of the school year.
- Students that allow other students to borrow their phone and it is confiscated will follow consequences for cell phone policy.
- Students who send sexually explicit pictures or words will receive the cell phone policy consequences along with a 3-7 code of conduct violation consequences.
- Students who send social media threatening other students or hostile words or phrases will receive the cell phone policy consequences along with a 3-9 bullying and/or 2-5 hostile verbal actions code of conduct violation consequence.

**PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW YOUR STUDENT TO BRING
A CELL PHONE TO SCHOOL.**

Please read the **Board Policy (IJBA)** on the following 2 pages for detailed policies regarding the use of personal devices on school property. The following is addressed:

- **Possession and Use**
- **Prohibitions**
- **Confiscations**
- **Potential Disciplinary Actions**
- **Security of Devices (Theft, Loss, or Damage)**
- **Prohibitions on Audio/Video Recording**

District: DeSoto County School District

Section: I - Instructional Program

Policy Code: IJBA - Personal Electronic Devices - Laptops, Tablets, & Mobile Devices (BYOD)

PURPOSE

DeSoto County Schools provides students access to our wireless network and the option of utilizing personal electronic devices as a means to enhance their education. Electronic devices have become a common means of communication and information access in today's society. It is also recognized that these devices can become distractions to the academic environment and therefore, negatively impact instruction. The district has created this policy to govern the possession and use of electronic devices on school premises, during school-sponsored or school-related events and on school transportation.

DEFINITIONS Definitions for purposes of this policy:

1. **Eligible Students**: Students whose parent/guardian signs and agrees to the terms of the district's Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices User Agreement.
2. **Electronic Device**: An electronic device is defined as any device that a student is in possession of which electronically communicates, sends, receives, stores, reproduces or displays voice and/or text communication or data. These include, but are not limited to cellular phones, pagers, smart phones, smart watches, music and media players, e-Readers, and iPods and/or accessories including, but not limited to, headphones, earbuds, chargers, power adapters, portable speakers, and audio docks. The possession of an electronic device or accessory by a student on school property or while attending school-sponsored or school-related events is a privilege, not a right.
3. **Unacceptable Electronic Devices**: An unacceptable electronic device includes, but is not limited to, gaming devices or consoles, modems, routers, televisions or accessories, tablets, laptops, netbook, or notebooks.
4. **Unauthorized Use**: Unauthorized use of personal electronic devices includes, but is not limited to, the following:

• Possessing, viewing, sending or sharing video or audio information having sexual, violent or threatening content on school grounds, school events or school buses shall be prohibited and may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the personal device.

- Transmitting school materials for unethical purposes such as cheating.
- Any activity which may be in violation of a DeSoto County Schools policy and/or procedural directive.
- Damaging, or attempting to damage the network, equipment, materials or data physically or electronically.
- Accessing unauthorized district computers, networks and information systems: Use of any electronic device which disrupts the instructional day.

5. **Authorized Use**: DeSoto County Schools shall permit student possession of personal electronic devices on all district property and at all district sponsored activities while the student is under the supervision of district staff. These devices shall be kept out of sight and silenced or powered off during the instructional day unless otherwise permitted by district or school procedures.

POSSESSION AND USE

Students may possess and use electronic devices at school subject to the following:

- The student is using the device for an educational or instructional purpose with the teacher's permission and supervision.
- Electronic devices may be used for specific instructional activities at the discretion of the school building administrator.

- Personally owned electronic devices used in school are not permitted to connect to the Internet through a 3G, 4G, or any other content service provider. Personally owned electronic devices must access the Internet via the district's content filtered wireless network.

PROHIBITIONS

Electronic devices shall not be used in any way that violates district policy or that threatens, humiliates, harasses, or intimidates school-related individuals, including students, employees, and visitors; or violates local, state, or federal law.

Use of electronic devices on school buses is prohibited.

Electronic devices may not be used during the administration of tests mandated by the Mississippi Assessment System, unless specifically allowed by law.

All notebooks, netbooks, and MacBooks must have antivirus software installed with updates activated, if applicable.

Streaming of any audio or video must be reserved for classroom activities only. Cloud-based music and videos personally owned by a student are not allowed.

Tech support will not be provided for student-owned devices.

CONFISCATION

Students are only allowed to use electronic devices as instructional aids with the teacher's permission and supervision. Unauthorized use of electronic devices disrupts the instructional program and distracts from the learning environment. **The building administrator and his/her designee may seize electronic devices if they are used during times not permitted. If a student refuses to give his/her electronic device to the administrator or his/her designee upon request, this will be viewed as insubordination and the appropriate consequence will apply.**

POTENTIAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

All violations will be subject to the disciplinary actions for possession of electronic equipment/device as listed in School Board Policy JD (Student Discipline). A campus administrator, in the exercise of reasonable discretion in response to student misbehavior, abuse of the privilege, or other reasonable cause, may deny or cancel the privilege of possessing an electronic device.

SECURITY OF DEVICES

Students shall be personally and solely responsible for the security of electronic devices brought to school. The school shall not assume responsibility for theft, loss, damage, or unauthorized calls made with an electronic device. If devices are loaned or borrowed and misused by non-owners, device owners are jointly responsible for the misuse or policy violation(s).

PROHIBITIONS ON AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING

Camera, video or audio recording functions of electronic devices may pose threats to the personal privacy of individuals, exploit personal information, and/or compromise the integrity of educational programs. Accordingly, the use of the audio recording, video

recording or camera functions of electronic devices is strictly prohibited on school premises at all times, unless teacher approval is given for specific instructional activities.

Last Review Date:_____

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2013

Approved/Revised Date: 1/7/2021

Bell Schedule

7:40	Bell Rings
7:40-7:55	Breakfast
7:40-7:45	8 th Grade Breakfast
7:45-7:50	7 th Grade Breakfast
7:50-7:55	6 th Grade Breakfast
8:00	Tardy Bell
8:00-9:37	1st block
9:40-9:50	Break (Carts will come to classrooms)
9:40-11:27	2nd block
11:30-1:57	3rd block/Gator Goal Time/Lunch
11:30-11:55	6 th grade/CBC/Resource Lunch 1
12:10-12:35	7 th grade/Band hall Lunch 2
1:07-1:32.	8 th grade Lunch 3
1:32-1:57	Athletics/RAMP/ALC Lunch 4
1:32-1:57	Gator Goal Advisory (6 th , 7 th , and 8 th)
2:00-3:40	4th block

*House Meetings and Pep Rallies will be held during Gator Goal Time. On meeting days, Athletics will go to lunch with 6th grade (11:30-11:55) and ALC/RAMP will go to lunch with 7th grade (12:10-12:35).

Student Holidays

- September 4th: Labor Day
- October 9th: Fall Break
- November 20st-24th: Thanksgiving Break
- December 15th: End First Semester
- December 18th - January 1st: Christmas Break
- January 2nd: Staff Development
- January 3rd: Staff Development
- January 4th: Students Return
- January 15th: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- February 16th: Staff Development Day
- February 19th: President's Day Holiday
- March 11th-15th: Spring Break
- March 29th: Good Friday Holiday
- April 1st: Easter Holiday
- May 22nd: Students' Last Day
- May 24th: Teachers' Last Day

Tentative Make-up Days: February 16th, February 19th, April 1st, May 23rd

Report Cards

Sent home on the following dates:

- 1st 9 Weeks: October 12th
- 2nd 9 Weeks: January 4th
- 3rd 9 Weeks: March 21st
- 4th 9 Weeks: TBD; Report cards must be picked up from school

Progress Reports

Sent home on the following dates:

- 1st 9 Weeks: September 14th
- 2nd 9 Weeks: November 9th
- 3rd 9 Weeks: February 8th
- 4th 9 Weeks: April 18th

State Testing Dates

The state testing window for 6th-8th grade Math, ELA, and Science (8th ONLY) is April, 8, 2024 – May 17, 2024.

Please try to avoid planning any vacations or trips during this time. If you would like to know specific dates concerning testing, please contact the school at (662) 781-0778.

School Counseling Services

School counselors work with all students, school staff, families, and members of the community as an integral part of the education program. The school counseling program promotes success through a focus on academic achievement, prevention and intervention activities, advocacy, and social/emotional/career development (American School Counselor Association).

School counselors provide brief counseling and work predominately with school related issues. A school counselor is not a therapist. When issues go beyond the training of a school counselor, parents are encouraged to seek therapy within the community. Parents can contact the school counselors for community health service referrals.

School counselors provide the following services:

- Provide brief direct counseling services to students individually and in support groups
- Advise students on educational planning
- Provide career guidance to students
- Maintain up-to-date resources on career and post-secondary institutions

Counselor

Mrs. Miranda Roberts

miranda.roberts@dcsms.org

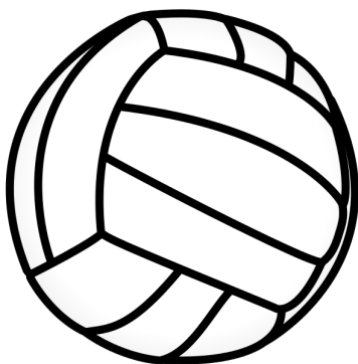
Mrs. Roberts holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in psychology and sociology from the University of North Alabama and a Masters of Education in school counseling from Capella University. She spent the first 7 years of her career working with adolescents and their families in the community mental health field. She worked as a community support specialist, and later as a mental health therapist. She has been a middle school counselor for the Desoto County School District since 2017. She strives to help students as they navigate the many complexities of middle school and support them in becoming their most successful selves.

