

***Sumter County
Elementary School
2026 - 2027
Parent-Student Handbook***



EXCELLENCE is the STANDARD!

**Mrs. Tawana Bettis, Principal
Mrs. Brittany Brock, Assistant Principal**

438 Bumphead Road
Americus, Georgia 31719
(229) 924-7835 / FAX (229) 924-8831 www.sces.sumterschools.org

This book belongs to:

Name: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

This is your Student Handbook for the 2026-2027 school year. You will find an acknowledgement page in the back of this handbook. Parent and student signatures are required at the back of the handbook and return the pages to your homeroom teacher by September 1, 2026.

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Sumter County Schools 2026-2027 System Calendar

July 23-24 & 27-29, 2026	Pre-Planning
July 28, 2026	Open House
July 30, 2026	First Day of School
September 7, 2026	Holiday / Labor Day
September 9, 2026	Progress Reports
September 11, 2026	Early Release / Parent Teacher Conferences
October 1, 2026	End of 1st Nine Weeks
October 2, 2026	W.I.N. Learning Day / Curriculum Planning
October 12-16, 2026	Fall Break
October 21, 2026	Report Cards
November 6, 2026	Early Release / Teacher Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Day
November 11, 2026	Progress Reports
November 20, 2026	Early Release / Curriculum Planning
November 23-27, 2026	Thanksgiving Break
December 17, 2026	Early Release / End of 2nd Nine Weeks / 1st Semester / Teacher Workday
December 18, 2026	Teacher Workday
December 21, 2026 - January 1, 2027	Winter Break
January 4, 2027	Teachers Return / Curriculum Planning
January 5, 2027	Students Return
January 13, 2027	Report Cards
January 18, 2027	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 10, 2027	Progress Reports
February 11, 2027	Early Release / Parent Teacher Conferences
February 12, 2027	Professional Learning Day
February 15, 2027	Mid-Winter Break / Presidents Day
February 26, 2027	Early Release / Teacher Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Day
March 11, 2027	End of 3rd Nine Weeks
March 12, 2027	W.I.N. Learning Day / Curriculum Planning
March 15, 2027	Mid-Spring Break
March 24, 2027	Report Cards
April 5-9, 2027	Spring Break
April 21, 2027	Progress Reports
May 20, 2027	SCHS Baccalaureate
May 21, 2027	Last Day of School / Early Release / Report Cards (K-8)
	End of 4th Nine Weeks / Teacher Workday / SCHS Graduation
May 24-25, 2027	Post-Planning
May 27, 2027	Report Cards (9-12)
May 31, 2027	Memorial Day

REVISED 6-1-2026

SUMTER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION – 100 LEARNING LANE – AMERICUS, GEORGIA 31719 -229-931-8500
The Sumter County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap in any educational program, activities or in employment practices.

Letter from the Principal,



Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year at **Sumter County Elementary School!** I am honored and excited to serve as your principal and partner with our students, families, staff, and community.

Returning to SCES is truly special because this school has been a meaningful part of my journey as an educator. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue serving a place that feels like home while helping create new opportunities, memories, and moments of success for our students.

At SCES, we are committed to building a **culture of excellence** by providing a caring and supportive learning environment where every student is encouraged to grow, lead, and reach their highest potential. Through strong relationships, high expectations, and collaboration between home, school, and community, we will work together to ensure every child succeeds.

Thank you for trusting us with your child's education. I look forward to an amazing year filled with learning, growth, achievement, and Panther pride!

Welcome to the Sumter County Elementary School family—where excellence grows, relationships matter, and every student has the opportunity to shine!

With gratitude and excitement,

Mrs. Tawana Bettis
Principal
Sumter County Elementary School

Letter from the Assistant Principal



Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year at Sumter County Elementary School! It is my honor to serve alongside our incredible staff and community as your Assistant Principal, and I look forward to partnering with each of you to make this year one of meaningful growth and lasting achievement.

At SCES, we are committed to building a culture where every student feels valued, every family feels welcomed, and high expectations are the standard. Together, there is no limit to what our Panthers can accomplish.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. Welcome to the SCES family—where every Panther has the power to soar!

With pride and purpose,

Mrs. Brittany Brock

Assistant Principal

Sumter County Elementary School

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

The purpose of the Student Handbook is to give Sumter County Elementary School students and their parents/guardians an understanding of the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our school. In a case of conflict between Board policy and the provisions of this handbook, the Board policy most recently adopted by the Board will prevail.

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that this document is reviewed annually since policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. These changes will generally supersede the provisions found in the handbook, which will become obsolete by the newly adopted policy. The handbook is not a contract between the school and parents/guardians or students. It can be amended at any time at the discretion of the Sumter County School Board. If policy changes are enacted during the school year, the administration will communicate those changes to students, staff, and parents/guardians.

It is the practice in Sumter County Schools to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and classes offered at all schools regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability.

NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Sumter County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap/disability in education programs, activities, and employment.

PANTHER PRIDE !!!

School Colors: Royal Blue and Gold

School Pride and Spirit: Panthers

Each student should remember that school life is comparable to life in a community. They should practice the qualities of good citizenship that are so necessary in a good community. Students can contribute to a positive school spirit by following the suggestions below:

1. Show loyalty to school functions.
2. Support the school and strive for excellence in scholastic and extracurricular activities.
3. Show courteous and respectful behavior to teachers, officials, adults, and peers.
4. Take pride in the school and school functions.
5. Demonstrate good sportsmanship by being fair, courteous, and generous in all activities including being a good loser and a graceful winner.

PHILOSOPHY OF SCHOOL

In partnership with parents, students, educators, and the community, Sumter County Elementary School (SCES) will strive to ensure academic success and meet the diverse needs of all students by providing a comprehensive, differentiated quality educational program. Innovative research-based instructional strategies will be utilized to provide a safe, nurturing environment and ensure the success of all students. Our philosophy embraces quality instruction for all students that will result in increased academic performance, fewer classroom management problems, greater relevance and application during the instructional process. SCES will implement data driven strategies/interventions and monitor student achievement to provide a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Sumter County Elementary School is to promote a lifelong love of learning and to provide a learning environment that will help all students develop intellectually, socially, morally, emotionally, and physically to their fullest potential.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Sumter County Elementary School is that of promoting self-sufficient students that will graduate college and career-ready.

SCHOOL'S BELIEFS

We at Sumter County Elementary School believe:

- children learn in different ways and can all be successful
- a safe, orderly, and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning
- quality education is a result of a shared partnership among home, school, and community
- all programs should provide opportunities for each student to learn and perform at his/her own rate, as well as through his/her individual learning style
- learning experiences should enable students to develop and understand values and contributions of their own culture and that of others, while developing a positive self-esteem
- each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs
- students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process
- students learn to make appropriate decisions given a supportive and challenging learning environment.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:20 a.m. - 7:40 a.m. Students Arrive, Eat Breakfast, & Complete Morning Work

7:40 a.m. Tardy Bell

7:40 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Daily Instruction (Reading, Math, Language Arts, Writing, Science, & Social Studies)

2:30 p.m. Early Bus Dismissal & Car Riders Transition

2:35 p.m. Regular Bus Dismissal

2:40 p.m. Car Riders Dismissed

*Connections—50 mins

*Recess—15 mins

*Lunch—30 mins



Section I: Curriculum & Instruction

ACCREDITATION

All Sumter County Schools are accredited “with quality” by the Cognia and by the Georgia Accrediting Commission.

COMPUTER USE

Appropriate Use Policy of Sumter County Schools Computers and Network Resources

Students are required to use computer technology for word processing, communication, research, multimedia projects, and testing. Unacceptable use of the computer and/or technology may result in disciplinary actions that vary depending on the severity, repeated violations, applicable Board of Education policies, and administration discretion. It is not acceptable to use this Internet access for any purpose, which violates the laws of the State of Georgia and the United States of America. Users must adhere to all copyright laws.

CURRICULUM

Sumter County Elementary School is aligned to Georgia’s K-12 Standards for English Language Arts and Math. The K-12 Standards provide a consistent framework to prepare students for success in college and/or the 21st century workplace. These standards represent a common sense next step from the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE). Specific objectives are taught each nine-week grading period and are reviewed throughout the year.

Students in second and third grade are taught using the Bookworms Reading & Writing Curriculum. Students receive up to 140 minutes daily in English Language Arts instruction. Various supplemental and intervention materials are incorporated to help students excel in reading.

Georgia’s K-12 Standards for math are taught using Ready Classroom Math Units and GaDOE Learning Plans. A variety of supplemental and intervention materials are used to increase student understanding of foundational math concepts.

Science, social studies, and health objectives are taught through content area reading, class projects and Connections classes. Books, classroom libraries, and Media Center materials are used to teach these essential objectives. Additionally, field trips, classroom guests, and teacher directed computer activities expose children to information about science, social studies, and health.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Progress Report

Sept. 9, 2026
Nov. 11, 2026
Feb. 10, 2027
Apr. 21, 2027

Report Card

Oct. 21, 2026
Jan. 13, 2027
Mar. 24, 2027
May 21, 2027

Early Release

*Sept. 11, 2026
Nov. 20, 2026
Dec. 17, 2026
*Feb. 11, 2027
May 21, 2027

*** Parent - Teacher Conference Day**
W.I.N. Learning Days - Oct. 2, 2026 & Mar. 12, 2027

EVALUATION

A variety of assessments are used to measure student achievement and program effectiveness. State administered tests include Norm Referenced Tests and the Georgia Milestones. Other types of assessments are also used to measure individual and group progress throughout the school year.

FIELD TRIPS

Teachers plan various field trips throughout the year. Students must have written parental/guardian permission to go on these trips. Students who do not bring signed permission forms will remain at school with regular assignments. Students may not be allowed to go on field trips if their behavior does not warrant their participation. Only actively enrolled students may go on field trips because of insurance and safety reasons. Parents/guardians may be asked to chaperone and must pay for a school lunch in advance of the trip or provide their own lunch. Ask your child's teacher for details.

GIFTED EDUCATION

In seeking to provide services for students who have the potential for exceptional academic achievement, Sumter County Schools offers a gifted education program. Students may be nominated to be tested for gifted education services by teachers, parents or guardians, peers, counselors, administrators, self, or others with knowledge of the student's abilities. Students are automatically referred for testing when reviews of achievement test results indicate they have obtained required scores. Students are referred for further testing if they have transferred from an out-of-state school system in which they were enrolled in a gifted education program. Transfer students receiving gifted education services in other Georgia public school systems are eligible for services in Sumter County School upon receipt of documentation of eligibility.

Students can be referred but only become eligible for services by meeting criteria in any three of the four following areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. Students may also become eligible for services by meeting state required mental ability

scores and achievement test scores, although evaluation data must be collected on the student in all four areas. The Sumter County Gifted Committee generally meets in October and again in March to determine if nominated students will be referred for testing or tested for gifted. If you wish to learn more about this program, contact the principal or gifted education teacher at the school.

Students at Sumter County Elementary School are provided with direct gifted services through a combination of resource classroom time and cluster grouping for a minimum of five contact hours with the Gifted Education Specialist.

GRADING

Students' grades are based upon daily work as well as formal assessments. Graded work will be sent home in the weekly Communication Courier and reported during mid-term (Progress Report) and at the end of each nine weeks (Report Card).

HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

We are committed to continually seeking to improve instruction for our students. We hope that as a parent/guardian, you will become involved in our school improvement initiatives as we continue to monitor student achievement and set high expectations. We encourage you to get to know your child's teacher and the class routines and expectations. We are proud of the professional credentials of our teaching staff and will furnish to you, upon request, the professional qualifications of any of your child's classroom teachers. This includes information concerning the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher is certified, the major fields and degrees held by the teacher, and the qualifications of any paraprofessional who provides services to your child.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students shall be permitted to make up work when absences are excused. Work missed due to unexcused absences may be made up at the discretion of the principal or his or her designee. After five (5) days, no excuse is valid. Work missed due to out of school suspensions may not be made up. All make-up work must be completed within five (5) days of the student's return to school.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center is open during the regular school day and immediately before and after school, as well as during lunch hours. Each school welcomes students to the Media Center.

In order to operate in the most effective way to benefit our children, the following procedures have been established:

1. Students will be held accountable for the book they check out.
2. There will be a charge for damaged (beyond use) and lost books.
3. Negligence and/or abuse will be addressed by building administrators.
4. Fees for damaged barcode labels will be \$1.00.

5. All financial obligations to the school should be met prior to the end of the school term.

Please help your child understand that he/she is responsible for the book that he/she checks out. You might encourage him/her to leave the book in his/her book bag while on the bus. You might encourage your child not to loan his/her book to other children.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

School administrators may use a maximum of three instructional days per year to schedule non-instructional activities.

Note:

1. The three days provided for administrative, non-instructional activities are not included in the 10 days allowed under Georgia State Board Policy IED for student absence.
2. No one class period may be missed for school sponsored activities more than 13 times during the 180-day school year (10 maximum for school-sponsored non-instructional activity and three days maximum for administrative non-instructional activity).

The Board may permit additional absences for school-sponsored, non-instructional activities on an individual student basis. In accordance with state policy, the Board will not grant exceptions for groups, clubs, or teams. When considering a request for exception, the Board will require (1) the complete absence record of the student, (2) the written permission of the student's parent(s) indicating an understanding of the absence policy, and (3) the recommendation of the school principal. The student's name and non-instructional activity will be recorded in the Board Minutes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The physical education program is designed to enhance the development of skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to participate in physical activities. Students participate in fitness experiences, modified team sports, basic skills, games, and movement activities. All students are required to participate in physical education activities. Students who are excused from activities for an extended period of time (more than five days) should have a medical doctor's statement to justify this exemption.

PROMOTION/PLACEMENT/RETENTION

****See Complete Promotion and Retention Policy in Appendix B.****

It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education that placement or promotion of a student into a grade, class, or program be based on an assessment of the academic achievement of the student and a determination of the educational setting in which the student is most likely to receive instruction and other services needed in order to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement. The Board further requires that each principal shall annually notify parents or guardians that the promotion, placement

or retention of a student will be based on the academic achievement of the student and criteria established by the Sumter County Board of Education.

Promotion, Placement or Retention for Grades 1-5

- A. Documentation that supports promotion, placement, or retention shall be on file in the student's permanent record.

All of the following (Steps 1 and 2) must be considered for a student to be promoted to the next grade:

1. A student in grades 1-5 must achieve a final grade of 70 or above in reading, language arts, and math courses.
 2. Attendance/Tardies – A student in grades 1-5 must not be absent more than 15 days in a school-year. If a pupil is absent more than 15 days, he/she shall be retained.
 3. The retention decision may be appealed to the principal within 10 working days.
- B. Should a student be recommended for retention in grades 1-5, then:
1. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the retention decision.
 2. Should a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) appeal the retention; the principal shall convene a placement committee to determine the appropriate placement of the student.
 3. A locally developed rubric/and or set of content mastery criteria will be used by the placement committee to determine placement.
 4. To override the recommendation to retain the student requires unanimous support of the placement committee.
 5. When a student is retained, an alternative, developmentally appropriate instructional program shall be provided.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Sumter County Schools provides special education programs for students eligible for services. Information regarding special education programs may be obtained from the school principal and/or central office.

*Special Education students shall meet criteria for promotion or placement as established in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The IEP committee shall serve as the placement committee for these students.

TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Textbooks and other instructional materials are furnished free of charge to all students. We expect all books to be handled properly by the students to avoid unnecessary damage. If a textbook or library book is lost or damaged, a fee will be charged. All financial obligations should be met prior to the end of the school term.

Section II: Parent Involvement

CLASSROOM VISITATION

Visitors are always welcome at Sumter County Elementary School. **All visitors must report to the office and log in the CHECKMATE SYSTEM immediately upon entering the school campus with valid ID.** Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit their children's classes for reasonable periods of time. For the protection of the children, all parents/guardians and visitors must report directly to the office if they are in the building for classroom visitation, delivering items and messages to students, or reporting as a volunteer.

We request that you help us in protecting instructional time by not interrupting the teaching and learning occurring during classroom visits. Classroom visitations are not appropriate times for teacher-parent conferences. **Please do not expect the teacher to conference with you at this time.** A parent-teacher conference is assigned during a teacher's planning time or after school. All classroom visits should be limited to 20 minutes and visitors are asked to follow up with teachers during a conference regarding concerns they may have. During your visit, please refrain from taking pictures of other children. We also ask that you refrain from using your cell phone in the classroom. The regular school program must continue during your visit.

Parents/guardians and other visitors are always welcome and encouraged to visit the school. We invite you to visit your child's classroom and get acquainted with the teachers, however, classroom observations should be limited to 20 minutes. If visitors violate the procedures for visitation, their classroom visiting may be restricted or revoked.

