# Agenda Request Form

Cherokee County School District

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item Number |
|---|---|
| July 20, 2017 | C-1 |

## Title

Approval of 2017-18 Modifications to School Board Policies (15) and New Debt Management Policy (DFF) - - on Final Reading

## Requested Action

School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of 2017-18 Modifications to School Board Policies (15) and New Debt Management (DFF) Policy- - on Final Reading

## Summary Explanation and Background

As a result of annual review of School Board policies to ensure continued alignment with State and Federal Laws/regulations, the attached modifications and technical revisions to Board Policies CEI, DCL, EE, EEA, EED, EEE, FDBD, GAK, GAMB, GBKA, IDCH, IHC, IHE, JCAB and JHCC are recommended by the Superintendent for Board approval.

Additionally, a comprehensive Debt Management (DFF) Policy, as recommended by the School Board's independent auditor, financial advisor and credit rating agencies is recommended by the Superintendent for School Board approval.

## Major System Priority

Increasing Accountability

## Financial Impact

N/A

## Exhibits: (List)

Executive Summary of Changes to Attached Policies

| Board Action | Source of Additional Information |
|---|---|
| *(For Official School Board Records Only)* | Dr. Brian V. Hightower (770) 479-1871<br>Mike McGowan (770) 479-1871<br>Tom Roach (770) 479-1406 |

## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Approved in Open Board Meeting on: _____
(Date)

By: _____
(School Board Chairman)

*Initialized: 3/3/99*
*Revised: 2/1/16*

| BOARD POLICY - - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | |
|---|---|
| **CEI**<br>Superintendent Evaluation | Modifies Policy to align with the School Board's current practices and procedures. |
| **DCL**<br>Fund Balance | Modifies Policy to include formulation of a plan for replenishment of fund balances when applicable. |
| **DFF (New)**<br>Debt Management | New Policy establishes comprehensive debt management practices as recommended by the School Board's independent auditor, financial advisor and credit rating agencies. |
| **EE**<br>School Nutrition Management | Modifies Policy to include current practices and standardized language. |
| **EEA**<br>Free and Reduced Price Meals | Modifies Policy to include current practices and standardized language. |
| **EED**<br>Vending Machines | Modifies Policy to include current practices and standardized language and applicable statutory reference. |
| **EEE**<br>Student Wellness Program | Modifies Policy to include current practices and standardized language and applicable statutory reference. |
| **FDBD**<br>Enrollment Projections | Modifies Policy to include current practices and standardized language. |
| **GAK**<br>Personnel Records | Modifies Policy to include current practices and standardized language. |
| **GAMB**<br>Possession and Use of Weapons | Modifies Policy to include new statutory exception. |
| **GBKA**<br>Personnel Reduction in Force | Modifies Policy to include standardized language. |
| **IDCH**<br>Move on When Ready | Aligns Policy provisions with State requirements and further delineates local school district requirements. |
| **IHC**<br>Class Rankings | Modifies Policy to include Move on When Ready students' statutory-required eligibility requirements and standardizes language. |
| **IHE**<br>Pupil Progression | Modifies Policy to align provisions with Class Rankings Policy IHC and to include current practices. |
| **JCAB**<br>Student Interviews and Searches | Modifies Policy to include current practices and standardized language. |

## BOARD POLICY - - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

| JHCC | Modifies Policy to include current practices and standardized language. |
| --- | --- |
| Student Publications | |

~~Each December,~~ On an annual basis, the School Board will hold a meeting ~~shall be held~~ with the Superintendent of Schools for the purpose of conducting a formal evaluation. This evaluation ~~shall~~ will result in a document stating the effectiveness of the Superintendent in the performance of duties and in carrying out goals and objectives ~~as prescribed by the Board of Education~~ as agreed upon by the Superintendent and School Board.

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**

**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

The Cherokee County Board of Education recognizes that maintenance of fund balance is essential to preservation of the financial integrity of the School District and is fiscally advantageous for both the School District and local taxpayers~~. This policy establishes~~ by establishing goals and ~~provides~~ providing guidance concerning the desired level of fund balance to be maintained by the School District. This mitigates financial risk that can occur from unforeseen revenue fluctuations, unanticipated expenditures and similar circumstances. The School District also seeks to maintain the highest possible credit ratings which are dependent, in part, on the School District's maintenance of an adequate fund balance.

Fund balance is a measurement of available financial resources and is the difference between total assets and total liabilities in each fund.

Beginning with the most restrictive constraints, fund balance amounts will be reported in the following categories:

1) **Nonspendable fund balance –** amounts that are not in a spendable form (e.g., inventory) or are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact (e.g., permanent fund principal).

2) **Restricted fund balance –** amounts that can be spent only for the specific purposes stipulated by external parties either constitutionally or through enabling legislation (e.g., grants or donations).

3) **Committed fund balance –** amounts that can be used only for specific purposes determined by a formal action of the ~~Cherokee County Board of Education~~ School Board. Commitments may be changed or lifted only by referring to the formal action that imposed the constraint originally (e.g., the School District's commitment in connection with future construction projects).

4) **Assigned fund balance –** amounts intended to be used by the School District for specific purposes. Intent can be expressed by the ~~Cherokee County Board of Education~~ School Board or ~~by a~~ its designee. ~~to whom the Cherokee County Board of Education delegates the authority.~~ In governmental funds other than the general fund, assigned fund balance represents the amount that is not restricted or committed. This indicates that resources in other governmental funds are, at a minimum, intended to be used for the purpose of that fund.

5) **Unassigned fund balance –** includes all amounts not contained in other classifications and is the residual classification of the general fund only. Unassigned amounts are available for any legal purpose.

The responsibility for designating funds to specific classifications ~~shall~~ will be as follows:

**Committed Fund Balance** – The ~~Cherokee County Board of Education~~ School Board is the School District's highest level of decision-making authority, and the action is required to be taken to establish, modify, or rescind a fund balance commitment is a resolution approved by the Board.

**Assigned Fund Balance** – The ~~Board of Education~~ School Board authorizes the Superintendent and ~~the Assistant Superintendent for Financial Management~~ Chief Financial Officer as officials authorized to assign fund balance to a specific purpose, as approved by this fund balance policy.

It is the initial goal of the School District to achieve and maintain an unassigned fund balance in the General Fund at fiscal year-end of not less than 12-15% of prior year general fund budgeted expenditures and not to exceed 15% of the total budget of the subsequent fiscal year, net of any committed reserve balance for capital expenditures and assigned fund balances "to cover unanticipated deficiencies in revenue or unanticipated expenditures," in compliance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-167(a)5. If the total of the unassigned, assigned, and committed fund balances (net of the previous allowances) at fiscal year-end falls below this goal, the School District ~~shall~~ will take action to restore the unassigned fund balance to the minimum level within two fiscal years following the fiscal year in which the event occurred. The School District will develop a plan to replenish the affected fund balance(s) and include the plan in a five-year forecast presented to the School Board during the annual budget development process. ~~short and long range restoration plan to achieve and maintain the minimum fund balance.~~ Unbudgeted Activity funds ~~shall~~ will be excluded from the calculation.

- This amount provides adequate funding to cover approximately three months of operating expenses.
- This amount is intended to provide ~~provides~~ the liquidity necessary to accommodate the District's uneven cash flow, which is inherent in its periodic tax collection schedule.
- This amount is intended to provide ~~provides~~ the liquidity necessary to respond to contingent liabilities.
- This amount may provide additional resources for other funds.

When multiple categories of fund balance are available for expenditure (e.g., a project is being funded partly by a grant, funds set aside by the ~~Cherokee County Board of Education~~ School Board~~,~~ and unassigned fund balance), the School District will start with the most restricted category and spend those funds first before moving down to the next category with available funds.

---

**APPROVED: September 1, 2011**

**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

**BOARD POLICY** **Descriptor Code: DFF**
**Debt Management**

The Cherokee County Board of Education recognizes the foundation of a well-managed debt program is a comprehensive debt policy. Because issuing debt commits the School District's future revenues, and may limit its flexibility to respond to changing service priorities, revenue inflows, and cost structures, adherence to a debt policy can serve to ensure maintenance of a sound financial position and that credit quality is protected.

This policy sets forth the parameters for issuing and managing debt and provides guidance regarding the timing and purposes for which debt may be issued, types and amounts of permissible debt, method of sale that may be used and structural features that may be incorporated. The policy provides the structure and guidance through which the School District commits to full and timely repayment of all short- and long-term debt.

Georgia law provides the authorizations and requirements for debt issuances by Georgia School Districts. These specific statutory requirements are referenced throughout the debt policy, as applicable. However, these requirements can be affected by changes in Georgia law as well as legal precedence, court decisions and opinions issued by the Georgia Attorney General and State Auditor and will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

## I. Conditions for Issuing Short-Term Debt

The School Board, as it deems necessary, may approve a resolution authorizing short-term borrowing of funds for school purposes. The School District will limit its short-term borrowing to cover projected cash flow shortages in the general fund through the issuance of Tax Anticipation Notes (TANS). Also, when the School District has an approved Special Purpose Local Optional Sales Tax (SPLOST), short-term borrowing may occur to allow the School District to begin building construction before the sales taxes that are funding the project are collected. (Georgia Constitution, Article IX, Section V, Paragraph V). An analysis will be conducted to determine the best funding alternative, which could include certain allowable interfund borrowing.

The aggregate amount of such borrowing outstanding at any one time will not exceed 75% of the total tax revenue collected in the prior year. The borrowing must be repaid by December 31 of each calendar year.

## II. Conditions for Issuing Long-Term Debt

Debt financing for capital improvements and equipment generally may be appropriate when the following conditions exist:

- When one-time, non-continuous projects (those not requiring annual appropriations) are desired;

- When the School District determines that future users will receive the benefit of the capital improvement so that the cost of the improvement is appropriately paid by those future users;
- When the project is necessary to provide basic services to the County's residents and students; or,
- When total debt, including debt issued by overlapping governments (e.g., Cherokee County), does not constitute an unreasonable burden to the County's taxpayers.

## III. Types of Long-Term Debt

Long-Term Debt may include, but not be limited, to the following:

- General Obligation Bonds;
- Intergovernmental Revenue Bonds;
- Certificates of Participation; and,
- Lease and Installment Purchase Debt.

## IV. Limitation on Long-Term Debt Issuance

Georgia law limits the amount of general obligation debt that the School District may issue to 10% of the assessed value of all taxable property located within the boundaries of the School District (Georgia Constitution, Article 9, Section 5, Paragraph 1). The School District will endeavor to keep all outstanding obligations, general obligation debt and other obligations, below 2.0% of total value of all taxable property, but not to exceed 2.5%.

In order to not stress the annual operating budget, the ratio of annual debt service expenditures as a percent of annual operating expenditures will not exceed 12%; however, if SPLOST revenues are utilized, the ratio will not exceed 15%.

At such time as indebtedness is incurred, the School Board will provide for the assessment and collection of an annual tax sufficient to retire the principal and pay the related interest within 30 years from the date of issuance.

The amount of general long-term debt financing for capital assets will not exceed 100% of the fair market value of the assets nor should the average life of the debt exceed the average life of the asset(s).