Mental Health Therapist

Ms. Jenese Norman

jenese.norman@dcsms.org

Students, school staff, or parents/legal guardians may refer students for school-based mental health services provided by a state board licensed clinician. The aim of school-based mental health services is to assist students in the area of mental and emotional wellness. The services are provided through the school district at no cost. However, these services are not intended as a substitute for medication management, psychological counseling, diagnosis, or acute care, which are not the responsibility of the school district. These services do require a referral to be completed and parental/guardian consent. If you are interested in these services, please contact the school at (662)781-0778.



LCMS Volleyball Schedule 2023-2024

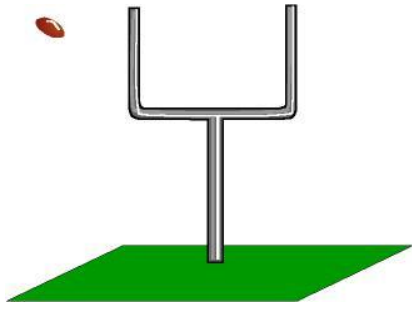
8/21	Hernando	Away
8/24	Southaven (extra)	Away
8/28	Horn Lake	Away
9/5	Desoto Central	Away
9/11	Center Hill	Home
9/14	Horn Lake (extra)	Home
9/18	Lewisburg	Home
9/19	DC (extra)	Home
9/23	Swamp Fest 7th Grade	Home
9/25	Olive Branch	Home
9/30	Swamp Fest 8th Grade	Home
10/2	Southaven	Home

4 Team Playoff

7th Semi Game 10/3 and Championship Game 10/5 at LMS

8th Semi Game 10/10 and Championship Game 10/12 at SMS

All Games begin at 5:30 PM



2023-2024 **LCMS Football Schedule**

All Games Begin at 5:30 PM

8th Schedule

8th Grade ONLY games

9/12	LMS	Away
9/19	Center Hill	Home

The following games are for 7th and 8th grades Teams.

9/26	DCMS	Away
10/3	OBMS	Home
10/10	Horn Lake	Away
10/17	Hernando	Home
10/24	Southaven	Away

All football games will be on Tuesday nights. The first three games are for 8th grade only.
The last four games will have 7th playing first, then 8th grade.

LCMS Basketball Schedule



2023-2024

Date	Opponent	Location
Nov. 6 th (Mon)	Southaven (extra)	Away
Nov. 9 th (Thurs)	Hernando	Away
Nov. 16 th (Thurs)	Lewisburg	Home
Nov. 30 th (Thurs)	Southaven	Home
Dec. 4 th (Mon) 8 th Grade Only	Strayhorn	Home
Dec. 7 th (Thurs)	Olive Branch	AWAY
Dec. 11 th (Mon)	Horn Lake (extra)	Away
Dec. 14 th (Thurs)	Desoto Central	Away
Jan. 4 th (Thurs)	Cleveland	Home
Jan. 8 th (Mon)	Tunica	Home
Jan. 11 th (Thurs)	Center Hill	Away
Jan. 18 th (Thurs)	Horn Lake	Home
4 - Team playoff 7 th Grade 1/22 and 1/23 at DCMS 8 th Grade 1/29 and 1/30 at CHMS	7 th Girls – 5pm 7 th Boys – 6pm 8 th Girls – 7pm 8 th Boys – 8pm	Games can start at an earlier time.

LCMS Soccer Schedule



2023 - 2024

Nov 9 (Thurs)	Lewisburg	HOME
Nov 14 (Tues)	DCMS	AWAY
Nov 16 (Thurs)	CHMS	AWAY
Nov 28 (Tues)	SMS	HOME
Nov 30 (Thurs)	OBMS	AWAY
Dec 4 (Mon)	HMS	AWAY
Dec 7 (Thurs)	HLMS	AWAY

Tournament (top 4 teams only) week of Dec 11 at HMS

Times: Girls play at 5:30 Next game will be at 6:30

Drop Off/Dismissal Procedures

Morning Drop Off

- Doors open at 7:40
- Students wanting breakfast must go at their designated time
 - 6th Grade: 7:40-7:45
 - 7th Grade: 7:45-7:50
 - 8th Grade: 7:50-7:55
- Students who do not want breakfast will report directly to their first period class
- Bus riders will be dropped off at the back of the school and enter through the gym
- Car riders must be dropped off at the front of the school and exit on the sidewalk side of the car rider line. **DO NOT DROP OFF STUDENTS IN THE TEACHER PARKING AREA!**
- Parents and students in the car rider line must follow the directions of the staff on duty

Afternoon Pick-up

- Cars will make two lines in the drive next to sidewalk
- Cars arriving early should pull all the way forward to the stop sign
- Car riders will exit the building through the front doors at 3:40
- 6th grade bus riders will exit the building at the end of D Hall
- 7th grade bus riders will exit through the rear gym doors
- 8th grade bus riders will exit the building at the end of E Hall
- Busses will leave the parking lot five minutes after the 3:40 bell
- Students DO NOT have time to socialize with or wait on friends. If students miss their bus, they will be left and will need a ride.
- No checkouts are allowed after 3:15

Students who are not picked up on time will wait on the benches at the front of the school.

No student should be left past 4:00.

Parents who cannot pick up by 3:40 should make other arrangements for transportation.

School Lunch

Pre-Payment



Please take advantage of the options to prepay your student's meal accounts. Prepaid meal accounts help the lunch lines go faster and gives students more time to eat, relax, and play. It also gives you the peace of mind of not having to worry about looking for lunch money every day or worry that it might get lost, stolen or used for other things other than lunch. Please monitor account balances closely. Teachers and support staff are not responsible for keeping track of meal accounts.

MyPaymentsPlus (<https://www.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome>) allows you to make pre-payments online using the website or phone app. There is a small transaction fee per payment, however, you are able to monitor your child's meal history at no cost.

Cash / Check

Cash and check at the serving line is still an option for those who chose not to utilize MyPaymentsPlus.

Balance Transfer

Access the form on the Child Nutrition webpage at <https://www.desotocountyschools.org/prepayment#>

. Please include the following information:

1. (Transfer From) Student(s) Full Name and School
2. (Transfer To) Student(s) Full Name and School
3. Amount to be Transferred to each account.

Free/Reduced Lunch

Federal funding for free lunches for all students ended with the 2021-2022 school year. Families who believe they qualify to receive free/reduced lunch are encouraged to complete the online application. A new application must be completed every school year, which means that some families who may not have qualified in the past may qualify in the next school year.

Free/Reduced Lunch Application can be accessed through the following website:
<https://www.nlappscloud.com/>

Check Status:

<https://admin.nlappscloud.com/statuslookup/SelectDistrict>

School Lunch Information

- Students are not allowed to leave campus.
- No fast food or food delivery may be dropped off for a student's lunch unless the parent is having lunch with the student in the cafeteria.
- Parents who wish to bring store bought food for birthdays or rewards must discuss it with the student's lunch period teacher beforehand.
- Any parent having lunch with his/her student will be given alternate seating from the class.
- Students will walk to and from the cafeteria with their lunch period teacher.
- Students and parents may find the lunch menu online at our school website (lcm.desotocountyschools.org)



YOUR SCHOOL MEAL

RESOURCE LIST

WWW.SCHOOLLUNCHAPP.COM

APPLY FOR MEAL BENEFITS ONLINE!
A NEW APPLICATION MUST BE COMPLETED EACH
SCHOOL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1ST!
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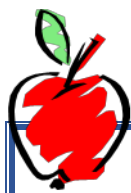
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Meal Prices

Student Breakfast (Paid)	\$ 1.75
Student Breakfast (Reduced)	\$ 0.30
Adult Breakfast Meal (3 or more menu items)	\$ 2.50
Student Lunch (Paid)	\$ 2.75
Student Lunch (Reduced)	\$ 0.40
Adult Lunch Meal (3 or more menu items)	\$ 3.50
Includes: Tea and Dessert (when available)	

Extra A La Carte Items

Lunch Entrée	\$ 2.00	Baked Chips / Snack Mix	\$ 0.50
Breakfast Entrée	\$ 1.50	Crackers (Cheez-It, Graham)	\$ 0.50
Fruit / Vegetable (1/2 cup)	\$ 0.50	Cereal Bar (Nutri-Grain, Quaker, Trix)	\$ 0.50
Grain (Roll, Biscuit, Mac & Cheese)	\$ 0.50	Dick & Jane Cookies	\$ 0.50
Dessert (Jell-O, Cookie, Cake)	\$ 0.50	Cereal Bag	\$ 0.50
Domino's Pizza Slice	\$ 2.25	Pop-Tart	\$ 0.75
8 oz Bottled Water*	\$ 0.50	Grandma Cookies	\$ 0.75
16 oz Bottled Water*	\$ 1.00	Rice Krispies Bar	\$ 1.00
Fruit Slushies	\$ 1.00	Applesauce Pouch	\$ 1.00
100% Fruit Sparkling Juice	\$ 1.00	Flavored Raisins	\$ 1.00
Ice Cream	\$ 0.50	Milk *	\$ 0.50
Specialty Ice Cream	\$ 0.75	Tea (Adults Only)	\$ 0.50

*Water and milk products are available to purchase for students who do not receive a school breakfast and/or lunch. State law prohibits any other a la carte items to be sold without a school breakfast and/or lunch purchase.