This is subject to change based on health safety of students, faculty and staff

COMMUNICATION COURIERS

Each Wednesday, your child's teacher will send home a folder with your child's work. This folder will also contain messages from the teacher and the school office. It is very important that you check your child's folder. This will keep you aware of your child's progress in class as well as important "happenings" at school.



GRADING SCALE

The grading scale reflects each student's academic performance. The grades are based upon daily work as well as formal evaluations.

A = 90 - 100

B = 80 - 89

C = 70 - 79

F = Below 70

HOMEWORK

Each grade level and each teacher has a homework plan. Please check with your child's teacher for the specifics. Homework is necessary so that students have ample opportunities to practice the skills presented at school each day. It is also important because it allows parents/guardians and children "together time" each day. Generally, children have homework assignments Mondays through Thursdays. * **EVERY night, read to or with your child for 15-20 minutes.**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

In acknowledgement of much reliable research proving that parental/guardian involvement raises the academic achievement of students, Sumter County Elementary School encourages involvement of parents/guardians through many planned activities throughout the year.

PARENT PORTAL

Campus Portal (Parent Portal) is our tool for parents/guardians and students to access instant, online, timely and secure student information: class schedule, assignments, attendance, discipline, course registrations for next year, report cards, and transcripts. Parents of current students are eligible to activate a Parent Portal account, after agreeing to the terms and conditions of use.

PARENT RESOURCE CENTER

Sumter County Elementary School has a Parent Resource Center located in Room 504 and the Media Center. The Parent Resource Center is open to all parents/guardians Monday-Friday from 7:45-3:45. There are many things there (pamphlets, handouts,

brochures, books, games, and manipulatives) that may help you meet the academic needs of your child. For more information, contact our school counselor at (229) 924-7835.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communication is an essential part of the educational program. We feel it is very important for parents/guardians to keep in close contact with their child's teacher concerning his/her progress. Parents/guardians will be asked to attend conferences throughout the school year. Scheduled Early Release/Parent-Teacher Conference days are: September 11, 2026, and February 11, 2027. **Teachers are available for conferences, by appointment, during planning time, and after school.**

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (P.T.O)

A school Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) is organized each year. We encourage all parents/guardians to take an active part in this organization.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are sent home every nine weeks to inform parents/guardians of their child's progress. To keep parents/guardians informed throughout the nine weeks, a Progress Report is sent home in the middle of the grading period.

Progress Reports Dates

Report Cards Dates

September 9, 2026	October 21, 2026
November 11, 2026	January 13, 2027
February 10, 2027	March 24, 2027
April 21, 2027	May 21, 2027

RIGHT TO KNOW PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

Date: **7/1/2026**

Dear Parents/guardians,

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

- Whether the student's teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; is teaching under

emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.

- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher and/ or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the school principal, Mrs. Tawana Bettis at (229) 924-7835.

Sincerely,

Principal

Derecho a conocer las calificaciones profesionales de los maestros y paraprofesionales

Fecha: 7/1/2026

Estimados

padres:

Conforme a los requisitos de la Ley para que todos los alumnos tengan éxito, a la Sumter County Elementary School le gustaría comunicarle que puede solicitar información sobre las calificaciones profesionales del (de los) maestro(s) y/o paraprofesional(es) de su hijo/a. Puede solicitarse la siguiente información:

- Si el maestro del alumno ha cumplido con la calificación y los requisitos para la licencia del Estado para los niveles del grado y las asignaturas en las que el maestro enseña; está enseñando en carácter provisional o de emergencia a través del cual no se exigen los requisitos para la licencia ni la calificación del Estado y está enseñando en el campo de la disciplina de la certificación del maestro.
- Si son para profesionales los que le brindan servicios al alumno y, de ser así, sus calificaciones.

Si desea solicitar información acerca de las calificaciones del maestro y/o paraprofesional de su hijo/a, comuníquese con school principal, Mrs. Tawana Bettis al (229) 924-7835. Saludos cordiales,

Principal

SCHOOL CHOICE

Public School Choice/Intradistrict School Choice

As of June 30, 2012, there will no longer be a Public School Choice transfer option under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as reauthorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) , and local educational agencies (LEAs) will no longer be required to implement Choice or pay for Choice transportation as implemented under the ESEA.

In November 2011, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), submitted to the United States Department of Education (USED), a flexibility waiver requesting flexibility through ten ESEA requirements and their associated, regulatory, administrative and reporting requirements. One of the ten requested waivers directly affect the Public School Choice transportation under ESEA.

Any student that has previously transferred to another school by exercising the ESEA Choice must be allowed to attend that school until they complete the school's highest grade; however, the LEA is no longer required to pay for the students' transportation cost during the duration of the student's attendance at their current CHOICE school. The LEA may continue to pay for CHOICE transportation for students, **only if the LEA chooses to do so.**

However, parents/guardians will still have the Choice transfer option under House Bill 251: The Quality Basic Education Act; Intra-District School Choice. House Bill 251 allows parents/guardians of students enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school to enroll in a school other than the assigned school that is located within the school district, if classroom space is available after the assigned students of that district have been enrolled. Under House Bill 251, transportation will not be paid for by the district. The parent/guardians shall assume the responsibility and cost of transportation of the student to and from the school.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Sebrina Pitts, Federal Programs Director at 229-931-8525 or spitts@sumterschools.org.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Sumter County Board of Education, recognizing the need to improve communication and to improve parent/guardian involvement in the schools, thus establishes local school councils as advisory bodies. It shall be the responsibility of local councils to provide advice and recommendations to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the board.

SCHOOL - PARENT COMPACT

The School-Parent Compact is a document that outlines how parents, students, and the entire school staff will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.

SHOUTPOINT / INFINITE CAMPUS MESSENGER

The Shout Point Telephone system is our automated student/parent/guardian/staff information center. Parents/guardians can be notified of: absences, homework assignments, schedule of school events, invitation to meetings, cancellations of school, and report card announcements. Parents/guardians and students can instantly access information from any touch-tone phone. Messages for individual staff members can also be left on voice mail.

VIDEO / AUDIO TAPING AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Your child may be photographed, audio taped, or videotaped for instructional or public relations purposes. **If you do not wish for your child to be audio taped, videotaped, or photographed, please notify the school in writing.**

VOLUNTEERS

An active group of parents/guardians and community volunteers are needed at the elementary school to assist students and teachers with various activities. Please contact the principal if you wish to volunteer your services to the school. A member of the volunteer committee may contact you to help in our school.

SECTION III: STUDENT SERVICES

COUNSELING

A full-time counselor will provide counseling services at the school. The program is designed to help students build a personal sense of responsibility for their behavior and achievement in the classroom. The counselor will also work with parents, guardians, teachers, and administrators as a resource person, coordinator, and consultant.

GEORGIA MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (GaMTSS)

Georgia Multi-Tiered System of Supports Georgia Multi-Tiered System of Supports (GaMTSS) is a data-driven, multi-level prevention system designed to meet the needs of the whole child by implementing a continuum of tiered supports (see Figure 1). GaMTSS is grounded in the belief that academics, behavior, and wellbeing are interconnected and impact student success. By integrating academics, behavior, and wellbeing data, systems, and practices, teams can align efforts to address barriers to learning and improve outcomes.

GaMTSS provides a structure to use integrated data to drive decisions and a process to select evidence-based practices. As depicted in the Five Essential Components (Figure 2), data-based decision making is at the center of GaMTSS and is an integral part of Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement. This work requires district level infrastructure to align data and practices into one integrated system of supports to improve student outcomes. Please see the Five Essential Components document to learn more about GaMTSS.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENINGS

Students attending Sumter County Schools in grades 2, 4, 6, and 9 will receive hearing and vision screenings administered by certified personnel. Parents/guardians will be notified if screenings indicate a need for further evaluation. Further evaluations are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians should notify the school in writing if they do not wish for their child to participate.

HOSPITAL HOMEBOUND

A hospital homebound program is available for students who are unable to attend school for 10 consecutive days or more due to serious injuries or health reasons. More information is available in the school office.

NUTRITION PROGRAM

All students are served breakfast and lunch free of charge. It is permissible for students to bring their lunches; however, they are encouraged to eat school meals. If your child has food allergies, including milk, please stop by the office to receive the SCS medical form to take to your child's doctor. Once the form is returned, a copy will be given to the nutrition manager and one will be placed in your child's permanent record folder. It is assumed that a child can drink milk unless the medical form is presented. **NO SOFT DRINK CONTAINERS ARE ALLOWED.** For sanitary considerations, the Georgia State School Food Service prohibits the students from sharing food in the cafeteria.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

The Sumter County School District is fortunate to have School Resource Officers assisting with school safety. The officer's role is to teach the children a variety of safety measures including bicycle safety, bus safety, water safety, and stranger danger. The main goal of the program is to teach students that law enforcement officers are here to help.

STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES

Please read the following carefully. Violations of the Acceptable Use Guidelines may cause a student's access privileges to be revoked, disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

Any student who utilizes the computer lab(s) or any computer equipment at the school must be aware of certain policies for use of the equipment and/or facilities. Procedures are in place for the protection of students and equipment. Students will be held accountable for any violation of the following policies (as would be the case for any classroom disciplinary matter). A student and his/her parents/guardian will be responsible for damages and will be liable for costs incurred for service or repair.

Students are only allowed to utilize the computers and network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their teacher. Students are not permitted to explore the configuration of the computer, operating system or network, run programs not on the menu, or attempt to do anything they are not specifically authorized to do.

Students are responsible for ensuring that any USB flash drives or other forms of storage media that they bring in from outside the school are virus free and do not contain any unauthorized or inappropriate files. Students may not bring personal computers or

hand-held computing devices and connect them to the school network or Internet connection (including connecting to wireless access points).

Safety Issues:

1. Any on-line communication should always be at the direction and with the supervision of a teacher.
2. Never provide last name, address, telephone number, or school name online.
3. Never respond to, and always report to the teacher or parent/guardian, any messages that make you feel uncomfortable or that are from an unknown origin.
4. Never send a photo of yourself or anyone else.
5. Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you met on-line.
6. Never open attachments or files from unknown senders.
7. Always report to a teacher any inappropriate sites that you observe being accessed by another user or that you browse to accidentally.

Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Accessing, sending, creating or posting materials or communications that are: Damaging to another person's reputation, Abusive, Obscene, sexually oriented, Threatening or demeaning to another person, Contrary to the school's policy on harassment, Harassing, or Illegal
- B. Using the network for financial gain or advertising.
- C. Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without their consent.
- D. Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages.
- E. Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other system users.
- F. Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bankcard or checking account information.
- G. Using the school's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music or images, or violation of copyright laws.
- H. Downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware or any other unauthorized program on any school's computer or computer system.
- I. Purposely bringing on premises or infecting any school computer or network with a Virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy or provide access to unauthorized data or information.
- J. Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person.
- K. Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account.
- L. Using the school's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended.
- M. Using the school's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with a teacher's directions and generally accepted network etiquette.
- N. Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software.
- O. Attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any network or computer component.

- P. Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by their teacher or inconsistent with school policy.
 - Q. Providing another student with user account information or passwords.
 - R. Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which is not school system property to or in the district's technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel.
 - S. Bringing on premises any disk or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data.
 - T. Downloading or accessing via e-mail or file sharing, any software or programs not specifically authorized by Technology personnel.
 - U. Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies.
 - V. Possessing or accessing information on school property related to "Hacking", or altering, or bypassing network security or policies.
 - W. Participating on message boards or in live chat without teacher direction.
 - X. Students should follow the guidelines below when performing Internet searches.
- Elementary: Students in grades K-5 may visit sites pre-selected by a teacher. Searches may only be done with child-friendly Internet search engines and must be done with teacher supervision.

STUDENT INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

*** Please see Appendix B for our Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy.**

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)

Each school in Sumter County Schools has a Student Support Team (SST), which includes school staff who can provide information and support for students needing help academically, behaviorally, or socially. The purpose of the SST is to improve the delivery of instructional services to students experiencing problems of an academic, behavioral, or social nature in school and to serve as a resource for teachers and other educators in the delivery of these services. The SST may be made up of teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, special education teachers, counselors, school psychometrists, specialists, school social workers, central office personnel, outside agencies, or other appropriate personnel who can assist in the development of alternative classroom strategies and modifications to meet the individual needs of a student experiencing difficulty in school. Teachers, students, parents/guardian, or others working with the student may request a SST meeting. Parents/guardians are invited to attend and participate in all SST meetings. If you have questions about the Student Support Team, call the school and ask to speak with the principal.

Section 504 PLAN

A student is eligible for a 504 plan under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 when he/she is professionally diagnosed as needing special services because he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. If you feel that your child may qualify for these services, please contact the principal.

Any student or parent/guardian or guardian (“grievant”) may request an impartial hearing due to the school system’s actions or inactions regarding your child’s identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant’s failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system’s obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator. The school system’s Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing. The Section 504 Coordinator may be contacted through the school system’s central office. Copies of the 504 Procedural Safeguards and Notice of Rights of Students and Parents/guardians under Section 504 may be found at the system website or may be picked up at the central office or at any of the school offices.

SECTION IV: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ADMISSION TO SCHOOL

All students whose parents or legal guardians reside in or are employed by the Sumter County School District are eligible for admission. Any student enrolling in a Georgia Public School for the first time must present these items:

1. A certified copy of the birth certificate
2. A Georgia Immunization Certificate
3. A Vision/Hearing/Dental Evaluation Certificate
4. Proof that parents/guardians of child live in the county (rent contract, utility bill, phone bill)
5. Social Security Card (School will provide waiver form if necessary)
6. Name of previous school
7. Transcripts or report card from previous school
8. Copy of previous discipline records

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

For safety reasons, all car riders will be assigned a number and will be given a tag with that number for the parent’s/guardian’s car. Duplicate tags for families who may use more than one vehicle will be made available. ***Children must learn their assigned numbers within the first few days of school so that dismissal will run smoothly.*** Adults who come through the line without an assigned tag will be required to come in the office and show proper

identification in order to sign children out. Please remain in your car and in line. Please display the card printed with your child's number on your windshield. A staff member will call for your child (by number) over the radio and your child will be brought to your car.

If you must come in to get your child, you will need to park in a parking space, enter through the front entrance, and report to the office. **A valid driver's license and/or id will be required from the adult picking up the student. During dismissal, parents may not come into the building past the office as this causes too much congestion in the halls and makes it difficult for teachers to keep up with their children at dismissal time. Students will not be called to the office after 2:15 for early dismissal.**

ATTENDANCE (ABSENCES AND EXCUSES) Board Policy JBD

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, unless with written permission of the teacher, principal, or their duly authorized school official. No student shall encourage, urge or counsel other students to violate this policy.

As permitted under state law and State Board of Education policies, students may be excused for the following reasons:

Personally ill and when attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others;

A serious illness or death in their immediate family necessitates absence from school;

Mandated by order of governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, or by a court order;

Celebrating religious holidays;

Conditions render attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety;

Registering to vote or voting, for a period not to exceed one day;

Participates in an activity or program sponsored by 4-H; and,

A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U. S. armed forces or National Guard, and such parent/guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted up to 5 days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent/guardian prior to the parent's/guardian's deployment or during the parent's/guardian's leave.

Students shall be counted present under the following circumstances:

When they are in attendance at least one half of the instructional day;

When serving as pages in the Georgia General Assembly;

Students in foster care shall be counted present when attending court proceedings relating to their foster care; and,

If a Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) Program is established by the Superintendent and the local election superintendent, eligible students shall be counted present for up to two days per school year while volunteering as poll officers during elections.

Excuses for absences shall be furnished in writing, shall be signed by the student's parent/guardian or guardian and shall specifically state the reasons for the absence. Excuses shall be dated and brought to the homeroom teacher within five days after the student's absence. All excuses will be evaluated by the principal or a designee to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. Students shall be permitted to make up work when absences are excused. Work missed due to unexcused absences may be made up at the discretion of the principal or his or her designee. After five (5) days no excuse is valid. Work missed due to out of school suspensions may not be made up. All make-up work must be completed within five (5) days of the student's return to school.

The Superintendent has the authority to affect the procedures and rules to carry out this policy.

High School Attendance Policy

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required activity unless with prior written permission of the principal or designee except for reasons stated in this policy.

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year and continuing for subsequent years, any high school student having more than seven (7) excused, approved or unexcused absences in a class during a school year will receive no credit for that class unless a waiver is granted by the Attendance Committee.

The Attendance Committee is a standing committee composed of five (5) members appointed by the principals and chaired by an administrator. The chair shall vote only in case of a tie.

The Attendance Committee shall use the following guidelines in determining whether to grant a waiver:

- a. If all absences are excused, the student shall be allowed to make up missed work and shall not be denied credit for the semester based on excessive absence.