Section 20-2-506(a)(4) of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated provides that lease and installment purchase contracts subject to annual appropriation must contain provisions limiting the total combined annual payments for such contracts and intergovernmental contracts in any calendar year to 7.5% of the total local revenue collected for maintenance and operation of the School District in the most recently completed fiscal year.

The School District agrees that, to the extent allowed by applicable law, so long as any of the Bonds are outstanding, it will not incur any additional debt or obligation of the School District payable from any State of Georgia appropriation to which the School District may be entitled unless the amount of any appropriation to which the School District has been entitled for a period of 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the adoption of the proceedings authorizing the issuance of such additional debt or obligation has been equal to at least twice the maximum annual debt service amount for any succeeding year on the Bonds and any other outstanding debt or obligation then outstanding payable from such appropriation and on the additional debt or obligation proposed to be issued.

## V. Sound Financing of Debt

When the School District utilizes debt financing, the following activities will occur and be presented to the School Board at an official meeting to ensure the debt is structured appropriately:

- Analysis of the financial impact, both short-term and long-term, of issuing the debt to include the Debt-to-Total Value, Debt Service-to-Expenditures and Payout Ratio calculations;
- Conservatively projecting the revenue sources that the School District will use to repay the debt;
- Ensuring the term of any long-term debt the School District incurs will not exceed the expected useful life of the asset the debt financed;
- Maintaining a debt service coverage ratio (i.e., for sales tax revenue secured debt) that ensures the revenues intended for the repayment of the outstanding debt will be adequate to make the required debt service payments; and,
- Projecting the long-term millage rate impact for all existing and proposed general obligation bonds.

## VI. Debt Features

The School District's bonds may be issued at a discount or premium, in order to market its bonds more effectively, achieve interest cost savings and/or meet other financing objectives. The School District's bonds may include redemption features which would allow the School District to refinance debt more easily when interest rates drop.

A decision to use the Intercept Program or bond insurance is purely an economic decision. The Intercept Program is free to all Georgia school systems so the decision as to whether to use the Program for the School District's General Obligation Bonds is based on the enhanced ratings under the Program compared to the School District's underlying ratings and investor reception of the enhanced rating at the time of bond pricing. For bond insurance, the analysis compares the present value of the interest savings to the cost of the

insurance premium. Such insurance should be purchased when the premium cost is less than the projected interest savings.

The School District will use either variable or fixed-rate debt to finance its capital needs. If variable rate debt is used, the outstanding debt will be no more than 10% of the total debt outstanding for the School District.

## VII. Refunding Debt

The School District will consider refunding outstanding debt when the net present value savings (net of issuance costs and any other cash contribution), as a percentage of the refunded bonds is at least 3%. In evaluating any potential refunding, the School District will also consider the current market conditions, the term to call date and, in the case of an advance refunding, future debt plans. Also, the School District may consider refunding outstanding debt (excluding general obligation bonds) when they wish to change the amortization schedule of the outstanding debt or to remove restrictive bond covenants on existing outstanding debt.

## VIII. Debt Retirement

Generally, borrowings by the School District will be of a duration that does not exceed the economic life of the capital improvement that it finances and will be structured to minimize interest cost. The School District will also structure the repayment of debt to consider future financing needs and debt service requirements. The School District will design the repayment of debt so as to recapture rapidly its credit capacity for future use. The School District will target a payout ratio, defined as the amount of principal paid off in the next ten years divided by the total debt outstanding, of 60% of annual debt service payments.

## IX. Full Disclosure

The School District will follow a policy of full disclosure and transparency in financial reporting and with the preparation of Preliminary Official Statements and Final Official Statements.

If the School District issues a direct bank placement it will voluntarily report this on the Electronic Municipal Market Access "EMMA" system.

## X. Legal Compliance

When issuing debt, the School District will comply with all legal requirements, including continuing disclosure requirements, as applicable. This compliance includes adherence to local, state and federal legislation and bond covenants.

More specifically, the School District's Chief Financial Officer is responsible for maintaining a system of record keeping and reporting to meet the arbitrage rebate

compliance requirements of the federal tax code. This effort includes tracking investment earnings on bond proceeds, calculating rebate payments in compliance with tax law, and remitting any rebatable earnings to the federal government in a timely manner in order to preserve the tax-exempt status of the School District's outstanding debt issues. Additionally, general financial reporting and certification requirements embodied in bond covenants are monitored to ensure compliance with all covenants.

The School District will comply with Amended SEC Rule 15c2-12 (the "Rule") by providing secondary market disclosure for all long-term debt obligations, which are subject to the Rule. As required, the School District will submit annual financial information to all nationally recognized municipal securities repositories pursuant to the Rule, on a timely basis.

## XI. Credit Ratings

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for maintaining relationships with the credit rating agencies that assign ratings to the School District's various debt obligations. This effort includes providing periodic updates on the School District's general financial condition along with coordinating meetings and presentations in conjunction with new debt issuance.

Credit ratings are the rating agencies' assessment of the School District's ability and willingness to repay debt on a timely basis. Credit ratings are an important indicator in the credit markets and can influence interest rates the School District must pay. Each of the rating agencies believes that debt management is a positive factor in evaluating issuers and assigning credit ratings. Therefore, implementing debt management practices will be viewed positively by the rating agencies and may influence the School District's credit rating and, ultimately, lower borrowing costs.

## XII. Method of Sale

The School District will select a method of sale that is the most appropriate in light of financial, market, transaction-specific and issuer-related conditions. Based on information provided by the Financial Advisor, the Chief Financial Officer is authorized to determine the most advantageous process for the marketing and placement of the School District's debt. Methods of sale include, but are not limited to, competitive sales, negotiated sales, direct bank loans and lease/purchase agreements.

## XIII. Using Financial Specialists

The School District may employ outside financial specialists to assist it in developing a bond issuance strategy, preparing bond documents, and marketing bonds to investors.

## XIV. Delegation and Authority

The School Board will delegate the responsibility for managing the School District's debt program to the Superintendent who may further delegate to appropriate staff members.

---

**PROPOSED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

## I. Purpose of the School Nutrition ~~Food Service~~ Program

The purpose of the School Nutrition ~~Food Service~~ Program is to:

- Encourage the maintenance and improvement of the health and nutrition of children by supporting the implementation of nutritionally adequate, educationally sound, financially accountable, non-profit school food and nutrition programs.
- Work for the highest standards for school food and nutrition programs with an emphasis on nutritionally sound meals that are acceptable to students.
- Encourage and promote united efforts between school personnel and the general public to assure every child an opportunity to receive the benefits of school food and nutrition programs incorporating nutrition education.
- Encourage and develop the highest standards and provide appropriate educational programs for professional growth of the school food and nutrition personnel.
- Promote legislation and research designed to foster adequate school nutrition programs.
- Assist in making the school nutrition program a laboratory for nutrition education and other related educational activities.

## II. Direction of ~~Lunchrooms~~ Cafeterias

The cafeterias ~~lunchrooms~~ operate under the direction of the principals. Each principal recommends personnel, monitors the program on a daily basis, determines the most efficient schedules and procedures to accelerate the flow of the cafeteria ~~lunch~~ lines, and is responsible for the supervision of the students. The School Nutrition Director ~~Food Service Supervisor~~, monitors the kitchen facilities, equipment, and the safety and sanitation of food.

## III. Reimbursable Meals

Each school serves a healthy meal that meets federal and state meal pattern requirements. ~~the approval of the School and Community Nutrition Program of the Georgia Department of Education.~~ Every effort is made to provide reimbursable meals to every student and utilize USDA foods in meal planning. ~~qualify for state reimbursement and for surplus food from the Federal Government.~~

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**

**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

**Free and Reduced Price Meals ~~Food Service~~**

The Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program ~~shall~~ will be operated in accordance with ~~the policies recommended by~~ state and federal guidelines through the Georgia Department of Education, School Nutrition Division. ~~the School and Community Nutrition Program of the Georgia Department of Education.~~

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**

**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**~~Cross Ref.: Also JGHA - Free Food Service~~**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

To safeguard the health and safety of students, the operation of vending machines or concession stands during the school day ~~shall~~ will be in compliance with the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards as outlined in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. ~~USDA regulations.~~

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**

**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

**Board Policy** **Descriptor Code: EEE**

**Student Wellness Program**

The Board of Education recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

## I. Nutrition Guidelines

~~To the extent practicable~~ Recognizing the importance of student wellness and proper nutrition Cherokee County School District supports ~~all schools in the district shall participate~~ participation in the National School Lunch and Breakfast program in all schools, as well as other Federal school meal programs for which schools qualify. ~~available federal school meal programs~~. All foods and beverages made available for purchase on campus during the school day ~~shall~~ will be in compliance ~~consistent~~ with the Smart Snacks in Schools regulations as required for participation in the National School Lunch program. ~~requirements of federal and state law~~. Standards may also be established for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day, as well as policies for food and beverage marketing to students. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals ~~shall~~ will not be less restrictive than regulations ~~and guidance~~ issued by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and any applicable updates to federal policy, ~~U.S. Secretary pursuant to the Child Nutrition Act and the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act~~, as those regulations and guidance apply to schools. The superintendent or designee ~~shall~~ will develop procedures for operation of the school ~~food services~~ nutrition program at each school during the day with the objectives of promoting school health and reducing childhood obesity.

## II. Nutrition Education

It is the intent of the Board that the district ~~shall~~ will teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Schools ~~shall~~ will provide nutrition education consistent with federal and state requirements and engage in nutrition promotion aimed at attainment of goals as described in guidelines established for these purposes and contained in the Principals' Handbook.

## III. Physical Education

All students in grades K-12 ~~shall~~ will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis. The district will provide physical education consistent with federal and state requirements and engage in promotion of physical activities aimed at attainment of goals as described in guidelines established for these purposes and contained in the Principals' Handbook.

## IV. Other School-Based Activities

The superintendent or designee ~~shall~~ will develop procedures that promote attainment of goals related to other school-based activities to promote wellness as described in guidelines established for these purposes and contained in the Principals' Handbook.

## V. Implementation

The Superintendent or designee ~~shall~~ will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the local school wellness policy and ~~shall~~ will develop procedures for evaluation, including indicators that may be used to measure the schools' success in meeting the goals contained in the Principals' Handbook. ~~In each school,~~ ~~t~~The principal or designee ~~shall~~ will be charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school works toward meeting the goals set within the local wellness policy at the individual school level and ~~shall~~ will report on the school's compliance to the Superintendent or designee.

School ~~food service~~ Nutrition Program staff at the school or district level ~~shall~~ will monitor compliance with nutrition ~~guidelines~~ regulations ~~within school food service areas~~ and will report on this matter to the Superintendent at the district level, or to the school principal at the school level.

---

**APPROVED: April 20, 2006**

**REVISED: June/July 2017**

The Cherokee County Board of Education utilizes its facilities and establishes school attendance areas based upon current and projected enrollment, total student population and core capacity of facilities. Accordingly, the Superintendent will oversee processes by which the School District determines critically overcrowded schools and recommend appropriate solutions for subsequent utilization of the facilities.

