



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

Cornellius Frazier, Principal

Jacque Walker, Kayla Couch, and Pam Parten, Assistant Principals

**1305 N. Isabella Street
Sylvester, Georgia 31791
(229) 776-8620**

WELCOME

Welcome to Worth County Middle School. We take pride in our school, our staff, our curriculum, and our facilities. We hope that you will share that pride with us.

This handbook is prepared for you, the WCMS student, and your parents. It contains information about the daily procedures, schedules, and the Code of Conduct. It will acquaint you and your parents with our policies and procedures. We ask that you and your parents use this handbook to become more informed about Worth County Middle School.

This Student Handbook, containing pertinent sections of the Code of Conduct, is distributed to every student at the beginning of the school year. Parents or guardians are required to sign or confirm receipt of the Student Handbook. Parents, guardians, and students must read the Student Handbook in its entirety. Failure to acknowledge receipt does not absolve the parent, guardian, or student of any responsibility for information contained within the handbook.



Dear Students and Guardians,

It gives me great pleasure to serve as principal of Worth County Middle School. I am incredibly excited for the upcoming school year. I look forward to continuing the relationships with the students and guardians of our 7th and 8th graders. I also look forward to building new relationships with the students and guardians of our upcoming 6th graders.

Here at Worth County Middle School, we offer many extracurricular activities for our students to be involved in. Students are encouraged to participate in one or more of the many sports that are offered throughout the school year. There are also many different clubs and organizations that students can join or participate in here at WCMS. More importantly, we strive to ensure that our students receive the best education possible at Worth County Middle School. Our teachers and staff are dedicated to serving our students and guardians as well as the Worth County community.

It is my goal for Worth County Middle School to be an exciting, loving, and safe place for all of our students. I encourage parents and guardians to be actively involved in your child's education. Students whose parents are involved in their education are more likely to achieve at high levels. Together we can create a middle school experience where your child can be inspired to do great things.

Let's make this year "The Best Year Ever"!!

GO RAMS!!!!

Sincerely yours,

Cornellius Frazier

Principal



Worth County Schools

2023 – 2024 Calendar

Planning (no students)	Holiday (no students or staff)	Last Day of 9-Weeks	1 st Day of School
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JULY 2023						
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DECEMBER 2023						
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APRIL 2024						
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MAY 2024						
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8/1 First Day of School
 9/4 Labor Day
 10/6-10 Fall Break
 11/20-24 Thanksgiving Break
 12/15 Half-Day
 12/18-1/3 Christmas Break
 1/15 MLK Day
 2/19 President's Day
 3/8-12 Winter Break
 4/1-5 Spring Break
 5/22 Last Day of School
 5/22 Half-Day
 5/25 Graduation

Approved 2/9/23

Worth County Middle School
1305 N Isabella Street
Sylvester, GA 31791 (229)776-8620

Principal	Mr. Cornelius Frazier
6 th Grade Assistant Principal	Dr. Kayla Couch
7 th Grade Assistant Principal	Mrs. Pam Parten
8 th Grade Assistant Principal	Mr. Jacque Walker
School Improvement Specialist	Mrs. Kerri Hancock
Athletic Director	Coach John Popham
Counselor 6 th grade & A-M 7 th Grade	Dr. Saudia Powell
Counselor 7 th Grade N-Z & 8 th Grade	Mrs. Deidre Smith
Media Specialist	Mrs. Christy Haskins
Technology	Mr. Andre Ransom
School Resource Officer	Mr. Zachery Kennedy
Cafeteria Manager	Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper



Worth County School District

Nehemiah Cummings, Superintendent

103 Eldridge Street
Sylvester, GA 31791

Phone: 229-776-8600 :- Fax: 229-776-8603
Website: <http://worthschools.net>

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessional

August 2022

Dear Parents,

Worth County Schools

Worth County Primary School
Principal: Mr. Jared Worthy
(229) 776-8600
jworthy@worthschools.net

Worth County Elementary School
Principal: Dr. Steven Rouse
(229) 776-8605
srouse@worthschools.net

Worth County Middle School
Principal: Mr. Cornelius Frazier
(229) 776-8620
cfrazier@worthschools.net

Worth County High School
Principal: Mrs. Melissa Edwards
(229) 776-8625
medwards@worthschools.net

Worth County Achievement Center
Principal: Mr. Will Smith
(229) 776-8600
wsmith@worthschools.net

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

- has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact your child's principal at the number or email shown on the left. We hope that this year will be a productive one for your child

Sincerely, **Felecia Cook**
Federal Programs Director

2023-2024

Adopted by the WCBOE May 2023

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT



Worth County Board of Education



Worth County Board of Education members (pictured left to right):

Mr. Justin Lucas; Ms. Marilyn Herring; Mr. Mark Haralson; Mr. Nehemiah Cummings, Superintendent; ; Mr. Hubert Souter, Chairperson; Mrs. Sue Youngblood

Meetings of the Worth County Board of Education are conducted the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Principals

Mr. Jared Worthy	Worth County Primary	Grades PreK-2	229-776-8660
Dr. Steven Rouse	Worth County Elementary	Grades 3-5	229-776-8605
Mr. Cornellius Frazier	Worth County Middle	Grades 6-8	229-776-8620
Mrs. Melissa Edwards	Worth County High	Grades 9-12	229-776-8625
Mr. Will Smith	Worth County Achievement Center	Grades 6-12	229-776-8600

FOREWORD

It is the purpose of the Worth County School District to operate each school in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education that ensures the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with that purpose, the Board of Education has adopted a policy that requires all schools to provide codes of conduct. These standards of behavior require students to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that facilitates an optimum learning environment for themselves and others.

We expect students to:

- Respect each other
- Respect school district employees
- Obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board of Education
- Obey rules established by individual schools

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

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

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

In addition, students may be disciplined for felonious conduct off campus, or which may pose a threat to the school's learning environment or the safety of students and employees.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community. Parents will have an opportunity to be involved in developing and updating the student code of conduct. We ask for your cooperation in sharing this responsibility for maintaining a proper learning environment.

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

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

WORTH COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Vision:

Worth County Schools will prepare students to graduate and be productive citizens by providing them with access to high quality programs.

Mission:

Worth County Schools provide a quality education that develops graduates and life-long learners.

Slogan:

Committed to the Success of Every Student

PHILOSOPHY

It is the philosophy of the **Worth County School District** to provide a safe and secure learning environment where “teachers can teach and students can learn.” Policies and regulations which are arrived at fairly and forthrightly with the collaboration of staff, parents, and students will create a positive learning climate for all.

Therefore, this **Code of Conduct of the Worth County School District** is important in providing and maintaining such a school climate.

The code will:

- Outline the roles of the student, school, and parents/guardians
- Define specific terms
- Specify the role and responsibilities of students, the school, and parents/guardians
- List general rules of conduct expected of all Worth County students
- Outline age appropriate, progressive discipline procedures for the schools, including consequences for unacceptable behaviors, from minor to severe
- Enumerate student support ideas, recommendations, and alternatives
- Match consequences with severity of behavior including removal of dangerous and chronically disruptive students from the learning environment
- Take into account any disability of the student when addressing misbehavior

In the Worth County School District, the students are expected to conduct themselves in compliance with school regulations and to exhibit courtesy and respect for authority at all times. Rules for student conduct apply while students are on school grounds at any time,

off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event, enroute to and from school on a school transportation vehicle, at a bus stop, or on school transportation or private vehicle used to transport students to a school-sponsored function.

- Parents and guardians are encouraged to review the Code of Conduct with their children and to support its enforcement throughout the community.
- Parents and guardians are to sign or confirm receipt of the Code of Conduct.
- Failure to acknowledge receipt does not absolve the parent/guardian of any responsibility for information contained in the Code.
- Codes will be available in each school and classroom.
- All student handbooks shall include pertinent sections of the Code of Conduct.
- Questions about the Code of Conduct should be addressed to the appropriate principal.

Students shall also be disciplined for engaging in off campus misconduct that could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the education process.

Disposition for such actions will result in the student appearing before a tribunal hearing to determine placement until verdict has been made at trial. Once the case has been settled, the student will reappear before the tribunal committee to determine future placement.

The Superintendent and the Worth County Board of Education do fully support the authority of the teacher and principal to follow the mandates of Georgia law O.C.G.A. 20-2-738

Policies related to discipline are in the Worth County Board of Education policy manuals. The Policy Manual is available for public review at the Board of Education office and on the school system website (www.worthschools.net). Student handbooks are written to be consistent with Board of Education Policies and this Code of Conduct.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

To the extent appropriate to the situation, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of the discipline to be imposed by each school official should be in proportion to the severity of the behavior, while taking into account the totality of the situation, including the student's age, discipline history, and other relevant factors.