- b. If any absences are unexcused, the Attendance Committee shall determine whether there exist unusual conditions or extenuating circumstances relating to the student's personal life or family situation which would require that the provisions of this policy be waived. If so, the student shall be allowed to make up missed work and shall not be denied credit for the semester based on excessive absences. If the student has any unexcused absences and there are no unusual conditions or extenuating circumstances relating to the student's personal life or family situation, the student shall not be allowed to receive credit for the semester, even if the student has passing grades.

The Superintendent and/or his or her designee has the authority to enact rules to carry out this policy.

ATTENDANCE LAW

Georgia Code - 20-2-150

(a) Except as otherwise provided by subsection (b) of this Code section, all children and youth who have attained the age of five years by September 1st shall be eligible for enrollment in the appropriate general education programs authorized in this part unless they attain the age of 20 by September 1st or they have received high school diplomas or the equivalent. This shall specifically include students who have reenrolled after dropping out and who are married, parents, or pregnant. Special education students shall also be eligible for enrollment in appropriate education programs through age 21 or until they receive high school or special education diplomas or the equivalent; provided, however, they were enrolled during the preceding school year and had an approved Individualized Education Program (IEP) which indicated that a successive year of enrollment was needed. Other students who have not yet attained age 21 by September 1st or received high school diplomas or the equivalent shall be eligible for enrollment in appropriate education programs, provided they have not dropped out of school for one quarter or more. Each local unit of administration shall have the authority to assign students who are married, parents, or pregnant or who have reenrolled after dropping out one quarter or more to programs of instruction within its regular daytime educational program, provided that a local unit of administration may develop and implement special programs of instruction limited to such students within the regular daytime educational program or, at the option of the student, in an alternative program beyond the regular daytime program; provided, further, that such programs of instruction are designed to enable such students to earn course credit toward receiving high school diplomas. These programs may include instruction in prenatal care and child care. Each local unit of administration shall have the authority to provide alternative programs beyond the regular daytime educational program. Unless otherwise provided by law, the State Board of Education shall have the authority to determine the eligibility of students for enrollment. It is declared to be the policy of this state that general and occupational education be integrated into a comprehensive educational program which will contribute to the total development of the individual.

- (b) A child who was a legal resident of one or more other states for a period of two years immediately prior to moving to this state and who was legally enrolled in a public kindergarten or first grade, or a kindergarten or first grade accredited by a state or regional association, shall be eligible for enrollment in the appropriate general or special education programs authorized in this part if such child will attain the age of five for kindergarten or six for first grade by December 31st and is otherwise qualified.
- (c) All children enrolled for 20 school days or more in the public schools of this state prior to their seventh birthday shall become subject to all of the provisions of this article, the provisions of Code Sections 20-2-690 through 20-2-702, and the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education relating to compulsory school attendance even though they have not attained seven years of age.
- (d) No child or youth shall be admitted to any public school of the state until the parent or guardian provides to the proper school authorities an official copy of that child's social security number which shall be incorporated into the official school records pertaining to that child or youth. Each local unit of administration shall establish and implement a plan for providing the public appropriate notice of the information required of every student under its jurisdiction prior to the beginning of each school year. School authorities may provisionally admit a child for whom an official social security number has not been provided if the parent or guardian completes a postage-paid application for a social security number at the time of enrollment. A parent or guardian who objects to the incorporation of the social security number into the school records of a child may have the requirement waived by signing a statement objecting to the requirement.

Reference

<http://statutes.laws.com/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-6/part-3/20-2-150>

BELONGINGS

Personal belongings such as toys and electronic devices/technology should be left at home. The school cannot assume responsibility for loss of or damage to these items. **Please put your child's name on all school items and clothes.**

BOOK BAGS / BACKPACKS

All students will need a **clear or mesh book bag/backpack**. For safety reasons, **rolling book bags** are **NOT** permitted. During our designated state testing window in April, third grade students will not be allowed to bring a book bag/backpack for one-two weeks.

BUSES

*** Please see Section V: Student Code of Conduct.**

CAR RIDER PROCEDURES

The safety of your children is very important to our faculty and staff. As parents/guardians, it is critical to you as well. We must ask for your cooperation as we implement new policies

regarding car rider arrival and dismissal. With over 500 children, it is necessary to ensure that each child gets to the right place.

CELL PHONES

Electronic communication devices may not be visible or used during the school day. Devices will be confiscated, and the student code of conduct will be followed for violations. ***The School is not responsible for any item that is confiscated, lost or stolen.***

****See the Code of Conduct.****

CHECKOUT PROCEDURES

In our continued efforts to provide the safest environment for the students of Sumter County Schools, we will adhere to the following procedure for checking students out of school. This will ensure that only authorized individuals are checking out students. This is **not** meant to inconvenience parents/guardians, but as a way to **make sure** that children are **safe at all times**.

1. **A picture ID/driver's license is required.** Anyone checking a student out of school **must be** listed on the student's information/contact sheet **and be able to provide proper identification.**
2. **A signed, dated note must accompany your child on the day he/she will leave early.**
3. **If your child can only be picked up by certain individuals, we need to know this immediately.** You must provide the office with a signed letter stating who has permission to pick your child up from school.
4. **No transportation changes will be made after 2:00 nor taken by phone.**
5. **No child can be checked out after 2:15.**

Help us guard important instructional time in your child's day by avoiding irregular departure.

CHILD ABUSE LAW

State law requires all caregivers of children to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Family and Children Services.

CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

School may be closed due to inclement weather or emergency events. Local radio and television stations will carry news and information. Your best source of information is the radio. Telephone lines will be for official emergency use by the school

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

Any child, who has a condition that is contagious such as pink eye, impetigo, head lice, ringworm, etc., must furnish the school with proof of treatment before the child can return to school. If the condition persists, the parent/guardian may be required to obtain written verification from a doctor or the health department stating the child is able to return to school.

DELIVERIES

No deliveries of any kind (balloons, flowers, etc.) will be accepted at Sumter County Elementary School.

DISASTER DRILLS

Monthly disaster drills will be scheduled during the school year and should be respected for the protection of life. Instructions are posted in each room, and teachers will inform students of proper procedures for evacuating the building.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

All electronic devices and toys should be left at home. They will not be allowed in classes or at school events without a permission slip from the office. Any item that disrupts the instructional day should not be brought to school. Those items that interfere with the classroom will be confiscated by the teacher and turned in to the principal. **THE SCHOOL WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE IF ANY OF THE ARTICLES ARE LOST OR STOLEN.**

Students who violate this rule will be subject to disciplinary action.

****See the Code of Conduct.****

IDENTIFICATION (ID) BADGES

ID badges will be issued to every student for the first time at no charge. These badges will be used to check out books from the Media Center. They will also be used to obtain breakfast and lunch. All students are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of their badges and lanyards. Damaged and lost badges will be replaced for a fee of \$3.00.

ILLNESSES/ACCIDENTS

If your child is injured or is ill at school, we will make him/her comfortable and then call you immediately. If you cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact the emergency number you listed on the student information form. If no one can be reached in a critical emergency, the child will be transported to the hospital. ***Please be sure to keep all phone numbers up-to-date.**

IMMUNIZATIONS

Georgia Law requires children attending school (Pre-Kindergarten - 12th grade) to be age appropriately immunized with all the required vaccines at the time of first entry in school. A new entrant is a child entering a school in Georgia for the first time or entering after having been absent from a Georgia school for more than 12 months or one school year. All students, regardless of grade and including foreign exchange students, must have the Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3231 immunization certificate marked "Complete for School" unless any of the following situations exist:

1. Medical exemption: in this case the 3231 has an expiration date no more than 12 months from date of issue. There must be an annual review of the medical exemption and the certificate must be reissued with or without indication of the medical exemption.

2. Religious exemption: For a child to be exempt from immunization on religious grounds, the parent or guardian must furnish the school with a notarized statement and it must meet the following criteria: (A) State that their religious beliefs conflict with immunization requirements; (B) the statement must be signed and dated by the parent(s)/guardian(s); (C) The statement must be notarized, dated, and signed by a Notary Public; (D) The statement should be submitted to the school in lieu of an immunization certificate (form 3231); (E) The statement does not expire.
3. Waiver of 30 calendar days granted to new entrants by the superintendent or designee.
4. Waiver of 90 calendar days may be granted by the superintendent or designee to students entering Georgia public schools from out of state, if documentation is on file from the county health department or a medical doctor stating that an immunization sequence has been started and can be completed within the 90-day waiver period.
5. Immunizations are required for diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis B, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chicken pox). Protection against each of these diseases must be addressed on the form 3231. The form can be computer generated and if the child attends more than one school, an original or a photocopy of the form must be submitted to the second school.

MEDICATION/NURSE

All Sumter County Schools are privileged to have a registered school nurse or nurse technician on-site. The nurse will be available to dispense medicine and take care of other student needs. The school nurse will keep a written daily report of any medicine administered. Medication will be administered under the following conditions:

Medication prescribed by a physician:

- ❖ must be in original container
- ❖ must contain instructions from doctor about dosage
- ❖ must be accompanied by written parental request for administration of medicine

Nonprescription Medication:

- ❖ Nonprescription medication shall not be given except with written permission from the parent or guardian. **The parent must send the medication in the original container or package.** Do not send medicine wrapped in plastic, paper towels, or foil.

MORNING PROCEDURES

Children may not arrive at school before 7:20 a.m. Staff members will be on duty from **7:20 a.m. until 7:40 a.m.** to assist your child in exiting from the car and getting safely to the sidewalk. Children should be dropped off at the front of the building in the right-hand lane **only** when a staff member is present to get them from the car. Please pull up to the mailbox to keep traffic from spilling over in the road. The left lane is for ongoing traffic. Please do

not stop in the left lane. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD CHILDREN BE DROPPED OFF ON/IN THE ROAD, AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SIDEWALK, IN THE PARKING LOT, OR IN THE BACK OF THE SCHOOL. If you wish to walk your child into the building, please *park* in a parking space in the front of the school and enter through the main entrance.**

PLEDGE

Each student attending Sumter County Schools shall be afforded an opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America during each school day. The Superintendent or designee shall establish a time and manner for the recitation of the Pledge in each school. The procedure shall be written in the faculty handbook for distribution to each teacher in the district.

RETURNED CHECKS

Any checks returned by the bank for nonpayment will have an added surcharge of \$12.00 to cover required bank fees. All financial obligations to the school should be met prior to the end of the school term.

SCHOOL HOURS

Our school hours are from **7:20 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.** daily. **Instruction begins promptly at 7:40 a.m. each day. Students who arrive after 7:40 a.m. are tardy.** Students should arrive on time and remain in class until the end of the day each day unless they have a doctor's appointment. **Car riders who wish to have breakfast at school should arrive by 7:40 a.m.**

Attendance: Please phone the school between 7:10 a.m. and 8:10 a.m. on any day your child must be absent. **Please be sure to send a doctor's excuse for each absence. We must receive the excuses *WITHIN 5 DAYS* after the student returns to school; otherwise, we cannot accept them.**

Note: School workers are on duty at **7:20 a.m.** each morning. ***Car riders should not be dropped off prior to that time, as there are no adults to supervise them. Afternoon car riders will be dismissed at 2:40 p.m. and should be picked up by 3:15 p.m.***

SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT

Sumter County Schools and the Georgia Department of Education support a positive approach to behavior that uses proactive strategies to create a safe school climate that promotes dignity, creates authentic student engagement, increases instructional time, and improves student achievement for all students.

At times, students exhibit behaviors which place themselves or others in imminent danger. In order to protect the safety of students and staff, the Georgia State Board of Education has adopted rule 160-5-1-.35: Seclusion and Restraint for all Students, which prohibits the

use of seclusion (as defined in that rule) and limits the use of restraint to those situations in which students are a danger to themselves or others.

STUDENT SURVEYS

Students will occasionally be asked to participate in local and state surveys. If you do not wish for your child to participate, please send a dated, written statement to the principal.



STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students, at all times, should observe the rules governing body cleanliness, neatness of appearance, and good grooming. T-shirts with improper suggestions or advertising of any alcoholic drink, or illegal substance will not be allowed at school. When, in the opinion of administration or teacher, a pupil is inappropriately dressed for school, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be called for proper school attire. Though pupils have the right to choose individual dress, the school has the responsibility to see that the attire is not immodest or offensive to anyone.

The following rules must be adhered to by all students:

Student Dress Code Rules

- ★ Students must wear **shoes at all times**. Flip-flops, house/bedroom shoes, and stiletto high heels are not allowed. Some classes may require closed-toe shoes for safety. No slides
- ★ Clothing may **not display profanity, alcohol, drugs, marijuana, or inappropriate or suggestive images or language**.
- ★ **Hats, caps, sun visors, bandanas, do-rags, wave caps, sweatbands, stocking caps, or other headgear (including bonnets)** are not allowed inside the school building.
- ★ **Hair accessories** such as combs, rakes, picks, or rat-tail combs may not be worn in the hair. Students may not carry combs or brushes in their hands during the school day.
- ★ **Pants must be worn at the waist** and should not sag, be rolled up, tucked into socks or shoes, or secured with rubber bands. Belts should not hang from pants or shorts.
- ★ **Clothing must not have holes above the knee that expose skin**. Holes must be at the knee or below.
- ★ Clothing may **not expose the midriff, back, cleavage, buttocks, or undergarments**. Proper undergarments must be worn at all times. No sleepwear may be worn to school.

- ★ **Tank tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti straps, tube tops, and mesh/net shirts** are not allowed unless worn with an acceptable shirt with sleeves.
- ★ **Sundresses must be worn with a jacket or appropriate shirt.**
- ★ **No writing across the buttocks** of pants or shorts.
- ★ **Oversized clothing and oversized jewelry** are not allowed. Earrings must not be oversized, and necklaces with medallions larger than one inch are prohibited.
- ★ **Sunglasses may not be worn inside the building.**
- ★ **No towels, bandanas, or other items may hang from pockets.**
- ★ Joggers are allowed.
- ★ The **administration has final discretion** in determining whether student attire is appropriate and does not disrupt the educational environment.

Disciplinary actions are as follows:

1st Offense: Sequester in ISI until parents/guardians are called/clothes are changed & letter will be sent home

2nd Offense: Sequester in ISS the rest of the day & parent/guardian conference prior to returning from ISS

3rd Offense: Sequester in ISS the rest of the day & 2 days after school detention

4th Offense: 1 to 3 days ISS (4th and subsequent)

TARDIES

Children arriving after 7:40 a.m. will be counted tardy *and* MUST BE escorted into the building by a parent/guardian to get a tardy slip. Parents/guardians are asked to park in a parking space to avoid blocking traffic in the driveway. ***Breakfast will be available until 7:45 a.m.***

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

If you wish for your child to ride a different bus home or to be dropped off at a different point in the afternoon, you **must** send a signed, dated note to school with a phone number where you can be contacted. Transportation changes **WILL NOT** be taken over the phone. **Please do not call the school requesting that your child be placed on a different bus, dropped off at a different point, or changed to be a bus/car rider.** Bus drivers are not allowed to transport children who are not on their regular route or to drop off a child at any other place than their regular bus stop without written permission from a parent/guardian.

VISITORS

Visitors are welcome. All visitors must report to the office and sign in upon entering the school campus. ***A driver's license must be presented at sign-in.*** We request that all visitors refrain from talking on their cell phone while in the classroom.

WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE

In compliance with White House Executive Order 12731, Sumter County Schools provides all employees and vendors with confidential channels to report suspicious activities. Sumter County Schools has established a system for reporting and investigating suspicious activities.

DEFINITIONS

Fraud - the intentional deception perpetrated by an individual or individuals, or an organization or organizations, either internal or external to Sumter County Schools that could result in a tangible or intangible benefit to themselves, others, or the locality or could cause detriment to others or the locality. Fraud includes a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, by false or misleading statements, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, which deceives and is intended to deceive.

Waste -the intentional or unintentional, thoughtless or careless expenditure, consumption, mismanagement, use or squandering of resources owned or operated by the locality to the detriment or potential detriment of the locality. Waste also includes incurring unnecessary costs because of inefficient or ineffective practices, systems, or controls.

Abuse - the excessive or improper use of something, or the employment of something in a manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for its use; the intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, maltreatment, or misuse of resources owned or operated by the locality: or extravagant or excessive use so as to abuse one's position or authority.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

The Sumter County Board of Education thoroughly and expeditiously investigates any reported cases of suspected fraud, waste, or abuse of any kind to determine if disciplinary, financial recovery and/or criminal action should be taken.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All reports of suspected fraud, waste, or abuse must be handled under the strictest confidentiality. Only those directly involved in the investigation should be given information. Informants may remain anonymous but should be encouraged to cooperate with the investigators and should provide as much detail and evidence of alleged fraudulent acts as possible.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Anyone suspecting fraud, waste or abuse concerning federal, state or local programs should report their concerns to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee of the Sumter County Board of Education at 100 Learning Lane, Americus, GA 31719, or call (229) 931-8500.