## I. STANDARDS FOR DETERMINING CRITICALLY OVERCROWDED SCHOOLS

1. Utilizing short- and long-term student enrollment projections and ~~After~~ the 20-day student enrollment count of each school year, the Superintendent will evaluate ~~the~~ impact of projected and actual student enrollment ~~and~~ to determine critically overcrowded schools.

2. Schools will be deemed critically overcrowded when they exceed, or projected to exceed, 140% of their enrollment capacity, as reflected in the Cherokee County Inventory of School Housing (CCISH) and when they meet other criteria affecting overall capacity including, but not limited to the following: Available portables, classrooms needed for special programs, site limitations, cafeteria and other core capacity (e.g., parking, student lockers, cafeteria usage, water/septic/sewer requirements, space available for additional portables, etc.).

3. A current school attendance area map, present and projected student population demographic dates, a copy of the CCISH, and the current inventory of portables will be supplied to each critically overcrowded school for review by the principal, staff, and community.

4. As a part of an inclusive review process, the principal of each critically overcrowded school will consider strategies from the following menu for addressing critical overcrowding and forward all stakeholder-identified options to the Deputy Superintendent.

    a. Additional portables (dependent upon available portables and/or available funds to purchase, move, and/or hookup portables to be provided by the school district.

    b. Enrollment capping (i.e., school cannot accommodate any more students and new students will be assigned to designated schools that are less crowded).

    c. Flexible school day/week/monthly/year scheduling (including, but not limited to):
        (1) Extended school day
            (a)Multiple period high school day
            (b)Double sessions
        (2) Multi-track year round education program
        (3) ½ day Kindergarten
        (4) Dual enrollment programs with institutions of higher learning
        (5) Other school day/week/month/year models that may be identified through this

process.

d. Attendance area changes (in conjunction with the Attendance Area Focus Group Process).

e. Reconfigured grades/educational programs and sites, dependent on available capital funds to be provided by the school district and/or other individuals/groups/entities (including, but not limited to):

(1) Kindergarten Center
(2) Primary Grade Center (e.g., K-1, K-2, 1-2)
(3) Intermediate Grade Center (e.g., 3-5, 5-6)
(4) K-8 Center
(5) Single Grade Center (e.g., 6,9)
(6) Other configurations that may be identified by the principal, staff, and community through this process

f. Managing the overcrowded condition and employing methods to reduce the negative impact.

g. Other proposed options that will achieve the desired result (i.e., relieve overcrowding…without having to allocate additional capital outlay resources that are not available).

5. Alternative student enrollment options that impact other schools must be recommended collaboratively by both sending and receiving schools.

6. Criteria for determining preferred alternative student enrollment options for critically overcrowded schools include, but are not limited to, a review of the following:

a. Welfare, health and safety of students and faculty/staff
b. Impact on the overall facility, (including ingress and egress problems)
c. Impact on facility core, such as campus cafeteria and media center
d. Amount of funding dedicated to the classroom through the instructional allocation (including, but not limited to, books, equipment, supplies and educational material).
e. Number of floating teachers
f. Divided/partitioned classrooms
g. Full classroom use of small rooms (e.g., resource rooms, conference rooms)
h. Class size (student/teacher/paraprofessional ratio)
i. Number of available portables and their impact on student learning potential and staff morale.

j. Site acreage

k. Playground/sports/recreation areas

l. Planned future renovations and /or replacement of facility

m. Restroom facilities

n. Impact on community/neighborhood

o. Analysis of fiscal impact

7. The ~~Deputy Superintendent~~ Chief of Support Services will insure that the principal facilitates the following:

   a. Meets with the shareholders to review all options viewed as appropriate.

   b. Schedules day and evening presentations for stakeholders with equal time for each option deemed appropriate.

   c. Gains broad consensus on ~~the top three rank ordered~~ proposed alternative student enrollment options among staff, parents, and other stakeholders. If consensus cannot be reached, the Deputy Superintendent will make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools on a proposed alternative student enrollment option.

   d. Observes the pre-determined deadline for a recommendation in this regard to the Superintendent.

8. The Superintendent will make a recommendation if deemed necessary to the School Board regarding attendance area adjustments.

## II. STANDARDS FOR ADDRESSING AND MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

1. The Superintendent and School Board will give developers of new residential subdivisions the opportunity to mitigate their impact upon the school district. Residents of any development in which the developer has chosen not to provide the requested level of mitigation that would offset some of the impact of said development will be given priority status for implementation of the aforementioned options.

2. A local governmental entity seeking School Board approval to establish a Tax Allocation District (TAD) or other authorized measure designed or intended to intercept or seek Board approval to intercept school funding ("Tax Intercept Program" "TIP") is required to submit a written proposal in this regard to the School Board. The TIP proposal of such local governmental entity must be approved by the School Board prior to TIP implementation and must adhere to the following requirements:

- every local governmental entity seeking School Board approval of a proposed TIP is required to provide the public with timely, official notice regarding the manner in which TIP revenue will be generated (i.e., by freezing School District property taxes at current levels for the prescribed number of years authorized in the TIP);

- except as otherwise approved by the School Board, each TIP must be limited to development of public and commercial property (not residential);

- for the School District's strategic planning, budgeting and accountability purposes, all TIP financial/tax data (including the most recent three-year property appraisal data for all property within the proposed TIP) must be delineated in the proposal; additionally, the proposed TIP must also reflect the estimated amount of future revenue which will be lost by the School District for each year of TIP implementation . . . both at the proposal stage and, on an updated/actual basis, each year thereafter;

- the amount of time for a TIP to be utilized must be limited to no more than 20 years; and,

- a School District representative appointed by the Superintendent must be included on the local governmental entity's TIP planning committee for these purposes.

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**
**REVISED: ~~September 1, 2016~~ June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

## Personnel Records/Employees

The Cherokee County Board of Education requires all employees to provide any and all employment-related documents as requested by the School District and to promptly provide notice of any change in certification or licensure, name, home address, tax withholding status or other information pertaining to employment.

## Personnel Records/Confidentiality

An employee may be required to access personnel records containing confidential information as a function of his or her job duties. Confidential information is any data or information which is not readily available to the general public or which could constitute an invasion of privacy, whether in verbal, paper, electronic or any other format. Any disclosure of confidential information must be in accordance with protocols as set forth by State, Federal and/or Local statutory requirements.

~~The following information must be filed in the Superintendent's office immediately upon employment:~~

1. ~~Superintendent's copy of teaching certificate.~~
2. ~~Retirement application.~~
3. ~~Social Security number.~~
4. ~~Tax exemption slips, state and federal.~~
5. ~~Employment Date form.~~
6. ~~Request for group insurance (enrollment or declination).~~
7. ~~College transcripts.~~
8. ~~Date of birth.~~
9. ~~I-9 form.~~
10. ~~Cafeteria Plan form.~~
11. ~~Workers' Compensation Eligibility form.~~

~~Each employee is held responsible for reporting immediately in writing any change in certificate, name, home address, or withholding tax status.~~

## ~~RELEASE OF SENSITIVE CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENTATION BY SYSTEM EMPLOYEES~~

~~In order to protect confidentiality rights of employees, administrators, teachers and students, no employee shall release to any individual Board Member or subcommittee of the Board of Education, any document, documents or information which would not be construed to be an open record pursuant to O.C.G.A. §50-18-70 (including, but not limited to, pupil files, portions of employee personnel files, employee W-2's, or any other document containing social security numbers of either employees or students) without the prior consent of the Board of Education.~~

~~All requests for such documents shall be made to the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent shall present such request(s) at the next meeting of the Board of Education.~~

~~In the event the documentation requested is deemed urgent, the member requesting same shall so indicate in the request and a Board meeting shall be called by the Chairman within seventy-two (72) hours of the request for action on such request. Any documents produced following approval of the Board of Education may be examined in the Board Office only and may not be copied without the prior consent of the Board of Education.~~

~~This policy is not intended to inhibit access to information or documentation by any employee which documentation or information is necessary to the employee's job responsibilities, nor is this policy intended to restrict access to documents or information to individual employees about whom said document or information was generated.~~

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**

**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

In keeping with Cherokee County ~~School District's~~ Board of Education's Major System Priority of providing a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning, and except as permitted by the Official Code of Georgia, *O.C.G.A.* §*16-11-127.1*, it is unlawful for any person to possess, carry or have within their control while within a school safety zone, at a school function, or on a school bus or other transportation furnished by a school any weapon or explosive compound.

Although, the Official Code of Georgia, O.C.G.A. §16-11-135 provides that employees of the of the School District who possess a valid Georgia weapons carry permit may park privately owned motor vehicles on the employer's premises with a firearm, ammunition, or both contained therein so long as the firearm is locked out of sight within the trunk, glove box, or other enclosed compartment or area within the privately owned motor vehicle. The School District strongly discourages such practice.

## I. Definitions

Firearm: Any handgun, rifle, shotgun, or other weapon which will, or can be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or electrical charge.

School function: A school function or related activity that occurs outside of a school safety zone. (e.g. school prom, field trip, organized sporting activity, school board meeting).

School Safety Zone: Any real property or building owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, secondary school, or local board of education and used for elementary or secondary education.

Weapon as defined by *O.C.G.A.* §*16-11-127.1 (4)* means and includes: " . . . any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or 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, metal knucks, 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 weapon of like kind, and any stun gun or taser as defined in subsection (a) of Code Section §16-11-106." [Dangerous Weapon is defined in O.C.G.A. §16-11-121.]

Since all Cherokee County School Board buildings are utilized for elementary and secondary education or host School Functions this definition, along with a notice prohibiting weapons will be posted by appropriate signage near the main entry way of each school and school district facility.

## II. Authorization & Restrictions

Notwithstanding the exemptions prescribed within *O.C.G.A.* §*16-11-127.1(c)* *and* §*16-11-130(c)(2)* , the Board enacts the following for purposes of this policy:

### A. School District Employees

School District Police Department employees who are trained and certified by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (GPOSTC) are exempt from the restrictions hereof while acting in their official capacity in the performance of their official duties.

School District employees who because of business necessity are, or may be, required to carry or use knives, box cutters, razor blades, or other similar tools or implements, are exempt from the restrictions hereof so long as these implements are used in accordance with daily business practices.

The Cherokee County School District Chief of Police has been designated by the Superintendent of Schools to authorize an employee, parent, legal guardian or any other person to possess and utilize a firearm, weapon or other similar device within a school safety zone for classroom display or other similar purposes. No other District employee may authorize such use. This does not apply to a student enrolled within the School District.

School District employees are required to inform the principal/workplace supervisor or designee and obtain written permission from the School District Chief of Police for the intended educational possession of any weapon, firearm or other similar device for classroom work thirty days prior to such use and must specify the weapon, or weapons to be authorized and the time period during which the authorization is valid. Teachers are not permitted to authorize, allow or permit a student or any other person to possess or use any firearm or weapon as defined in Section I of this policy for classroom or other similar purpose.

The School District has previously authorized "sworn" Cherokee County School District Police Officers to possess and carry weapons within the School Safety Zone. No other School District employees are permitted to carry weapons within the School Safety Zone other than provided herein above without the express written permission of the Cherokee County School District Chief of Police.