Monthly Meal Price Breakdown

Month / Days		FULL PAY			REDUCED		
		LUNCH	BFAST	TOTAL	LUNCH	BFAST	TOTAL
AUG	21	\$57.75	\$36.75	\$94.50	\$8.40	\$6.30	\$14.70
SEPT	20	\$55.00	\$35.00	\$90.00	\$8.00	\$6.00	\$14.00
OCT	21	\$57.75	\$36.75	\$94.50	\$8.40	\$6.30	\$14.70
NOV	17	\$46.75	\$29.75	\$76.50	\$6.80	\$5.10	\$11.90
DEC	11	\$30.25	\$19.25	\$49.50	\$4.40	\$3.30	\$7.70
JAN	19	\$52.25	\$33.25	\$85.50	\$7.60	\$5.70	\$13.30
FEB	19	\$52.25	\$33.25	\$85.50	\$7.60	\$5.70	\$13.30
MAR	15	\$41.25	\$26.25	\$67.50	\$6.00	\$4.50	\$10.50
APR	21	\$57.75	\$36.75	\$94.50	\$8.40	\$6.30	\$14.70
MAY	16	\$44.00	\$28.00	\$72.00	\$6.40	\$4.80	\$11.20
Yearly Cost:		\$495.00	\$315.00	\$810.00	\$72.00	\$54.00	\$126.00

Program Overview - Title I, Part A

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides financial assistance through state education agencies (SEAs) to local education agencies (LEAs) and public schools with the highest percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.

Title I funds may be used for children from preschool through grade 12. LEAs target the Title I funds they receive to public schools with the highest poverty rates. Public schools with poverty rates of at least 40 percent may use Title I funds, along with other federal, state, and local funds, to operate a school-wide program to upgrade the entire educational program. Schools with poverty rates below 40 percent, or those choosing not to operate a school-wide program, offer a targeted assistance program. In a targeted assistance program, the school serves Title I-eligible students who are failing, or most at risk of failing, to meet challenging state academic standards. The school then designs, in consultation with parents, staff, and district staff, an instructional program to meet the needs of those students. Both school-wide and targeted assistance programs must be based on effective means of improving student achievement and include strategies to support parent and family engagement.

Title I Parent and Family Engagement Events

- **August 2nd, 2023 - Back-to-School Events**
 - **Parent and Student Orientation**
 - **6th Grade: 5:00-5:30**
 - **7th Grade: 5:30 – 6:00**
 - **8th Grade: 6:00 – 6:30**
- **October 26th, 2023 – Mental Health Awareness and Trunk-or Treat**
- **February 13th, 2023 – Family and Parent Breakfast**

School-Parent Compact

Lake Cormorant Middle School and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

The School's Responsibilities

Lake Cormorant Middle School will provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:

1. Hire highly qualified teachers
2. Deliver engaging, well-planned lessons at Tier 1 instruction
3. Provide ongoing teacher professional development
4. Implement a system of positive behavior incentives to promote positive behaviors and lessen discipline issues
5. Provide targeted Tier II instruction to closing gaps in student learning
6. Provide Tier III instruction for students struggling academically/behaviorally
7. Utilize student data to drive teacher instruction through the PLC model

LCMS will hold parent-teacher conferences when students are not meeting academic and behavioral goals. The compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.

1. Conferences will be set up every 9 weeks by the counselors for students not meeting academic and behavior goals.
2. Parents may request a conference at any time by contacting the school counselors.
3. Teachers will conference with parents via SchoolStatus on a consistent basis.

LCMS will provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress via the following methods:

1. Progress Reports sent home via students once every 9 weeks term
2. Report Cards at the end of each 9 weeks term
3. Update grades frequently so that parents have access to current grades via Parent Portal
4. Parental contact via email or phone/text using SchoolStatus
5. School events (i.e., Back to School Bash, Open House, Title I Family Nights, PTO and Booster Club meetings, etc.)
6. Auto-dialers
7. Social media (as appropriate)

LCMS will provide parents reasonable access to staff.

1. Conferences can be set up through the counseling center.
2. Teachers can be reached by email via their DCS email account and the school website (lcm.desotocountyschools.org), or by phone during school hours.

LCMS will provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's education, to observe classroom/school activities, and to join organizations as follows:

1. Booster club meetings/events
2. PTO meetings/events

The Parent's Responsibilities

We as parents will support our children's learning in the following ways:

1. Monitoring student attendance
2. Making sure homework is completed
3. Volunteering at school
4. Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my child's education
5. Promoting positive use of my child's extracurricular time
6. Staying informed about my child's education by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district
7. Communicating with the school about pertinent matters in a timely manner
8. Participating in Title I events and committees

Parent's Right To Know

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Our school receives federal funds for Title I, Part A programs. Throughout the school year, we will be providing you with important information about this law and your child's education. This letter lets you know about your right to request information about the qualification of the classroom staff working with your child.

You have the right to request information regarding the professional qualification of your child's classroom teacher(s). If you requested this information, the district or school will provide you with answers to the following questions as soon as possible:

1. Has your child's teacher met state licensing requirements for the grade level and subject in which the teacher is providing instruction?
2. What are the college degree, majors and the fields of discipline for any graduate degree or certificates the teacher holds?
3. Is the teacher working under an emergency status for which state licensing requirements have been waived?

You also have the right to request information regarding the professional qualification of the paraprofessional(s) assisting your child's teacher (s). If you request this information, the district or the school will provide you with answers to the following questions:

1. Has she/he completed at least 2 years of study at an institute of higher learning?
2. Has she/he completed an associate's degree (or higher)?
3. Has she/he met a rigorous standard of quality by meeting our state's certification procedure for determining the quality of paraprofessional staff?
4. Does she/he have (a) the knowledge of, and ability in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics or (b) knowledge of and the ability to assist in learning activities such as homework, reading readiness, learning to read, writing, mathematics, and other appropriate support?

If you would like to request this information, please contact your child's school by phone at (662)781-0778 or by email at lisa.steiner@dcsms.org.

Should you have any other questions regarding your child's education, please don't hesitate to call me at the school.

Sincerely,

Lisa Steiner, Principal
Lake Cormorant Middle School

Tardy Policy

Tardy #1-5: Student warning

Tardy # 6: Parent will receive a text message

Tardy #7: 1 day of lunch detention

Tardy #8: Mandatory parent conference

Tardy #9: 3 days of lunch detention

Tardy #10: 5 days of lunch detention

Tardy #11: 1 day of ALC

Tardy #12: 2 days of ALC

Tardy #13: 3 days of ALC; possible disciplinary hearing

Absence and Attendance

Please try to make your child's doctor appointments after 3:00 p.m. or early in the mornings so that your child can check into school late. If your student misses more than 2 hours and 30 minutes of instructional time, they will be considered absent for the full day.

Pursuant to Section 37-13-91, Mississippi Code of 1972, a compulsory-school-age child who is absent more than 37% of the instructional day must be considered absent the entire day. Therefore, for the purposes of determining and reporting attendance, a pupil must be present for at least sixty-three percent (63%) of the instructional day to be considered present the entire school day.

Middle School Students (6-8)

- Seven (7) absences may be excused by a note from a parent/guardian.
- Any additional absence after the 7th excused absence by a parent/guardian note must be excused by a note from a doctor or other documentation excusing said absence.
- Any documentation being given for an excuse of absence(s) must be submitted to the principal and or his/her designee within two (2) school days of returning to school unless granted an exception by the principal for extenuating circumstances.
- When a student has exceeded five (5) unexcused absences, the Desoto County Attendance Officer shall be notified in writing within two (2) days by the school principal or his/her designee.
- Trips that involve military events for brothers, sisters, or parents will be excused
- Middle school sponsored trips will be excused (NOT trips with siblings at another school)
- Excused and unexcused absences are further explained in DCS Board Policy JBA and JBD in the following pages.

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: J - Students
Policy Code: JBA - Compulsory School Attendance/School Age

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The term "minor" when used in any statute, shall include any person, male or female, under twenty-one years of age. Ms Code 1-3-27

DeSoto County School District shall comply with the requirements of the "Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law" (Ms Code 37-13-91). Appropriate reports as required by law shall be provided to the Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement.

COMPULSORY- SCHOOL-AGE CHILD

"Compulsory-school-age child" means a child who has attained or will attain the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year; and shall include any child who has attained or will attain the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 and has enrolled in a full-day public school kindergarten program. A child, five (5) years of age, who enrolls in public kindergarten, will have to abide by the same guidelines as outlined in the §37-13-91.

Compulsory-school-age children must be enrolled in school unless the child is:

- a. Physically, mentally or emotionally incapable of attending school as determined by the appropriate school official based upon sufficient medical documentation;
- b. Enrolled in and pursuing a course of special education, remedial education or education for handicapped or physically or mentally disadvantaged children; or
- c. Being educated in a legitimate home instruction program. Ms Code 37-13-91 (3)

REPORTS

If a compulsory-school-age child has not been enrolled in school within fifteen (15) calendar days after the first day of the school year or if a child has accumulated five (5) unlawful absences during the school year, the principal shall, within two (2) school days or within five (5) calendar days, whichever is less, report, on the form provided by the State Department of Education, the absences to the school attendance officer. The principal, or his/her designee, shall report any student suspensions or student expulsions to the school attendance officer when they occur. Ms Code 37-13-91 (6)

School districts shall maintain accurate records documenting enrollment and attendance in a manner that allows the State Department of Education to make an assessment of changes in enrollment and attendance, including dropout rates.

The State Department of Education shall compile annually a statewide report on school district effectiveness in reducing absentee problems, dropout rates, and other attendance-related problems during the previous school year, incorporate the information into the annual Mississippi Report Card required by Section 37-3-53, Mississippi Code of 1972, on school district performance and offer technical assistance and coordination services to assist districts in improving performance.