2. Any employee with Sumter County Board of Education (temporary staff, full-time staff, and contractors) who receives a report of suspected fraudulent activity must report this information within the next business day. The employee is to contact the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee at (229) 931-8500. Employees have the responsibility to report suspected fraud, waste or abuse. All reports can be made in confidence.
3. The Sumter County Board of Education or its designees shall conduct investigations of employees, providers, contractors, or vendors against which reports of suspicious activity are made. All investigations shall be thorough and complete in nature and shall occur in a prompt manner after the report is received.
4. If necessary, the person reporting the fraudulent activity will be contacted for additional information.
5. Periodic communication through meetings should emphasize the responsibilities and channels to report suspected fraud, waste or abuse.
6. A hard copy of these Fraud, Waste, or Abuse Administrative Regulations and Code of Ethics shall be disseminated to all employees at the beginning of each school year and will sign attesting that he/she has received the information and understands its contents, and be posted in a visible location at all schools and facilities and on the Sumter County Schools website (www.sumterschools.org) on the Federal Programs Web Page.
7. A report shall be made to the Sumter County Board of Education if fraud, waste, or abuse is suspected of or by the Superintendent.

WITHDRAWALS

Parents/guardians should notify the school in advance if a student is withdrawing or transferring to another school. The office will provide required documents upon notification.

SECTION V: Student Code of Conduct

Board Policy Descriptor Code: JCDA

STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE

It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education that each school within this school district shall develop and implement age-appropriate student codes of conduct designed to improve the student learning environment and which will comply with state law and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.15. Each code of conduct shall include, at a minimum, the requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-4-8-.15, STUDENT DISCIPLINE.

Each school shall involve parents in developing and updating student codes of conduct. Each code shall require disciplinary action for each infraction of the code. All student codes of conduct shall be submitted to the board for approval.

The student code of conduct shall be distributed to each student and the student's parents or guardians during the first week of school and upon enrollment of each new student. The parents shall be requested to sign an acknowledgment of the receipt of the code of conduct and return promptly the acknowledgment to the school. The student code of conduct shall be available in the school office and each classroom.

Sumter County Schools Date Adopted: 9/12/2002 Last Revised: 4/11/2013

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

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

All consequences for offenses listed below are minimum consequences. Depending on the severity of the situation, school officials may apply stricter measures. An administrator has the discretion to determine the offense and the appropriateness of the consequence assigned. Misbehavior governed by the code may occur during school hours, outside school hours, on school grounds or campus, off school grounds or campus, at school-sponsored activities whether on or off school grounds/campus, and/or on school-sponsored transportation.

Each time a student is given In-School **Intervention** or Out-School Suspension the parent(s)/guardian(s) must meet with a member of the school administration before the student may return to his/her regular classes.

Students who repeatedly violate the various rules and regulations may be subject to disciplinary action more severe than the consequences specified for the individual offenses committed, up to and including suspension to a formal hearing and possible long-term suspension or expulsion.

School **administrators** are authorized to take disciplinary action for misconduct which occurs:

- On the school grounds during or immediately before or immediately after school hours;
- On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- Off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event;

- For incidents that cause a disruption of the functioning of the school;
Within a school safety zone.

Authority to take disciplinary action also extends to any off-campus non-school related actions by students, at any time of the year, which has a direct and immediate impact on school discipline, the educational function of the school, or the welfare of students and staff. A student who has committed a criminal act while off campus is subject to disciplinary action and may be excluded from school. Such an act could, but is not limited to, a felony, a delinquent act which would be considered to be a felony if committed by an adult, an assault misconduct of a serious nature. A student whose presence on school property may endanger the welfare and/or safety of other students or staff, whose presence may cause substantial disruption at school, is also subject to in-school intervention, and assignment to an alternative education.

The Superintendent fully supports the authority of principals and teachers in the school system to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to provisions of state law. It is the preferred policy of the board that disruptive students are placed in alternative education settings in lieu of being suspended or expelled.

AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER

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

A teacher shall remove a student from class and send to a designated area under the direction of the principal for recommended placement in an alternative education program or for expulsion as appropriate, a student who engages in conduct described in Levels III and IV.

LEVEL III and IV DESCRIPTORS

Level III discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature, serious disruptions of the school environment, threats to health, safety, or property, and other acts of serious misconduct. These offenses must be reported to the principal. Offenses that threaten

the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from the school and/or school-sponsored activities for up to three school days, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent(s)/guardian(s) participation in a conference with the principal is an element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided.

Level IV discipline offenses represent the most serious acts of misconduct. These offenses must be immediately reported to the principal. These violations are so serious that they may require use of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. Such acts may also result in criminal penalties being imposed. Any misconduct that threatens the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from the school and/or school-sponsored activities for up to three school days, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent(s)/guardian(s) participation in a conference with the principal is an element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given if not already provided.

The teacher shall file a report of such removal with the principal by the end of the school day on which such removal occurs or at the beginning of the next school day: that describes the student's behavior.

By no later than the close of school on the day following removal, the principal shall discuss the matter with the teacher and student and give the student oral or written notice of the reason(s) for which the student was removed from class. If the student denies engaging in such conduct, the principal shall explain the evidence against the student and offer the student an opportunity to present the student's version of what happened.

If the principal seeks to return the student to the teacher's class, and the teacher gives his/her consent, the student shall be returned to class, and the principal may take such additional action to discipline the student as may be warranted.

If the teacher refuses to accept the student back in his/her class, the principal shall determine an appropriate temporary placement for the student and convene a meeting of a school placement review committee.

At the conclusion of the conference, the principal shall send to the student's parent/guardian a copy of the report filed by the teacher and written notification that:

- 1.the student was removed from class,
- 2.the placement of the student, whether back in class or in a temporary placement pending review by the school placement review committee,
- 3.any additional disciplinary action imposed by the principal, and information

regarding how the student's parents/guardians may contact the principal.

An appropriate temporary placement for the student shall be a placement that, in the judgment of the principal:

1. provides the least interruption to the student's education, and
2. reflects other relevant factors, including, but not limited to, the severity of the behavior that was the basis for the removal
3. the student's behavioral history
4. the student's need for support services, and
5. the available education settings.

The student shall not be returned to the class of the teacher who removed him/her, as an appropriate temporary placement, unless the teacher gives his/her consent. The temporary placement shall be in effect from the time of student removal until the decision of the school placement review committee is issued or, if applicable, a placement determination is made.

The school placement review committee shall convene by the end of the second day following the student removal by the teacher and shall issue a decision in writing by the end of the third school day following such removal by the teacher. The sole function and authority of the placement review committee shall be to determine whether or not the student shall be returned to the teacher's classroom.

If a placement review committee decides to return a student to class, the principal shall implement the decision, and may, after considering the use of any appropriate student support services, take any of the following actions:

- Place the student in ISI,
- Impose out-of-school suspension for not more than ten school days, including any time during which the student was subject to out-of-school suspension after his/her removal from class, or ; make another disciplinary decision/recommendation consistent with local board policy his/her removal from class, or; make another disciplinary decision/recommendation consistent with local board policy.
- If a placement review committee decides not to return a student to class, the principal shall implement the decision and after considering the use of any appropriate student support services may:
 - Place the student in another classroom, ISI or an alternative education program,
 - Impose out-of-school suspension for not more than (10) school days, including any time during which the student was subject to out-of school suspension as a temporary placement
 - May make another placement or disciplinary decision or recommendation consistent with local board policy; or
 - May implement or recommend any appropriate combination of the above and return the student to the class from which he/she was removed upon the completion of a disciplinary or placement action.

Within one day of taking action on the decision of the placement review committee, the principal shall:

- Send written notification of the action to the teacher and the parents/guardians of the student
- Make a reasonable attempt to confirm that the written notification has been received by the student's parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians of a student removed from class who has been determined to be a chronic disciplinary problem student may be required to participate in conferences requested by the principal. Refusal by a parent or guardian to participate in such a conference will subject the parent/guardian to an application to the Juvenile Court of Sumter County for an order to attend such conferences and/or participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior or both.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

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

1. Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
2. Loss of Privileges
3. Isolation or Time Out
4. Removal from Class or Activity
5. Notification of Parents/Guardians
6. Parent Conference with Restorative Practices/Sessions
7. Corporal Punishment
8. Detention - After school (ASD) or Lunch
9. In School Intervention (ISI)
10. Placement in an Alternative Education Program
11. Short-term Suspension
12. Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
13. Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus

Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that

certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The School will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Board of Education policies. If a student who has been placed on a behavior contract violates the code of conduct with any infraction, the student may be referred to a tribunal for possible placement at alternative school or expulsion.

Parents/Guardians or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents/guardians or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved also by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy.

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

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

Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16, UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS.

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OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES
DISCIPLINE RULES AND CONSEQUENCES
Disciplinary Procedures

Sumter County Elementary School follows a progressive discipline plan. Students are given ample opportunities to correct the disruptive behavior. After the teacher has dealt with the behavior, if a student continues the behavior, the student will be written up on a “discipline referral form.” The school administration will then implement the “CODE of Conduct” consequences listed on the following pages.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty or academic misconduct is any type of cheating that occurs in relation to a formal academic exercise. It can include:

ACTS OF BIGOTRY

While on school grounds or during school activities engaging in any verbal or physical acts of bigotry whether observed, overheard, or known to be fact, by a member of the school faculty

AGGRESSIVE MISBEHAVIORS/HORSEPLAY

Severe behavior putting one’s own or others’ safety at risk, continued disruption of teaching; refusal to leave the room, continued or severe aggression, threat of severe aggression. This includes aggressive physical play, such as wrestling, slap boxing, play fighting, etc.

ALCOHOL

A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any drug, alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, or intoxicant of any kind. *(Influence is defined as noticeably impaired behavior and/or obvious physical symptoms.)*

A STUDENT WHO VIOLATES THIS RULE WILL FACE SUSPENSION FROM ALL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ANY ELECTED/APPOINTED STUDENT BODY OFFICE FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR. *(In every instance, law enforcement will be notified.)*

ARSON

Unlawful and intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary device.

ASSAULT AND/OR BATTERY ON SCHOOL EMPLOYEE

Engaging in an assault on and/or battery of any school employee on or off school property, if school-related. This includes touching, striking, pushing, or threatening the person, bodily or psychologically, and/or the property of any school system employee. (GA Code 20-2753) Code Section (20-2-751.6) Relating to suspension policy for students committing acts of physical violence resulting in injury to teachers would be amended in: Subsection (a), (b), (c) to permit local boards to use disciplinary hearing officers or panels, in addition to tribunals, to hear cases involving students committing acts of physical violence resulting in injury to teachers.

BEING IN AN UNAUTHORIZED AREA

Being in areas designated as unauthorized ****Students are not to be in unauthorized areas of the school without written permission.*

BREAKING AND ENTERING-BURGLARY

Unlawful entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a crime.

BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING (SOCIAL MEDIA)

Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm or emotional distress caused by repeated teasing, taunting, joking, name calling, etc. This includes cyberbullying, text message/chat threats, pictures/videos, and other electronic threats through social media platforms. Instances may be referred to law enforcement or juvenile authorities.

CAMPUS DISTURBANCE/DISORDERLY CONDUCT

Causing substantial disruption of learning opportunities, the normal operating procedure of the school, and/or threatening the safety of other students

Substantial disruption may lead to law enforcement referral

Georgia Code Section 20-2-1181 states that “it shall be unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop as established by local school boards of education. Any person violating this Code Section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.”

CLASSROOM DISTURBANCE

Disrupting the learning environment.

CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES/BANNED OBJECTS

To protect instructional time and minimize distractions of the educational setting, electronic devices will not be allowed at school. Only school-issued or approved

devices necessary for student learning will be allowed to be used during the school day from arrival to departure time.

The following personal electronic devices (PEDs) are not allowed to be used: Cell phones, AirPod/like devices, IPAD/like devices, bluetooth headphones/earphones, smartwatches, smart glasses, toys, games, or other unapproved electronic communication devices. Any material stored or saved on confiscated electronic devices/cell phones may be searched by school officials. ALL CONFISCATED DEVICES that are not used for investigative purposes or picked up by a parent/guardian, WILL BE DISCARDED AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Permitted Use: Devices may still be used under specific circumstances, like for students with IEPs or medical needs, or for emergency communication protocols.

Sumter County Elementary School will assume NO LIABILITY for lost or stolen phones and/or electronic devices. No searches will be conducted for any electronics reported stolen or lost.

CONFISCATED ITEMS MAY ONLY BE PICKED UP BY A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN. ALL UNCLAIMED CONFISCATED DEVICES WILL BE DISCARDED AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR ON JUNE 30. **A parent or guardian must come to the school between 3:15 PM and 3:45 PM.**

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used during the school day. No recording of any activities is allowed.

COMPUTER/LAPTOP/IPAD TRESPASS

Unauthorized use of a computer, laptop, Ipad, computer network, or data Penalty at the discretion of the administrator which may include, but is not limited to loss of computer privilege, ISI, suspension, suspension for a tribunal hearing, and/or referral to law enforcement officials, or juvenile authorities. Immediate restitution for any damages is required. **(See Internet Usage Policy)**

DISOBEDIENCE, DISRESPECT, MISCONDUCT, AND/OR INSUBORDINATION

(Following Directions, Refusal to obey faculty, Inappropriate Behavior, Interruption Instruction)

Acting in a rude, disobedient, disrespectful and/or insubordinate manner and/or refusing

to identify oneself correctly upon request. Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts.

DRUGS: Drug Related, Drugs, Pseudo Drugs

Selling of or attempting to sell, distribution of, possession of, use of drugs or under the influence of drugs on school property or at a school function *(illegal drugs or substances represented to be illegal drugs, inhalants, and/or drug paraphernalia such as rolling papers, roach clips, pipes, etc.) Mere possession of inhalants such as glue, white-out, and/or rubber cement does not constitute a violation of this policy. It is a violation of this offense for a student to possess any form of CBD product with or without THC at school, on the school bus, or at a school sponsored activity.

Georgia law, 16-12-191, provides that persons may be in possession of *medical* marijuana under limited circumstances defined in the law. Because of **federal law** parents should make other arrangements for administering medical marijuana **at school** and students should not possess the medical marijuana at school. Parents must administer medical marijuana off campus to the student.

Federal law has NOT changed and possession of any form of marijuana is illegal. (*Influence is defined as noticeably impaired behavior and/or obvious physical symptoms.*)

FIGHTING/BATTERY

It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to engage in fighting. Fighting is a serious offense. Students may be charged with affray, disruption of public school, battery, and/or assault.

(Based on investigation and administrative discretion. **Regardless of who throws the first blow.**)

NOTE: If a school system employee is hit/injured, whether intentionally or not, during the process of breaking up a fight, the student may receive up to a ten-day suspension. In addition the student may be referred to a formal hearing.

NOTE: A legal complaint may be filed with the proper law enforcement officials at the discretion of the administration.

FOOD ITEMS * (Gum, candy, soft drinks, junk food) (Unless school-approved)

Unauthorized possessing/chewing/eating/selling/buying of identified food items

FORGERY/FALSE SIGNATURES/FORGED PASSES (False info, False signature)

Forging checks, school or parent/guardian documents, hall passes, absence or check out excuses, etc. **Possible referral to law enforcement.**

GAMBLING

Participating in illegal gambling, games of chance or possession of illegal gambling devices such as dice. Gambling on school property or while attending an activity under school supervision is not allowed.

HOMICIDE

Murder and non-negligent manslaughter, killing of one human being by another, killing a person through negligence.

INAPPROPRIATE DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Displaying inappropriate expressions of affection such as kissing, holding hands, embracing, and petting, etc., while at school or at any school sponsored activity.

INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Making sexual advances, requesting sexual favors or being involved in sexual conduct of any nature without force at school or any of its functions. *(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement **and/or tribunal** based on the severity of the student's actions.)

INDECENT EXPOSURE

Violating the school's dress code and/or removing one's own or another's clothing or acts which offend against commonly recognized standards of good taste.

Indecent exposure is defined as removing clothing items, pulling down pants, wearing pants significantly below the waistline, or unzipping pants in public. Unzipping pants and/or pulling them down while wearing shorts underneath will be treated as indecent exposure.

KIDNAPPING

Unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will, or of a minor without the consent of his/her custodial parents or legal guardian.

LEAVING CAMPUS WITHOUT PERMISSION OR SKIPPING

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school function during school hours except for illness or other providential cause, nor shall any student encourage, urge or counsel other students to violate this rule. Truancy, skipping class or required in-school activity out of class without valid permission, being in areas designated as unauthorized (students are not to be in unauthorized areas of the school without written permission.) and/or leaving campus without permission constitute skipping.