Infrequently, there are situations when school staff and parents/guardians disagree on discipline measures for a student. In those cases, the school principal will, based on this Code of Conduct, school discipline policy/procedures, and administrative judgment, assign appropriate discipline measures. In addition, the principal may make student discipline decisions determined to be in the best interest of the student and the school in any case of disruptive conduct not specifically covered in this Code.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communications through personal contacts are extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents as well as on-going opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments.

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

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code which may result in a school staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior.

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

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

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws

cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

The Worth County School District seeks to promote a positive environment for Worth County Schools in which there is an awareness of, involvement in, and support for the system and its educational mission. Recognizing that open channels of communication are essential in fulfilling its role as a legislative body, the Board of Education invites parents, students, staff, and others, to offer suggestions on policies by submitting in writing any suggested additions, changes or deletions to the policies. The Code of Conduct is reviewed annually and parents, guardians, and students are invited to participate in the review process.

PROCESS FOR PARENTS TO ADDRESS CONCERNS

When parents have concerns about their child's education or educational setting, the following is an outline of the process to follow:

1. The first step is to talk with the teacher(s) of the child. It may be convenient to have a discussion via phone (best) or electronically. If this does not resolve the concern, a parent/teacher conference should be scheduled and attended additionally by the school counselor and/or appropriate administrator.
2. If the parent is not pleased with the outcome or response after working with the teacher(s) on the specific concern, the parent needs to address his/her concerns to the principal of the school.
3. If the parent is still not pleased with the outcome or response after meeting with the principal, the parent will need to contact system level personnel based on the specific concerns.
 - Transportation – Mr. Rusty Parten, 229-776-8612
 - Maintenance – Mr. Jimmy Odom, 229-776-8600
 - School Nutrition – Mrs. Cynthia Thomas, 229-776-8600
 - Student Services – Kira Outlaw, 229-776-8600
 - Special Education – Mrs. Sommer Clark, 229-776-8600
 - Curriculum & Instruction, Professional Learning,–Teresa Sumner, 229-776-8600
 - Title One, Testing- Felecia Cook
 - Athletics – Jeff Hammonds, 229-776-8600
4. The Superintendent of Schools is willing to work with parents regarding concerns. However, parents should try to resolve their concerns as close to their child's classroom setting as possible. This is where services are provided and the school personnel know the most about the child and the issue. If you feel that you have followed this process and have been unsuccessful at having your concerns addressed, contact the Superintendent's secretary at 229-776-8600

CAMPUS VISITATION

VISITORS: All visitors to school campuses must report to the front office before visiting other parts of the school, as required by O.C.G.A. 20-2-27. Visitors will need to have proof of identification in the form of:

1. a driver's license,
2. military ID or
3. other state issued ID.

A visitor's badge will be issued that will provide identification for the person having a reason to be on campus. Persons not wearing such a badge will not be allowed on campus. Unauthorized visitors will be requested to leave; failure to do so will result in official misdemeanor charges of a high and aggravated nature. Visitors are allowed to visit only the areas requested. *Parents should have an appointment when possible.*

These measures are necessary to protect children from unauthorized persons. Only those children enrolled in a Worth County school shall be able to utilize school facilities, equipment, and programs, and participate in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, subject to all other existing rules of participation.

FACE MASKS

Students will be allowed, but not required, to wear face masks in all school areas under normal circumstances. However, WCSS may alter mask flexibility and requirements at any time.

Face masks must not be a bandana or bandana like and must be worn appropriately. Face masks also fall under the same rules of any other piece of clothing. Any masks deemed inappropriate by school administration will not be permitted.

DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

Disciplinary hearings are held following any instance of an alleged violation of the student Code of Conduct if the principal recommends a suspension or expulsion of a student longer than ten days or following an alleged assault or battery upon any school system employee, if that employee requests a hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to hear the charges and the evidence; to determine if the Code of Conduct was violated; and if so, to determine appropriate disciplinary action. The student and parents/guardians have a right to this due process hearing before a long-term suspension (more than ten days) or expulsion can be administered. The maximum penalty that can be imposed by a disciplinary hearing is permanent expulsion; however, it is the preferred policy of the board that disruptive students are placed in alternative education settings. Regardless of the student's status at the time of the disciplinary hearing (e.g. student transfers, student withdraws), the district will proceed with the hearing on the date scheduled and provided to the parent/guardian in the charge letter.

Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8.16 Unsafe School Choice Option.

For grades 6-12

In the event that a student chooses to admit to a violation of the code of conduct or chooses not to contest the charges before a hearing officer; and if the school and a parent/guardian agree as to appropriate disciplinary action; and if the parent/guardian chooses to waive the opportunity to participate in a disciplinary hearing, present evidence, subpoena and cross examine witnesses, and be represented by an attorney at such hearing; a Disciplinary Hearing Waiver Agreement may be written, co-signed and dated.

CHEATING

Any form of cheating/academic dishonesty/plagiarism will be initially handled by the classroom teacher. Consequences may include a zero on assignment/test/project etc. and parent notified. Repeat offenses may be forwarded to the school administration and warrant more severe consequences.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

A student attempting to enroll in the Worth County School District during the time in which the student is subject to a disciplinary order from another school district may be

denied enrollment or be subject to the completion of the disciplinary actions handed down from the other school district.

NON-RESIDENT STUDENT

Any student who lives out of the county but wishes to attend Worth County Schools may apply for non-residence status. Certain criteria must be met and maintained in order to be approved. Policy and application can be found on the school website and at each school location.

WITHDRAWAL STUDENTS

Any student who withdraws from Worth County School District prior to the completion of a disciplinary hearing must submit to completion of the previous disciplinary hearing before consideration of readmission.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are not subject to the same disciplinary procedures as other students. First, it must be determined if the misconduct is caused by or has a direct and substantial relationship to the disabling condition. If so, that determination must be made by persons having expertise with respect to students who have disabilities. If it is determined that the misconduct does not arise out of the disabling condition, the student then is subject to discipline. However, under no circumstances can educational services be discontinued altogether for the student with disabilities. A student with disabilities can be temporarily removed from the classroom prior to a hearing when necessary to protect the student, other students, or the teacher, but the hearing shall be held as soon as possible.

SEARCHING STUDENTS

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

BULLY REPORTING PROCEDURE

The Worth County School District expressly prohibits the bullying of any person, by any means or method, at school, on school property, at school-related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system.

Should a student feel that they are, or have been bullied (see definition) they should first report to the closest teacher or person of authority. If the problem is not resolved, the student should report to a guidance counselor for intervention in the situation. If interventions are not successful, the Principal/Assistant Principal/SRO officer should be notified verbally or by written form.

Safe2SpeakUP APP (Report Bullying, Threats, etc.)

Safe2SpeakUp is a companion app to *CrisisGo* for those ages 18 and under. This means that school staff using *CrisisGo* can communicate and coordinate student safety by communicating between the two apps.

Safe2SpeakUP allows students to **anonymously** report bully-related activity involving themselves or their friends. Additionally, students can submit safety tips to their school's safety team for issues like drugs or weapons on campus. *Safe2SpeakUP* users can message with the school officials that oversee bully-related incidents, as well as message groups that their school district has granted them permission to access.

Students are encouraged to download the *Safe2SpeakUp* app onto their cellphones and to report bullying or other dangers before issues escalate.



DATA COLLECTION

Several times throughout the year, it will be necessary to collect data through student surveys. These surveys will cover various topics in education. All student surveys are completely anonymous. The data collected will be used to identify critical areas of need such as to:

- Maintain a school environment that is free of drugs and violence.
- Promote a class atmosphere that allows teachers to teach and students to learn.
- Develop and offer experiences that involve students in applying the concepts of making healthy decisions, accepting responsibility for their behavior, and understanding consequences.

Parents or guardians have the right to review surveys and contact the school principal with any questions or concerns. Parents will be allowed to opt out of their student's participation in any survey that asks questions about private family matters or that collects information for marketing purposes.

CLEAR BOOK BAG POLICY

Only clear book bags will be allowed in grades PK-12.

Clear book bags cannot be obstructed with graphics, stickers, or other artwork.

Each school will have some clear book bags on hand for sale. Book bags sold will be at cost, not as a fundraiser.

Regular purses are allowed as long as nothing larger than a regular sized textbook can fit inside of the purse.

Each school will designate a location for students to secure non-clear bags containing athletic equipment or other extracurricular items.



****Athletic Bags** – Students who play sports, will take their athletic bag to the gym **immediately** upon arrival. One of the PE coaches will take their bag and lock it up in the PE offices. After the **fourth** bus shift is called, students may go into the gym and see the PE coach on duty, and retrieve their belongings.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is required for students to be academically successful in school. Students who have excessive absences each year find themselves behind in their classes and in danger of grade retention or loss of credits. With this in mind, the Worth County School District (WCSD) is placing more emphasis on regular school attendance. We are asking for your support by making every effort to have your child in school every day, except when the child's illness or a family emergency requires his/her absence.