Except for weapons maintained within Cherokee County School Police vehicles, firearms are not permitted in any vehicle leased or owned by the School District.

### B. Parents, Legal Guardians, Visitors

As a result of the eminent danger posed by the unintentional discharge of weapons and/or the potential theft of unsupervised weapons, visitors to any Cherokee County

School District facility are encouraged not to bring weapons onto school district property even if permitted by law.

Firearms may not be carried by any parent, legal guardian or visitor outside of the vehicle even though such individuals may hold a valid weapons carry license or other permit to carry a firearm issued by the State of Georgia or any other appropriate licensing body. This prohibition does not apply to ~~a~~ law enforcement officers or other public safety officials of any federal, state or local agency or other individuals permitted to carry weapons by O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1 so long as they are in the performance of their official duties or individuals possessing proper documentation or credentials as described in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-130(c)(2).

Those persons who believe they meet the requirements set forth in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-130(c)(2) must provide adequate documentation upon the request of a school official showing they meet and are qualified to possess a firearm pursuant to the code section.

Pursuant to state law, firearms and weapons are to be stored in a locked compartment, a locked container, or a locked firearms rack in any privately owned vehicle of any parent, legal guardian, or visitor while parked (unattended) at any school district facility so long as they have a valid weapons carry license or other permit. As a result of the associated danger, as well as the potential for theft, individuals permitted to carry weapons are strongly encouraged to secure weapons in a locked compartment out of sight or to not bring firearms or weapons into the school safety zone.

Except as otherwise permitted, firearms, weapons or explosive compounds ARE NOT permitted inside any building or facility owned or leased to/by the School District.

### C. Contract Services

Contract Service providers (including, but not limited to, construction companies, paving companies, telecommunication providers, and others who are performing and/or working on any School District property) are exempt under the following conditions:

(1) Tools and/or other implements are used by the contract service provider or their employees because of business necessity to complete the scope of work and when not in use, said tools and/or implements will be properly secured or removed from the work site location.

(2) The Office of Support Services ~~& Facilities/Construction Management~~ must be notified a minimum of five (5) days prior to the use of any explosive compound used by the contract service provider or their employees on, or at any existing School District property or facility where students and staff may be present.

## III. Searches

Searches are subject to Fourth Amendment protections in the United States Constitution; however, nothing in this policy shall preclude the right of school officials

and/or law enforcement officers to search a privately owned or school district vehicle, when necessary, to prevent an immediate threat to human health, life, or safety, or when there is sufficient cause to believe the vehicle contains contraband.

Persons found in violation of this policy may be subject to applicable criminal penalties; School District employees may also be subject to further disciplinary action.

**ADOPTED:** **August 21, 2008**
**REVISED:** **June/July, 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

## REDUCTION IN FORCE (RIF)

When the Superintendent of the Cherokee County School ~~System~~ District determines that the application of this reduction in force policy is necessary, it ~~shall~~ will be his/her primary responsibility to prepare for presentation to the ~~Board of Education~~ School Board a plan for reduction in force (RIF) in the affected program area(s). In developing a RIF plan, the Superintendent ~~shall~~ will insure that a reduction in force does not reduce the quality of programs in the school ~~system~~ district. In making recommendations for termination or downgrading of employee positions, the Superintendent may consider any position or employee ~~of the Cherokee County Board of Education~~.

This RIF policy ~~shall~~ will apply to all professional personnel employed by the Cherokee County ~~Board of Education~~ School Board. Nothing in this policy, however, ~~shall~~ will be construed to extend to professional personnel any expectation of re-employment or due process rights greater than are available to the specific employees under the Fair Dismissal Law of Georgia; nor is this policy to be construed to mandate the promotion of an employee to a position of higher rank, authority, or compensation, even though the employee who is to be terminated may be qualified or certified for a higher position.

To the extent that any provision in this policy conflicts with or is superseded by State or Federal law, the applicable regulations control.

The Superintendent ~~shall~~ will establish and maintain all necessary guidelines~~, as necessary,~~ for administration of this policy. ~~Board Policy: GBKA, Personnel Reduction in Force (RIF).~~

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**
**REVISED: June/July, 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

The Cherokee County Board of Education makes provisions for its high school students to participate in Move on When Ready (MOWR) as referenced in State Board Rule 160-4-2-.34. The school district requires these students to meet state assessment requirements.

MOWR is a program through which high school students take courses from a state public or private post-secondary institution while still enrolled as a high school student and receive credit both at the high school and at the post-secondary institution. MOWR courses can be completed in high school classrooms, on a college campus or through a distance learning provider.

**DEFINITIONS**

1. **Approved courses** are courses identified by the Georgia Department of Education that are eligible to be taken under Move on When Ready.

2. **Course** is instruction for which credit is awarded.

3. **Credit** means units or portions of units earned and applied toward high school graduation and credit hours earned toward the completion of a post-secondary program of study.

4. **Eligible institution** – a unit of the University System of Georgia (USG), or the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), a private independent nonprofit postsecondary institution located in Georgia that are identified by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC).

5. **Eligible student** is any student enrolled in an eligible high school who is accepted by a state public or private post-secondary institution and meets criteria for participation in MOWR.

**Full time** – enrollment for the equivalent of 4 or more MOWR courses totaling at least 12 semester hours per school term of postsecondary credit at an eligible postsecondary institution; or a combination of high school and college courses to equal a total of 6 classes.

6. **HOPE Grant** is the funding mechanism administered by the GSFC that, under rules promulgated by the GSFC, provides for eligible students to participate in diploma or certificate programs at public post-secondary institutions.

7. **Local Education Agency (LEA)** for purposes of this policy is the Cherokee School District.

8. **Secondary credit** – high school credit for courses taken at an eligible institution under the program.

## I. REQUIREMENTS

1. Any eligible high school student may enroll full-time or part-time in approved credit-bearing college-level courses approved by the State Board of Education. Courses may be taken before, during or after regular school hours on the college campus, online or at the high school where available. MOWR students must maintain full time enrollment status (enrollment for the equivalent of 4 or more MOWR courses totaling at least 12 semester hours per school term of postsecondary credit at an eligible postsecondary institution; or a combination of high school and college courses to equal a total of 6 classes).

2. An eligible student must meet criteria specified by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) for MOWR.

3. Any eligible student will take courses from a list approved by the GSFC developed with input from the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia.

4. Students who participate in MOWR ~~shall~~ will adhere to all guidelines associated with the program.

5. For students who participate in MOWR the grades and amount of credit for each approved course ~~shall~~ will be placed on high school transcripts and ~~shall~~ will be used in computing grade point averages and numeric grade average for the purpose of determining class rank.

6. Postsecondary semester hour credit ~~shall~~ will be converted to high school credit as follows: 1 to 2 semester hours = .5 unit; 3 to 5 semester hours = 1 unit; 1 to 3 quarter hours = .5 unit; 4 to 8 quarter hours = 1 unit.

7. Students enrolled in MOWR are exempt from required instructional time, as specified in State Board Rule 160-5-1-.02.

8. Except in instances where the post-secondary institution provides the student a numerical grade, the correlation of student's grades earned at the post-secondary institution and the secondary cumulative grade point average ~~shall~~ will be as follows:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A+ = 98<br>A = 95<br>A - = 92 | B+ = 88<br>B = 85<br>B - = 82 | C+ = 78<br>C = 75<br>C - = 72 | D+ = 70<br>D = 70<br>D - = 70 | F =60 |

## II. ~~LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY~~ RESPONSIBILITIES

~~a)~~ The School District ~~LEA~~ ~~shall~~ will:

1. Identify eligible students according to program criteria, as described in MOWR.

2. For funding purposes, report MOWR students in accordance with FTE guidelines as described in *FTE Data Collection Codes and Weights.*

3. Require eligible students to meet state assessment requirements as required in State Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 TESTING PROGRAMS– STUDENT ASSESSMENT.

4. Apply the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.18 COMPETITIVE INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES IN GRADES 6-12 to students enrolled in an approved dual enrollment program.

5. Award secondary credit toward state and local high school graduation requirements for the successful completion of any approved MOWR course as documented on the student's high school transcript.

6. By ~~April~~ February 1 of each school year, or prior to enrollment in an eligible institution, school systems ~~shall~~ will provide general information about MOWR to all eighth through eleventh grade students as part of the development of their program of study. College and universities have the right to determine MOWR enrollment criteria.

## III. STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN MOWR

1. Student must complete the CCSD MOWR Participation Form and meet with his/her School Counselor prior to enrollment or participation in a MOWR program. Parents are also required to meet with their student's School Counselor prior to approval.

~~1.~~

2. Student participation in MOWR will be guided by GSFC regulations and Federal statutes (e.g. IDEA, Section 504 of ADA).

~~2.~~

3. Students are subject to the provisions in O.C.G.A. §20-2-150 – Eligibility for Enrollment.

~~3.~~

4. Students are required to provide his or her transportation.

~~4.~~

5. Participation in the program may require payment of additional fees to the post-secondary institution. Such fees will be billed by the post-secondary institution to the student.

~~5.~~

6. Students must meet the local graduation requirements for the student's Program of Study for the year of his/her enrollment in high school.

~~6.~~

7. Students attending post-secondary institutions are subject to the rules of post-secondary institutions and their local high school.

~~7.~~

8. Students planning to participate in the spring graduation ceremony must have completed all MOWR courses to fulfill all graduation requirements and must provide the necessary transcript no later than forty-eight (48) hours before the ceremony.

9. Students who successfully complete a course(s) in a post-secondary institution through the MOWR program will receive quality points on their weighted numeric grade average whenever the college course taken is equivalent to an Advanced Placement (AP) high school course or a waiver is recommended and approved by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction.

**LAST REVISED: July 21, 2016**

**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

## I. CUMULATIVE AVERAGE AND CLASS RANKING

Class ranking will be determined by the weighted ~~cumulative~~ numeric grade average of graduating seniors at the completion of high school graduation requirements. ~~including successfully passing all appropriate state-mandated assessments.~~

The weighted ~~cumulative~~ numeric grade average summarizes each student's academic performance in high school credit courses. The weighted ~~cumulative~~ numeric grade average is used in determining eligibility for numerous awards, activities and college applications.

For the purpose of computing class rank, ~~students will receive the following additional points added to their semester average for that course, the~~ a student's final course grade (if student receives a passing grade in the course) will be weighted with the following quality points for the purpose of calculating a weighted numeric grade average: ~~if they receive a passing grade~~:

Quality Points:

- Honors Courses, Five points
- Advanced Placement (AP) Courses, 10 points
- Move on When Ready (MOWR) Courses:
  a. 10 points, whenever the college course taken is equivalent to an AP high school course, as recommended and approved by the Chief Academic Officer.
  b. A waiver for consideration of quality points (5 or 10) may be submitted to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction for MOWR Courses taken by students which meet the following criteria:
     - Demonstrates rigor;
     - Serves as a replacement for an on-campus course receiving quality points; or,
     - Exceeds the highest instructional level course available at the local high school.

| | |
|---|---|
| ~~Honors Classes~~ | ~~5 points~~ |
| ~~Advanced Placement~~ | ~~10 points~~ |

~~Students who successfully complete a course(s) in a post-secondary institution through the Move on When Ready program (as described in Board Policy IDCH) shall receive the above bonus points whenever the college course taken is equivalent to an Advanced Placement (AP) high school course, as recommended by the principal and approved by the Assistant Superintendent for Educational Programs, Student Support, Accountability and Professional Development.~~

## II. CLASS RANKING/HONOR ROLLS

The graduating senior with the highest class ranking, as determined by weighted numeric grade average, ~~shall~~ will be recognized as Valedictorian. The student with the second highest class

ranking, as determined by weighted numeric grade average, ~~shall~~ will be recognized as Salutatorian. The weighted numeric grade average will be calculated to four decimal places.