MISBEHAVIOR IN IN-SCHOOL INTERVENTION (ISI)/SUSPENSION (ISS)

Acting in a rude, disobedient, disrespectful, and/or insubordinate manner, causing a disruption, use of profanity, and/or failure to follow rules while in ISI.

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT

Theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle (car, truck, motorcycle, RV, dune buggy, ATV, or anything that is self-propelled.)

NON-SANCTIONED GROUP ACTIVITIES (GANG RELATED ACTIVITIES)

Participating in an activity related to non-sanctioned groups while on school premises or at a school function. Gangs are herein described as clubs, groups, or organizations of limited membership, which are known to Sumter County Schools through its personal intelligence or through information furnished through local law enforcement officials, to advocate, practice, engage or participate in unlawful acts such as intimidation, violence, or destruction to property. Gangs shall not be permitted on school premises or in school facilities, or to conduct any activities, meetings, or gatherings on or about school facilities, premises, or property at any time. The presence of such gangs is a disruption to the education process and a threat to the safety and well-being of the students and faculties of Sumter County Schools. Membership in or affiliation with gangs as defined above shall not be permitted. Wearing of any insignia, and/or uniforms, or other means of any gang identification, or using or making any signs, signals, or other means of gang communication or identification by any students or non-student visiting on the premises of any school facility shall not be permitted.

There is zero tolerance in Sumter County Schools for non-sanctioned group activities which are detrimental to a healthy and safe school environment.

- No colors, bandanas, articles of clothing, or paraphernalia which promote or identify with a non-sanctioned group is acceptable. No extremes in dress and/or grooming will be permitted.
- No recruiting, intimidating, initiating, or hazing will be permitted on school property and/or at school related functions.
- No signs, symbols, gestures, songs, drawings, or writings which show an allegiance or affiliation with non-sanctioned groups will be permitted. Tattoos, body carvings showing allegiance or affiliation with non-sanctioned groups must be covered at all times.
- Any items found on school property which display signs, symbols, gestures, songs, drawings or writings which show allegiance or affiliation with a non-sanctioned group will be confiscated by school officials and turned over to law enforcement agencies.
- No student shall threaten to commit, or actually commit, any crime of violence or damage property with the purpose of terrorizing another; cause the

evacuation of a building, place of assembly, school bus, or other school facility, or otherwise disrupt the orderly operation of any activity on any school campus or school property in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or disruption.

- Any student who urges, encourages, counsels, furthers, promotes, assists, causes, advises, procures, or abets any other students to violate any section or paragraph of this policy shall be deemed to have violated this policy.

OBSCENITY

Using profane, vulgar, and/or obscene words or gestures, or improper dress, possession of pornographic material.

POSSESSION AND/OR USE OF EXPLOSIVE COMPOUNDS

(LIGHTER/MATCHES)

Carrying, possessing or having under such person's control while at school building, school function, on school property, on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school, ammunition of any type or explosive compound, (matches, lighter, explosives, fireworks, flammable incendiary devices). (GA Code OCGA. 16-11-127.1) Punishment is subject to administrative discretion based on the severity of the offense.

PRANKS/UNAPPROVED OBJECTS

Causing substantial disruption of learning opportunities, the normal operating procedure of the school, and/or threatening the safety of other students.

Destroying, vandalizing of, and/or threatening to destroy public or private property located on school premises or at a school function. (This may include such actions as use of lasers, dangerous toys, bombs, explosive devices, setting fires, pulling or vandalizing fire alarms, calling 911, the deliberate destruction or defacement of school property.)

(Events that cause a classroom/campus disturbance may result in an additional consequence.)

Substantial disruption may lead to law enforcement referral

Georgia Code Section 20-2-1181 states that "it shall be unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop as established by local school boards of education. Any person violating this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature."

ROBBERY

Taking or attempting to take anything of value that is owned by another person or organization, under confrontational circumstances by force, threat, or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

SEXUAL BATTERY

Forcible sexual union against a person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will when the victim is incapable of giving consent because of age or mental incapacity, (Includes rape, attempted rape, fondling, indecent liberties, child molestation).

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment means unwanted sexually oriented words or actions that hurt or humiliate people. It causes tension for others. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or any member of the district staff to harass a student through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined below. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the school staff to a student or when made by any student to another student or system employee constitutes sexual harassment when: Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's education. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual; or Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment. Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal harassment or abuse
- Pressure for sexual activity
- Repeated remarks to a person with
- Sexual or demeaning implications
- Unwelcome touching
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.
- Sexual harassment is a kind of discrimination. It means that someone is treated differently because of his or her sex. It is behavior or words that:
 - are directed at a person because of his or her sex
 - are uninvited, unwanted, and unwelcome
 - cause a person to feel uncomfortable or offended
 - create an environment that makes learning difficult
 - are pervasive and ongoing.

Any person who alleges sexual harassment by a staff member or student in the school district may complain directly to a principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor, or other individual to receive such complaints. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future employment, grades, or job assignments. The right to

confidentiality, both of the complaint and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the Board's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

All allegations of sexual harassment shall be fully investigated, and immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated. Appropriate documentation shall be maintained on all allegations of sexual harassment. A substantiated charge against an employee shall subject such person to disciplinary action, including discharge. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject that student to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Additionally, in all cases a report of sexual harassment will be reported to the system's Title IX coordinator. It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the district to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

A student shall not engage in physical sexual activity on school property or at school sponsored events. A student shall not be in possession of any asexually oriented device or material.

Parents/Guardians and students should be aware of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct that can include criminal charges and the student being tried as an adult. Sexual offenses are prohibited with and against members of the same sex as well as members of the opposite sex. Students may not engage in consensual sexual acts on school grounds or at a school activity, function, or event whether on or off school grounds. Sexual Misconduct is defined as amorous kissing or similar displays of affection; any form of sexual activity; or exposing one's intimate body parts or "mooning" to another student or adult. A student may be charged with Sexual Battery for intentionally making physical contact with the intimate parts of another person without the consent of that person. A student may be charged with Sexual Molestation for doing any immoral or indecent act to or in the presence of another person, without that person's consent, with the intent to arouse or satisfy the sexual desires of either the student or the other person. This includes forcing another person to make physical contact with the student's intimate body parts. Any student (or parent/guardian or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of abuse, sexual misconduct, or other inappropriate behavior is urged to immediately make a report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

What Teenagers Need to Know About Sex and the Law?

If you are 18, you are considered to be an adult even if you are still in high school. Anyone younger than 18 is a “minor.”

1. “Sexting” is a crime. You and your friends can be charged criminally if there is a nude or partially nude photo of you on their cell phone or computer—even if you took the photo yourself. You can get into trouble, too, for sending it to them. Once you send the photo, you cannot control who else they share it with or where they post it.
2. If you touch, slap or pinch someone’s breast or bottom as a joke in school, it may not be a joke to that person. If the person you touch finds it offensive, the legal system will not take it as a joke either.
3. If you are convicted of a sex offense, even as a juvenile, you will be required to register as a sex offender. You will have to notify the police every time you move, get a new job, or attend a new school.
4. If you have consensual sexual contact with someone under the age of 16, you can be charged 1. with statutory rape in juvenile court even if you are under the age of 16 as well. If your case then is transferred to adult court, you will be treated as an adult sex offender and subject to the same penalties as an adult.

SKIPPING DETENTION/ ISI

Failure to report to ISI when assigned. In all cases the students must serve assigned ISI days upon returning to school.

TARDINESS TO CLASS/SCHOOL

Tardiness is defined as (1) being late for school, or (2) late for class. Tardies accumulate on a nine week basis. Tardiness occurs when a student is not in the classroom when the tardy bell sounds. Students who are tardy to class will report to class and sign the tardy roster. Students who are tardy to school (after 7:40 a.m.) will report to the office to sign in and retrieve a tardy slip excused/unexcused to submit to the teacher.

TERRORISTIC THREATS TOWARDS SCHOOL

O.C.G.A. 16-11-37(a) A person commits the offense of a terroristic threat when he or she threatens to commit any crime of violence, to release any hazardous substance, as such term is defined in Code Section 12-8-92, or to burn or damage property with the purpose of terrorizing another or of causing the evacuation of a building, place of assembly, or facility of public transportation or otherwise causing serious public inconvenience or in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

Students **charged** with making a terroristic threat toward the school or students (verbally or via social media) may be permanently expelled or expelled for a specific period of time. OCGA 20-2-690.1 clearly gives the school system the authority to

expel a student, particularly when there is a threat to the safety and security of the school.

THEFT OR POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY

Theft without threat, violence or bodily harm of public or private property located on school premises or at a school function. Based on the value of the object, law enforcement may be notified. **Consequence may result in immediate suspension based on administrative discretion.**

THREATENING AND/OR INTIMIDATING ANOTHER STUDENT

Threatening and/or intimidating another student: touching, pushing, or threatening the person bodily or psychologically. Possible referral to law enforcement

TOBACCO/VAPING

The possession, distribution, or use of tobacco products (i.e. Cigarettes, E-Cigarettes, E-Cigs, Hookah, Vapes, Snuff, & Juuls) on school campus and/or school property is not permitted. In addition, lighters and matches should not be brought to school. Possible referral to law enforcement and immediate suspension. If an electronic smoking device is found to contain any illicit or illegal drugs, the student will have violated the Drug Offense (see pg. 68)

No student, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product at any time on any school District owned/leased property or at any school event, including non-school hours, 24 hours a day, seven days per week

TRESPASSING

Entering or remaining on a public school campus or School Board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry (includes students under suspension or expulsion, and unauthorized persons who enter or remain on a campus after being directed to leave by the chief administrator or designee.) No trespassing or loitering is allowed.

VANDALISM

Destroying, vandalizing of, and/or threatening to destroy public or private property located on school premises or at a school function. (This may include such actions as use of bombs, explosive devices, setting fires, pulling or vandalizing fire alarms, calling 911, the deliberate destruction or defacement of school property.)

(Immediate restitution for damages and possible referral to law enforcement. May result in immediate suspension/(Possible Referral to Law Enforcement and/or tribunal based on the severity of the student's actions.)

VIOLATION OF DRESS CODE

Violation of dress code guidelines.

WEAPONS (Hand Gun, Knife, Rifle, Firearm, Other)

Possessing a dangerous instrument or weapon on school property or at a school event. A student shall not supply, possess, handle, use, threaten to use or transmit any weapon or any other tool or instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury and intended for use as a weapon, in a school safety zone, at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school. A “weapon,” “tool” or “instrument” means and includes by way of illustration but is not limited to the following items:

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

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

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

Reporting Requirements

Any employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a student possesses a weapon as defined in paragraph 1, is involved in an assault using a weapon as defined in paragraph 2, or is involved in a second offense with a weapon on campus must report such violations to the principal or assistant principal of the school. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that a report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney. The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any activity involving weapons.

If a student turns in a weapon found, school authorities have to make an insightful determination as to whether the student is truthful in reporting *finding* a weapon as opposed to being in *possession* of the weapon. In cases where doubt exists, proof remains with the student. Please be reminded that the case law ruling from the State Board of Education is that **intent** must be determined in order to expel a student for possession of a weapon.

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

A student is deemed to be in possession of an illegal and/or banned item(s) under BOE policy when such item(s) is/are on the person of the student, in the student's possession, in the student's locker, in the student's vehicle on school property or on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity or any school event held away from the school.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student desks, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search.

As used in this discipline code, the term "unauthorized" means any items dangerous to the health or safety of students or school personnel, or disruptive to any lawful function, mission or process of the school, or any item described as unauthorized in school rules available beforehand to the student.

A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action.

Personal Searches: A student's personal belongings and/or personal effects (e.g. purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials.

If a pat down search of a student's person is conducted it will be conducted by a school employee of the same sex and with an adult witness present, when feasible.

If the school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student has on his or her person an item imminently dangerous to the student or to others, a more intrusive search of the student's person may be conducted. Such a search may only be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex, with an adult witness of the same sex present, and only upon the prior approval of the Superintendent or his or her designee, unless the health or safety of students will be endangered by the delay which might be caused by following these procedures.

Desk Searches: Student desks are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their belongings. **Periodic general inspections of desks may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.**

Seizure of Illegal Materials: If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such items shall be turned over to proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

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

The school administration reserves the right to make decisions on other school matters in the best interest of the student body in any or all matters not specifically addressed in this handbook. Any item brought onto school property may be searched at any time.

School administrators reserve the right to change the consequence for any discipline violation based on the severity of the infraction and administrative discretion. A RESTORATIVE parent conference may be required prior to students returning to class from ISS & OSS.

SCES LEVELS OF STUDENT CODE & CONSEQUENCES

These are the levels of infractions by category for SCIS and the possible consequences for them. School administration reserves the right to determine consequences based on the severity of the infraction and frequency of individual violations.**CONTINUOUS VIOLATORS:**

- Students may serve a maximum of 15 days in ISS (in school suspension). Once a student has reached the 15 day maximum, any future offenses will result in immediate out of school suspension.
- Students who accumulate 5 discipline referrals (to not include bus and tardy referrals) in a school year will result in a Behavior Contract/Behavior Contract/Parent/Guardian Notification of Continuous Violator letter or a behavior contract.

Level	Infractions/Offenses	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th & Subsequent Offenses
Level 1 Initial/ Minor	Academic Dishonesty Cell Phones/Electronics Classroom Disturbance Digital Misuse (Non-Harmful) Dress Code Food Items Hallway Misbehavior Inappropriate Affection Inappropriate Language (Non-Directed) Minor Defiance/Disrespect Not Following Directions, Playground/Recess Safety Violation Tardiness Unauthorized Area Unexcused Classroom Refusal to Work	• Verbal Warning • Teacher Conference • Parent Contact (as needed) • Reflection Sheet	• Lunch Detention • Parent Contact • Loss of Classroom/Recess Privileges • Counselor Referral (as needed)	• After-School Detention • Parent Conference • Behavior Reflection Plan	• In-School Intervention (ISI) • Behavior Contract • Administrative Conference

Level 2 Repeated/ Disruptive	Aggressive Misbehavior/Horseplay Campus Disturbance Cyberbullying (Minor) Dishonesty During Investigation Disrespect/Insubordination Forgery Gambling Leaving Campus/Skipping Minor Physical Aggression Misbehavior in ISI Misuse of Technology Obscenity Repeated PDA Recording Others Without Permission Social Media Misconduct Threatening Student Vandalism	• Parent Conference • Restorative Conference • Counselor Referral • ISI	• ISI (1-2 Days) • Behavior Contract • Loss of Extracurricular Privileges	• ISS (1-3 Days) • Mandatory Parent Meeting • Restorative Conference	• OSS (1-5 Days) • Social Worker/Counselor Referral • Tribunal Consideration (if warranted)
Level 3 Serious/ Frequent	Acts of Bigotry AI Misuse for Harm Bullying/Cyberbullying Distribution of Inappropriate Media Explosives/Lighters/Matches Extortion Fighting Gang Activity Inappropriate Sexual Behavior Repeated Harassment Serious Cyber Harassment Sexual Harassment Terroristic Threats Theft Tobacco/Vaping	• ISS (1-3 Days) • Parent Conference • Restorative Conference	• OSS (3-5 Days) • Mandatory Parent Re-Entry Meeting • Counselor/Social Worker Referral	• OSS (5-10 Days) • Tribunal Review	• Tribunal Hearing • Alternative School Recommendation • Expulsion Recommendation (if applicable)
Level 4 Major Safety/ Criminal	Alcohol Assault on Employee Arson Bomb Threats Burglary Drugs False Reporting of Emergencies Homicide Kidnapping Motor Vehicle Theft Robbery Sexual Battery	• Minimum 10-Day OSS • Law Enforcement Referral • Parent Notification	• Tribunal Hearing	• Alternative School Placement or Expulsion Recommendation	• Long-Term Alternative Placement or Expulsion, as permitted by district policy and Georgia law

	Sexual Misconduct Severe Cybercrime Substance Distribution Use of AI to Create Credible Threats Weapons				
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- Students who accumulate 8 discipline referrals (to not include bus and tardy referrals) in a school year will result in a mandatory 10 day suspension and referral to tribunal.
- If a student who has been placed on a behavior contract violates the code of conduct with any infraction, the student may be referred to a tribunal for possible placement at alternative school or expulsion.