The Worth County School District is taking the following actions to encourage school attendance and to discourage truancy:

1. All schools will provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in school, a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance. By **September 1** of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the school system, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student will be asked to sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. After two reasonable attempts by the school to secure such signature or signatures, the school shall be considered to be in compliance with this subsection if it sends a copy of the statement, via certified mail, return receipt requested, or first-class mail, to such parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child, or children. In addition, students aged ten or older by September 1 must sign a statement indicating receipt of a written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to the local board policy.
2. Parents of all students will provide a written excuse from a physician/certified medical practitioner, parent or guardian, stating days missed and reason for absence to the school within the **first three (3) days** the student returns to school, after an absence.
3. Parents of students in grades K – 8th will provide an excuse from a physician/certified medical practitioner after the **fifth (5th)** written parental excuse.
4. Parents of students from ages 6-9 who have **five (5) unexcused absences** will receive notification from the WCSD by phone and/or 1st class mail. The notice shall outline the penalty and consequences of such absences. Upon the **6th unexcused absence**, a letter via certified mail with return receipt requested will be sent to the parent. The letter will require the parent/guardian to clear up unexcused absences within 5 business days or a warrant can be taken against the parent/guardian(s).

Note -O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150 (c) All children enrolled for 20 school days or more in the public schools of this state prior to their seventh birthday shall become subject to all of the provisions of this article, the provisions of *Code Sections 20-2-690 through 20-2-701*, and the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education relating to compulsory school attendance even though they have not attained seven years of age.

5. Parents of students from ages 10 – 16, who have **five (5) unexcused absences**, will receive notification from the WCSD via phone and/or 1st class mail. The notice shall outline the penalty and consequences of such absences. Upon the **6th unexcused absence**, a letter via certified mail with return receipt requested will be sent to the parent. The letter can require the parent/guardian to clear up unexcused absences within 5 business days or a warrant will be taken against the parent/guardian(s) and a juvenile complaint will be filed against the

student. Failure to receive written notices in no manner absolves the parents'/guardians' responsibility in complying with all system/school attendance policies and rules.

6. If a student ages 14-16 has ***more than ten (10) consecutive school days of unexcused absences*** in any semester, notice will be given, by the school system, to the juvenile court and the student may be withdrawn from school for lack of attendance.
7. In grades 9 -12, the WCSD will mail attendance letters on the fifth (5th), and seventh (7th) absence. These letters will be for unexcused absences per class period and will outline the WCSD's attendance policy as it relates to course credit(s).
8. Student tardiness will be addressed through each school's progressive discipline plan.
9. The WCSD's Child Attendance Team (CAT) consists of a (an): school social worker and administrator from each school. Additionally, each school has a building-level CAT team consisting of a (an): administrator and other support staff as needed. The school-level team is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the rules and regulations adopted by the Attendance Protocol Committee and other support staff, as needed. The Worth Co. School District's Attendance Team will address school attendance matters. For students who are excessively absent, the WCSD's Attendance Team will make attempts to resolve the matter with students at the local level. However, if students' absences continue, a CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES (C.H.I.N.S.) petition can be filed and referred to the DJJ Judge.
10. Local law enforcement officials will take an active role in questioning school-age students whom they see on the streets or in other public places during the school day and who are not accompanied by a parent/guardian. Police officers are to return truant students to their appropriate school where school administrators will provide appropriate discipline.
11. The WCSD shall report student attendance rates to the Attendance Protocol Committee and the State Board of Education at the end of each school year, according to a schedule established by the State Board of Education.

ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL

- All students must have an adequate certificate of immunization, Form #3231, to enroll in school.
- First year Georgia public school students must have eye, ear, and dental screening and a certified birth certificate in order to enroll.
- New transfer students must register in the Registrar's office and will then be oriented to the facility.
- Withdrawal of students will also be handled by the Registrar's office. Parents or guardians must authorize withdrawal of students. Twenty-four hour advance notice is recommended.
- All financial obligations must be cleared before transcripts can be sent or before a student can officially withdraw from school.

ARRIVING/LEAVING SCHOOL

- All students will report to their designated area (cafeteria or homeroom) upon arrival at school. Students will not be allowed in the cafeteria or on the halls until **7:30 AM**
- After students have arrived at school, they may not leave without permission from an administrator. If it is necessary to leave school, parent/guardian permission must be obtained.
- Students will only be permitted to leave with the adults listed in the computer. All transportation changes must be written by a parent/guardian.
- Students will not be called to the office to check out of school until the parent comes into the office and signs them out.

Grades and Absences - Final course grades of students shall not be penalized because of absences if they following conditions are met:

- Absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons.
- Make up work for excused absences was completed satisfactorily.
- Uniform Withdrawal Criteria are met

For the purpose of accurately measuring the academic performance of students continuously enrolled in public schools, the Board adopts the following uniform criteria for withdrawing students.

Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student who:

- Has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences;
- Is not subject to compulsory school attendance; and
- Is not receiving instructional services through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The Superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall use his or her best efforts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of a student if the school system plans to withdraw such a student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance if the superintendent or superintendent's designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program. Appropriate school personnel shall withdraw students retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

- Students and parents should make every effort to be at school on time. If a student is not in his/her assigned homeroom by 8:00 A.M., he/she will be considered tardy. Any student who is tardy to school for any reason must report to homeroom. Students who ride late buses will not be counted tardy.
- Tardiness is excused for medical reasons, family emergencies, and inclement weather. All notes for excused tardiness must be signed by the parent/guardian, medical professional, or other as prescribed by the Worth County Attendance Policy.
- Please note: Students with excessive tardies lose important instructional time. Students may also be subjected to disciplinary referrals if the tardiness continues during the school year.

Students are tardy to class/school if they arrive 5 minutes after class/school begins.

BUCKLEY AMENDMENT

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (PL-93-380), known as the Buckley Amendment, allows parents and/or students who are 18 years or older the right to see their entire educational file. These records are confidential and only those immediately concerned with students' education are allowed access to files. Student records contain directory information, student grades, and attendance, and standardized test results. Further information about student records can be found in Board Policy JR.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) Notice:

No student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program), without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student.

A parent/guardian of a student may, upon request, inspect any survey created by a third party containing one or more of the items listed as (1) through (8) above before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student and may choose to opt the student out

of participation in the survey. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for (1) granting a request by a parent/guardian for reasonable access to such survey within a reasonable period of time after the request is received, and (2) making arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of the administrations or distribution of a survey to a student containing one or more of the items listed as (1) through (8). The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

A parent/guardian of a student may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for granting a request by a parent/guardian for reasonable access to instructional material within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the administration of physical examinations or screenings that the school may administer to students. This notice shall offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to opt the student out of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is (1) required as a condition of attendance; (2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and (3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students.

The parent/guardian of a student shall be notified prior to the commencement of activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information (or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose.) Such notice shall offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to inspect, upon request, any instrument used in the collection of such information before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student and to opt the student out of such activities. The Principal shall develop procedures that: (1) make arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of such collection, disclosure, or use, and (2) grant a request by a parent/guardian for reasonable access to such instruments within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

Water Safety Education

Georgia House Bill 402, known as the Edna Mae McGovern Act, requires that all public schools provide annual notice to parents and guardians on the importance of water safety education.

Water safety education courses and swimming lessons play an important role in saving countless lives every year. An aquatic education opportunity is not currently offered in Worth County. However, listed below are the contact numbers for YMCA locations offering swimming classes within our surrounding area.

Albany Area YMCA (Central): 229-436-0531

Albany Area YMCA (Lee): 229-759-9770

Moultrie YMCA: 229-985-1154

Tifton YMCA: 229-391-9622

Cafeteria

The lunchroom is operated to provide students a nutritious meal. All students should respect the right of others to enjoy their meal.

Please observe the following rules:

- * Enter and leave the cafeteria in an orderly manner.
- * Throwing food is prohibited.
- * Loud talking will not be tolerated.
- * Any beverages brought to school must be unopened. Beverages must be consumed in the cafeteria.
- * Put trays and trash away after a meal. Clean your eating area before you leave.
- * Remember all meals must be eaten in the lunchroom, including those brought from home. Food and milk may not be taken from the lunchroom. No food may be delivered to the campus without the consent of the principal. Canned sodas are permissible if brought from home as part of a student's lunch.
- * Breakfast is served from 7:30 AM to 8:00 AM. *Lunch is served from approximately 11:00 to 1:30. Check your schedule for the appropriate time.
- * School vending machines may be used by students only during designated break periods after lunch (USDA regulations).
- * If parents bring lunch to school that was bought from a restaurant, they must have the approval of the principal. In addition, any meals must be eaten during the student's designated lunch period

CHANGING CLASSES/DISMISSAL

Students must walk on the right side of the hall during class changes. Loud talking, running, pushing, or other misbehavior will result in disciplinary action. Horse playing is prohibited. Students are not to loiter in the halls, doorways, or congregate in or around restrooms. Students will not congregate in outside areas when changing classes. Students waiting for bus dismissal at day's end will remain seated in the classroom. Teachers will hold students until their bus shift is called. If a student goes outside on the wrong bus shift, the student will be subject to a disciplinary referral. If students are walkers or car pick up and go out to bus dismissal, they will be subject to a disciplinary referral.