Students participating in the ~~Move on When Ready~~ MOWR program are also eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian recognition per statutory requirements. ~~if they have attended and successfully completed a minimum of two courses per semester on the high school campus during both junior and senior years. Courses on the high school campus include traditional, on-line and/or virtual delivery models authorized by the school and school district.~~ A MOWR student who moves into the local school system after his or her sophomore year and has not taken any courses on site at the participating eligible high school will not be eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian recognition. Transfer credit used for Valedictorian or Salutatorian ~~shall~~ will be accepted only from an Accredited School in accordance with Board Policy on Awarding Units of Credit and Acceptance of Transfer Credit and/or Grades (JBC(4)).

## III. CUMULATIVE AVERAGE AND HONOR GRADUATE STATUS

The distinction of Honor Graduate will be awarded to graduating seniors who have a weighted numeric grade average of 90 or above (or 89.5 or above rounded to the nearest whole unit).

## IV. HONOR ROLL PLACEMENT

High school students will be placed on the Honor Roll when their weighted numeric grade average is 90 or above (or 89.5 or above rounded to the nearest whole unit).

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**
**LAST REVISED: September 1, 2016**
**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

## I. STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

### CONTENT STANDARDS (KNOWLEDGE)

The School District's student performance standards are aligned with the Georgia Department of Education's Student Performance Standards and reflect the School Board's commitment to high expectations for all students. These standards require mastery of content knowledge in the academic areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, foreign languages, health education/physical education and career/technology education. The foundations on which all other content knowledge is built are reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematics.

## II. GENERAL CURRICULA

A. All schools and programs will fulfill the student performance standards set forth in State Education Rules and local policy that reflect the Major System Priorities of the School Board. Accountability and benchmark procedures which address high expectations in student performance standards will be implemented by all administrative, instructional and support staff through the Instructional Program Accountability Policy.

B. All students will be offered courses, which are rigorous, relevant and consistent with Georgia law and Georgia Department of Education Student Performance Standards.

C. Each school containing any grade K-12 will provide education on alcohol, illegal and legal drug abuse annually at each grade level. Furthermore, all schools will develop and implement an accurate, comprehensive health and physical education program that will be grade and age appropriate as referenced in Policy IDBB.

D. Each school will develop procedures to allow parents and legal guardians to exercise the option of excluding their child from sex education and Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) prevention instructional programs.

1. Sex education and STD education will be a part of a comprehensive health program.

2. Prior to the parent/guardian making a choice to allow his/her child to take the specified unit of instruction, he/she will be told what instruction is to be provided and will have the opportunity to review all instructional materials to be used, print and non-print. Any parent or legal guardian of a child to whom a course of study in sex education is to be taught will have the right to elect, in writing, that such child not receive such course of study. Additionally, all parents/guardians will be required to give written permission for such child to receive such course of study.

3. The School District will establish a committee to review periodically sex/ S T D education instructional materials and make recommendations concerning age/grade level use. Recommendations made by the committee will be approved by the School Board prior to implementation.

E. All schools, kindergarten through grade twelve, will provide instruction that addresses core values and provides instruction in character education as adopted by the Georgia Board of Education.

F. Classroom instruction will focus on ensuring that all students demonstrate mastery of student performance standards and core curricular competencies at the appropriate level. All students will be annually assessed in this regard. Any student who does not meet grade level standards will be provided support by way of a Response to Intervention (RTI) Plan. Research-based strategies and interventions will be used for remediation, which will include progress monitoring and reporting individual student progress in moving toward district standards.

G. District curriculum staff will continually update the student performance standards and core curricular competencies. It is the responsibility of teachers and the principal/designee to ensure that the instruction is consistent with the content standards. A teacher(s) desiring to teach a new or experimental course may submit an outline of the course to the principal, who will follow district procedures for obtaining approval for new courses.

H. All schools will implement a developmental guidance program that includes a career awareness/planning component designed to enable all students to acquire marketable skills and the knowledge needed for transition into work and post secondary education.

I. The School Board authorizes homebound education in compliance with State and Federal Guidelines.

J. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan developed by the appropriate committee may modify the instructional program or length of school day for an eligible student if it is determined that the modification would be appropriate for the student. A decision to modify the program or length of school day will be documented in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

K. Grading English Learners (EL)

English Learners (EL) must receive appropriate grade-level instruction using English proficiency level as determined by the W-APT or ACCESS assessment. Resources provided by the World Class Instructional Design and Application Consortium (WIDA) will assist teachers with differentiation. Grades must reflect work that has been differentiated to their English proficiency level and accommodations established in the English Language Learner–Testing Participation Committee Plan (ELL-TPC).

~~K.~~ L. A comprehensive system will be planned, developed and implemented to measure and verify proficiency of student performance standards and core curricular competencies, based on documented demonstrations of mastery. Such verification will consist of, but not be limited to, the following:

1. **Elementary School and Middle School**

   a. Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)
   b. State Assessment(s)
   c. ACCESS for English Learner students
   d. Other Approved Measures (e.g., prescribed reading and mathematics mastery tests, teacher-made tests and portfolio assessments)

2. **High School**

   a. State Assessment(s)
   b. Other Approved Measures (e.g., prescribed reading and mathematics mastery tests, teacher-made tests and portfolio assessments).

~~L.~~ M. Each school will maintain records of annual student report cards.

~~M.~~ N. All student report cards, cumulative folders, RTI folders must be transferred intra district from the sending school to the receiving school within 10 days.

## III. PRE-KINDERGARTEN/ELEMENTARY PUPIL PROGRESSION

A. **Reporting**

1. **Report Cards/Interim Progress Reports**

a. The reporting of student progress to parents will follow School District procedures and will be in accordance with Georgia law, Georgia Board of Education rules, and School Board policies, rules and regulations.

b. Report cards are issued at the end of every nine weeks of school and cover a period of approximately 45 school days. Such reports will be distributed to students for delivery to their parents/guardians according to the School District calendar. If a student withdraws and does not qualify for a report card under this provision, he/she will be issued a withdrawal form listing current grades in each subject area.

c. No later than midway between grading periods, an interim progress report will be sent to all parents/guardians of students in grades 1-5.

d. Student attendance for the grading period will be recorded on the report card.

e. Elementary report cards will be signed by the parent/legal guardian and returned to the teacher.

2. **Grading System - Kindergarten**

a. It is required that kindergarten student performance be evaluated and reported based on mastery of standards in language arts, mathematics, and writing/fine motor skills. Following are the symbols used to describe evidence of mastery:

Academic Skills Code:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| NA | = | Not Yet Assessed |
| ND | = | Not Demonstrated |
| EM | = | Emerging |
| PR | = | Progressing |
| MS | = | Meets Standard |
| EX | = | Exceeds Standard |

No check indicates skill has not been introduced

b. Progress in other areas is assessed and reported using the following symbols:

AC = Area of Concern
DE = Developing
CD = Consistently Demonstrating

3. **Grading System - Grades One and Two**

Grade one and grade two student performance is evaluated and reported based on mastery of standards in academic courses, participation courses, personal growth and development, and conduct using the following symbols:

O = Outstanding
S = Satisfactory
N = Needs Improvement
U = Unsatisfactory

4. **Grading System - Grades Three through Five**

a. In reporting student performance in grades three through six, the symbols "A", "B", "C", "D" and "F" are used in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, spelling, science, health, social studies and Accelerated Intellectual Movement (AIM-Gifted Resource Enrichment). These symbols represent the equivalent numerical grades as shown below:

A = 90-100
B = 80- 89
C = 71- 79
D = 70
F = Below 70

b. Progress in music, art, physical education and general conduct will be assessed and reported using the following symbols:

S = Satisfactory
N = Needs Improvement
U = Unsatisfactory

**5. Alternative Report Cards**

a. For some special education students, alternative report cards are used to report progress made on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives. Some students will receive the regular

education report card to report progress made in other subject areas.

b. An English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Report Card Addendum is issued each grading period.

~~**6. Grading English Learners (EL)**~~

~~English Learners (EL) must receive grade level instruction using the Georgia Student Performance Standards on their English proficiency level as determined by the W-APT or ACCESS assessment. Resources provided by the World Class Instructional Design and Application Consortium (WIDA) will assist teachers with differentiation. Grades must reflect work that has been differentiated to their English proficiency level and accommodations established in the English Language Learner Testing Participation Committee Plan (ELL-TPC).~~

~~a. Teachers will implement the accommodations determined by the student's ELL-TPC committee and documented in his/her English Language Learner (ELL-TPC) plan. ESOL teachers will provide general education teacher with a classroom testing accommodation plan.~~

~~b. Grading of ELs should therefore reflect daily instructional accommodations as well as testing accommodations, and should not penalize the student for not yet being fully fluent in English.~~

~~c. ELs will receive grades based on accommodations or alternative assignments appropriate to the student's language proficiency level, and receive the same report card that is used in general education.~~

~~d. ELs will not be penalized for missing work in the general education classroom during the time they are pulled for ESOL services. Teachers must grade students on the components for which they are present and derive the class grade based on the elements that the student completed.~~

~~e. Students will not receive grades of "D" or "F" based on lack of English proficiency. EL students will not receive grades of D or F unless their lack of performance on modified instruction warrants such grades.~~

~~f. Classroom teachers will provide accommodations for instructional assignments and tests based on students' English language proficiencies. The use of instructional accommodations and modifications does not indicate that a student cannot receive the highest grade in the content area.~~

B. **Promotion, Placement and Retention**

**DEFINITIONS**

**Additional instruction** – academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes that is designed to bring students not performing on grade level 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 instruction or other forms of instruction beyond the school day.

**Differentiated instruction** – instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.

**Grade level** – standard of performance, based on competency of student performance standards.

**Placement** – the 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.

**Placement committee** – the committee established by the local school principal/designee to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not meet expectations on the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instrument in the absence of Georgia state assessment. This committee will be comprised of the principal/designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) in the content area(s) in which the student did not achieve grade level on the Georgia state assessment.

**Promotion** – the assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade.

**Retention** – the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

Elementary school students will be promoted, placed or retained dependent upon their ability to meet the student performance standards and core curricular competencies of Cherokee County School District and State Board of Education Rules 160-4-2-.11, Promotion, Placement, and Retention and 160-3-1-.07, Testing Programs-Student Assessment, and State law. Elementary school students will not be retained unless RTI Tier III placement has occurred for a minimum period of six weeks prior to the end of the school year.

1. When determining the placement of students, which must include review by the (RTI) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee, academic performance based on mastery with emphasis on proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics; and the level of social and emotional development will be considered.