Tier	Violation Threshold	Consequences / Interventions
Tier 1	0 - 3 major referrals Referred to next tier	Behavior Contract; Parent Notification; Refer to Counselor; Classroom/School-Based Interventions; Reflection Sheet, Loss of Privileges (Recess/Clubs where applicable)
Tier 2	5 major referrals Referred to next tier	Behavior Contract (updated/reviewed); Parent Conference; Check-In/Check-Out with Counselor or Staff Mentor; In-School Intervention (ISI) or In-School Suspension (ISS); Restorative Conference/Circle; Behavior monitoring plan; Mandatory Parent Re-Entry Meeting
Tier 3	8 major referrals (continuous violators) or 15 days in ISS (in school suspension) Referred to Tribunal	Minimum 10-Day Out-of-School Suspension (OSS); Law Enforcement Referral (if applicable); Tribunal Hearing; Alternative Placement Referral; Permanent Removal from Campus; Mandatory Parent Meeting

Student Due Process

Students must be given:

- Written explanation of incident
- Opportunity to respond
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) notification

- Appeal process (if applicable)

Special Education / 504 Protections

Disciplinary actions must consider:

- Manifestation determination review (MDR) when required
- IEP/504 accommodations
- Behavioral intervention plans (BIP)

2026 - 2027

SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS **TRANSPORTATION MANUAL**

Safe Student Riding Instructions

Welcome to another great year! We look forward to transporting your child this school year. To ensure that your child will have a safe riding experience this year, we ask that you review the safe riding instructions with your child now and periodically during the school year.

Statistics show children riding a school bus are much safer than in their parent's/guardian's personal vehicle or any other type of transportation on the roadways. The Sumter County Board of Education believes the school bus is an extension of the classroom; therefore, the same rules of "Respect Yourself" and "Respect for Others and Other's Property" will apply in route to the bus stop, departing from the bus stop, and while on the bus.

Safe riding begins before your child leaves the house or arrives at the designated bus stop. In order to keep your child safe, your child needs to arrive at the bus stop approximately five minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. These few minutes will allow your child time to arrive at the bus stop without the need to hurry. These five minutes will also limit your child's time near roadways and exposure to various weather conditions for prolonged periods.

While Waiting For the Bus

Students should wait away from the roadway at their designated stop. There should be no horse playing, pushing or shoving while on the way to the bus stop or at the bus stop. Students who do not live on the same side of the road as the bus pick-up must wait on their side of the road until the bus arrives. If your child has to cross the road, he/she must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and wait for the driver to give instructions when it is safe for him/her to cross.

While Loading the Bus at Designated Stop (same side of road)

Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, wait for the entrance door to open, and make sure that the red stop lights are flashing before approaching the bus to board. When more than one student boards at the same bus stop, they must line up in a

single file line just prior to the arrival of the bus. There should not be pushing, shoving or horse playing while boarding the bus. Students should always use the handrail when stepping onto the bus. Students should be seated in their seat as carefully but as promptly as possible and remain there until they reach their school or destination.

While Loading the Bus at Designated Stop (opposite side of road)

When a student has to cross the road to board the bus, he/she must stand on their side of the road. Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, wait for the entrance door to open, and be sure the red stop lights are flashing before approaching the bus to board. Students must wait for the driver to give a verbal or physical sign that it is all clear to cross the road. Even after all the above, students must quickly look both ways to be sure the road is still clear and all other vehicles have stopped. Students must always cross in front of the bus and should always use the handrail when stepping onto the bus. There should not be pushing, shoving or horse playing while loading the bus. Students should seat themselves as carefully and as promptly as possible and remain seated until they reach their school or destination.

While on the Bus

Once students board the bus, the driver has total responsibility of your child's safety. Students must follow the listed "Bus Regulations" found in "Code of Student Conduct" to ensure a safe ride, whether they are being transported from home to school or back home or any school-sponsored trips.

While Unloading the Bus at School or Destination

Students should unload the bus in single file from front to back with no pushing, shoving or horse playing while unloading the bus. Students should use the handrail as they depart the bus until both feet are on the ground. Students should check for an approaching bus on the door side before exiting the bus.

Students should look both ways before crossing the traffic area and should clear this area as quickly and safely as possible. Students should **never** return to the bus without the supervision of an administrator.

While Loading the Bus at School

Students should wait for buses in a safe area designated by the school. The bus should come to a complete stop and your child must wait for the driver to open the entrance door before approaching the bus. Students should look both ways before leaving the curb and crossing the traffic area to approach the bus. Students must watch for other buses pulling up on the right side while loading the bus. Students should line up in a single file according to the order they arrive at the bus and should use the handrail to board. There should be no pushing, shoving or horse playing while coming to, while loading or while getting to their seat. Students should be seated as carefully but as promptly as possible and remain seated until they reach their designated stop.

While Unloading the Bus at Designated Stop

Students should unload the bus in single file from front to back with no pushing, shoving or horse playing. Students should use the handrail as they depart the bus until both feet

are on the ground. Students should exit the bus and clear the roadway and continue to move until they are safely away from the bus. Students who live on the opposite side of the road must cross in front of the bus while the bus is at their stop. When a student must cross the road, they should stop at the front of the bus and look both ways before continuing to cross. When all is clear, students should clear the roadway as quickly as possible. Students should go directly home and never return to the bus for any reason. Please instruct your child to never retrieve an item that rolls under the bus. Students who have permission from parents/guardians to check their mailbox who live on the same side of the road as their mailbox must clear the roadway and wait for the bus to depart and for traffic to clear before returning to the roadway to the mailbox. If your child lives on the opposite side of the road from their mailbox, they must cross over to their side of the road while the bus is at their stop. If your child has permission from you to check the mailbox and you live on the opposite side of the road from your mailbox, your child must also wait until after the bus has departed their stop and for traffic to clear before crossing the road to check their mailbox.

Railroad Crossing

History has shown that more lives are lost in school buses at railroad crossings than at any other location. Each time a school bus and a train collide, the train wins! This is why it is so important for the driver to have their full attention on the railroad crossing. There is no other time when a driver's distraction can cost the loss of so many lives. Please reinforce with your child the importance of being "Silent At All Railroad Crossings."

Bus Evacuation

Due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the bus driver's control, your child may have to evacuate a bus at some time during the year. The decision to evacuate may be based solely on having the best interest of the students in mind. When evacuating a bus is necessary, students are placed in a safer location while waiting for assistance to arrive.

Most evacuations are due to breakdowns which may leave the bus in questionable surroundings. Not all breakdowns result in an evacuation; several factors are taken into consideration before the decision is made to evacuate a bus. The location of an inoperative bus is the greatest factor when making a decision to evacuate a bus. A bus may be required to be evacuated if it is disabled next to a high volume roadway, high speed limit roadway, on or near a bridge, on a steep hill or in a curve or near water, or any unsafe area.

When any type of evacuation occurs, students must follow the instructions of the driver to safely unload and to relocate in a safe location away from the hazard. On rare occasions, the driver may be incoherent so we may depend on the older, mature students to help with evacuation. This type of evacuation is practiced with all students during the beginning of each school year. There are several reasons that students may have to be unloaded from one bus to another bus without it being an emergency. We ask for you to periodically remind your child to stay calm whenever it is necessary to unload from one bus to another bus for any reason and to always use their "While Loading and Unloading the Bus" directions.

All buses are designed with several "Emergency Exits"; these locations are, but are not limited to the entrance/exit door, rear door, emergency exit windows and roof hatches. Students should always use the front entrance/exit door during all evacuations when possible. When the service door is not available, the second choice should be the back door. All other exits should be used only when the loading door and the back door are not practical. When the rear door is the chosen exit, selected students designated by the driver are instructed to assist students to the ground. All students are instructed to leave all personal belongings on the bus and to exit from the front to the back of the selected exit location. Students are instructed to walk at least 100 feet away from the bus at the direction away from the recognized hazard or hazards.

School bus transportation is such an important part of the educational system in Sumter County. We appreciate your assistance as we try to provide the safest and most efficient transportation for our precious cargo-your children!

SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES (PreK-3rd)

BUS PASSES:

If a student needs to ride a bus other than their assigned bus, they **must bring** a letter stating the bus number, reason for bus pass request, parent/guardian name, signature, and contact number. All bus pass requests should be submitted to the front office no later than 10:30 a.m.

The following rules are published for the safety, health, and welfare of all children who ride school buses. Parents/Guardians are requested to share with their children the importance of obeying the rules so that all students may be transported safely and comfortably. If a student is suspended from the bus, he or she may also be suspended from school depending on the severity of the offense. The school reserves the right to combine school consequences with transportation consequences.

When a student is suspended off a bus, he or she **CANNOT** ride any Sumter County School Bus. If a student is suspended and gets on another bus to or from school, then 3 additional days will be added to the current suspension. **This rule also applies to activity buses/field trips.**

FIGHTING

CONSEQUENCE:

1st Offense: Three (3) days bus suspension.

2nd Offense: Five (5) days bus suspension.

3rd Offense: Ten (10) days bus suspension.

4th Offense: Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the semester (minimum (30) days bus suspension).

5th Offense: Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the school term.

PROMOTING A FIGHT, THROWING OBJECTS, ARGUING WITH/PROFANITY TOWARDS STUDENTS

CONSEQUENCE:

1st Offense: Three (3) days bus suspension.

2nd Offense: Five (5) days bus suspension.

3rd Offense: Ten (10) days bus suspension.

4th Offense: Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the semester (minimum (30) days bus suspension).

5th Offense: Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the school term.

BULLYING

CONSEQUENCE:

1st Offense: Three (3) days bus suspension.

2nd Offense: Five (5) days bus suspension.

3rd Offense: Ten (10) days bus suspension.

4th Offense: Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the semester (minimum (30) days bus suspension).

5th Offense: Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the school term.

GENERAL BUS RULES

The following are not allowed on the bus: A.

Disrespecting the bus driver/monitor.

- Refusing to obey the driver or person in authority.
- Refusing to sit in an assigned seat.
- Refusing to answer the driver when a question is asked.
- Giving the driver the wrong information.
- Getting off the bus at the wrong stop without a note from the school.
- Refusing to obey the railroad crossing rule.

B. Water, food, gum chewing, juice or sodas

C. Toys of any size.

D. Supplies out on the bus except a book to read.

E. Sexual gestures.

F. Graffiti

G. Extending any part of the body or other objects out the windows, doors and aisles of the bus.

H. Standing, walking, playing or kicking.

I. Sunglasses unless prescribed by a physician.

J. Yelling out the window or inside the bus.

K. Getting on or off the bus while in motion.

L. The use of mirrors, lasers, flash, cameras, lights, reflective devices or any electrical communication devices is prohibited.

M. Any other action that might cause disruption for the driver.

N. Dress Code Violation

CONSEQUENCE:

1st Offense: Needs Improvement Form

2nd Offense: Three (3) days bus suspension.

3rd Offense: Five (5) days bus suspension.

4th Offense: Ten (10) days bus suspension.

5th Offense: Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the semester (minimum (30) days bus suspension).

6th Offense: Loss of bus riding privilege for the remainder of the school term.

MAJOR OFFENSES

The following behavior will not be tolerated in any form and **MAY** result in an automatic suspension for the entire year. Additionally, students may be referred for a disciplinary tribunal for these offenses:

Sexual misconduct offenses (engaging with or fondling one another).

Ignition of lighter, matches, and /or combustible or flammable materials, etc.2nd

Possession of a dangerous instrument /Firearm/Other Weapon.

Physical assault /Physical Violence.

Smoking, dipping, use of drugs/alcohol, or possession of related products including electronic smoking devices.

Theft/Vandalism of school or personal private property.

Arson/Unlawful and intentional damage to real or personal property by fire.

Sexual Harassment

Intentional spitting at or on another person.

Racial Slurs

Profanity towards an adult.

CONSEQUENCE:

Minimum of 10 days' suspension with possible tribunal unless another penalty is given at the discretion of the administrator according to the policy listed above, including, but not limited to an automatic suspension of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

BROUGHT BACK to SCHOOL

Student is returned to school when no one is home to get him/her off the bus.

CONSEQUENCE:

1st OFFENSE: Meet with parent/guardian and present a letter with Consequences for them to sign.

2nd OFFENSE: Student suspended from the bus for three (3) days.

3rd OFFENSE: Student suspended from the bus for five (5) days.

4th OFFENSE: Student suspended from the bus for eight (8) days. **5th OFFENSE:** Student suspended for the Remainder of the Year.

*****No student shall be allowed to ride any school bus if the student's riding privileges have been suspended. If the school year ends and the student has not served his/her entire bus suspension, then the student shall finish the bus suspension at the beginning of the next school year. *Restitution for damaging bus seats and/or property is required.**

DISCIPLINARY JURISDICTION OVER STUDENT CONDUCT

The Sumter County School District has discipline authority over its students whenever the interests of the School District are involved. Therefore, the Code of Student Conduct applies at the following times and places:

- On school grounds at any time;
- Off school grounds at a school bus stop or at a school activity, function, or event;
- While the student is on a school bus or School District-sponsored transportation;
- When either the alleged perpetrator or the alleged victim is in route to or from school, or to or from a school activity, function, or event;
- Off school grounds while the student is participating in or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities, such as field trips, conferences, or athletic events, or is otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of school authorities;
- Off school grounds while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of another school system in Georgia;
- Off school grounds when the behavior of the student could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.5(c));
- Off school grounds when the misconduct is directed at a School District student, employee, or volunteer and is related to the victim's affiliation with the School District;
- Off school grounds when a student leaves school without permission of a school official (Absent Without Leave); and
- Off school grounds when the misconduct adversely affects the safety and welfare of the school community or the orderly mission and function of the school.

INVESTIGATION OF MISCONDUCT

When a violation of school rules is reported or suspected, the principal or designee will determine whether an investigation is warranted and, if so, will instruct appropriate personnel to conduct an investigation. The investigation should be timely and include interviews with the alleged perpetrator(s), victim(s), identified witnesses, teacher(s), staff members, and others who might have relevant information. Written statements should be obtained from all individuals who are interviewed. Video surveillance, if

available, should be reviewed and secured. If administrators believe a request for a due process hearing will be made, he/she should attempt to preserve video surveillance of any misconduct. Any other physical and documentary evidence should be collected and preserved. School counselors, school social workers, school police, and other support staff should be utilized for their expertise as determined by the circumstances of the matter. At an appropriate time during or after the investigation, the parent or guardian will be notified. However, if the incident involves an injury or similar situation, appropriate medical attention should be provided, and the parent or guardian should be notified immediately.

The determination of whether or not a student has violated the Code of Student Conduct will be made based solely on a preponderance of the evidence. In other words, is it more likely to be true than not true, based on the evidence, that the student did violate the rule?

SECTION VI: APPENDIX A

COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972, THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT, THE HATCH AMENDMENT, AND THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION GUIDELINES

It is the intent of the Sumter County School District to comply with the above referenced federal statutes and regulations adopted pursuant thereto, in terms of employment, programs and other related activities in the school district. Part of our compliance effort is to periodically apprise employees, parents and students of the existence of these statutes and regulations, and our intent to carry out the mandates thereof.

Coverage

The final regulations cover all operations of the Sumter County School District with the exception that the Vocational Education Guidelines cover vocational programs only.

Treatment

All schools must treat students and employees without discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability. The regulations cover the following areas:

Access to and participation in course offerings and extracurricular activities, including campus organizations and competitive athletics.

Eligibility for and receipt or enjoyment of benefits and services.

Use of facilities.

A recipient school district may not participate with single-sex organizations other than the following: Boy Scouts; Girl Scouts; YWCA; YMCA; and certain voluntary youth services organizations that meet the provisions of Title IX.

Health Education

Classes in health education may not be offered separately on the basis of sex except that separate sessions for boys and girls are permissible during times when materials and discussion deal exclusively with human sexuality.

Physical Education

Sex segregated physical education classes are prohibited. The regulations allow separation by sex within physical education classes during competition in wrestling, boxing, basketball, football, and other sports involving bodily contact.

Athletics

Where selection is based on competitive skill or the activity involved is a contact sport, athletics may be provided through separate teams for males and females, or through a single team open to both sexes. If separate teams are offered, they must provide equal opportunity—comparable facilities, equipment, etc.—but equal aggregate expenditures are not required.

Organizations

The school district may not provide significant assistance, in connection with its education program or activity, to any organization, agency, or person which discriminates on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age or disability.

Counseling Materials

Counseling materials developed and disseminated in keeping with these regulations must exclude references which portray biases toward race, sex, color, national origin, age, religion or disability.

Employment

The regulations apply to nondiscriminatory policies and practices including both full-time and part-time employment and students. Specifically, the regulations cover:

- ✓ Employment criteria
- ✓ Recruitment
- ✓ Compensation
- ✓ Job classification and structure
- ✓ Fringe benefits
- ✓ Marital or parental status
- ✓ Effect of state or local law or other requirements
- ✓ Advertising
- ✓ Pre-employment inquiries

Employment coverage generally follows the policies of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. They are:

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

The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the Sumter County School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task, (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office U.S.
Department of Education 600
Independence Ave, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4605

The school district has designated the following types of personally identifiable information about students as “Directory Information.” Directory information may be released by the school district without the consent of a parent or student.