In addition, teachers will keep a copy of their dismissal roster. The roster will contain the names of all students in the last period and the shift the students are released.

CHANGE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Students who have any change of address, telephone number or name should report any change to the office and registrar. Student's name, address, and telephone number are for directory purposes and will be used appropriately.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

A comprehensive character education program, Tuesday Advisement, has been implemented at Worth County Middle School. This character curriculum focuses on the

students' development of the following traits: trustworthiness, respect, school pride, citizenship, caring, responsibility, compassion, fairness, self-control, and cheerfulness.

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

Commercial advertising “for profit” is prohibited at Worth County Middle School.

COMPUTER/INTERNET POLICY STATEMENT

- All students using school system computer resources and the Internet shall comply with the Worth County Board of Education's Acceptable Use of Computer/Internet Resources policy, the administrative procedures provided by the Superintendent regarding such use, and the Board of Regents Acceptable Use Policy for PeachNet. In order for a student to gain access to the Internet through school equipment, the student's teacher must sign a Staff Computer/Internet Access Agreement, or the student must sign and have parent/guardian give permission through the Student Computer/Internet Access Agreement. Both forms are available through each school's Technology Committee. At WCMS, the Internet has a filtering device that reduces access to objectionable sites.

PERMISSION TO PUBLISH ON THE INTERNET

Worth County Middle School maintains a website on the World Wide Web. Anyone with access to the Web is able to view the website. This is an excellent means to communicate with parents and to highlight what a great school and exceptional student body we have at WCMS. Through the web, we are able to recognize faculty, staff, and students for excellence in many areas, including academics and athletics. Parents who do not want their child's first name, picture, or work published on the web page should inform the school.

CURRICULUM

Our students are taught the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE). Our teachers have access to a multitude of resources that supplement their instruction in the classroom. Our students utilize interactive notebooks, technology, science labs, and math unit books as additional learning resources in the classroom.

DISMISSAL TIMES FOR WCMS/DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

Students will not be allowed into the hallways or cafeteria until 7:30 AM. **Early drop offs, are not permitted during the 2023-2024 school year.** Students will be dismissed at the end of the school day in shifts to board buses. The approximate release times will be: First shift - 3:06 P.M., second shift - 3:10 P.M., third shift - 3:14 P.M., and fourth shift- 3:18 P.M. Students who walk home from school or ride home with parents in the afternoon will be dismissed at approximately 3:04 PM. All parents MUST pull through the front driveway to pick up students. For legal and safety reasons students may not walk to the highway (Isabella

Street) or any other location to get into vehicles. All parents should be considerate of other drivers and move forward with traffic to avoid leaving a large gap in the line. Vehicles are not allowed on the grassy areas beside or in front of the school. All cars must park in designated areas of the school.

The previous statements are in accordance with the following Georgia Codes:

OCGA 40-6-184: Impeding traffic flow

OCGA 40-6-203: Stopping, standing or parking prohibited in certain areas

OCGA 40-6-205: Obstructing an intersection

OCGA 40-6-243: Opening and closing car doors on the side available to moving traffic.

Students will remain seated in the classroom with their designated teacher until their designated shift is released. Students are **not** allowed to walk to another school to board a bus. If a student misses the bus, the student must immediately go to the front office and call home.

DRIVING PERSONAL VEHICLES TO SCHOOL

Worth County Middle School students are not allowed to drive to school. The Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act requires that local school systems certify whether or not a student's attendance pattern and discipline record allow the possession of a Georgia Driver's Permit or license. A student may be denied a license or have his/her license revoked if he/she:

- Has more than ten consecutive school days of unexcused absences in any semester or combination of two consecutive quarters; or
- Has been suspended from school for threatening, striking, or causing bodily harm to a teacher or other school personnel; possession or sale of drugs/alcohol on school property; or possession or use of a weapon on school property.

EMERGENCY DRILLS AND SIGNALS

The signal for evacuation of the building will be a loud, continuous sounding of the alarm bell. Students should evacuate the building in a quick, orderly fashion by the routes posted in each classroom. The signal for securing students will be signified by repeated intermittent beeps of the school alarm bell. Students should report immediately to the designated areas in hallways. Drills for evacuating and securing students will be practiced on a regular basis. Students who do not comply with rules during emergency drills and signals may be subject to disciplinary action.

STUDENT CELEBRATION/ACTIVITIES/DANCES/BREAKS

Throughout the school year, students may have an opportunity to participate in school events. Participation in the various events will depend on the students: attendance in school, grades,

behavior, and good citizenship. Students who do not meet the defined criteria may be excluded from the events. In addition, dress code must be followed for all school sponsored dances.

FUNDRAISING PROJECTS AND FIELD TRIPS

Each year, all fund-raising projects and field trips must be approved by the principal and the Worth County Board of Education prior to making any arrangements or agreements with regard to them. All school funds must be deposited daily with the school bookkeeper. Students are prohibited from making door-to-door sales and solicitations.

GIFTED EDUCATION

Gifted services are offered to students who meet eligibility criteria provided in SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38. A student may be referred for consideration for gifted educational services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. Details of the program, referral procedures and eligibility requirements are available from Mrs. Parten, Assistant Principal, and Mrs. Easom, Gifted Services Lead Teacher, at Worth County Middle School.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The guidance and counseling functions are designed to help the student discover, understand, and realize his or her full potential. The counselors provide the following services:

- Confidential counseling on personal problems
- Assistance with study skills
- Education alternatives
- Career exploration
- Opportunities for self-awareness and building self-esteem through classroom guidance
- Consultation with parents, teachers, and other educators
- Referrals to other school support services or community resources

The counselors assist the registrar with the following services:

- Maintenance of students' permanent records
- Registration of new students
- Student withdrawals

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The BRIDGE (Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia's Economy) Act, House Bill 400, was signed into law in May, 2010, to create an atmosphere motivating middle- and high-school students to learn because they see the relevance of education to their

dreams and future plans. The implementation of the BRIDGE Act provides middle- and high-school students with career counseling and regularly-scheduled advisement to choose a focused plan of study.

BRIDGE LAW Middle school activities

- 6th grade – Create a GCIS account known as “My Portfolio” and complete a career assessment
- 7th grade – Complete a 7th grade assessment, explore career clusters, and save at least three career clusters
- 8th grade – Explore and save at least three occupations prior to their parent/student transitional meeting. Complete and save the “Course Planner” (known as “Individual Graduation Plan or IGP”).

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS TO SEE THE COUNSELOR

- Students should make an appointment to see one of the counselors. Appointments can be made before school, between classes (if time permits), or during lunch and after school.
- Students should not go to the counselor's office without an appointment and/or a hall pass from the teacher.
- Every effort will be made to make appointments during **nonacademic** classes.

HEAD LICE

Any student found to have head lice will **not** be allowed to remain at school or board a bus. Parents will be notified and must pick up the student. WCBOE regulations require that a student be treated and all nits removed from the hair before returning to school. To return to school, the student must be transported by an adult. The student must report at 8:00 AM and the accompanying adult must remain present until the student has been checked by trained school personnel and declared to be nit free. Proof of treatment, such as a bottle or box giving the name of the medicated shampoo used, must be presented. The student may resume riding the bus only when found to be nit free. A head lice infestation is not an excuse for extended absenteeism.

HEALTH CLINIC

Parents, please do not send a child to school who is sick with fever or vomiting. This practice allows illness to be spread to others. Children have trouble learning if they are coughing, vomiting, or running fever. **Please make school personnel aware of changes to telephone numbers during the school year.** This will enable us to contact you immediately in case of an emergency. Please make sure your child gets plenty of rest (weekends included), and eats well-balanced meals at home. Breakfast is a very important meal for your child (make sure your child eats breakfast at home or at school). Nurse Kitchens will be busy administering aid and medicine to students on a daily basis. In addition, we will have an isolation room just for students or staff with temperatures 99 degrees Fahrenheit and above. This room will be monitored by WCMS staff.