2. For special education students whose promotion is in question, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee, which includes the principal/designee, will determine grade placement.

3. The principal/designee will have the final authority for appropriate grade placement of students in Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 4 and 6. The principal/designee will be included in the placement committee for students in grades 3 and 5, within the limitations of School Board Policy, Georgia Board of Education Rules 160-4-2 .11 and 160-3-1-.07 and Georgia law.

4. English Learners (EL) who have been enrolled in the ESOL program for two years or less may not be retained solely due to lack of English proficiency.

5. Work completed under private instruction will not be accepted by the School District except in accordance with Georgia Board of Education administrative rules.

6. **Additional Requirements for Grades One through Five**

   a. Each school principal/designee will distribute student data from the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment to teachers prior to the beginning of each school year. Each teacher will use data to focus instruction on identified student academic performance in grades 1-5.

   b. Each school principal/designee will establish and/or convene a RTI or IEP Committee for each student in grades 3-5 who does not achieve grade level on reading and/or mathematics sections of the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment. The RTI or IEP Committee will provide the following:

      Students will be tested in accordance with requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.

      The school principal/designee will annually notify parents or

guardians that placement or promotion of a student into a grade, class, or program will be based on the academic achievement of the student on criterion-referenced assessments and/or other criteria established in this policy.

7. **Requirements for Grades Three and Five**

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 achieve grade level on the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment in reading, unless otherwise specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

2) No fifth grade student will be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment in reading in mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy, unless otherwise specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

3) In the event that State or Federal statutes/rules waive the requirement of Reading proficiency for 3rd and 5th grade students and Math proficiency for 5th grade students based on a state assessment, this policy will also be waived for the duration of the State waiver.

4) The school principal/designee may retain a student who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.

5) A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia state assessment in reading and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) will take the Georgia state assessment in reading and/or mathematics on the second administration day(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the School District. 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 state assessment in grade three or five in reading 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 for by the State Board of Education and the School District 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, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee will serve as the placement committee.

C. **Summer School**

1. The summer school program provides accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in reading and mathematics.

2. Pursuant to State Board of Education administrative rules, and *as funds are appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly*, the opportunity to participate in the summer school program will be available to students who:

   a. Failed one or more academic subjects (language arts, reading, mathematics, science or social studies); or,

   b. Were retained in their current grade; or,

   c. Scored in the below grade level range of the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instrument in the absence of Georgia state assessment.

3. Summer school records will be sent to the sending school at the conclusion of the summer school program. The teachers and principal/designee of the sending school will review the student's records to determine appropriate grade placement within limitations of School Board Policy, Georgia Board of Education Rules 160-4-2-.11and 160-3-1-.07 and Georgia Statutes. Eligibility for competitive interscholastic activities as defined in the Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.19 cannot be met during summer school.

4. Extended School Year (ESY) services shall be offered to eligible special education students.

## IV. MIDDLE SCHOOL PUPIL PROGRESSION

### A. Reporting

1. Report Cards/Interim Progress Reports

   a. Report cards are issued at the end of every nine weeks of school and cover a period of approximately 45 school days. Such reports will be distributed to students for delivery to their parents/guardians according to the School District calendar. If a student withdraws and does not qualify for a report card under this provision, he/she will be issued a withdrawal form listing current grades in each subject area.

   b. An interim progress report will be sent to parents/guardians no later than midway between grading periods.

   c. Student attendance for the grading period will be recorded on the report card.

   d. Conferences will be scheduled at the request of the teacher or parent. Parents/guardians will be notified by the teacher and through interim progress reports and report cards of the right to request and participate in at least two conferences annually.

2. Grading System – Grades Six, Seven and Eight

   The grading system used in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades and the interpretation of the letter grades, which represent the equivalent numerical grades, are as follows:

   Academic Grades

   A = 90-100
   B = 80- 89
   C = 71- 79
   D = 70
   F = Below 70

   A minimum passing score of 70 is required for all courses.

   Conduct

   S = Satisfactory
   N = Needs Improvement
   U = Unsatisfactory

~~3. Grading English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Students~~

~~English Learners (EL) who are served in the ESOL program will receive a report card each grading period. In order to evaluate ESOL students effectively, certain modification to traditional grading are recommended:~~

~~a. Most ESOL students cannot participate fully in certain content areas including social studies, science and health where mastery of the English language is assumed. Report card evaluations for ESOL students will take into account the student's motivation, effort and progress in the class.~~

~~b. In areas where language is not a barrier, such as mathematics, art, music, physical education, traditional grading procedures will be followed.~~

## B. Promotion, Placement and Retention

Middle school students will be promoted, placed or retained dependent upon their ability to meet the student performance standards and core curriculum competencies of the School District and State Board of Education Rules 160-4-2-.11, Promotion, Placement, and Retention and 160-3-1-.07, Testing Programs-Student Assessment, and State Statutes. Middle school students will not be retained unless there has been a referral to the Response To Intervention (RTI), Tier III or Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee with sufficient timeliness to assure that appropriate interventions and accommodations to secure the student's success have been attempted and documented.

1. When determining the placement of students, which must include review by the Response To Intervention (RTI) Committee, academic performance based on mastery in language arts, reading and mathematics, passing science or social studies and passing one additional course during each year for grades six, seven and eight will be considered as well as the level of social and emotional development.

2. Special Education Students

   a. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee, which includes the principal/designee, will determine grade placement for students with disabilities whose promotion is in question.

   b. The IEP Committee will determine and record on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) the appropriate level of student performance standards and type of diploma the student will work toward.

3. The principal/designee will have the final authority for appropriate grade placement of grade 6 and 7 students. The principal/designee will be included in the placement committee for students in grade 8, within the limitations of School Board Policy, Georgia Board of Education Rules 160-4-2 .11 and 160-3-1-.07 and Georgia Statutes.

   English Learners (EL) who have been enrolled in the ESOL program for two years or less will not be retained solely due to lack of English Proficiency.

   A middle school student whose accelerated academic needs cannot be met at the middle school level, as determined by the middle school principal/designee, high school principal/designee and Assistant Superintendent, Educational Programs, may be permitted to attend a high school for the necessary course. Middle school students will not attend a high school for a course when that course is available at the middle school level or when the course sought at the high school level requires successful completion of the middle school curriculum. Transportation to a high school for coursework must be provided by the parents/guardians.

4. Requirements For Grade Eight.

   Promotion of a student will be determined as follows.

   1) No eighth grade student will be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment in reading and mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.

   2.) A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia state assessment in reading and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) shall take the reading and/or mathematics on the second administration day(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the local Board of Education.

   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.

   3.) A student's failure to take the Georgia state assessment in

grade eight in reading 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 for by the State Board of Education and the School District 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.

4.) For students receiving special education services, the IEP Committee will serve as the placement committee.

**C. Summer School**

1. The summer school program provides remediation in language arts, reading, mathematics, science and social studies.

2. Pursuant to Georgia Board of Education administrative rules, and *as funds are appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly*, the opportunity to participate in the summer school program will be available to students who:

   a. Failed one or more academic subjects (language arts, reading, mathematics, science or social studies); or,

   b. Were retained in their current grade; or,

   c. Scored in the below grade level range of the Georgia state assessment in reading and/or mathematics.

3. Summer school records will be sent to the sending school at the conclusion of the summer school program. The teachers and principal/designee of the sending school will review the student's records to determine appropriate grade placement. Eligibility for competitive interscholastic activities as defined in the Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.19 cannot be met during summer school.

4. Extended School Year (ESY) services will be offered to special education students who are eligible.

## V. HIGH SCHOOL PUPIL PROGRESSION

### A. Reporting

1. Report Cards/Interim Progress Reports

   a. Report cards or quarterly progress reports are issued at the end of

every nine weeks of school and cover a period of approximately 45 school days. Such reports will be distributed to the students for delivery to their parents/guardians on the fifth school day following the end of the grading period except for the final report, which will be mailed to the parent.

b. An interim progress report will be sent to parents/guardians no later than midway between grading periods.

c. Student attendance for each class will be recorded on the report card.

d. Conferences will be scheduled at the request of the teacher or parent/guardian. Parents/guardians will be notified by the teacher and through interim progress reports and report cards of the right to request and participate in at least two conferences annually.

2. Grading System

a. High schools will utilize numerical grades for normal progress reporting. Should letter grades be needed [to calculate certain Grade Point Averages GPAs, parental reference, weighted numeric grade average, etc.] the equivalent numerical grades are as follows:

A=90-100
B=80-89
C=71-79
D=70
F=Below 70

b. The weighted Numeric Grade Average ~~(NGA)~~ summarizes each student's academic performance in high school. ~~NGA is used in determining eligibility for numerous awards, and activities.~~

~~c. For the purpose of determining class rank, extra points will be awarded for advanced courses as follows:~~

c. For the purposes of considering quality points when determining weighted numeric grade average:

- Honors Courses, Five points ~~added to numerical grade~~
- Advanced Placement (AP) Courses, 10 points ~~added to numerical grade~~
- Move on When Ready (MOWR) Courses:

a. 10 points, whenever the college course taken is equivalent to an AP high school course, as recommended and approved by the Chief Academic Officer.
b. A waiver for consideration of quality points (5 or 10) may be submitted to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction for MOWR Courses taken by students which meet the following criteria:
   - Demonstrates rigor;
   - Serves as a replacement for an on-campus course receiving quality points; or,
   - Exceeds the highest instructional level course available at the local high school.

d. An incomplete (I) is given as an opportunity for students to make up incomplete class work. Class work will be made up 14 school days after the close of the grading period. If the work remains incomplete at the end of this period, the "I" will revert to a failing grade. The principal/designee has the discretion, upon request, to extend the deadline.

**B. Grade Adjustment**

1. The principal/designee is responsible for the supervision and maintenance of student records. The principal/designee assumes the responsibility for adjusting a student's grades or credits when the necessity arises, consistent with the following reasons:

   a. Erroneously computed or recorded grades.

   b. Conversion of grades from other schools into the School District's grading system.

   c. Averaging or grades earned by students who may be:

      - Temporarily enrolled in another school in the United States or abroad, or
      - Enrolled in a special program (homebound instruction, out-of-district placement, tutorial programs, make-up work, and so on).

   d. Summer school grades: The original grade assigned and the summer school grade earned will appear on the student transcript. Both the original grade and summer school grade are used in computing class rank.

e. Averaging grades earned by students who transfer to the high school from other schools during the course of the year with grades earned at the high school. Transfer grades received during the school year should be sent to individual teachers or department heads to be incorporated into the final average.

f. Granting credits earned in other high schools in subjects not offered in our curriculum.

g. Any other good and sufficient cause except that no grades may be adjusted to facilitate athletic eligibility.

2. In the above cases, as well as in any other case not delineated herein, the principal/designee will, when possible, consult with appropriate teachers in whose class the student is enrolled, officials of the sending schools, and persons in charge of special instruction.

3. The principal will refer unresolved grade disputes between the principal and a teacher to the school's Grade Review Advisory Committee. The Superintendent will establish guidelines to insure consistent and timely implementation of the responsibilities of each school's Grade Review Advisory Committee. Reference GA. Code 20-2-989.20 and School District Guidelines for the Grade Review Advisory Committee.