Student’s name, address, and telephone listing;

Date and place of birth;

Dates of attendance;

Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;

Weight and height of members of athletic teams; Diploma awarded.

A parent or eligible student who desires that the school district not release any or all of the directory information about a student must notify the school district to that effect in writing addressed to Sumter County School District, Attention: Director of Human Resources, 100 Learning Lane, Americus, Georgia 31719 no later than 30 days after the first day of school.

Research

All instructional materials, including teachers’ manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis or evaluation conducted by or for the school district, shall be available for inspection by the parents or guardians of the students involved in the survey, analysis or evaluation.

No student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis or evaluation which reveals any of the following information without prior consent of the student (if an adult or an emancipated minor) or of the student’s parent or guardian:

Information concerning political affiliations, mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to students or their families, sexual behavior and attitudes, illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior, critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships, legally recognized privileges and analogous relationships such as those with lawyers, physicians and ministers, or income (other than that required by law) to receive eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

Compliance

The Director of Human Resources has been named to coordinate the school district’s activities in complying with all regulations and purposes cited above.

Grievances

If employees or students think that they have been discriminated against because of their sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, or disability, they should contact:

Director of Human Resources
Federal Regulations Compliance Officer
Sumter County School District
100 Learning Lane

Americus, Georgia 31719
(229) 931-8500
OR
The Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
101 Marietta Towers
Atlanta, GA 30323 (404)
221-2352

Public Notice

Prior to the beginning of each school year, each school system must provide public notice to advise students, parents, employees, and the general public that all technical and vocational programs will be offered without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap. The notice must include the name, office address, and telephone number of the person designated to coordinate Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504/ADA.

Discriminatory Disclosure

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and the Perkins Act of 1998); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Students, parents, employees and the general public are hereby notified that the Board of Education does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities or in employment policies.

The following individuals have been designated as the employees responsible for coordinating the school system's effort to implement this nondiscriminatory policy:

Title VI
Dr, Sebrina Pitts
Sumter County BOE
100 Learning Lane
Americus, GA 31719
229-931-8500

Section 504
Director of Special Programs
Sumter County BOE
100 Learning Lane
Americus, GA 31719
229-931-8500

Title IX
Dr. Brian Simon
Sumter County BOE
100 Learning Lane
Americus, GA 31719
229-931-8500

APPENDIX B

SUMTER COUNTY FEDERAL PROGRAMS COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Complaint Procedures under the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965

Section 9304 – General Applicability of State Educational Agency Assurances

Section 9503 – Complaint Process for Participation of

Private School Children

A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency (“complainant”) may file a complaint with the Sumter County Board of Education (“Department”) if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a local educational agency (“LEA”), the state educational agency (“SEA”), or an agency or consortium of agencies is violating a Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

1. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
2. Title I, Part B, Subpart 3: Even Start Family Literacy
3. Title I, Part C: Education of Migrant Children
4. Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
5. Title I, Part F: Comprehensive School Reform
6. Title I, School Improvement Grant 1003(a)
7. Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
8. Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education through Technology
9. Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement
10. Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1: Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities
11. Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2: Community Service Grants
12. Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers
13. Title V, Part A: Innovative Programs
14. Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 6111: State Assessment Program
15. Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 6112: Enhanced Assessment Instruments Competitive Grant Program
16. Title VI, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income Schools
17. Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children
18. Race To The Top, RT3

21.Title X Part C - McKinney-Vento Homeless Education

Pursuant to Section 9306 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) , an LEA accepting federal funds also agrees to adopt local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore, for complaints originating at the local level, a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education until every effort has been made to resolve the issue through local written complaint procedures. If the complainant has tried to file a complaint at the local level to no avail, the complainant must provide the Georgia Department of Education with written proof of their attempt to resolve the issue at the local level.

1. A statement that the LEA, SEA, agency or consortium of agencies has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program;
2. The date on which the violation occurred;
3. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation);
4. A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information;
5. Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency;
6. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position; and;
7. The address of the complainant.

Once the complaint is received by the Director of Federal Programs, it will be copied and forwarded to the district Superintendent's office as documentation of complaint being received and investigated.

1. The date the district received the complaint;

2. How the complainant may provide additional information;
3. A statement of the ways in which the district may investigate or address the complaint; and
4. Any other pertinent information.

The Department will have thirty (30) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings.

Appropriate Department staff will review the information and determine whether:

1. Additional information is needed;
2. An on-site investigation must be conducted;
3. Other measures must be taken to resolve the issues raised in the complaint; or 4. A Letter of Findings can be issued.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the Department will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings.

If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included. Either the 30-day or the 60-day timelines outlined above may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant, as well as the other parties involved.

F. Right of Appeal

If an individual, organization or agency is aggrieved by the final decision of the district, that individual, organization or agency has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education.

For complaints filed pursuant to Section 9503 (20 U.S.C. §7883, complaint process for participation of private school children), a complainant may appeal the Department's decision to the United States Secretary of Education no later than thirty (30) days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Department's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

Revised 6/11/15

APPENDIX C

Georgia Senate Bill 351 and Digital Citizenship

In compliance with **Georgia Senate Bill 351 (SB 351)**, which requires public schools to provide annual instruction on responsible digital behavior, cyberbullying prevention, and internet safety, **Sumter County Schools** has adopted **Parent ProTech** as the official **digital citizenship curriculum** for the 2026–2027 school year.

About Parent ProTech

Parent ProTech is an educational platform designed to empower families with tools and knowledge to help students navigate the digital world safely and responsibly. The curriculum includes age-appropriate lessons for students on topics such as online safety, screen time balance, cyberbullying, and digital footprints.

In addition to classroom instruction, **parents and guardians can create free accounts** to access a wide range of resources that support digital safety at home. These include video tutorials, device-specific guides, and tips for fostering open communication about online habits.

How to Set Up a Parent ProTech Account

Parents and guardians are encouraged to create a **free** account to access Parent ProTech resources. Follow these steps:

1. **Visit** www.parentprotech.com.
2. Click the **"Sign Up"** button located at the **top right** corner of the homepage.
3. On the next screen, select **"Sponsored User."**
4. From the drop-down list, choose **"Sumter County."**
5. Then, **select your child's school** from the available options.
Note: If you have children at more than one school, you only need to set up one account.
6. Click **Submit** to continue.
7. You will then be prompted to enter the following:
 - o First Name
 - o Last Name
 - o Phone Number
 - o Email Address
 - o Create a Password
8. Add your student by clicking the **Add Child** button and selecting:
 - o **School** from the drop-down menu
 - o **Grade Level** from the drop-down menu
9. Once all children are added, check the box to **accept the Privacy Policy and Terms & Conditions**, then click **Submit**.
10. You will receive an email notification once your account has been approved and is ready to use.

Together, we can help ensure that our students become responsible digital citizens who are prepared to thrive in a connected world.

Sumter County Schools

Complaint Form for Federal Programs under the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965

Please print

Name (Complainant):
Mailing Address:
Phone _____ Number _____ (Home): _____ Phone _____ Number _____ (Cell): _____ Phone Number (Work): _____ Email Address: _____
Agency/Agencies complaint is being filed against:
Date on which violation occurred:
Statement that the Sumter County Schools has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation) (attach additional sheets if necessary):
The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (attached additional sheets if necessary):

Signature of Complainant

Date

Signature of District Receiving

Date

***In order to file a complaint regarding Fraud, Waste or Abuse involving US Department of Education funds or programs, please visit**

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/hotline.html>

Revised 6/11/15

Behavior Expectations Matrix



Sumter County Elementary School & Accelerated Achievers Academy



Behavior Matrix

	Hallway	Cafeteria	Restroom	Bus	Classroom/ Media Center	Playground
P Practice Safety	- Keep to the right - One behind the other - Hands and feet to yourself - Report problems to an adult	- Follow directions - Stay in line - Report problems to an adult	- Report directly to the restroom and return to class - No horseplay - Report problems to an adult	- Follow all bus rules - Report problems to an adult	- Follow all classroom/media center rules - Report problems to an adult	- Report problems to an adult - Stay visible
A Accept Responsibility	- Set a good example - Walk NOT run	Wait patiently	Use the restroom quickly and quietly	Listen to bus driver/monitor	Listen, learn, and grow	- Play well with others - Stay safe
W Wise Choice	- Go to your destination - Help keep hallways clean	- Clean your area - Voice level 1 with permission	- Flush the toilet - Wash your hands - Return to class	- Stay seated - Remain quiet	- Be present, focused and ready to learn - Be a leader not a follower	- Line up when called - Use equipment appropriately
S Stay On Track	- Walk quietly - Voice level 0	- Use good table manners - Say please and thank you	- Keep hands to self - Respect others privacy	Keep hands, feet, objects, and unkind words to yourself	- Listen to your teacher - Be kind and helpful to others - Be positive	- Take turns using equipment - No hitting, kicking, spitting, or fighting

CELL PHONE POLICY

To protect instructional time and minimize distractions of the educational setting, electronic devices will not be allowed at school. Only school-issued or approved devices necessary for student learning will be allowed to be used during the school day from arrival to departure time.

The following personal electronic devices (PEDs) are not allowed to be used: Cell phones, AirPod/like devices, IPAD/like devices, bluetooth headphones/earphones, smartwatches, smart glasses, toys, games, or other unapproved electronic communication devices. Any material stored or saved on confiscated electronic devices/cell phones may be searched by school officials. ALL CONFISCATED DEVICES that are not used for investigative purposes or picked up by a parent(s)/guardian(s), WILL BE DISCARDED AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Permitted Use: Devices may still be used under specific circumstances, like for students with IEPs or medical needs, or for emergency communication protocols.

Sumter County Elementary School will assume NO LIABILITY for lost or stolen phones and/or electronic devices. No searches will be conducted for any electronics reported stolen or lost.

CONFISCATED ITEMS MAY ONLY BE PICKED UP BY A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN. ALL UNCLAIMED CONFISCATED DEVICES WILL BE DISCARDED AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR ON JUNE 30. **A parent or guardian must come to the school between 3:15 PM and 3:45 PM.**

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

Sumter County Board of Education Approved: 4/13/2017

**SUMTER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION – 100 LEARNING LANE – AMERICUS, GEORGIA
31719 -229-931-8500**

The Sumter County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap in any educational program/activities or in employment practices

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY- POLICY IHE

It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education that placement or promotion of a student into a grade, class, or program be based on an assessment of the academic achievement of the student and a determination of

the educational setting in which the student is most likely to receive instruction and other services needed in order to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement. The Board further requires that each principal shall annually notify parents or guardians that the promotion, placement or retention of a student will be based on the academic achievement of the student and criteria established by the Sumter County Board of Education.

DEFINITIONS

- a. **Accelerated Instruction** – challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic foundational skills gaps and deficiencies in reading and/ or mathematics. This accelerated instruction is designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level, as defined by the Office of Student Achievement, to meet grade-level standards in the shortest possible time.
- b. **Additional Instruction** – Academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes that are designed to bring students not performing on grade level, as defined by the Office of Student Achievement, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before and after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/ or summer/inter-session instruction.
- c. **Differentiated Instruction** – instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.
- d. **Grade Level** – the standard of performance as defined by the Office of Student Achievement.
- e. **Placement** – assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.
- f. **Placement committee** – the committee established by the local school principal or designee to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not meet established criteria to be considered on grade level. This committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student’s parents or guardian, and the teacher(s) in the content area(s) in which the student did not achieve grade level.
- g. **Promotion** – the assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student’s achievement of established criteria in the current grade level.
- h. **Retention** – the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

- i. **Chronic Absenteeism** – will be reviewed as part of promotion and retention decisions. Students who are chronically absent may be considered for retention if there is insufficient evidence of mastery of grade-level standards. For a student enrolled for the entire 180-day calendar, this equals 18 or more days. For students enrolled for fewer than 180 days, the 10% threshold is calculated based on the actual number of days enrolled, whether excused or unexcused.
- j. **Chronic Absenteeism Definition** – In accordance with the Georgia Department of Education and federal accountability guidelines, a student is considered chronically absent when he or she misses 10% or more of the total days enrolled during the school year. For a student enrolled for the entire 180-day calendar, this equals 18 or more days. For students enrolled for fewer than 180 days, the 10% threshold is calculated based on the actual number of days enrolled, whether excused or unexcused.

Promotion, Placement or Retention for Grades - Kindergarten – 5th

A. Documentation that supports promotion, placement, or retention will be on file in the student's permanent.

Steps 1 and 2 must be considered for a student to be promoted to the next grade:

1. A student in grades K-5 must achieve a final grade of 70 or above in Language Arts and Math courses.
2. Attendance/Tardies – A student in grades K- 5 must not be absent more than 10% of enrollment in a school-year. If a student is absent more than 10% of enrollment (excused and/or unexcused), he/she will be retained.
3. The retention decision may be appealed to the principal within 10 working days.

B. Should a student be recommended for retention in grades K-5, then:

1. The information obtained by the state kindergarten assessment will be considered as part of the required documentation.
2. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of the retention decision.
3. Should a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) appeal the retention, the principal will convene a placement committee to determine the appropriate placement of the student.
4. A locally developed rubric and/or set of content mastery criteria will be used by the placement committee to determine placement.

5. To override the recommendation to retain the student requires unanimous support of the placement committee.
6. When a student is retained, an alternative, developmentally appropriate instructional program will be provided.

Promotion, Placement or Retention for Grades 6-8

- A. Documentation that supports promotion, placement, or retention will be on file in the student's permanent record.

Steps 1 and 2 must be considered for a student to be promoted to the next grade:

1. A student in grades 6-8 must achieve a final grade of 70 or above in at least three out of four academic subjects and at least one exploratory course.
2. Attendance/Tardies – A student in grades 6-8 must not be absent more than 10% of enrollment in a school year. If a student is absent more than 10% of enrollment (excused and/or unexcused) he/she will be retained.
3. The retention decision may be appealed to the principal within 10 working days.

- B. Should a student be recommended for retention in grades 6-8, then:

1. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of the retention decision.
2. Should a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) appeal the retention, the principal will convene a placement committee to determine the appropriate placement of the student.
3. A locally developed rubric and/or set of content mastery criteria will be used by the placement committee to determine placement.
4. To override the recommendation to retain the student requires unanimous support of the placement committee.
5. When a student is retained, an alternative, developmentally appropriate instructional program will be provided.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 3, 5, AND 8

- A. Promotion of a student will be determined as follows:

1. No third-grade student will be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not receive a grade-level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

2. No fifth-grade student will be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not receive a grade-level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and attain an achievement level of “Developing Learner,” “Proficient Learner,” or “Distinguished Learner” on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.
3. No eighth-grade student will be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not receive a grade-level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and attain an achievement level of “Developing Learner,” “Proficient Learner,” or “Distinguished Learner” on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.
4. The school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.

B. When a student does not perform at grade level in grades 3, 5, or 8 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments specified in section (a) above, then the following will occur:

1. Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments individual student scores, the school principal or designee will notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student regarding the following:
 - i. The student’s below-grade-level reading designation and/or the mathematics achievement level on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments;
 - ii. The specific retest(s) to be given the student and testing date(s);
 - iii. The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student’s performance on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments; and
 - iv. The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.
2. The student will be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and

3. The student will be retested with the appropriate section(s) of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided by the State Board of Education and this board.

C. When a student does not perform at grade level on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in grades 3, 5, and 8, and also does not perform at grade level on a second opportunity to take the assessment, then the following will occur:

1. The school principal or designee will retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided for in this policy.
2. The school principal or designee will notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student and the teacher(s) regarding the decision to retain the student.
 - i. The notice will describe the option of the parent or guardian or teacher to appeal the decision to retain the student;
 - ii. The notice will describe the composition and functions of the placement committee; it will describe the option of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), or principal to invite individuals who can provide information or facilitate understanding of the issues to be discussed to attend the placement committee meeting; and
 - iii. The notice will include the requirement that the decision to place the student must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee comprised of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), and principal or designee.

3. If the parent or guardian or teacher(s) appeals the decision to retain the student, then the school principal or designee will establish a placement committee to consider the appeal.

- i. The placement committee will be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) of the subject(s) of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or the alternative assessment instrument on which the student failed to perform at grade level.
- ii. The principal or designee will notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian and teacher(s) of the time and place for convening the placement committee.

iii. The placement committee will review the overall academic achievement of the student in light of the performance on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or the alternative assessment instrument and promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends and make a determination to promote or retain.

iv. The decision to place must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee and must determine that if placed and given accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction during the next year to address foundational skills gaps, the student is likely to progress towards grade level by the conclusion of the school year.

v. The placement committee will prescribe such additional assessments as may be appropriate in addition to assessments administered to other students at the grade level during the year.

vi. The placement committee will provide for a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student.