COVID-19 cases at WCMS - Notification/Quarantine procedures Students who arrive with symptoms or become sick at school:

If a child becomes sick at school with symptoms of Covid-19 they will need to be assessed by Nurse Kitchens

The nurse will:

- a. Separate sick children from well children utilizing the isolation room. All students in the isolation must wear a provided mask. Nurses or staff supervising the isolation room will also wear a mask at all times.
- b. Notify parent or guardian to review concerns of student symptoms and the student must be picked up (give handouts as needed of Covid-19 symptoms, 10 Things to do at Home, CDC guidelines) and copy of return to school guidelines.
- c. Add student to follow-up tracking for Covid-19, following the return to school guidelines
- d. Notify nurse supervisor/principal using follow-up tracking

- **CLINIC REFERRALS**

Each student sent to the clinic must have a clinic referral filled out entirely by the teacher/staff member who is referring him/her. The only exception will be a true emergency. All PE injury referrals must be completed by the student's PE teacher and not the teacher in the student's next class. No student will be allowed to call home sick **except** from the clinic or in cases of emergency. **Students must have a note from the school nurse to be able to sign out sick.**

MEDICATIONS

- **All medications must be brought to the school clinic by a parent or responsible adult. Students are not allowed to have medications of any kind in their possession.**
- No medication will be administered to any student without required forms signed by parent/legal guardian and on file in the clinic. Some medications also require a written service plan that has been completed by the child's physician. All forms are available from the school nurse. All medications must be in the original container with dosage instructions on the label. Any medications not picked up by the last day of school will be destroyed.
- Routine medications will be given at the times ordered by the physician. These students will be given a note concerning their medication or treatment times. As needed, medications will be given at the times indicated by the parent.

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM

General Information

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act is the federal law that governs the educational rights of children and youth in homeless situations. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 reauthorized the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. In an effort to strengthen accountability at both the state and local level, the reauthorization includes the requirement for every school district in the country to designate a homeless liaison. Homeless children have the right to a free, appropriate public education.

If you or your child:

- live in a shelter
- share housing with relatives or others because you lost your housing or cannot afford housing
- live in a campground, car, abandoned building, or other inadequate shelter
- do not have a permanent address and/or permanent housing
- live on the street
- live in temporary foster care
- if you are an unaccompanied youth

You have the right to:

- immediately enroll in and attend school without having health and school records with you
- enroll in school where you are living or the school attended when permanently housed... if in your child's best interest
- receive transportation to and from school of origin
- participate in school related activities and receive other needed services
- utilize dispute resolution process if you have a grievance

For Further Information:

Contact Tracie C. Turner, Worth County Schools Homeless Liaison

Her phone number is 229-776-8600 fax number 229-776-8603 email address tturner@worthschools.net or the Georgia Department of Education, www.doe.k12.ga.us.

HONOR'S DAY

In order to be awarded a certificate, medal and/or trophy during Honor's Day, students must meet the following criteria:

A Honor Roll

- will receive a medal and certificate during Honor's Day
- must have final grade of A in all Academic classes

A/B Honor Roll

- must have final grade of A's and/or B's in all Academic classes
- will receive a certificate in the classroom from their teacher
- **Top 4 students for each content area teacher on a team** - will receive an award during Honor's Day
- **Top overall average for each team** - will receive an award for each team
- **A girl and a boy from each team** - will receive the citizenship award
- **Connections** -will award top three students per grade level

***The Honor's Day Committee reserves the right to modify the number of awards that are presented during the Honor's Day program. Homeroom teachers may present some awards in ceremonies in their classroom.**

HOSPITAL/HOMEBOUND SERVICES

If a student should need to be absent from school for more than 10 consecutive or intermittent school days because of serious illness or an accident, arrangements may be made to provide instruction at home. In accordance with state rule 160-4-2.31 Hospital/Homebound Services, students with absences due to psychiatric/emotional disorders, as defined in the latest edition of the Diagnostic, and Statistical Manual (DSM), may be eligible for hospital-homebound instruction. The student's inability to attend school for medical or psychiatric reasons must be certified by a licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to request hospital/homebound instruction as soon as possible. The school counselor who is designated as the School Hospital/Homebound Coordinator should be contacted for more information regarding policies, procedures, and the application process.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

All students entering the **sixth** grade and all **new students entering any grade must** provide an up-to-date immunization record. This record must include two MMR shots and two Varicella shots (Chicken Pox) or a history of actual Chicken Pox disease documented on Form 3231 which is the legal shot record. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, **seventh**

graders will be required to have the tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) and meningococcal (meningitis) vaccines prior to entering school.

LOCKERS

School lockers are available for rent at \$10.00 through the homeroom teacher. Only school locks may be used on lockers. Any other locks will be removed. Replacement cost of locks is \$10.00. If you have a problem with a lock or locker, see your teacher. All locks should be on lockers and locked at all times. Students may not share or pop lockers at any time. Lockers are school property and may be searched with reasonable cause.

Lockers are provided in the gym for students who have PE. Students may rent a locker in the gym for \$5.00. Students must provide their own lock. Do not share lockers, within the school or gym, with anyone.

MAKE-UP WORK

Only work missed during excused absences may be made up. It is the **student's responsibility** to obtain work from the teacher whose classes he/she has missed. All make-up work must be completed within 3 days of returning back to school.

MEDIA CENTER

- The media center is accessible to students and faculty during each instructional day of the school year. The media center hours are 7:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. daily. A media specialist and a media clerk are available to assist students in the media center.
- A teacher may send up to three students at a time separate from their regularly scheduled class library time to check out books. Students are welcome to return books at any time during the normal school day. A digital form is used as a media center pass.
- Students may check out up to two books for a duration of two weeks. Books can be renewed after two weeks if additional time is needed. Students may only check out books for themselves. All media center books are due back in the library two weeks prior to the final day of school. Students are responsible for their checked-out books. Students are required to pay for the replacement of any severely damaged or lost books.
- No fines are imposed for overdue books. However, books should be turned in when due so that all students have access to a variety of books.
- Students are expected to follow the rituals, routines, and rules set forth in the media center.

- A Responsible Use (Technology) Permission Form must be kept on file in the Media Center for every student. Permission from a parent or guardian must be given for students to be able to use the WCSD computer network, have their names, work, photograph, etc., published, and/or bring their own technology from home. (Refer to the Worth County School District Responsible Use Guidelines for the guidelines/policies regarding these permissions).

MOMENT OF SILENCE

At the opening of each school day, the school will conduct a brief period of quiet reflection on the anticipated activities of the day.

PARENT NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In compliance with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Worth County Schools would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- 1) Whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2) Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- 3) The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- 4) Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's or paraprofessional's qualification, please contact the principal at your child's school.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parent and Family Engagement

Worth County Middle School has a Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator to assist all parents. We encourage all of our parents to become more involved with their children's education and school activities. Throughout the school year, the Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator plans activities that provide opportunities for parents to participate in school and their children's educational experiences. These activities include parent workshops and special events for parents and students. We also have a Parent Resource Center and will provide a list of websites for student participation that includes educational activities to enhance student learning.

VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

Who is a volunteer? Persons over the age of 18 who wish to contribute their service to the school system. Worth County Schools reserves the right to deny volunteer privileges if it deems appropriate and in the best interest of Worth County Schools.

Worth County Schools has developed a three-tiered system to identify volunteers. The three-tiered system gives opportunity for a variety of involvement in the schools.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER LEVELS

- **Level 1** – Level 1 volunteers are non-district personnel who will have no direct interaction with students, such as volunteers working on playground construction or assisting with facilities maintenance when school is not in session.
- **Level 2** – Level 2 volunteers are non-district personnel who will have direct interaction with students with other adults present at all times (supervised at all times). When Level 2 volunteers interact with students, a Worth County School District employee or no fewer than two other adult volunteers must be present at all times. **Examples of Level 2 volunteers include one-day field trip chaperons, parents/guardians volunteering for a field day or book fair, classroom helper, in-class tutors.**
- **Level 3** – Level 3 volunteers are non-district personnel who will have direct, unsupervised interaction with students. Examples of Level 3 volunteers include chaperones on overnight field trips and mentors who have unsupervised interaction with students.

Note: School visitors are not considered volunteers. Examples of visitors include individuals who come to school for the following reasons: visiting during lunch, at parties, at field day (only watching activities), at spring fling type activities such as giving out or taking tickets, schoolwide and classroom programs, reading a book to the class with district personnel present at all times. **This list is not exhaustive. Please contact Mrs. Christie Haskins, WCMS Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator, for any questions about the volunteer procedures.**

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS

- In support of student safety, the Superintendent requires that all schools and administrative offices identify and screen all volunteers in accordance with district guidelines. Security clearances for volunteers must be renewed every three years. Please contact Ms. Trina Green for more information on criminal background checks for volunteers.

PARENT PORTAL

You will be able to have access to your child's grades by signing up for the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. In order to maintain security and confidentiality, parents must present their completed registration form along with photo identification to the school registrar. The form can be picked up at school at the time of registration. Multiple children from the same family can be submitted on the same form at one location.