## C. Promotion, Placement and Retention

1. Parents/guardians will be notified at the end of the school year when a student is not considered "on-track" for graduation. Refer to current guidelines for determination of "on track" status.

2. Students will be assisted in meeting these requirements through accelerated instruction, differentiated instruction or additional instruction and other opportunities which may include but are not limited to:

   a. Summer school attendance
   b. Special counseling
   c. Volunteer and/or peer tutors
   d. School sponsored help sessions
   e. Study skill classes
   f. Polaris Evening School
   g. Approved online courses

3. Special Education Students

a. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee will determine and record on the IEP the type of diploma the student shall work toward.

b. The IEP Committee has the discretion to determine that the student be permitted additional time or less time to complete a course. All decisions regarding this time modification must be specified on the student's IEP.

c. An alternative report card will be used for students with disabilities whose progress cannot be appropriately reported using the standard report card.

4. End of Course Testing

To earn credit for a course requiring an EOC test, a student transferring a course from a non-accredited program must take and pass the corresponding EOC test.

5. Semester/Final Examinations

Semester and final examinations will be scheduled and administered in accordance with district procedures, rules and regulations. The End of Course Test, where required, serves as the final exam.

6. Online Courses

Students must receive approval prior to enrolling in any online course. Their school counselor must review the appropriateness for the student's program of study. Additionally, the Office of Educational Programs must approve the course content.

D. **Summer School**

1. A high school student may earn one-half credit for successful completion of a 60-hour summer school course.

2. A high school student may take up to two classes during the summer session.

E. **Graduation Requirements**

1. School Board Policy IHF addresses graduation requirements.

2. High School students transferring into the School District high schools will be subject to the graduation requirements for the grade level into which they enter (i.e., a student transferring from outside the district in the eleventh grade will fall under the same requirements as all other eleventh graders).

F. **Graduation Requirements**

1. School Board Policy IHF addresses graduation requirements.

2. High School students transferring into the School District high schools will be subject to the graduation requirements for the grade level into which they enter (i.e., a student transferring from outside the district in the eleventh grade will fall under the same requirements as all other eleventh graders).

**LAST REVISED: July 21, 2016**
**REVISED: June/July, 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**

To ensure the Cherokee County Board of Education's Major System Priority of providing a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning is sustained, this policy is created to provide guidelines for conducting student interviews and searches.

## I. Searches by School Administration

### A. Search – General

Any school administrator acting at school or at a school function may search any student under their authority (regardless of age) if the official has "reasonable suspicion" to believe that:

- a law or school rule has been or is being broken;
- A student may possess illegal, dangerous or prohibited property or substances.

The search will be no more invasive than is reasonably necessary based upon the level of suspicion and the exigent circumstances then present.

Students attending alternative school are subject to a search at anytime and both the student and parent/legal guardian are aware of and acknowledge their understanding by signature upon enrollment.

### B. Random Searches

The School District reserves the right to conduct random searches of all equipment it owns and maintains including, but not limited to, student lockers, athletic lockers, desks, files and other storage areas. This search does not require permission or consent of the individual using the property, and may be conducted at any time by a School Administrator.

### C. Locker Searches

Regardless of assignment to students with or without charge, lockers remain the property of the school. School Administrators are authorized to open lockers to examine their contents.

### D. Personal Searches

When conducting searches of a student's person, school officials will utilize the following protocols:

1. Ensure there is an adult witness present from the inception of the search until the until the conclusion of the search including the seizure of illegal, dangerous, or prohibited property or substances.
2. The witness should be of the same gender as the student when practicable.
3. Searches will be conducted in such a way as to cause the least amount of embarrassment to the student. Only the searcher, witness, and student should be present. Students should never be searched in the presence of other students.
4. Whenever a search is to take place, the student should be escorted from the class or activity area to the search location. Stops along

the way (restroom, locker) should be avoided. All personal property, including books, electronic devices, jackets, hats, tote bags, and purses should be brought by the student from the classroom or activity area to the search location.

5. The digital contents of cell phones will not be searched.
6. Except for shoes, coats, jackets or hats, no student will be asked to remove articles of clothing during a personal search.

E. **Vehicle Searches**

Parking on school campus property is a privilege and not a right. Motor vehicles parked in areas located upon school district property may be searched by the School Administrator under the following circumstances:

1. When weapons including, but not limited to, guns, knives or clubs are in plain view within the motor vehicle; or,
2. When the student or other person has orally consented to the search of the motor vehicle; or,
3. When there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the motor vehicle was used in the commission of a crime; or,
4. When there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the motor vehicle is carrying a prohibited, stolen or illegally possessed substance or object; or,
5. At random, as disclosed in writing to the student and/or parent/guardian when submitting the application for parking.

School Administrators may require the student to surrender possession of any key to a motor vehicle parked in the designated student parking area or on School District property for purposes of opening and inspecting the motor vehicle.

School Administrators will, when practicable, permit the student to be present during the entry into and the subsequent search of the motor vehicle. Any item found in or on the motor vehicle which is prohibited by state law, board policy and the School District Discipline Code may be seized. All items seized will be retained by the administrator, or if a violation of law, the school police department until such time as it can be released to the parent or legal guardian of the student, dependent upon the circumstances and the decision of the school police officer and School Administration.

F. **Free Air Searches**

The School District may, from time to time, conduct a "free air" search upon district property using trained police canines. Such searches will be accomplished so as to protect students, faculty and others from immediate contact with the canine(s) in an effort to promote the safety of all students.

## II. Interviews by School Personnel

A. The administrators and teachers possess the authority to conduct reasonable interviews of students in order to properly investigate alleged offenses and/or student misconduct.

B. All interviews will be conducted by an administrator, teacher or police officer in private whenever possible, in order to protect the student and maintain confidentiality. When conducting the interview a witness of the same gender will be present when practicable.

C. If the student is asked to provide a statement, the statement will be written by the student in his/her own words, dated and signed (if age permits).

D. School District police officers may be present at the time of the interview if there is the likelihood the student may present a danger to himself or others. At no time during the interview may the police officer advise, coach, counsel, or direct the Principal/Designee.

E. If an administrator determines that a possible violation of the law has occurred, he/she will contact the Cherokee School Police Department for further investigative follow-up.

## III. Searches by School Police Officers

In Georgia, certified police officers assigned to, or working in a school are considered law enforcement officers, not school officials. As such, the following applies to all searches conducted by School Police officers:

A. Officers are required to adhere to the principles of the United States Constitution, applicable federal and state laws, and the policies of the General Directives Manual of the Cherokee County School Police Department when conducting searches of persons, and/or property.

B. When a law enforcement officer instigates, directs, participates or acquiesces in a search conducted by school officials the school official will be acting as an agent of school police, the officer and/or the school official must have probable cause for the search.

## IV. Interviews by School Police Officers

A. Officers are required to adhere to the principles of the United States Constitution, applicable federal and state laws, and the policies of the General Directives Manual of the department when conducting an interview or custodial interrogation of a student regardless of age.

B. If a decision is made to turn the interview function over to the a police officers, the Administrator may assist the officer in performing his/her official duties, but will not act as an "agent" of the officer.

## V. Use of Metal Detectors

Hand-held metal detectors may be used by the Principal or Designee as an aid in detecting the presence of a firearm, or other weapon in order to protect the health, welfare and safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors on a school campus.

## I. ~~Search and Seizure by School Personnel~~

### ~~A. Search – General~~

~~In all cases of search, including searches of lockers and persons, the responsible principal/designee shall maintain an accurate written summary of the events surrounding the search incident. School officials must remember that any search of a student creates a potential for legal issues and challenges. Searches have generally been upheld when the principal/designee can articulate that the search was reasonable at its inception and reasonable within its scope.~~

### ~~B. Lockers~~

~~Regardless of assignment to students without charge, the lockers remain the property of the school. The school principal or designee is authorized to open lockers at any time in the presence of another witness and to examine their contents, including personal belongings of students. This search shall be based on reasonable cause or suspicion to believe that the contents threaten the safety, health, or welfare of any person or that the search may lead to the discovery of any crime or local policy violation. This policy does not preclude administrators from performing random locker searches.~~

### ~~C. Random Searches~~

~~The School System reserves the right to conduct random searches of all school owned and maintained equipment including, but not limited to student lockers, athletic lockers, desks, files, and other storage areas. This type of search does not require permission or consent of the individual using the property, and may be conducted at anytime by the principal or designee.~~

### ~~D. Vehicles~~

~~As a condition of receiving the right to park a vehicle upon the School System's property, students must agree in writing to submit to random vehicle searches. Should a student refuse to submit to a random vehicle search, the parking permit will be suspended or revoked by the school administration. Nothing contained in this policy shall limit the School System's right to search based upon reasonable cause or suspicion.~~

### ~~E. Free Air~~

~~The School System may, from time to time, conduct a "free air" search upon system property using police canines. Such searches shall be accomplished so~~

~~as to protect students, faculty and others from immediate contact with the canine(s) in an effort to promote the safety of all students.~~

## ~~F. Consent Searches~~

~~Student's rights are not violated if a student consents to a search. However, consent cannot be the result of duress or coercion, expressed or implied, or any form of undue influence. It must not be assumed that a refusal to consent is evidence of wrongdoing.~~

~~If there is not reasonable cause or reasonable suspicion a search shall not be undertaken without consent being given. Parents should also be contacted.~~

## ~~G. Imminent Danger~~

~~Administrators and school police officers should not hesitate to search a student when they sense that they or others may be in imminent danger. Where there is a reasonable basis for believing that a student or other person is carrying a weapon, administrators should not hesitate for a moment to stop and pat-down the potentially armed person for weapons.~~

## ~~H. Personal Searches~~

~~The right of students as citizens to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures shall be preserved in the schools. Accordingly, school officials shall proceed with extreme caution when engaging in the search of a student's person. The search shall be no more invasive than is reasonably necessary based upon the level of suspicion and the exigent circumstances then present. Once reasonable grounds to conduct a search have been established, the following guidelines shall control:~~

1. ~~Always have an adult witness present from the inception of the search until the "evidence or contraband" is properly secured. The witness should be of the same gender as the student when practicable.~~

2. ~~Searches shall be conducted in such a way as to cause the least amount of embarrassment to the student. Only the searcher, witness, and student should be present. Never search a student in the presence of other students.~~

3. ~~Whenever a search is to take place, the student should be escorted from the class or activity area to the search location. Stops along the way (restroom, locker) should be avoided. All personal property, including books, jackets, hats, tote bags, and purses should be brought by the student from the classroom or activity area to the search location.~~

a. ~~Middle and High School Student Searches - Exceptions~~

1) ~~Personal searches of middle and high school students may be conducted by school administrators when the health or safety of the student (or other students) is threatened or at risk. Reasonable grounds for this assumption must exist prior to the search. The search shall be carried out by the principal or designee and should be in the presence of a witness of the same gender if the level of danger or risk and time will permit. Parents will be contacted after the search.~~