UNLAWFUL ABSENCES / VALID EXCUSES

An "unlawful absence" is an absence during a school day by a compulsory-school-age child, which absence is not due to a valid excuse for temporary nonattendance. Days missed from school due to disciplinary suspension shall not be considered an "excused" absence under this section. Each of the following shall constitute a valid excuse for temporary nonattendance, provided satisfactory evidence of the excuse is provided to the principal or his/her designee:

- a. Attendance at an authorized school activity with the prior approval of the principal of the school district or his/her designee.
- b. Illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
- c. When isolation is ordered by the county health officer, by the State Board of Health or appropriate school official.
- d. Death or serious illness of a member of the immediate family, which includes children, spouse, grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters.
- e. A medical or dental appointment with prior approval of the principal or his/her designee, except in the case of emergency.
- f. Attendance at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
- g. Observance of a religious event, with the prior approval of the principal or his/her designee. (Approval should not be withheld unless, in the professional judgment of the principal or his/her designee, the extent of the absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
- h. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel including vacations or other family travel, with the prior approval of the principal or his/her designee. (Approval shall be based on the professional judgment of the principal or his/her designee but shall not be withheld unless the extent of the absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
- i. Other conditions sufficient to warrant nonattendance, with prior approval of the principal or his/her designee. However, no absences shall be excused when any student suspensions or expulsions circumvent the intent and spirit of the compulsory attendance law. Ms Code 37-13-91 (4)
- j. An absence is excused when it results from the attendance of a compulsory-school-age child participating in official organized events sponsored by the 4-H or Future Farmers of America (FFA). The excuse for the 4-H or FFA event must be provided in writing to the appropriate school superintendent by the Extension Agent or High School Agricultural Instructor/FFA Advisor.
- k. An absence is excused when it results from the compulsory-school-age child officially being employed to serve as a page at the State Capitol for the Mississippi House of Representatives or Senate.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER

The superintendent and principals shall cooperate with the school attendance officer employed by the State Department of Education, pursuant to Ms Code 37-13-85.

Process Standard 10 is as follows:

10. The school district implements procedures for monitoring and reporting student absences as specified in the Mississippi Compulsory Attendance Law. (Ms Code 37-13-91)

The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards for this policy are standards 10 and 11.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE as cited

Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards (Most Current Edition)
Attorney General's Opinion. Carter, 1-9-98 (#183) (97-0817)
JBD - Attendance, Tardiness and Excuses

Last Review Date: _____

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008

Approved/Revised Date: 2/22/2021

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: J - Students
Policy Code: JBD - Attendance, Tardiness and Excuses

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES K-12

Instructional Day

Pursuant to Mississippi Code 37-13-91, a parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory- school-age child in this state shall cause the child to enroll in and attend a public school or legitimate nonpublic for the period of time that the child is of compulsory-school-age. Mississippi Code Section 37-9-14(2)(u) states that School District Superintendents are "to comply in a timely manner with the compulsory education reporting requirements prescribed in Section 37-13-92(6)." The State Department of Education shall prescribe a uniform method for schools to utilize in reporting the unlawful absences to the school attendance officer.

The instructional day is therefore defined as a school day in which pupils are in regular attendance for scheduled classroom instruction for not less than sixty-three percent (63%) of the required instructional time, as fixed by the local school board for each school in the school district. The school board will review and approve the instructional time for each school in the school district annually prior to the beginning of the school year.

Each of the following shall constitute an excused absence:

1. Illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
2. When isolation is ordered by the county health officer, the State Board of Health, or an appropriate school official.
3. Death or serious illness of a member of the immediate family, which includes grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, stepbrothers, and stepsisters. The absences must be approved by the principal or his/her designee.
4. A medical or dental appointment documented with the proper excuse from the attending physician/dentist upon return to school.
5. Attendance at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
6. Observance of a religious event, with prior approval of the principal or his/her designee. (Approval should not be withheld unless, in the professional judgment of the principal or his/her designee, the extent of absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
7. Attendance at an authorized school activity with the prior approval of the principal or his/her designee.
8. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel including vacations or other family travel, with prior approval of the principal or his/her designee.
9. An absence may be excused when it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the principal or his/her designee, that conditions are sufficient to warrant the child's non-attendance. However, no absences shall be excused by the principal or his/her designee, when any student suspensions or expulsions circumvent the intent and spirit of the compulsory attendance law.

Elementary School Students (K-5)

- Seven (7) absences may be excused by a note from a parent/guardian. (**Note must include student's legal name, date of absence, reason for absence, parent/guardian signature, and date note was written.**)
- Any additional absence after the seven (7) excused by a parent/guardian note **must** be excused by a note from a doctor or other documentation excusing said absence.
- Any documentation being given for excuse of absence(s) **must** be submitted to the principal or his/her designee within two (2) school days of returning to school, unless granted an exception by the principal for extenuating circumstances.
- When a student has exceeded five (5) unexcused absences, the DeSoto County Attendance Officer shall be notified in writing within two (2) days by the school principal or his/her designee.

***6th graders who are housed on an elementary campus will follow elementary guidelines.**

Middle School Students (6-8)

- Seven (7) absences may be excused by a note from a parent/guardian. (**Note must include student's legal name, date of absence, reason for absence, parent/guardian signature, and date note was written.**)
- Any additional absence after the seven (7) excused by a parent/guardian note **must** be excused by a note from a doctor or other documentation excusing said absence.
- Any documentation being given for excuse of absence(s) **must** be submitted to the principal or his/her designee within two (2) school days of returning to school, unless granted an exception by the principal for extenuating circumstances.
- When a student has exceeded five (5) unexcused absences, the DeSoto County Attendance Officer shall be notified in writing within two (2) days by the school principal or his/her designee.

High School Students (9-12)

- Five (5) absences may be excused by a note from a parent/guardian. (**Note must include student's legal name, date of absence, reason for absence, parent/guardian signature, and date note was written.**)
- Any additional absence after the five (5) excused by a parent/guardian note **must** be excused by a note from a doctor or other documentation excusing said absence.
- Any documentation being given for excuse of absence(s) **must** be submitted to the principal or his/her designee within two (2) school days of returning to school, unless granted an exception by the principal for extenuating circumstances.
- When a student has exceeded five (5) unexcused absences, the DeSoto County Attendance Officer shall be notified in writing within two (2) days by the school principal or his/her designee.

Make-up Work Policy

When a student is absent from school (excused or unexcused), the number of days allowed to complete any required make-up work is commensurate with the number of days missed to a maximum of five (5) days.

For example, if a student is absent from school for one (1) day, the student has one (1) day to complete the required make-up assignments. If the student is absent for five (5) days, he/she will have five (5) days to complete his/her make-up work. If the student is absent for twelve (12) days, the student has five (5) days to complete the missed work.

The principal has the discretion to allow additional time or limit the number of required assignments in extreme situations.

Last Review Date: _____
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008
Approved/Revised Date: 6/7/2018

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: I - Instructional Program
Policy Code: IHA - Grading System

GRADING POLICY

GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR GRADING

Minimum Standards

Students must demonstrate mastery of the content required for each grade/course.

Content for grades 1-5 is determined by the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Content for grades 6-12 is determined by Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and the Mississippi Content Frameworks for all remaining subjects.

Monitoring Student Progress

Each teacher has the responsibility of identifying pupils who are not making satisfactory progress toward the achievement of grade level or course objectives.

Teachers are encouraged to notify parents during each grading period if students do not meet minimum requirements. Progress Reports will be sent at week four or week five of the nine-week period.

Teachers are not required by district policy to take a specified number of grades. However, any grades taken must be posted to the electronic grade book bi-weekly.

The following guidelines apply to all subject areas:

1. The DeSoto County School District requires that the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Language Arts and Mathematics and the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks for all other subject areas be included in the course scope and sequence. The district provides a curriculum manual for each teacher.
2. Required lesson plans are developed and include all of the components outlined and approved by the school district.

DeSoto County Schools Grading Scale

A – 90 - 100

B – 80 - 89

C – 70 - 79

D – 65 - 69

F – 0 - 64

Kindergarten science and social studies skills are assessed within the reading standards.

For first, second, and third grade science and social studies, the following grading scale is used:

S – Satisfactory

N – Needs Improvement

U – Unsatisfactory

GRADING POLICY

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students must master 70% of the Mathematics standards and 70% of the Language Arts standards. In addition, kindergarten students are expected to exhibit an adequate level of reading proficiency.

Grades 1-5

Each nine-week grade is computed by averaging the grades for those nine weeks. This average will be a compilation of the grades that the teacher has for the student in his/her gradebook including, but not limited to, formative assessments, quizzes, classwork, unit tests, common assessments, etc.

The semester grade is computed by averaging the two nine-week grades. The yearly grade is computed by averaging the two semester grades.

The grading policy for students with disabilities with current Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) will be consistent with policy IHFA.

Grades 6-8

Each semester grade is computed by averaging the grades for that semester. Ninety percent (45%-first nine weeks; 45%-second nine weeks) of the grade will be a compilation of the grades that the teacher has for the student in his/her grade book including, but not limited to, formative assessments, quizzes, homework, classwork, unit tests, etc. Ten percent of the grade will be the grade received on the nine-week/semester exam. The final grade for a course will be computed by averaging the two semester grades.

Nine-week tests will be administered for the first and third nine weeks. Semester exams will be administered for the second and fourth nine weeks.

7th and 8th Grade Accelerated English courses will be weighted at 1.05.

Seventh grade Compacted Math will be weighted at 1.05.

Eighth grade Accelerated Math will be weighted at 1.05.