WCMS PBIS RULES

Cafeteria Rules

1. Take trash and trays to trash can
2. Talk only to students at your table
3. Students must get permission from teacher before leaving cafeteria
4. No food or drink may be taken out of the cafeteria
5. No food can be thrown in the cafeteria
6. Walk while in the cafeteria

Hallway Rules

1. Students will remain in assigned area
2. Go to locker at designated time
3. Walk quietly in a single file line on the right side of the hall
4. Allow for personal space. (Do not walk too close to others)
5. Listen to directions from adults
6. No bags, books or personal items are to be left in the hall

Bus Rules

1. Leave out on correct bus shift
2. Get on correct bus
3. Keep hands and feet to yourself
4. Keep all body parts inside the bus
5. Do not throw any objects inside or outside of the bus
6. Must remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion

Restroom Rules

1. Flush toilet after use
2. Turn water off after use
3. Respect others' privacy

4. Report any problems
5. Clean up after use
6. Remain quiet (No loud Noise)
7. Only 5 students at a time in the restroom

Classroom Rules

1. Listen and Follow directions/rules of teacher in charge
2. Bring all materials to class
3. Stay in assigned seat
4. Wait your turn to speak
5. Cell phones must not be used at anytime
6. Complete all assignments on time
7. Actively participate in class
8. Ask for help when you need it
9. Get permission from teacher before leaving class
10. Arrive to class on time/tardy is not accepted

R.A.M.S. Islands

“We are RAMS”

Teachers – Responsible for Accelerating and Motivating Students Learning

Students – Responsible, Accountable, and Motivated Students

Responsible

Designing educational lessons and activities to help students take control of their own education provided through technology (Chrome books), service based, project based and problem based learning.

Accountable

Implementing differentiated instructional strategies to advance the learning progress of students by engaging and broadening students’ sense of responsibility, and enabling the students to achieve at the national standard for their year level

Motivating

Intentionally motivating and engaging students through well-designed instructional strategies with a focus on improving academic literacy skills - reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking

Student Learning

Supporting student-centered learning by providing supplementary lessons and activities to ensure students meet all expected standards in Math, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts.

PERSONAL PROPERTY (including toys)

Students are not permitted to bring any item to school that may be distractive or disruptive to the learning environment. No items may be brought to school to sell, swap, or exchange. No audio or video recorders are allowed at school without the knowledge and consent of the principal. Any item that is considered to be a “toy” is prohibited. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property (including cell phones). Students that fail to adhere to this rule, may be subject to a disciplinary referral.**

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Students should enter the gym and be seated so that attendance can be taken. When the whistle blows, students should stop activity immediately and follow instructions.
- Tennis shoes must be worn and laced during activity. **NO BOOTS OR SANDALS ALLOWED.**
- Disruptive behavior, horse playing, wrestling, or running around in the gym or locker room is prohibited.
- Food, gum, candy, seeds or drinks are not allowed in the gym.
- Students may not go to the locker room, band area, use the bathroom, or get water without permission. Students are not allowed to leave the gym without permission.
- **Personal property must be locked in the students’ P.E. lockers. No book bags are allowed in the gym. Each student is responsible for purchasing their own PE lock. PE locks are not provided by Worth County Middle School. Students are not allowed to share lockers.**
- Students may not hang from the basketball nets.
- Injuries must be reported immediately to the appropriate PE teacher.
- Students may not enter the equipment room or use any equipment without permission.
- Students should not kick or throw any ball in a crowded area.
- Students should keep their hands and feet to themselves. Again – no horse playing is allowed during PE.

Failure to follow PE rules will result in the following consequences:

- 1st Offense Teacher will give a verbal warning.
- 2nd Offense Teacher will notify parents and/or administration of the offense
- 3rd Offense Teacher will deduct points and contact/discuss or conference with the parent.
- 4th Offense Office referral

Offenses of a serious nature will result in an automatic office referral.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

A Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a “tiered system of supports that integrates assessment and intervention within a school-wide, multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavioral problems. MTSS promotes systems alignment to increase efficiency and effectiveness of resources” (Adopted from National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010).

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for books, equipment (including technology), and other non-consumable materials issued to them and will be required to pay for them if they are damaged, lost or not returned.

SECTION 504

A request for a Section 504 evaluation may be made by a teacher, educator, or parent/guardian who suspects that a student may have a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. All requests for Section 504 evaluations must be directed to the school counselor who is designated as the School Section 504 Coordinator.

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

SIGNING OUT OR TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Students who wish to sign out or change their mode of transportation home **must bring** a written note from their parent or guardian that includes a telephone number, so the note can be checked for authenticity. If notes cannot be verified, students will **not** be allowed to sign out or change their transportation.

SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS

IDEA (34 CFR 300.566) requires each local school system to maintain documentation of confidentiality for those having access to special education records. Therefore, **all requests**, including parents or other agencies requesting special education records, must be made for these records through the Worth County Special Education Department at 103 Eldridge St. , Sylvester. Phone number: 229-776-8600. It is here that original files are maintained.

Special Needs Public School Options:

A parent/guardian can request a transfer to another public school within their school system as long as there is available space at that school and the school has a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program (IEP). If the parent/guardian chooses this option, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the school.

The parent/guardian may request a transfer to a school in another school system if there is available space and the system and school have a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individual education program. If a school system accepts the child, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the school in that system.

The parent/guardian may also request a transfer to one of the State schools for the deaf and/or blind operated by the State Board of Education. Acceptance into a state school will depend on whether or not that setting is appropriate for the student's needs. If the parent/guardian chooses this option, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the state school. Please contact the Georgia Department of Education for more information about transferring to a state school.

Special Needs Private School Choice Options:

Parents/guardians of students who receive special education services in WCSS have the option to exercise public and private school choice. Under a State law passed by the Georgia State Legislature in 2007, parents/guardians of students who receive special education may choose to transfer their child to another public school or private school in Georgia. Parents/guardians must be current residents of Georgia and have been residents for one year.

Parents/guardians interested in transferring their child to a private school in Georgia may be able to take advantage of a Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. These scholarships provide funding that can be used to offset tuition costs at participating private schools in the State of Georgia. For more information on the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship and the parent

application process, visit the Georgia Department of Education's website at <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/sb10.aspx>

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

All students are required to provide the registrar's office with a Social Security number for the permanent record.

SPORTSMANSHIP AT ATHLETIC EVENTS/STUDENTS PLAYING SPORTS

- Students are expected to display the highest level of sportsmanship and to behave appropriately at all times.
- Students coming as players and spectators should remember they represent Worth County Middle School. The school expects students to support the team in a positive manner and treat teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, and spectators with dignity and respect.
- School rules apply anytime students are on school grounds, and this includes athletic events. Sloppy and attention-getting dress, hats, inappropriate language, displays of affection, and disruptive and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.
- Transportation home should be arranged prior to the end of the game. For all home games, students should be picked up immediately at the conclusion of the game. Classrooms, halls, and lockers will not be accessible during, or after athletic events. Worth County Middle School students may not leave the gym or event area during the game without the permission of a parent or school official.
- **Students who are not picked up promptly or behave inappropriately will be disciplined by the administration and may be denied admission to future events.**
- Students who participate in athletics at WCMS, must maintain passing grades in their classes, demonstrate good citizenship, and attend school regularly. Any exemption from that rule must have explicit approval from the principal, coaches, and/or athletic director.

STUDENTS COMMITTING ACTS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST TEACHERS, SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS, OR OTHER SCHOOL OFFICIALS OR EMPLOYEES

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6 - Students committing acts of physical violence against teachers, school bus drivers, or other school officials or employees; penalties

(a) As used in this Code section, the term “**physical violence**” means:

- (1) **Intentionally** making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another; **or**
- (2) **Intentionally** making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or physical harms were in defense of himself or herself, as provided in Code Section 16-3-21.

(b) Local board of education policies and student codes of conduct **shall** provide for the penalties to be assessed against a student found by a disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal pursuant to Code Section 20-2-752 to have committed any act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee. Such disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal **shall** hold any disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions of Code Section 20-2-754. **Any student alleged to have committed an act of physical violence shall be suspended pending the hearing** by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal. The decision of the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal may be appealed to the local school board pursuant to Code Section 20-2-754. If appropriate under paragraph (1) of subsection (c) of this Code section, **the decision of the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal shall include a recommendation as to whether a student may return to public school and, if return is recommended, a recommended time for the student's return to public school.** The local school board may impose penalties not recommended by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal.