4. A plan for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction to address foundational skills gaps must be developed for each student who does not achieve grade level performance in grades 3, 5, or 8 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments specified in section (a) above, whether the student is retained, placed, or promoted for the subsequent year.

5. A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in language arts and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) will take an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided by the State Board of Education and this board. Placement or promotion of these students will follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.

6. A student's failure to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in grades 3, 5, and 8 in language arts and/or mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided by the State Board of Education and this board will result in the student being retained. The option of the parent or guardian or

teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student will follow the procedure set forth in this rule.

7. For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee will serve as the placement committee.

Decision of Placement Committee

The decision of the placement committee will be final.

SPECIAL EDUCATION K-12

Special Education students will meet criteria for promotion or placement as established in their Individualized Education Plan. The IEP committee will serve as the placement committee for these students.

PROMOTION REQUIREMENT FOR GRADES 9-12

Credit for Courses in Grades 9-12 and Lower Grades where High School Credit is Awarded

For a student to earn high school credit, all of the standards must be met as listed below:

A. To earn credit for a course, the student must have a passing grade of 70 or higher. The number of units required for promotion will be specified in the student handbook.

**To graduate, students must meet the requirements established by the Sumter County Board of Education.*

B. Meet attendance requirements established by the Sumter County Board of Education.

C. Meet assessment requirements as listed in State Rule 160-3-1.07 (Testing Programs – Student Assessment) and the testing requirements established by the Sumter County Board of Education.

D. Statewide Passing Score that the percentage requirement of the numeric score on the Georgia Milestones EOC assessment on a student's final numeric grade in the course assessed by the EOC will count a minimum of 20%.

Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Internet Acceptable Use Policy of Sumter County Schools Computers and Network Resources Last Reviewed Date: 09/11/2025

Sumter County Schools recognizes that access to technology in and out of school gives students greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21st-century technology and communication skills.

To that end, we provide access to technologies for student and staff use.

This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviors that users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices on the school campus and or network.

- The Sumter County Schools network is intended for educational purposes.
- All activity over the network or using district technologies may be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary action.
- Sumter County Schools makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected to alert IT staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

Technologies Covered

Sumter County Schools may provide Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more.

As new technologies emerge, Sumter County Schools will attempt to provide access to them. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover *all* available technologies, not just those specifically listed.

Usage Policies/Web Access

Sumter County Schools provides its users with access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. Sumter County Schools strictly prohibits the use of school equipment, networks, and servers to access, send, receive, view or download obscene materials, materials harmful to minors, and materials that violate CIPA regulations. Accordingly, access will be restricted in compliance with CIPA regulations and school policies, through the use of qualifying technology protection measures as that term is defined in Section 1703(b)(1) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000. Sumter County Schools will routinely update these technology protection measures to ensure they continue to meet or exceed compliance standards and specifications established by the Georgia Department of Education.

To ensure efficacy and encourage transparency Sumter County Schools will provide reasonable opportunities and procedures for parents/guardians of current students to confer and collaborate with school administrators and teachers regarding appropriate internet access for such students.

Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely. Users are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution, and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a user believes it shouldn't be, the user should follow district protocol to alert an IT staff member or submit the site for review, whereupon Sumter County Schools will review the complaint with all due speed, and at a minimum respond to the complaint in writing.

If a student or employee of Sumter County Schools intentionally violates this policy through the use of school equipment to access prohibited materials, regardless of the location of the violation, they will be subject to the consequences listed within this acceptable use policy.

If a person who is not a student or employee of Sumter County Schools intentionally violates this policy through the use of school equipment to access prohibited materials, regardless of the location of the violation, they will be subject to the consequences listed within this acceptable use policy.

Email

Sumter County Schools may provide users with email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies.

If users are provided with email accounts, they should be used with care. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origin; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher.

Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage may be monitored and archived.

Social/Web 2.0 / Collaborative Content

Recognizing the benefits collaboration brings to education, Sumter County Schools may provide users with access to web sites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users.

These websites and tools might include social media sites only when directed by school personnel, for the exclusive purpose of accessing and utilizing age-appropriate educational resources under the supervision of such school personnel during the course of a school related activity. When not otherwise under the supervision of school personnel, Sumter County Schools prohibits all students from accessing social media platforms through the use of computer equipment, communications services, or internet access that is operated by Sumter County Schools. When using allowed websites and tools, users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Users should be careful not to share personally-identifying information online.

Parents may ask to be informed which social media sites, if any, their child will access under the supervision of school personnel and may prohibit the use of any social media site for their child.

Mobile Devices Policy

Sumter County Schools may provide users with mobile computers or other devices to promote learning outside of the classroom. Users should abide by the same acceptable use policies when using school devices off the school network as on the school network.

Users are expected to treat these devices with extreme care and caution; these are expensive devices that the school is entrusting to your care. Users should report any loss, damage, or malfunction to IT staff immediately. Users will be financially accountable for any damage resulting from negligence or misuse.

Use of school-issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored.

Personal Electronic Devices Policy

In accordance with GA HB340 the “Distraction-Free Education Act” Sumter County Schools K-8 students may not use their personal electronic devices for the duration of the school day. All personal electronic devices must be stored within school lockers, a designated place within the classroom, or a magnetically sealed Yondr pouch. Parents and legal guardians will be able to contact their children through the school’s front office, which will relay all necessary information to their children. Students will also be able to contact their parents and guardians through the front desk staff at their school.

In the event of an emergency, Sumter County Schools will follow the district and school level safety plans.

Sumter County High School students should keep personal electronic devices turned off and put away during school hours—unless in the event of an emergency or as instructed by a teacher or staff for educational purposes.

Because of security concerns, when personal electronic devices are used on campus, they should not be used over the school network without express permission from IT staff. In some cases, a separate network may be provided for personally-owned devices

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to, smartphones, smartwatches, smartglasses, tablets, e-readers, and headphones.

Security

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. If you believe a computer or mobile device you are using might be infected with a virus, please alert IT. Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or download any programs to help remove the virus.

Downloads

Users should not download or attempt to download or run .exe programs over the school network or onto school resources without express permission from IT staff.

You may be able to download other file types, such as images or videos. For the security of our network, download such files only from reputable sites, and only for education purposes.

Netiquette

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

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

Users should also remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

Plagiarism

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

Personal Safety

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

If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

Examples of Acceptable Use

I will:

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

- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.
- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

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

Examples of Unacceptable Use

I will **not**:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- Attempt to find inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarize content I find online.
- Post personally-identifying information, about myself or others.
- Agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that isn't intended for my use.

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

Limitation of Liability

Sumter County Schools will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

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

Sumter County Schools will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges

- Notification to parents
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities
- Legal action and/or prosecution



Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Agreement

STUDENT'S FULL NAME _____ SS# _____
Application Date _____ Homeroom Teacher _____
School _____ Grade _____
.....

Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Agreement: (If under 18 years of age.) Signature required for all students' Internet Access Privileges

As the parent or guardian of this child, I have read the Sumter County School Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Terms and Conditions. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes and that Sumter County Schools has taken some available precautions to eliminate controversial materials. I will **not** hold Sumter County Schools responsible for materials acquired on the Internet. I hereby give permission to issue Internet privileges for my child and certify that the information contained on this form is correct. I may withdraw my permission at any time and my child's access privileges will be canceled within 24 hours (working days only). I understand that Sumter County Schools may cancel my child's access privileges at any time for Internet policy violation.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

.....Student
Agreement:

I understand and will abide by Sumter County Schools Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy Terms and Conditions. I further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be initiated.

Student Signature

Date

User Name (Please Print): _____

AFFIRMATION OF KNOWLEDGE

I have **READ** and **STUDIED** the contents of this **HANDBOOK**. With my signature below, I am saying that I am aware of the:



- (1.) **Attendance (Absences and Excuses),**
- (2.) **Attendance Law,**
- (3.) **Car Rider Procedures,**
- (4.) **Checkout Procedures,**
- (5.) **Morning Procedures,**
- (6.) **Student Dress Code,**
- (7.) **Transportation Changes,**
- (8.) **SCS Student Behavior Code and the Offenses and Consequences,**
- (9.) **SCS Transportation Manual (Safe Student Riding Instructions),**
- (10.) **School Bus Discipline Policy,**
- (11.) **Cell Phone Policy,**
- (12.) **Promotion and Retention Policy,**
- (13.) **Computer Use/Appropriate Use Policy,**
- (14.) **Student Acceptable Use Guidelines,**
- (15.) **COVID-19 Procedures,**
- (16.) **Behavior Expectations Matrix, and**
- (17.) **Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy** at my child's school, **Sumter County Elementary.**

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE TOMORROW.

Parent/Guardian: _____

Student: _____

Date: _____

COMMENTS: _____



APPENDIX D

Student Educational Stability Supports

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education

Educational protections ensure immediate enrollment, school stability, transportation, and access to supports for students experiencing homelessness.

- Immediate enrollment
- School of origin
- Transportation
- Free meals when eligible
- Community referrals
- No discrimination

Foster Care Educational Stability

Students in foster care have rights to school stability, immediate enrollment, transportation, timely records transfer, and educational supports.

- School of origin
- Immediate enrollment
- Transportation
- Timely records
- Academic & SEL supports

District Contact

Dr. Adrienne Davis
District School Social Worker
adavis@sumterschools.org
229-924-1012



Sumter County Schools Accelerated Achievers Academy (SCSAAA)

Student & Family Handbook

2026–2027 School Year

Welcome to SCS Accelerated Achievers Academy

2026–2027 School Year



Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is with great excitement and gratitude that I welcome you to the 2026–2027 school year at **Accelerated Achievers Academy**. As the principal, I am honored to serve our students and families as we begin this exciting new chapter together.

Throughout my career as a teacher, school counselor, assistant principal, and now principal, I have always believed that every child deserves opportunities to be challenged, inspired, and supported. Accelerated Achievers Academy was created to provide those opportunities for gifted and advanced learners by fostering critical thinking, creativity, leadership, and academic excellence.

Our mission is **to challenge gifted and advanced learners to think critically, lead confidently, and succeed**. Every decision we make will be centered on what is best for students. We are committed to providing a caring, safe, and engaging learning environment where students are encouraged to take risks, explore new ideas, and reach their fullest potential.

The success of our academy depends on the strong partnership between home and school. I encourage you to stay involved, communicate openly with us, and celebrate your child's achievements along the way. Together, we can create a culture of excellence where students feel valued, supported, and empowered to achieve their goals.

As we work toward the **Sumter County Schools Vision of graduating all students college and career ready**, we will continue to hold high expectations while providing the support needed for every student to thrive. We believe learning is a lifelong journey, and we are excited to help our students develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to become productive citizens and future leaders.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. I look forward to building meaningful relationships with each of our families and making this an exceptional year of learning, growth, and achievement.

Welcome to the Accelerated Achievers Academy family—we are excited to soar to new heights together!

Warm regards,

Tawana W. Bettis, Principal
SCS Accelerated Achievers Academy

Letter from the Assistant Principal



Dear Accelerated Achievers Academy Students and Families,

Welcome to the **2026–2027 school year!** I am excited to welcome you to the **Accelerated Achievers Academy (AAA)**. Congratulations on being selected to join a community where **Excellence is the Standard!**

Our academy is designed to challenge students through rigorous, engaging, and enriched learning experiences that encourage critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and leadership. I am committed to ensuring that every student is supported, inspired, and given opportunities to reach their fullest potential.

Families are an essential part of our success, and I look forward to partnering with you throughout the school year. Together, we will create an environment where students are challenged academically, encouraged to grow, and celebrated for their achievements.

Students, I encourage you to work hard, ask questions, embrace new challenges, and always strive to do your best. This is going to be an incredible year, and I cannot wait to see all that you accomplish.

Thank you for being part of the Accelerated Achievers Academy family. Together, we will continue **Putting It All Back Together...Where Excellence is the Standard!**

Warmly,

Mrs. Brittany Brock

Assistant Principal

Coordinator, Accelerated Achievers Academy

Sumter County Elementary School

Sumter County Schools Accelerated Achievers Academy (SCSAAA)

We are proud to welcome you and your child to the inaugural 2026–2027 school year of the Sumter County Schools Accelerated Achievers Academy (SCSAAA). We look forward to a productive and exciting year as we work together to pursue excellence in academics, innovation, creativity, and rigor.

The faculty and staff at SCSAAA recognize that all students are unique learners. Our mission is to provide a learning environment that supports the academic, social, emotional, and developmental needs of gifted and advanced learners while preparing them to become successful, productive citizens in a global society.

A commitment to hard work, collaboration, and excellence among faculty, staff, students, families, and the community will ensure the continued success of our students.

Please contact the school office if we can assist you with any questions or concerns.

School Contact Information

Phone:(229) 924-7835

Address: 438 Bumphead Road Americus, Georgia 31719

Website: sces.sumterschools.org

Handbook Notice

This handbook is intended to serve as an addendum to the student handbook of each student's home school. Parents and families are encouraged to review and become familiar with all policies, procedures, expectations, and guidelines outlined in their child's home school handbook, as those policies remain applicable while participating in the Achievement Academy.

Gifted and Advanced Learning Services

Purpose

Sumter County Schools is committed to serving gifted and advanced learners in grades 3–6 who demonstrate exceptional ability, advanced academic potential, creativity, leadership, and high levels of motivation. Through enriched and accelerated learning experiences, SCSAAA provides students in grades 3–6 opportunities to extend beyond the standard curriculum and develop their unique talents and abilities.

Program Goals

The goals of SCSAAA are to:

6. Promote advanced academic achievement and intellectual growth.
7. Foster critical and creative thinking.
8. Encourage problem-solving and innovation.
9. Support social and emotional growth.
10. Provide rigorous and engaging instructional experiences.

11. Prepare students for future academic success and leadership opportunities.

Gifted Standards for Grades 3–6

Students participating in gifted services will:

- M. Develop advanced research skills.
- N. Practice creative thinking and innovative problem-solving.
- O. Strengthen critical thinking and analytical reasoning.
- P. Develop advanced communication skills using a variety of formats and technologies.
- Q. Build self-awareness and understand how their unique strengths influence interactions with others.

Eligibility & Continuation Criteria for the admission

Students should meet the following indicators:

- 10. Identified as Gifted Qualified according to state and district guidelines.
- 11. Scored at or above the 75th percentile on the STAR Reading and STAR Math assessments; or
- 12. Scored at or above the 90th percentile in either STAR Reading or STAR Math.
- 13. Earned a minimum final average of 85 in ELA, Reading, and Math, as applicable, during the previous grading period.

In addition, students should demonstrate readiness for a rigorous academic environment through the following:

- 8. No major discipline infractions during the current school year.
- 9. No more than three minor discipline referrals per semester.
- 10. Maintained at least 90% attendance, excluding documented medical or extenuating circumstances.
- 11. Earned satisfactory conduct/work habit ratings as reflected in report card data or through a standardized teacher recommendation rubric.

SCSAAA will utilize the below point system to ensure objective lens and every student is given an opportunity. The point system would:

- 5. Use a scoring rubric.
- 6. Assign weighted point values.
- 7. Ensure all applicants are evaluated using the same evidence sources.

Category	Points
Gifted Qualification	3
STAR Percentile	3
Grades	3
Attendance	3
Discipline	3

SCSAAA Program Commitment

Thank you for entrusting SCSAAA with your child's education. We are committed to creating a supportive and rigorous learning environment that recognizes and nurtures each student's strengths.

Families and students are expected to support the educational process by:

- Ensuring consistent attendance and punctuality
- Supporting academic success and positive behavior
- Maintaining communication with teachers and staff
- Participating in conferences and school events
- Encouraging responsibility, effort, and integrity

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Acknowledgement

I understand that my child is expected to follow all school and district policies and maintain appropriate academic and behavioral expectations.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date: _____

Student Signature:

Date: _____

School-Family Compact

The School-Family Compact outlines how families, students, and school staff will work together to support student achievement.

School Responsibilities

SCS AAA will:

- Provide high-quality instruction in a supportive learning environment.

- Maintain high expectations for all students.
- Communicate regularly regarding student progress.
- Provide opportunities for family involvement.
- Offer resources and strategies to support learning at home.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Families will:

- O. Support regular attendance and punctuality.
- P. Monitor student progress.
- Q. Communicate with teachers and staff.
- R. Encourage positive study habits and academic effort.
- S. Participate in school activities and conferences when possible.

Student Responsibilities

Students will:

1. Attend school prepared to learn.
2. Complete assignments and participate actively.
3. Demonstrate respect and responsibility.
4. Ask for help when needed.
5. Work toward academic and personal growth.

Student Signature:

Date: -----

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date: -----

School Representative Signature:

Date: -----