

## DISCIPLINE

The teacher is in full charge of the classroom as well as proper conduct throughout the building and grounds. The teacher is primarily responsible for the maintenance of discipline of students under their authority.

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

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

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

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

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

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

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 Option.

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

As required by the Georgia General Assembly, parents and guardians are encouraged to inform their children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

### **Standards for Student Behavior**

Standards for student behavior are designed to create the expectation that students will behave themselves in such a way so as to facilitate a positive learning environment for themselves and other students. The standards are designed also to encourage students to respect each other and school district employees, to motivate students to obey student behavior policies adopted by this board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within this school district.

## **Behavioral Expectations**

Each student is expected to:

- Demonstrate courtesy with all individuals regardless of circumstances, even when others do not;
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline;
- Attend all classes regularly and on time;
- Prepare for each class by taking appropriate materials and assignments;
- Meet the Rabun County High School standard of grooming and dress;
- Respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and other employees of Rabun County Schools;
- Respect the property of others, including Rabun County Schools property and facilities;
- Cooperate and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline; and
- Refrain from committing violations of the Code of Student Conduct.

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

The disciplinary procedures outlined in this behavior code are clearly stated to insure that all students are aware of unacceptable behavior that is in violation of school district policies and the consequences of such policy violations. Offenses are classified as Level One, Level Two, or Level Three.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

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

**Battery:** Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person.

**Bullying:** In accordance with Georgia law, bullying is defined as an act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

- (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
- (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
- (3) Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;

- b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
- c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

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

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

**Disciplinary Tribunal:** School officials appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact finder and judge with respect to student disciplinary matters.

**Dress Code:** The current dress code is explained in the student handbook.

**Drug:** The term drug does not include prescriptions issued to the individual, aspirin or similar medications and/or cold medications that are taken according to product use recommendations and board policy. Caffeine pills are considered drugs.

**Expulsion:** Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school quarter or semester. Such action may be taken only by a disciplinary tribunal.

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

**Fireworks:** The term "fireworks" means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance.

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

**Hazardous Object:** This term includes any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, 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 term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

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

**Physical Violence:** Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another: or intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another.

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

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

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

**Weapons:** The term weapon is defined in criminal Code Section 16-11-127.1 and for the purpose of this handbook 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.

## **LEVEL ONE**

Student offenses classified as Level One are those that threaten the safety of students and staff, disrupt the orderly school environment, and/or may result in injury or loss of property.

Level One Offenses include:

- Possession of a weapon in a school safety zone
- Possession of a firearm in a school safety zone as defined by 18 U.S.C. § 921. A student who possesses a firearm, bomb, or other dangerous weapon as defined in the criminal code will be subject to a one calendar year expulsion from school.
- Unlawful use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol, including, but not limited to:
  - o Possession, distribution, sale, attempted sale, use, and/or under the influence of narcotics, alcohol, stimulants, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, drug paraphernalia or other intoxicant.
  - o Sale, attempted sale, distribution, or being under the influence of a prescription or over the counter drug.
  - o Possession, distribution, attempted sale or sale of substances represented as drugs or alcohol.
- Possession of fireworks or any explosive.
- Verbal assault, including threats of violence or bodily harm and/or sexual assault or harassment, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions
- Physical assault or battery, including sexual battery, of other students, or persons attending school-related functions
- Physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel:
- Any off-campus behavior of a student which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process.

- Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of the school or to personal property of any person legitimately at school.
- Marking, defacing, or destroying school property.
- Stealing, theft, or extortion of school district property or the property of others.
- Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, leaving campus without permission, failure to comply with compulsory attendance law
- Bullying, Georgia law mandates that upon a tribunal finding that student in grade 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.
- Willful and persistent violation of the student code of conduct.