(c)(1) A student found by a disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence as defined in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section against a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or school employee **shall** be **expelled** from the public school system. **The expulsion shall be for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school pursuant to Code Section 20-2-150.** The local school board at its discretion may permit the student to attend an alternative education program for the period of the student's expulsion. If the student who commits an act of physical violence is in **kindergarten through grade eight**, then the local school board at its discretion and on the recommendation of the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal may permit such a student to reenroll in the regular public school program for grades nine through 12. **If the local school board does not operate an alternative education program for students in kindergarten through grade six, the local school board at its discretion may permit a student in kindergarten through grade six who has committed an act of physical**

violence as defined in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section to reenroll in the public school system;

(2) Any student who is found by a disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or school employee as defined in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section **shall** be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior; and

(3) Any student who is found by a disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence as defined in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of this Code section against a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or school employee **may**

be disciplined by expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension.

(d) The provisions of this Code section **shall** apply with respect to any local school system which receives state funding pursuant to Code Sections 20-2-161 and 20-2-260.

(e) Nothing in this Code section **shall** be construed to infringe on any right provided to students with Individualized Education Programs pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Legal Resources for Georgia Administrators – Students 2018

USE OF TELEPHONE AND CELL PHONE USAGE

School telephones are to be used for official business only. Students must have written permission from staff members to use telephones during the school day. Students' classes will not be interrupted except for emergencies. Students should know how they will be picked up from school **before** leaving home. The office personnel will not give messages to students during the school day. **Students should not use their cell phones, or any other device, during the school day to call or text. Students who fail to adhere to the cell phone policy will be subjected to a disciplinary referral. If students are sick, the school nurse will contact parents from the clinic.**

2023-2024

Grading Policies for all Subjects and Promotion and Retention Criteria

****Please note that students will be administered an End of the Year Final that will count 15% of their final average.****

Homework – 10%

Summative Assessments – 30 %

Quizzes - 30 %

Classwork - 30 %

Grading Scale

90-100 A

80-89 B

74-79 C

70-73 D

0-69 F

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY 2023-2024

The WCMS Guidelines for Promoted or Retained Students:

6th -8th grades

Students must pass 4 out of 5 classes in order to be promoted to the next grade level. The classes will include the 4 core content areas (ELA, mathematics, science, social studies) and connections classes. The connections classes will be averaged together to create a final grade.

If a student did not meet the promotion criteria listed above, the student will be considered RETAINED PENDING ACADEMIC REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

5 courses are:

1. Reading/ELA
2. Math
3. Science
4. Social Studies

5. Connections – A final average of 4 connection courses.

For Special Education students, the guidelines in the IEP for PROMOTED/RETAINED/PLACED will be followed.

Georgia Milestones - For 6th and 7th grade - Students must pass the reading or math portion of the GA Milestones. For 8th grade- No eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Georgia Milestones in reading and mathematics and meet promotion standards criteria.

DEFINITIONS

The following words are defined because they appear throughout the Code and require a common understanding for students, parents, and staff.

1. **Alternative School** – school designed to meet the needs of student in grades 6-12 who have not been behaviorally successful in a regular school setting
2. **Assault** - the **attempt** or **threat** of harm of another person.
3. **Battery** – (also known as physical assault) – intentionally made direct or indirect physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person.
4. **Behavior Support Process** – mechanisms for identifying and addressing the student support plans/behavioral needs of students through the provision of integrated resources that promote behavioral change and/or support.
5. **Bullying (sexual, racial, ethnic, other), hazing, intimidation, verbal or non-verbal taunting or stalking.** This also includes **Cyber bullying (social media, electronic device communication whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment) on or off campus that impacts school climate.** Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4
6. **Bus safety issues** – include but are not limited to refusal to stay quiet at railroad crossings, hanging out of windows, disturbance in inclement weather, being out of seat and throwing items out of the window.
7. **Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student** – a student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur.
8. **Code of Conduct** – a systematic collection of regulations, rules, or procedures regarding behavior and expectations of persons or groups.
9. **Disciplinary Officer** – the disciplinary officer conducts certain disciplinary hearings, especially in matters that may result in long term suspension, expulsion or assignment to the alternative school.
10. **Due Process** – the protection of the rights of a student through established, fair practices.
11. **Expulsion** – suspension of a student from a school beyond the current school semester.
12. **Fighting** – the exchange of mutual physical contact usually with malicious intent on both sides and lack of responsiveness to intervention.
13. **Grand Theft** – theft involving items/materials valued at greater than \$500.00.
14. **Habitual Violator** – A student who has been referred to the administrative staff an excessive number of times with similar behaviors.
15. **Harassment** – (Board policy definition) means any acts, conduct, or communication having gender, racial, religious, or ethnic demeaning implications which are created and communicated by a person to another with the intention to demean, intimidate, dominate, abuse, or browbeat the recipient of the act or communication and that such intent is reasonably perceived by the recipient for that purpose. The prohibited conduct does not apply to a single event incurred by the recipient but does apply to repetitious conduct on the part of a perpetrator, even though such conduct may be exhibited to a different person.

16. **Inappropriate Student Demeanor** – student behavior that shows disrespect, or contempt, to other students, administrators, faculty, or staff. Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts.
17. **Home Suspension (long term)** – removal of the student from the school campus and exclusion from all school-sponsored activities for more than ten (10) school days, but not beyond the current school semester. Students on long-term suspensions are not permitted on any school campus or any school-sponsored event.
18. **Home Suspension (short term)** – removal of the student from the school campus and exclusion from all school-sponsored activities for not more than ten (10) school days by the school administration. Students on short term suspension are not permitted on any school campus or at any school sponsored event.
19. **Horseplay** – misbehavior when students are not angry, and respond to interventions, and there is no malicious intent.
20. **In-School Suspension (ISS)** – removal of a student from class or classes with assignment to a designated supervisor. The student shall be marked present in each class when in attendance in ISS.
21. **Major Disturbance** – student behavior of such nature that it causes a cessation of activity on campus or in the classroom.
22. **Physical Violence** – intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with another person, or intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or physical harms were in defense of himself or herself, as provided in Code Section 20-2-71.6.
23. **Progressive Discipline** – policies designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior with the previous discipline history of the student being considered and other relevant factors taken into account and all due process procedures required by federal and state law followed.
24. **Safety Hazard** – any behavior, article of clothing (including shoes) that constitutes a hazard to students or staff.
25. **School Safety Zone**—in or on any real property or buildings owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, secondary school, or school board and used for elementary or secondary education.
26. **Sexual harassment** - the deliberate, repeated, and unsolicited physical actions, gestures, verbal or written comments of a sexual nature, when such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. Examples include behaviors such as leering, pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments or jokes, or pressure to engage in sexual activity. The Georgia General Assembly has required that in this Code of Conduct all parents and guardians shall be encouraged to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.
27. **Sexual misconduct/inappropriate sexual behavior** - any willful and/or deliberate act (spoken, written, or physically conducted) e.g. writing suggestive notes and making obscene gestures committed with the intent of promoting sexual favors or furthering acts lewd or lascivious in nature, any unsolicited sexual proposal or offensive touching of any other person; or any act of indecent exposure or any sexual crimes as defined by state law.

28. **Tardiness** - not being in one's assigned classroom at the time the official school day and/or the class is scheduled to begin.
29. **Trespassing** – individuals (students or adults) who present themselves in any unauthorized area(s) (building or campus), i.e. being on school property without permission. No one is allowed on school property after hours except for scheduled school activities.
30. **Truancy** - failure to report or sign in to school without prior permission, knowledge or excuse by the school or the parents or "skipping" class or school; more than five unexcused absences during the school year.
31. **Time-Out** - a short-term removal from the K-2 classroom during which time the student is supervised in an alternative setting
32. **Weapons** – "Weapon" 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, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind, and any stun gun or taser as defined in subsection (a) of Code Section 16-11-106. This paragraph excludes any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher. Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8.16 Unsafe School Choice Option.



VAPOR PRODUCTS

Vapor product means “any noncombustible product containing nicotine that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit, or other electronic, chemical, or mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, that can be used to produce vapor from nicotine in a solution or other form. The term ‘vapor product’ shall include any electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, or similar product or device and any vapor cartridge or other container of nicotine in a solution or other form that is intended to be used with or in an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, or similar product or device.”¹

Possession of a vaping device by a minor under the age of 18 is prohibited by *GA Code Ann. §§ 16-12-171(b)(1)(A); 16-12-174(d) (2019)*.

According to the US Surgeon General, “E-cigarette aerosol is not harmless, most e-cigarettes contain nicotine – the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can harm the developing brain – which continues to develop until about age 25. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can impact learning, memory, and attention. Using nicotine in adolescence can also increase risk for future addiction to other drugs. In addition to nicotine, the aerosol that users inhale and exhale from e-cigarettes can potentially expose both themselves and bystanders to other harmful substances, including heavy metals, volatile organic compounds, and ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deeply into the lungs. Many e-cigarettes also come in kid-friendly flavors. In addition to making e-cigarettes more appealing to young people, some of the chemicals used to make certain flavors may also have health risks. E-cigarettes can also be used to deliver other drugs, including marijuana (THC). In 2016, one-third of U.S. middle and high school students who ever used e-cigarettes had used marijuana in e-cigarettes.”