Exemption Policy (Grades 6-8)

Students in grades 6-8 may be exempt from final exams if the following criteria are met:

1. The student has a ninety-five (95) or above semester/term average in the course;
2. The student has an eighty-five (85) or above semester average and does not have more than five (5) days/periods **unexcused** absences for final exams;
3. The student has not been assigned to ALC/RAMP for more than 10 days and has not been suspended and/or placed in DCAC or JDC at any time during the school year. For half credit courses, the student has not been assigned to ALC/RAMP for more than 5 days and has not been suspended and/or placed in DCAC or JDC at any time during the semester.
4. **Excused** absences will not impact course exemptions.

Grades 9-12

Each term grade is computed by averaging the grades for that term. Eighty percent of the grade will be a compilation of the grades that the teacher has for the student in his/her grade book including, but not limited to, formative assessments, quizzes, homework, classwork, unit tests, mid-term tests, etc. Twenty percent of the grade will be the grade received on the end of course final

exam for half credit courses and end of term exams for full credit courses. In full credit courses, the final grade will be the average of the two term grades.

Advanced Courses, Advanced Placement Courses, and Dual Enrollment/Credit Courses will be weighted as outlined in policy IHEA.

Exemption Policy (Grades 9-12)

Students in grades 9-12 may be exempt from end of course final exams for full credit and half credit courses if the following criteria are met:

1. The student has a ninety-five (95) or above semester/term average in the course;
2. The student has an eighty-five (85) or above average and does not have more than four (4) days/periods **unexcused** absences for final exams in full credit courses;
3. The student had an eighty-five (85) or above average and does not have more than two (2) days/periods **unexcused** absences for final exams in half credit courses;
4. Student has not been assigned to an Alternative Learning Center (ALC) for more than five (5) days, has not been suspended and/or placed in DeSoto County Alternative Center (DCAC) or the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) at any time during the semester (August-December or January-May).
5. **Excused** absences will not impact course exemptions.

Grade Revisions

In accordance with House Bill 696 and State Board Policy 403, DeSoto County Schools will follow the following guidelines regarding the changing of student grades.

Any change of grades, other than the final grade, shall be addressed with the teacher who issued the grade and the building level administrator.

Any change of a final grade (as recorded on the cumulative folder or permanent record) shall be presented and approved by a panel consisting of, at a minimum, the teacher issuing the grade, the building level administrator, and a central office administrator.

Written documentation (which includes the signatures of all panel members) of all actions must be included in the cumulative folder and available for review by the Mississippi Department of Education. Any changes or corrections must be made on the cumulative folder and permanent record as required by the Mississippi Cumulative Folders and Permanent Records Manual of Directions.

DeSoto County Schools does not mandate or require the awarding of a minimum grade.

Last Review Date:_____

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008

Approved/Revised Date: 6/15/2023

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: I - Instructional Program
Policy Code: IHE - Promotion and Retention

PROMOTION/RETENTION

Kindergarten:

Students must meet the following requirements to be promoted to the next grade:

- Exhibit an adequate level of reading proficiency.*
- Master 70% of the English/Language Arts Standards
- Master 70% of the Mathematics Standards

* Diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment and classroom data may be used to determine a student's reading proficiency.

First and Second Grade:

Students must meet the following requirements to be promoted to the next grade level:

- A minimum yearly average of 65 in English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

Third Grade:

Students must meet the following requirements to be promoted to the fourth grade:

- A minimum yearly average of 65 in English/Language Arts and Mathematics
- Successful completion of the Literacy Based Promotion Act as outlined in Senate Bill 2347

Fourth Grade – Eighth Grade:

Students must meet the following requirements to be promoted to the next grade:

- 4th - 7th Grade- A minimum yearly average of 65 in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
- 8th Grade- A minimum yearly average of 65 in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and .5 credit of Social Studies. (In-state and out-of-state eighth grade transfers who are not eligible to receive .5 credit in Social Studies due to missing the required seat time, may be promoted if the average of their Social Studies transfer grades is a 65.)

Ninth – Twelfth Grade:

Promotion in grades 9-12 is based upon earning Carnegie units. A Carnegie unit or half-unit is earned when a student completes the course with an average of 65 or better. Half-units are earned in courses designed to be completed in nine weeks. (Refer to Classification of Students – IEDB)

The high school academic program in the DeSoto County School District requires four (4) full

years or eight (8) semesters of work. Students may not take courses that are sequential in nature until the proper prerequisites have been successfully completed. (For example, a student may not take Algebra II without having passed Algebra I) Exceptions to this rule may be made for seniors who may be permitted to take two (2) sequential classes simultaneously.

The retention of a student for extracurricular purposes is prohibited.

Last Review Date: _____

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

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Adopted Date: 7/1/2008

Approved/Revised Date: 7/22/2021

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: I - Instructional Program
Policy Code: IJ - Technology and Instruction / Electronic Information Resources

Technology and Instruction/Distance Learning

Terms

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

Title

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

Loss, Theft or Full Damage

If a device is stolen, the parent/guardian (in the case of a student) should immediately notify the school administration. At that time, the user or the parent/guardian will be required to file a police report. Once a police report has been filed, the district, in conjunction with the local law enforcement agency may deploy locating software to aid authorities in recovering the device. It is imperative that a lost or stolen device be reported immediately.

If a device is damaged, lost or stolen, the user or the parent/guardian may be responsible for the full replacement cost or be assessed a deductible for the repair. A chart listing the deductible and fees are included in this policy. The user or the parent/guardian of the device must report to district personnel within three calendar days of missing or damaged device.

Students who leave the district during the school year must return all devices and additional accessories to the school administrator.

Repossession

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

Terms of Agreement

The user's right to use and possession of the property terminates no later than the last day of enrollment unless earlier terminated by the DeSoto County School District or upon withdrawal from DeSoto County Schools.

Unlawful Appropriation

Failure to timely return the property and the continued use of it for non-school purposes without the

DeSoto County School District's consent may be considered unlawful appropriation of the District's property.

Fees for Device Use

Use and Maintenance Fees

- Parents/Guardians shall pay a non-refundable annual support fee of \$25.00 for students grades 6th-12th for the use of a DeSoto County School electronic device.
- Homebound students in grades K-5th will be assessed a \$25.00 fee annually for the use of a DeSoto County Electronic device.
- The annual fee can be paid online through a link on the district's website or at the school.
- For damage that occurs to any district device there will be a required deductible to cover damage by incident (i.e. 1st damage, 2nd damage) AND by incident type (i.e. cracked glass, broken LCD, bent frame, etc.).
- If the device is lost, stolen, or damaged beyond repair, the parent/guardian (in the case of a student) may be responsible for the replacement cost. A police/sheriff report will be required for all stolen devices.
- District may disable the device remotely to protect the device and/or data on the device.
- Seniors must clear all records and pay all fees before they shall be allowed to participate in commencement exercises.
- If there are fees that are outstanding, the district may take all legal measures that are available to recoup those fees.

Damaged Devices

Any damage must be reported to school authorities immediately. Power adapters, and sleeves, cases and hotspots must be returned to DeSoto County Schools or paid in full.

Deductibles- Fees

- First damage occurrence: \$50.00 deductible to cover damage.
- Second damage occurrence: \$50.00 deductible *plus* 25% of the repair cost to repair the laptop and possible loss of take home privileges.
- Third damage occurrence: \$50.00 deductible *plus* 50% of the repair cost to repair the laptop and loss of take home privileges.
- Fourth damage occurrence: Fair market value to repair the laptop or tablet.
- Full replacement cost for; computer device/current bid amount, adapter \$50.00, case \$25.00, hotspot \$84.00

Handling and Care

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

Power Management

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

Transport

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

Monitoring and Supervision

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

User Data

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

Help and Support

Each school will have a designated Distance Learning Support Person. An online help ticket will need to be filled out and submitted.

Use of Personal Laptops and Tablets

In grades where students are issued a laptop or tablet by the district, students will not be allowed to use their personal laptops or tablets in place of a district device. The goal of the 1:1 initiative is to provide every student with the same device. If a parent refuses a device for home use, the student will be required to check out a device at school for use each day in class. The district is not able to provide support or install software on personal devices; therefore the use of personal devices is not a viable alternative to a district provided device.

Adopted Date: 7/21/2020

Approved/Revised Date: 6/2/2022

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: J - Students
Policy Code: JCDB - Dress Code for Students

DRESS CODE

Proper attire and grooming are deemed important to scholastic achievement and orderliness. The responsibility for the appearance of the students begins with the parents and the students themselves. Students' clothing, make-up, and hairstyles should reflect neatness, cleanliness, and self-respect so that the school is a desirable place in which to promote learning and character development.

It is virtually impossible to formulate a set of regulations that adequately covers every detail of proper grooming. Violations of the Dress Code will be dealt with in accordance with the DeSoto County Schools Code of Discipline. It will be treated as insubordination and will be handled as stated in the Code of Discipline of the DeSoto County Schools. Insubordination is a Level II violation.

First Violation: Administrator-Parent conference, home suspension, ALC, or in-school suspension.

Second Violation: School suspension (three days)

Repeated Times: Suspension from school pending a disciplinary hearing

(1) Hair must be neat, clean and worn in a manner that does not interfere with vision or cause a disruption in the classroom. No combs, picks, rollers or extreme coloring will be allowed.

(2) T-shirts with sleeves, white or colored, are acceptable. Shirts must be properly closed, zipped or buttoned.

(3) No article of clothing that pertains to or depicts the following will be acceptable:

(1) Substances or activities illegal by law for minors, such as, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling

(2) Profane, suggestive or violent language

(3) Derogatory symbols; remarks directed to any ethnic group

(4) Sufficient underclothes must be worn appropriately and must not be exposed.