## **LEVEL TWO**

Student offenses classified as Level Two are serious violations of the behavior code. Level Two offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Possession of a hazardous object in a school safety zone;
- Disrespectful conduct toward teachers, administrators, and other school personnel, including use of vulgar or profane language;
- Fighting;
- Possession/use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, or vapor products.
- Violation of school dress code.
- Disruption of the orderly school environment, including but not limited to the inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts or harassing other students or any school employee.
- Failure to comply with the local and district-wide provisions relating to the use of the electronic communication network as defined by policy IFBG - Internet Acceptable Use;
- Leaving campus without proper authorization.
- Failure to comply with compulsory attendance as required under Code Section 20-2-690.1 and the Rabun County Schools Attendance Protocol.
- Repeated occurrence of offenses listed under Level Three.
- Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat
- Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives;
- Disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff
- Classroom and school disturbances
- Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words or indecent exposure

- Use during instructional time of cell phone or electronic communication device, except for health or other reasons approved by an administrator
- Moving and non-moving driving violations
- Giving false information to school officials
- Chronic disciplinary problems

Before a student is suspended (in-school or out-of-school) 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 (in-school or out-of-school), a reasonable attempt will be made to notify the student's parents.

### **LEVEL THREE**

Offenses classified as Level Three are less serious violations of the Behavior Code. Offenses classified as Level Three include, but are not limited to:

- Public affection;
- Gambling;
- Cheating;
- Violation of the Rabun County High School dress code;
- Forgery;
- Possession of explicit/obscene material;
- Profanity;
- Any behavior which disrupts the learning environment of the classroom or school not listed as a major offense.

## **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:

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges

- Time Out
- Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Detention
- Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- Short-term Suspension
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- 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.

Parents 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 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 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, school lockers, desks and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without further notice to students or parents. Cell phones/multi-media/electronic devices taken from students due to possession and or use in violation of school rules are subject to having their contents searched. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of administrators.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESS**

Student support processes are designed to consider, as appropriate in light of the severity of the behavioral problem, support services available at each school, the school district and other public entities or community organizations which may assist students to address behavior problems;

Rabun County Schools provides a variety of resources to help address student behavioral problems. These resources include Student Support Teams, school counselors, principal and assistant principal, chronic disciplinary problem student plans, and the Rabun County Schools Attendance Protocol.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROCESSES**

Parental involvement processes are designed to enable parents, guardians, teachers, and school administrators to work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance. The process should enable parents, guardians, and school employees to communicate freely their concerns about student behaviors which detract from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contacts is extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents, as well as ongoing opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments.

Parents and students should contact the principal of the school if specific questions arise related to the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code which may result in a school staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference.

Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior.

Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem, the principal shall notify by telephone call and by mail the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call and by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent/guardian to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

Rabun County Schools shall involve parents in updating student codes of conduct. Each code shall require disciplinary action for each infraction of the code.

## BUS CONDUCT

The student behavior code applies to all school district transportation and at school bus stops. Many of the violations of the student behavior code will result in immediate removal from any school bus transportation. The following are additional provisions prescribing and governing student conduct and safety rules on all school buses and at school bus stops:

- Students shall be prohibited from acts of physical violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined by subsection (a) of Code Section 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior;
- Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players ; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and
- Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

If a student is found to have engaged in physical acts of violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, the student shall be subject to the penalties set forth in that Code Section. The consequences for physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel may include expulsion for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public schools.

A meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and appropriate school officials must be held to form a school bus behavior contract whenever:

- A student is found to have engaged in bullying; or
- A student is found to have engaged in a physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus.

The school bus behavior contract shall provide for age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Provisions may include, but are not limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, a suspension from riding the bus, and suspension from school. These provisions regarding use of a bus behavior contract are not to be construed to limit the instances when other code of conduct violations may require use of a student bus behavior contract.

Other infractions of bus conduct rules include:

- Failure to remain seated;
- Eating or drinking on the bus;
- Putting any part of the body outside a window;
- Consistent tardiness to bus stop;
- Unnecessary noise;
- Loading or unloading at unassigned stops; and/or

- Refusal to sit in assigned seat.

Disciplinary actions by an administrator include, but are not limited to:

- Conference with student;
- Conference with parent/guardian;
- Detention;
- Saturday School;
- In-school Suspension;
- Suspension from the bus transportation system; or
- Suspension from School.

Bus referrals are cumulative over the school year. Recommended action includes, but is not limited to:

- First referral - Form sent to parents;
- Second referral - Suspension for five days from the bus;
- Third referral - Suspension for nine days from the bus; and
- Fourth referral - Suspension from the bus for the remainder of the school year.

# **RABUN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

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## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Revised: August 2015