2) ~~When a search is to be conducted, and the student resists the search, the school police department is to be contacted by the principal/designee and an officer will be dispatched to the site location. Parents will be contacted after the search.~~

3) ~~Where the search of a student appears necessary due to a serious criminal act, the principal/designee shall, after informing the student of the action to be taken and the reasons for the search, contact the student's parents and or legal guardian and the school police department.~~

b. ~~Elementary School Student Searches - Exceptions~~

1) ~~Personal searches of elementary school students may be conducted by the principal/designee when the health or safety of the student (or other students) is threatened or at risk. Reasonable grounds for this assumption must exist prior to the search. The search shall be carried out by the principal or designee and should be in the presence of a witness of the same gender if the level of danger or risk and time will permit. Parents will be contacted after the search.~~

2) ~~When a search is to be conducted, and the student resists the search, the school police department is to be contacted by the principal/designee and an officer will be dispatched to the site location. Parents will be contacted after the search.~~

## ~~II.~~ ~~Searches using Metal Detectors~~

~~As a part of the overall plan to protect the health, welfare, safety and lives of students, faculty, staff and visitors to the school system, and to enforce the Code of Student Conduct, metal detectors may be used by a principal or designee to scan and screen for firearms and other weapons in order to locate and deter their use. Firearms and other weapons have no place in public~~

~~schools. They are life-threatening, cause bodily harm and have adverse and disruptive effects on the educational process.~~

~~A metal detector may be used, but is not required, on a student when (1) there is reasonable suspicion that a weapon will be found or (2) due to reasonable personal knowledge and/or fear that a weapon will be found based on current or prior circumstances.~~

1. ~~Metal detectors may be used at random, without cause, at times to be determined by the principal/designee or as otherwise prescribed by the Superintendent of Schools. Random searches shall be conducted with minimal disruption of the educational program. Care shall be taken to ensure that the selection of students subjected to the detection process as part of the random sweep shall be demonstrably according to chance.~~

   ~~It shall be the obligation of the principal/designee conducting the search to ensure that no bias as to gender, religion, or race entered into the selection process. A report shall be submitted from each school conducting a random search with a metal detector to the Assistant Superintendent of School Operations each semester.~~

2. ~~The use of a metal detector to scan an individual student is permitted under the following guidelines:~~

   a. ~~The metal detector shall not touch any part of the student's body, and shall not result in any strip search of the student or "scavenger hunt" of the student's property.~~

   b. ~~If the metal detector is not activated during the scanning, the student will be allowed to enter or remain in the classroom or activity.~~

   c. ~~If the metal detector is activated during the scanning, the student will be requested to indicate what metal may be causing the alert and if there is not reason to believe that the metal object is dangerous, to remove the object(s) for inspection by placing the object(s) in a container within sight of the student. A second scanning is then performed, as described.~~

   d. ~~If the second scanning fails to activate the metal detector, the student will be allowed to remain in the classroom or activity.~~

   e. ~~If the second scanning again activates the metal detector, a pat-down search will be conducted for the purpose of locating the object(s) which activated the metal detector. The pat-down search shall be limited to the area of the body where the metal detector was activated. Whenever~~

~~possible, except where school personnel are concerned for their safety or the safety of others, no school personnel may conduct a pat-down search of a student of a different gender, and all such searches shall be conducted only in the presence of another adult who is informed beforehand as to the reason for the search.~~

f. ~~If school personnel detect an object(s) other than a firearm or other weapon during the pat-down search, the student will be asked to remove it. If the student does not remove it, then the school personnel shall remove it. If the object(s) feels like or is believed to be a firearm or other weapon, the school personnel shall remove the object.~~

g. ~~If the principal/designee and/or school police officer believe that circumstances warrant immediate action due to a perceived emergency or adverse student behavior, the previous steps shall not be required.~~

3. ~~Scanning of bags, briefcases, pocket books, book bags, or other containers (referred to herein after collectively as "parcels").~~

a. ~~Parcels may be scanned by the metal detector.~~

b. ~~If the parcel does not activate the metal detector, it shall be returned to the student with no further search unless circumstances require other action.~~

c. ~~If the parcel activates the metal detector, the person conducting the search will open the parcel in order to permit a visual inspection for firearms and/or other weapons. Care should be taken not to physically handle objects within the parcel which cannot be seen. If further inspection is required, the contents shall be emptied into a container within view of the student. If no firearms or other weapons are located, the visual inspection shall cease and the parcel will be returned to the student.~~

d. ~~If a firearm and/or other weapon is found, it shall be handled under applicable provisions of the Student Code of Conduct and applicable state law. Any weapons confiscated shall immediately be given to officers of the school police department to be retained as evidence. Principals/designees shall not retain any weapon as evidence in their office or other location within the school.~~

e. ~~If, as a result of the use of the metal detector, any controlled substances, marijuana, tobacco products, or other items and/or objects prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct are found, they shall be confiscated and immediately given to the appropriate school employee~~

~~or an officer of the school police department, and the student's parents and/or legal guardian shall be immediately notified.~~

~~J.~~ **~~Search of Motor Vehicles~~**

~~Parking on school campus property is a privilege and not a right. All motor vehicles parked in areas located upon school district property may be searched by the principal or designee without a warrant under the following circumstances:~~

1. ~~Where weapons (including, but not limited to) guns, knives or clubs are in plain view within the motor vehicle; or,~~

2. ~~Where the student or other person has orally consented to the search of the motor vehicle; or,~~

3. ~~Where there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the contents of the motor vehicle are in violation of the Student Code of Conduct of the Cherokee County Board of Education, or where there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the motor vehicle contains articles that school personnel are authorized to seize; or,~~

4. ~~Where there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the motor vehicle was used in the commission of a crime; or,~~

5. ~~Where there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the motor vehicle is carrying a prohibited, stolen or illegally possessed substance or object; or~~

6. ~~At random, pursuant to rules and regulations acknowledged in writing by the student and parent/guardian when submitting the application for securing a parking decal.~~

~~The principal/designee may require the student to surrender possession of any key to a motor vehicle parked in the designated student parking area or on school system property for purposes of opening and inspecting the motor vehicle. A principal or designee shall not authorize or permit forced entry into a motor vehicle that is locked.~~

~~The principal/designee shall permit the student to be present during the entry into and the subsequent search of the motor vehicle. Any item found in or on the motor vehicle which is prohibited by state law and the Student Code of Conduct may be seized. The student shall be given a written list of any such items seized. All items seized shall be retained by the school police department or released to the parent or legal guardian of the student, dependent upon the circumstances and the decision of the school police officer and the principal/designee.~~

**~~III. Searches and Seizures by School Police Officers~~**

A. ~~When a law enforcement officer instigates, directs, participates or acquiesces in a search conducted by school officials, the officer must have probable cause for the search, even though the school officials acting alone would be treated as state officials subject to a lesser constitutional standard for conducting searches.~~

B. ~~Police officers of the Cherokee County School Police Department are required to adhere to the principles of the United States Constitution, applicable federal and state laws, and the policies of the General Directives Manual of the Cherokee County School Police Department when conducting searches of persons, and/or property.~~

C. ~~School officials may call upon officers of the Cherokee County School Police Department to be present when officials conduct a search; however, the officers are to refrain from taking the lead in any search procedure unless the situation and/or the circumstances are determined to be a legitimate police matter. The general principle to be followed is that the school must initiate and conduct the search, with the police only acting as observers.~~

D. ~~If the decision is made to turn the investigative/search function over to the police officer, then the principal/designee will assist the officer in performing his/her official duties, but may not act as an "agent" of the police.~~

**~~IV. Interviews and Interrogations by School Personnel~~**

A. ~~The principal/designee of each school in the Cherokee County School System possesses the authority to conduct reasonable interviews and interrogations of students in order to properly investigate alleged offenses and/or student misconduct.~~

B. ~~Alleged offenses and/or student misconduct that may involve any student or group of students on the way to or from school, on the school bus, at any school function or activity, any school-related activity, or any school event held away from the school district may be under the jurisdiction of school authorities. In addition, any conduct outside of school hours or away from school which may adversely affect the educational process or endanger the health, safety, morals, or well being of other students, teachers, or employees within the system may be subject to administrative process.~~

C. ~~All interviews and interrogations should be conducted by the principal/designee in an office environment, whenever possible, in order to protect the student and maintain confidentiality. When conducting the~~

~~interview/interrogation, a witness of the same gender should be present when practicable.~~

D. ~~All interviews and interrogations are to be documented in writing and should include the date, time, and purpose and the names of persons present. If the student is asked to provide a statement, the statement is to be written by the student in his/her own words, dated and signed.~~

E. ~~The parent or legal guardian of the student shall be contacted by the principal/designee when the principal/designee determines that a criminal act and/or a violation of the Student Code of Conduct has occurred and the student is in someway connected or involved.~~

F. ~~If the principal/designee determines during the interview/interrogation that a possible violation of the law has occurred, he/she will contact the Cherokee School Police Department for further investigative follow-up.~~

## ~~IV. Interviews and Interrogations by School Police Officers~~

~~D. Police officers of the Cherokee County School Police Department are required to adhere to the principles of the United States Constitution, applicable federal and state laws, and the policies of the General Directives Manual of the department when conducting an interview or custodial interrogation of a student regardless of age.~~

~~A. If a decision is made by the principal/designee to turn the investigative function over to the school police officer, he/she will assist the officer in performing his/her official duties, but may not act as an "agent" of the police.~~

The Cherokee County Board of Education ~~of Cherokee County~~ recognizes student expression as an educational benefit of the school experience and encourages freedom of comment, both oral and written, with a degree of order conducive to proper learning.

One medium of expression is student journalism. Some student publications, such as yearbooks, magazines and school newspapers, may be developed as part of the curriculum to benefit primarily those who compile, edit, and publish them. Because such publications are considered part of the curriculum, these publications are not considered public forums for student expression as such the School District may exercise reasonable editorial control to maintain a safe and secure learning environment and to promote the underlying educational purpose of the publication. Accordingly, faculty ~~Faculty~~ advisers will be assigned to guide students who are engaged in these curriculum-based activities. Any commercial advertisements in such publications will conform to ~~Board~~ School District regulations.

~~Students' First Amendment rights to freedom of expression and equal protection of the law will be observed in regard to student publications, whether school-sponsored or non-school sponsored. The observance of these rights must be balanced against the duty of educating students in an orderly manner to protect the rights of all.~~

In such cases, ~~S~~students ~~may~~ will be required to submit publications for approval prior to distribution. ~~When approval is required, school administrators must make available to students the standards which will be used in determining the grant or denial of permission. Such guidelines will be specific and will be directed toward ascertaining which publications will cause substantial disruption of, or material interference with, school activities or intrusions into school affairs or the lives of others. To be valid, these guidelines must prescribe a procedure for appeals from students.~~ Each school shall establish a procedure to review staff editorial decisions if necessary, that includes a process of appeal to the Office of School Operations.

~~It will be the responsibility of the local school administrators to promulgate reasonable and specific regulations setting forth the time, manner, and place in which distribution of student publications may occur. Students who become subject to discipline for failure to comply with distribution rules will be granted procedural due process rights.~~

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**
**REVISED: June/July 2017**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**