(5) Tank tops, tube tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti straps, thin straps, or tops that expose the midriff, any part of the bust, excessive part of the back, are excessively tight or are distracting in class are not permitted. No slits in shirts are to be above the waistline of pants or skirts. Shirts are to be tucked in. Blouses/tops made to be worn outside should be at least three (3) inches below the waistline and no longer than five (5) inches below the waistline.

(6) Students in grades K thru 5 are allowed to wear shorts as part of their daily attire. Shorts should be walking shorts or Bermuda shorts. Students in grades 6 thru 12 may wear walking shorts or Bermuda shorts that are knee length. They should not be excessively tight or baggy. Athletic shorts are not permitted unless they are a part of an approved gym class or athletic class/activity.

(7) Knee length dresses and skirts are allowed. No slits in these skirts or dresses above the knee caps are allowed.

(8) No spandex articles of clothing are allowed.

(9) Shoes must be worn at all times, and no house shoes are allowed. Shoes with laces should be laced and tied.

(10) No visible tattoos will be allowed. Neither male nor female students will be permitted to wear rings and/or studs in their noses, tongues, or any exposed body parts other than the ear and appropriate rings on fingers.

(11) Coaches, physical education classes or any organized athletics have the option to ban all jewelry due to safety reasons and/or violation of the Mississippi High School Activity Association regulations.

- (12) Sunglasses, other than prescription, must be removed when inside the building.
- (13) All pants must be worn fitted to the waist, at the waist, with or without a belt. Belts must be worn and buckled appropriately for pants that have belt loops. Pants should fit appropriately. No baggy pants are allowed. No writing is to be on the seat of the pants, even the cheerleader's uniform and dance team.
- (14) Leggings are allowed when worn with a top that meets the dress length guidelines specified in #7.
- (15) Pants must have no exposed skin above the knee.
- (16) Hats, caps, sweatbands, or other head coverings are not to be worn in the buildings or on the grounds of the school except for medical reasons as prescribed by a physician. Head coverings as part of a religious belief will be allowed if there is sufficient proof the student is a practicing member of the religious sect. Head coverings may be worn if authorized by the faculty and/or administration, if it is part of a uniform (i.e., wearing a full baseball uniform during games or practice) or as deemed necessary.
- (17) Specific outfits designated for extracurricular activities and decisions concerning any questionable clothing will be left to the discretion of the principal.
- (18) Local principals or their designee have the power and discretion to make all decisions on their campus.

Last Review Date: _____

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008

Approved/Revised Date: 6/6/2011

District: DeSoto County School District

Section: J - Students

Policy Code: JD - Student Discipline

+CODE OF DISCIPLINE K-12

DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS CODE OF DISCIPLINE

FORWARD

The Uniform Discipline Code has been developed in consultation with students, parents, teachers, and administrators so they will know and understand that firm, fair and consistent discipline policies are to be maintained in all DeSoto County public schools. Use of this Code is intended to ensure a stable learning environment in an atmosphere which encourages academic excellence. It is expected that staff members, students and parents will work together to support and enforce the code regulations with equity and consistency for all students.

A copy of this Code shall be distributed to each student and the parents, legal guardian or custodian of each such student shall sign a statement verifying that they have been given notice of the Code.

INTRODUCTION

The uniform Discipline Code of the DeSoto County Schools provides a uniform standard of conduct for all public school students. It describes inappropriate student behavior, ensures equal treatment for misconduct, and prescribes specific actions for remediating prohibited behaviors. The Code is based on the premise that rules must be enforced fairly, firmly and consistently and in a fashion equitable and just, while complying with state mandates and regulations. It recognizes that as students progress in school and advance in age and maturity, they will assume greater responsibility for their actions. It is also recognized that differences in age and maturity require different types of disciplinary action.

In this Code, discipline is defined as the implementation of and adherence to behavioral rules and regulations which will ensure an educational environment free of mental and physical hazards to students, teachers and staff. Such an environment is conducive to the practice of good citizenship and encourages learning. The enforcement of the Code will help ensure a safe and orderly school climate for students and staff alike.

Specific provisions of the Code include:

- (1) A parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child enrolled in the DeSoto County Schools shall be responsible financially for his or her minor child's destructive acts against school property or persons.
- (2) A parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child enrolled in the DeSoto County Schools may be requested to appear at school by the school attendance officer or the principal, for a conference regarding the destructive acts of their child, or for any other discipline conference regarding the acts of the child.
- (3) Any parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child enrolled in the DeSoto County Schools who refuses or willfully fails to attend such discipline conference specified in paragraph (2) of this section may be summoned by proper notification by the superintendent of schools or the school attendance officer and be required to attend such discipline conference.
- (4) A parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child enrolled in the DeSoto County Schools shall be responsible for any criminal fines brought against such student for unlawful activity occurring on school grounds or buses.
- (5) Any parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child who
 - (1) fails to attend a discipline conference to which such parent, guardian or custodian has been summoned under the provisions of this section, or
 - (2) refuses or willfully fails to perform any other duties imposed upon him or her under the law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction shall be fined not to exceed an amount provided by law.
- (6) The DeSoto County Schools shall be entitled to recover damages in an amount not to exceed an amount as provided by law, plus necessary court costs, from the parents of any minor (7-17) who maliciously and willfully damages or destroys property belonging to this school district. However, this section shall not apply to parents whose parental control of such child has been removed by court order

or decree.

(7) As an alternative to suspension, a student may remain in school by having the parent, guardian or custodian, with the consent of the student's teacher or teachers, attend class with the student for a period of time specifically agreed upon by the teacher and school principal. If the parent, guardian or custodian does not agree to attend class with the student or fails to attend class with the student, the student shall be suspended in accordance with this Code.

CODE OF DISCIPLINE

GRADES K-12

Student Conduct:

Acts of Misconduct

These acts of misconduct include those student behaviors which disrupt the orderly educational process in the classroom or on the school grounds including the following:

Level I

- 1 – 1 Tardiness
- 1 – 2 Running and/or making excessive noise in the hall or building
- 1 – 3 Inappropriate personal contact including but not limited to pushing and shoving, inappropriate gestures and public displays of affection, recklessness, or any inappropriate contact which does not result in physical harm, or any additional contact which the principal determines to be in this level.
- 1 – 4 In unauthorized area without pass (halls, etc.)
- 1 – 5 Dress code violation
- * 1 – 6 Displaying any behavior which is disruptive to the orderly process of education

Disciplinary Action

First Violation

Minimum: Teacher-Student Conference

Maximum: Teacher-Student-Parent Conference

Repeated or Flagrant Violation

Minimum: Teacher-Student-Administrator-Parent Conference (Home Suspension)

Maximum: Corporal Punishment, in-school suspension, detention, and/or school suspension

* Students, who after having a student-teacher conference, a teacher-student-parent conference, home suspension, Teacher Support Team interventions, continue displaying behavior which is disruptive to the orderly process of education, can be suspended from school, pending a disciplinary hearing.

Level II

- * 2 – 1 Leaving the school grounds without permission
- * 2 – 2 Skipping class
- * 2 – 3 Insubordination - refusal to follow written or verbal school rules after receiving specific directions from a person in authority including, but not limited to breaking school or classroom rules, failure to respond to staff request, refusal to complete assigned task, or exhibiting disrespect towards adults.
- * 2 – 4 Students shall not possess, smoke, or use tobacco or any product containing tobacco or nicotine while on campus, while attending school-sponsored activities, or while under the supervision and control of district employees. This includes the possession and/or use of any electronic device that delivers nicotine or other vaporized liquids to the person inhaling from the device, including but not limited to electronic cigarettes, vapes, vaporizers, cigars, pipes, hookahs, or any electronic device that delivers nicotine or other vaporized liquids to

the person inhaling from the device.

* 2 – 5 Exhibiting any hostile physical or verbal actions

**2 - 6 Unauthorized and/or inappropriate use of electronic devices (as defined in Board Policy IJBA).

2 - 7 Cheating on tests or exams (The grade "0" will be assigned regardless of other punishment).

Disciplinary Action

First Violation

Minimum: Administrator-Conference, ALC, mandatory student-parent-administrator conference, corporal punishment

Maximum: School suspension (one to three days)

Repeated or Flagrant Violation

Minimum: School suspension (three days)

Maximum: School suspension (three days) and/or ALC for up to ten (10) days and/or Teacher Support Team interventions

* Students who, after having a student-teacher conference, a teacher-student-parent conference, a mandatory student-parent-administrator conference, and Teacher Support Team interventions, and a Functional Behavior Assessment, continue displaying behavior which is disruptive to the orderly process of education, can be suspended from school, pending a disciplinary hearing.

** Additional disciplinary action for unauthorized and/or inappropriate use of personal electronic devices (as defined in Board Policy IJBA):

1st Offense: First offense will result in confiscation of the device with parental contact. The electronic device will be returned at the end of the school day to the student or his/her parent/guardian as determined by the building principal.

2nd Offense: Second offense will result in confiscation of the electronic device and a mandatory parent/administrator conference. The electronic device will not be returned directly to the student; parent/guardian must meet with a school-level administrator to collect the electronic device.

3rd Offense: Third offense will be considered repeated and/or flagrant and the penalty for such acts will be determined by the building administrator. The phone will be confiscated and penalties could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Check-in/Check-out procedures for the electronic device during the school day (1-10 days)
- ALC/In-School Suspension (1-3 days)

4th Offense: Fourth offense will result in school suspension (1-3 days), and a loss of electronic device privileges pending reinstatement by the building principal.

Level III

3 – 1 Fighting

3 – 2 Gambling

* 3 – 3 Theft of personal and/or school property

3 – 4 Acts which threaten the safety and well-being of students and/or staff: engaging in any behavior (by word or act) that encourages, incites, or instigates threatening or aggressive acts which can create the risk of harm to another person.

3 – 5 Extortion- use of intimidation, coercion or force

* 3 – 6 Vandalism of personal and/or school property

3 – 7 Using profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, or offensive language and/or gestures, and/or possession of obscene, indecent, immoral, or offensive materials.

3 – 8 Sexual conduct, including unwelcomed sexual contact, or recording and/or transferring sexually suggestive images through personal electronic devices.

3-9 Bullying (as defined in Board Policy JDDA)

Disciplinary Action

First Violation

Minimum: School suspension from one to three days, ALC, corporal punishment

Maximum: School suspension (three days), report to authorities when applicable

Repeated or Flagrant Violation

Minimum: School suspension (three days), ALC (ten days), and/or Levels 3-4 and 3-8 Teacher Support Team interventions

Maximum: School suspension (three days) and possible assignment to DeSoto County Alternative Center pending the results of a disciplinary hearing.

* For theft or vandalism restitution shall be made regardless of other punishment

Level IV

4 – 1 Possession, use or under the influence of alcohol, synthetic drugs, counterfeit drugs, illegal drugs, narcotics, controlled substance(s) or paraphernalia.

4 – 2 Assault on a student. Assault is defined as purposely or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury (including pain or discomfort) to another.

4 – 3 Assault on a school employee. Assault is defined as purposely or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury (including pain or discomfort) to another.

4 – 4 Directing profanity, vulgar or threatening language, and/or obscene gestures toward a staff member.

4 - 5 Participating in sexual activity including but not limited to sexual intercourse, sexual contact or exposing intimate body parts while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property.

Any student in violation of the above shall be suspended by the principal for three days and ordered to appear for a disciplinary hearing before a District Hearing Officer.

Disciplinary Action

Minimum: Assignment to the DeSoto County Alternative Center and a report will be made to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Maximum: Expulsion

Students below grade 6 may be given other punishment.

Level V

5 – 1 Possession and/or use of a weapon as defined in MS CODE § 97-37-17. Weapons possession on educational property. The definition of weapon for the sake of this policy also includes any instrument used as a weapon which is capable of causing death or serious physical injury. Also, any toy or look-alike weapon that

looks enough like an authentic weapon to be reasonably mistaken as authentic. Examples of weapons include, but are not limited to guns, rifles, pistols, toy guns, knives, toy knives, craft knives, utility tools, scissors, air or gas operated weapons, AirSoft pistols, BB guns, air rifle, air pistol, daggers, slingshots, razors, dynamite cartridges, bombs, grenades, mines, etc.

Disciplinary Action

Minimum: Possession other than gun will result in assignment to the DeSoto County Alternative Center and a report will be made to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Maximum: Possession of a fire arm/gun or use of other weapon will result in expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year (under certain circumstances expulsion can be from the student's assigned school to the DeSoto County Alternative Center).

For students below grade 6, the hearing officer may recommend other punishment if the behavior does not require expulsion and the student is likely to benefit from remediation.

5 – 2 Sale or distribution, or conspiring to sell counterfeit drugs, synthetic drugs, illegal drugs/alcohol, narcotics or controlled substance(s)

Disciplinary Action

Minimum: Assignment to the DeSoto County Alternative Center and a report will be made to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Maximum: Expulsion

For students below grade 6, the hearing officer may recommend other punishment if the behavior does not require expulsion and the student is likely to benefit from remediation.

5 – 3 Students are prohibited from wearing, displaying, or possessing in any manner on school property or at school-sponsored events clothing, apparel, accessories, drawings, or messages associated with any gang or social club that is associated with criminal activity, as defined by law enforcement agencies.

Disciplinary Action

Minimum: Mandatory student/parent/resource officer/administrator meeting to investigate situation and determine proper discipline consequence.

Repeated: Assignment to the DeSoto County Alternative Center

Maximum: Expulsion for repeated violations and/or gang activity that includes but is not limited to:

- (8) Acts which disrupt the process of orderly education
- (9) Recruitment with use of intimidation
- (10) Tagging or marking
- (11) Assault
- (12) Battery

For students below grade 6, the hearing officer may recommend other punishment if the behavior does not require expulsion and the student is likely to benefit from remediation.

5-4 Threats of violence or harm: Any spoken, written, gestured or electronically communicated threat that disrupts the educational environment of the school and/or suggests a student intends to cause bodily harm or carry out an act of violence against district property, students, employees, or others (e.g. bomb threats, school shooting threats, etc.).

Disciplinary Action

Students found to have made threats of violence or harm against district property, students, employees or others will be subject to expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year (under certain circumstances expulsion can be from the student's assigned school to the DeSoto County Alternative Center).

In addition to these penalties, provisions of the Mississippi Criminal Code are applicable to illegal behavior. Principals are required to report illegal activities to the police. Students committing any crime or involved with any criminal behavior are subject to arrest by local law enforcement.

The DeSoto County Board of Education permits individual schools to adopt additional regulations governing actions not covered by Conduct Code. However, such additional regulations may neither substitute for nor negate any of the provisions, in spirit or intent of the Conduct Code, and **must be approved in writing by the School Superintendent.**

DUE PROCESS

In cases where the imposition of punishment is for a suspension of three (3) days or less, the student will be orally informed of the charges lodged against him. The student shall have a right to respond and refute these charges. There may be a delay between the time that "notice" is given and the time of the parent/student right to respond. A parent will be notified of the suspension by telephone, if possible, and in writing. The student's parent/guardian has a right to discuss this matter further and have the charge and punishment explained by the administration along with all other rights provided by board policy.

DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

When a student appears before a disciplinary hearing, the student will be subject to additional punishment up to and including suspension of more than three (3) days, assignment to an alternative educational setting for more than ten (10) days, or an expulsion from school.

For additional information on due process and disciplinary hearings, please refer to Board Policy JDAAAA - Disciplinary Procedures.

ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

After a student is referred for consideration of placement at DeSoto County Alternative Center (DCAC), the District Review Board and Transition team will determine appropriate placement for the student. Once a student is accepted into DCAC, the District Review Board and Transition Team will develop an Individualized Instruction Plan (IIP) for each student. The plan will follow the program and class schedule of the home school. DCAC follows the frameworks that are established by the state of Mississippi for the subject matter to be taught in each course. Certified personnel will send a daily feedback sheet home that requires a parent signature for all students attending DCAC.

An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) committee meets to determine every change of placement for our special education students. Students with special education rulings follow their IEP while at DCAC.

Parents are notified of the recommendation for placement at DCAC during the disciplinary hearing. The home school will contact the parent once acceptance is granted by the District Review Board. All parents and students will meet with a DCAC administrator to discuss the DCAC program and requirements. The student shall complete a minimum of thirty (30) successful days prior to returning to his/her home school.

The District Review Board consists of school-level administrators, district-level administrators, and counselors as determined by the Director of Pupil Services.

FELONY CHARGES AND CONVICTIONS FOR OFF-CAMPUS CONDUCT

If a student commits a crime off campus and is formally charged with a felony or an act that substantially disrupts or has the potential to disrupt the educational process the student will be recommended for reassignment or expulsion.

Last Review Date: _____
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008
Approved/Revised Date: 6/1/2023

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: J - Students
Policy Code: JDDA - Bullying

BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR

DeSoto County Schools prohibits bullying or harassing behavior of students, school employees, or volunteers. DeSoto County Schools will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other students or school employees.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits.

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

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

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

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

DeSoto County Schools recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing.

"Reasonable action" includes, but is not limited to, promptly reporting the bullying or harassing behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee.

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

Legal Reference- MS Code of 1972 37-11-67 and 37-11-69

Last Review Date: _____
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/22/2010
Approved/Revised Date: 7/18/2019

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: J - Students
Policy Code: JCBB - Gang Activity

GANG POLICY

The DeSoto County School District prohibits gang activity, defined hereinafter. Students who engage in gang activity will be subject to discipline pursuant to the District's Code of Discipline, up to and including possible expulsion.

A "gang" is defined as a group that initiates, advocates, or promotes illegal activities, activities that threaten the safety or well being of persons or property on school grounds, or at supervised school functions, or activities that are harmful to the education process.

Prohibited "gang activity" includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) Soliciting students to become gang members;
- (2) Participating in gang initiation or other gang ceremonies;
- (3) Deliberately wearing, displaying or possessing prohibited gang symbols;
- (4) Engaging in gang-related violence or threats of violence;
- (5) Threatening others, including threats by brandishing a weapon or a replica of a weapon on school campuses, or at supervised school functions; or
- (6) Engaging in any behavior undertaken in such a manner as to be reasonably likely to incite violence or endanger persons or property.

Prohibited "gang symbols" may include any type of clothing decoration, jewelry, patches, bandanas, gang names, depiction of gang signs or symbols, and/or body signal/movement which is recognized as denoting a gang or is a sign, signal or movement utilized in connection with gang communications, including, but not limited to those appearing with the "Gang Awareness" pamphlet attached hereto as well as the additions thereto in the future. School officials will keep a booklet containing known "gang symbols" in each school office. Students and parents who may have questions regarding this policy should contact the school principal for further clarification of any part of the policy.

Students may be disciplined for engaging in any activity prohibited by this policy including the prohibited "gang activity" enumerated in the third paragraph hereof. District officials will cooperate with local law enforcement to provide the school with gang information to aid in the prevention of violence, gangs, and drugs in our schools. This information shall include, but is not limited to: gang names, colors, symbols, signals, and gestures associated with gangs (all of which are prohibited gang activity). Amendments and updates to the list of prohibited gang symbols and gang activity and/or handbook must be submitted to the Director of Pupil Services for approval. Thereafter, the Director of Pupil Services will distribute the amended and/or updated information to the appropriate district officials.

Each school shall make regular announcements to the student body advising that gang activity and gang symbols are strictly prohibited.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, nothing herein prohibits the display of recognized religious symbols such as the Star of David or the Crescent or the Cross unless these or other religious symbols are altered or augmented in some way.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, wearing of clothing or particular colors in and of itself is not prohibited unless the clothing (color or otherwise) is worn in combination with other prohibited gang signs or symbols. The wearing or displaying in any manner of gang names however, is prohibited.

Last Review Date: _____

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

FORM JCBB-1 Reference to Gang Signs and Gang Names.pdf

Adopted Date: 11/1/2010

Approved/Revised Date: 3/3/2022

District: DeSoto County School District

Section: J - Students

Policy Code: JCDAD - Bus Conduct

BUS CONDUCT

The DeSoto County School District Transportation Department operates as an extension of the school(s) and student conduct is governed accordingly. Students who do not conduct themselves properly are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the DeSoto County School District policies. Punishments may include but are not limited to suspension and expulsion from school or from the bus for misconduct on the bus.

DeSoto County Schools only transports students to his/her primary residence. Each parent/guardian upon enrollment is required to establish a primary residence based on the requirements for school admission listed in School Board Policy JBC. DeSoto County Schools does not provide busing to daycares, family daycare homes, group daycare facilities, or the homes of extended family members.

(1) Responsibilities:

- (1) Bus drivers and aides are responsible and authorized to maintain student order and discipline at all times.
- (2) Principals are responsible and authorized to administer any and all necessary student discipline. Principals shall also ensure that all bus rules are communicated to eligible riders.
- (3) Students have the responsibility to obey all policies and procedures established by the DeSoto County Board of Education, their respective schools and the Transportation Department while waiting for, boarding, riding or off-loading a DeSoto County School Bus.
- (4) The Transportation Department shall post rules clearly on every school bus and shall include but not be limited by the rules listed below.

(2) Rules of Conduct

- (1) Be waiting at your stop 5 minutes early.
- (2) If you need to cross the street, wait for traffic to stop; driver will motion to you when it is safe to pass in front of the bus to load or unload.
- (3) Obey the bus driver.
- (4) No unauthorized items on bus. (No weapons, tobacco, combustibles, pets, large items, etc.)
- (5) Be nice and courteous.
- (6) Keep the bus clean.
- (7) No profanity and no fighting.
- (8) Keep hands and head inside of bus.
- (9) Do not throw anything, anywhere.
- (10) Stay in your seat. Driver may assign seats.
- (11) No eating or drinking.
- (12) Damage to bus interior may result in student paying for damage.
- (13) Emergency door/windows may only be opened in case of emergency.
- (14) Do not distract or bother the driver through loud talking or misbehavior.
- (15) Report any problems you may have to the bus driver as soon as possible.
- (16) School District and drivers are not responsible for articles left on the bus.

(17) Use or possession of gang graffiti, gang drawings, gang writings, gang dress, or gang activity of any kind may result in expulsion from school.

Last Review Date: _____

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008

Approved/Revised Date: 2/24/2017

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: E - Business Management
Policy Code: EBAB - Smoke Free Buildings

TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOL PROPERTY

The DeSoto County Board of Education bans the use of all tobacco products in all school buildings and property in the district and on all school vehicles by all persons at all times. Tobacco products are defined as any substance that contains tobacco, including but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, or electronic cigarettes.

This ban extends to all employees, students, and patrons attending school-sponsored athletic events and meetings and to school-owned or operated vehicles and facilities. The board issues this ban in a sincere appeal to all employees, students and patrons to cooperate in helping to create within our facilities a truly healthy environment for all concerned.

The Federal code states that neither a person nor a federal agency shall permit smoking within any indoor facility owned or leased or contracted for and utilized by such person or agency for provision of routine or regular kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children.

Any failure to comply with a prohibition in this section shall be in violation of this section and any person subject to such prohibition who commits such violation may be liable to the United States for a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed \$1,000 for each violation, or may be subject to an administrative compliance order, or both. Each day a violation continues shall constitute a separate violation. In the case of any civil penalty under this section, the total amount shall not exceed the amount of Federal funds received by such person for the fiscal year in which the continuing violations occurred.

REF: Public Law 103-227, 20 US CODE 6083 Section 1043 (a) and (c-1) and (f-1)

Last Review Date: _____
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008
Approved/Revised Date: 2/8/2017

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: K - General Public Relations
Policy Code: KM - Visitors to the Schools

SCHOOL VISITORS

Visitors with legitimate reasons for coming to the school are welcome in any of the DeSoto County District Schools.

The following regulations shall be observed during the visitation:

1. All visitors must immediately report to the principal's office (including news media).
2. If the principal has any reason to question the legitimacy of the visit, the superintendent's office shall be consulted.
3. Teachers shall not be interrupted while teaching except for emergencies.
4. Pupils from other schools and pre-school children are not allowed unless specifically invited and pre-arranged through the principal's office.
5. News media must be granted permission by the Superintendent or his/her designee before they enter a school campus or they will be considered trespassing and are subject to fines and/or arrest.

Last Review Date: _____
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Adopted Date: 7/1/2008
Approved/Revised Date: 12/3/2020

District: DeSoto County School District
Section: J - Students
Policy Code: JGCDC - Administering Medications to Students

MEDICATION POLICY

1. Administration of medication is foremost the responsibility of the parent/guardian. All medications that can be given outside of school hours without serious effects must be given before or after school. No narcotic pain medications will be given at school without prior authorization from the principal and/or Health Services Department at the Board of Education.
2. Medications will only be administered if:
 - a. A physician's order (a prescription label is considered an order) and a medical authorization form signed by a parent/guardian is received at school including the child's name, name of medication needed, and time of administration.
 - b. Prescription medication must be supplied in the bottle dispensed by the pharmacy with the following on the label before the school can accept it: child's name, name of medication, how often the medication is to be given, the dosage, and the date of expiration. Non-prescription medication must be in the original package and it is up to the school principal if it can be given with parent consent only or parent consent plus a physician signature. The principal has the option of not allowing over the counter medication to be administered at their school.
3. Medications will not be accepted in household containers, envelopes, baggies, etc.
4. The first dose of any medication should be given at home in case there is an allergic reaction.
5. Medications are to be stored in a locked cabinet in a secure location. Medications requiring refrigeration will be stored in a refrigerator in a secured area (medication and food must be stored separately).
6. No medication will be administered without written parental/guardian consent. The schools will provide the parents/guardians with the necessary medication authorization forms and it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to complete the form and return it to the school. The forms must be updated every school year and anytime there is a medication or dosage change. **NO CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MEDICINE WILL BE MADE UNTIL THE FORM IS SUBMITTED** to the designated staff member in the school. If there is a change in the dosage of medication, the parent/guardian will have to also supply the school with a new doctor's order indicating the change.

7. The designated staff member will maintain a daily log of medications administered to each individual student and will maintain these records in a secure location with the medication. The log should contain the student's name, date, medication given, time it was given, and the initials of the person who gave the medication along with a signature. If a medication dose is missed, the designated staff member is to document this on the daily log along with the reason why the medication was missed and notify the appropriate personnel. The school should keep medication logs on file for at least five (5) years.
8. Students that have asthma are allowed to keep their inhaler with them as long as they have an asthma medication permission form signed by their doctor and on file with the school. These forms are provided by the schools and should be updated every year.
9. Diabetic students should supply a diabetic care plan from their doctor to the school. Diabetic supplies are to be accessible to the student at all times. It is at the principal's (or principal designee's) discretion as to where medication and supplies are to be stored.
10. Epipens are for severe allergic reactions. An Epipen care plan should be sent to the parent/guardian for them to get their doctor to complete and send back to the school. The Epipen should be stored as close to the student as possible, since it is for emergency use. Individual consideration will be given by the principal or principal designee to determine if the student is able to carry their own medication and properly self administer or if a designated staff member needs to keep and administer the medication.
11. Emergency medications should be taken on field trips (eg. asthma inhalers, Epipens, diabetic supplies).
12. The proper disposal of unused medications is important and it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to obtain all unused medication from the school when the medication is discontinued, the school year ends, or the student transfers to another district or school. The unused medication has to be picked up by the parent/guardian by the deadline set forth by the school nurse and/or principal or it will be disposed of by a designated person at the school with a witness present. The medication disposal should be documented on the medication log and signed by both employees.
13. Schools will not provide medications to students.
14. Prescription drugs must be brought to the school by a responsible adult. A medication receiving form (see page 3 of policy) must be signed by the person bringing in the medication and an authorized staff member indicating the number of pills or amount of liquid received.
15. All prescription drugs will be counted on a regular basis by two designated staff members. It is at the principal's or his/her designee's discretion as to how often this is to be done.
16. Medications that are not FDA approved will not be administered at school.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA

DeSoto County Schools does not allow the administration or use of medical cannabis while on district or school property. Students are absolutely prohibited from possessing any form of medical marijuana or cannabis derivatives. Possession of such items will result in disciplinary action as outlined in DCS Board Policy JD.

Last Review Date:_____

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

FORM JGCDC-1 DCS Medication Receipt Form.pdf

Adopted Date: 7/24/2008

Approved/Revised Date: 7/21/2022