¹ Public Health Law Center; www.publichealthlawcenter.org

BUS TRANSPORTATION

WCSD Bus Transportation Requirements for 2023-2024

Student safety is the number one priority of WCSD and students and parents are reminded that riding a school bus is an extension of the school day, and that students are expected to follow the same rules of respect and following directions as they are in the school building. Riding a school bus is a privilege that the school district does not want to see any student lose; however, unruly, misbehaving students will be removed from the busses to protect the safety of all students. Students that ride the school bus must go by these rules in order to ride the bus. We want our drivers to be able to focus on the road ahead as well as student loading and unloading zones rather than being distracted due to student behavior.

Bus Rules:

- At **no time** will students act toward or address comments to a bus driver or monitor in a disrespectful manner or refuse to cooperate with the driver.
- Students shall get on or off the bus only at their assigned stop/route, unless otherwise directed with a note from the school office. Students riding a route other than what has been assigned will be returned to the school for the parent/guardian to pick them up.
- Students shall not refuse to sit in an assigned seat or deny another person a place to sit.
- Students will be expected to **remain seated** for the duration of the trip, and remain seated until the bus door opens. No students will stand in the driver compartment.
- Students shall **not** throw any articles within the bus or out the bus window, and shall not extend any part of their body, clothing, or other articles out of the bus window.
- Students shall not take or handle any emergency equipment inside the bus, and shall never board or leave the bus through the emergency door except in an emergency.
- Students shall never attempt to operate the passenger door except in cases of extreme emergency.
- Students shall not yell, scream, whistle, or operate an electronic device to a point where it interferes with the safe operation of the school bus.
- Students shall not write upon, disfigure, or destroy any part of the school bus. The parent or guardian may be held responsible for any damages to the school bus.
- **The use of obscene, vulgar, or profane language are forbidden.**

- Students shall not carry tobacco, including E-cigs/Juuls, etc., weapons, explosives (such as fireworks), knives, pointed articles, animals (pets), intoxicating beverages, drug paraphernalia or drugs on the bus.
- Large items will not be transported on the school bus. The driver has the discretion to allow certain larger than normal items which could be placed at the front of the bus. Items should be no larger than what could rest in a student's lap. Balloons are prohibited. Glass vases are prohibited. Arrangements can be made with the parent or guardian and school staff for the pickup of large items.
- Students shall not eat, drink, or litter on the bus.
- No earbud or cell phone use while loading and unloading the bus. Those items should be put away inside book bag/pockets etc.
- Students loading the bus at the school bus loop should use care, be prompt, and ready to board without horse play. **Buses will not return to transport students that are horse playing etc.** School Administration will notify the parent or guardian to come transport the student. Depending on the circumstances, the Transportation Director or his designee may authorize the bus driver to return to the school for a student that has missed the bus.
- All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point 12 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross. Students shall never cross behind the bus.
- Students shall face forward for the duration of the trip and shall keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle.
- Students will abide by the individual school's rules and regulations concerning bus students.
- Serious offenses are defined but not limited to those listed above.
- Be courteous to the driver and other students.
- All rules (school and bus) apply on field trips.
- Emergency drills will be conducted each year. Student participation is required.
- The Director or Assistant Transportation Director are authorized to alter routes, reassign students and authorize the removal of a disruptive student.

STEPS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR IMPROPER CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUS

A bus conduct report is written and forwarded to the assigned Assistant Principal at the school attended by the rule violator. The Assistant Principal in charge of bus discipline will follow the district's code of conduct for transportation. The Director of Transportation will be notified of all discipline issues on a school bus by the Assistant Principal. The student's parent or guardian copy of the report will be issued to the student.

- Student violates a rule.

- Driver completes a discipline referral form and submits it to the transportation department to be forwarded to school administration.
- Assistant Principal investigates and resolves the discipline issue and notifies both the Director of Transportation and the student's parent.

Bus riding privileges may be revoked by the Administration of the Worth County School District.

Note:

- Worth County Schools has the authority to skip steps for serious violations or to designate such other punishment as deemed appropriate.
- If your child needs to be picked up or dropped off at a different location, please send a written note with your child to your child's school. The bus driver will be made aware of the change by the school administration.
- Any complaints in reference to concern with your children on the bus can be made to the Director of Transportation, Mr. Rusty Parten, 229-776-8612.

Safe School Bus Riding Practices

The school bus driver has authority over, and responsibility for, students while on the bus. It is the student's responsibility to follow the rules and follow the direction of their school bus driver. Proper student behavior is important because any driver distraction is potentially hazardous to student safety, the safety of the driver and the safety of other road users.

Students should be aware that they are responsible for their actions and behavior and that school bus transportation can be denied if they do not conduct themselves properly. The following are some general rules of conduct for student safety **while on the school bus**.

Students should:

- Follow directions of the school bus driver the first time given.
- Go directly to an available or assigned seat when entering the bus without delay.
- Remain seated.
- ***Sit the safe way, facing forward with your back against the back of the seat and your bottom against the bottom of the seat. In the event that the bus driver has to brake hard or if there is a serious accident, it is essential that the student is sitting properly in order for the compartmentalization protection of the padded high backed bus seats to be effective (keeping the student within the safety of the padded space that surrounds them).*
- Tell your bus driver if someone is picking on you or making you feel uncomfortable.
- Keep aisles and exits clear.
- ***Remain absolutely quiet at railroad grade crossings. This is a critical moment. The bus driver must be able to hear an approaching train.*
- Help keep the bus clean.

- Refrain from spraying fragrances such as perfume, cologne or body spray.
- Do not use mirrors, lasers, flash cameras or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Safe Student Bus Riding Instructions

Safety Rules at the Bus Stop

- Be at the designated bus stop five minutes before time for the bus to arrive. All school and bus rules apply at the bus loading zone.
- Wait a safe distance of 12' from the road, and be prepared to quickly board the bus.
- Refrain from pushing, horseplay, or any other unsafe activity while at the bus stop.
- Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, wait for the red stop sign to come out, the red flashing lights to activate, and for the door to completely open before approaching the bus.
- Wait until the bus stops; then walk to the door and board the bus in an orderly manner. Stay within the view of the driver and never cross behind the bus.
- When having to cross the road, wait on your side of the road for the bus to arrive.
- Wait for the driver to give a hand signal that it is ok to cross the road (Stop, look, listen).
- Be sure all traffic has stopped both ways before crossing the road.
- Use the handrail when loading and unloading the bus.
- If you miss the bus, do not chase after the bus; go back home and tell your parents.
- Never stop to get mail from the mailbox until the bus has moved and traffic is flowing again.
- At any time, if the bus horn sounds, this is a signal for danger and you should react quickly to the bus driver's directions to avoid injury.

Safety Rules While on the Bus

- All buses are designed with several "emergency exits." These locations are, but not limited to, the entrance/exit door, rear door, emergency exit windows and roof hatches.
- Always use the front entrance/exit door during an evacuation when possible.
- All other exits should be used only when the front entrance/exit door and the rear exit door are not available to use.

- When the loading door is not available and the rear door is the chosen exit, selected older/mature students are instructed to assist younger students to the ground by sitting and sliding out feet first.
- Leave all personal belongings on the bus and exit from the front to the back of the selected exit location.

Additional Guidelines

- Students may not walk to another school for the purpose of riding a bus home from that school. All students are to ride the bus home from their assigned school.
- Parents should avoid conversation with the driver during loading and unloading; during this critical time, complete concentration by the driver is required.
- The use of school bus videos may be used to corroborate disciplinary action but is not required in order to assign dispositions.

Code of Conduct Progressive Discipline Plan Worth County Middle School 2023-2024

At Worth County Middle School (WCMS) teachers encourage desirable behavior and deal with undesirable behavior through sound, acceptable, professional means. Students are expected to conduct themselves in compliance with school regulations and to exhibit courtesy and respect for authority at all times. Rules for student conduct apply while students are on school grounds at any time, off the school grounds at a school activity function or event, enroute to and from school on a school transportation vehicle, or on school transportation or private vehicle used to transport students to a school-sponsored function, and at school bus stops.

Students will at all times show proper respect toward fellow students, staff, and faculty members. Corrective action will be taken against any student who willfully disobeys faculty members. Penalties will depend upon the degree and intent of the disobedience, as well as the number of similar incidents of inappropriate behavior. Continued willful disobedience may bring suspension and possible expulsion from school.

At **WCMS**, the techniques of discipline management used or penalties imposed range from:

1. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian and teacher
2. Counseling
3. Restriction from school programs and assemblies
4. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damages caused to the school-related environment
5. Lunch or morning detention
6. In-School Suspension
7. Suspension from school
8. Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school environment
9. Corporal punishment
10. Disciplinary Hearing/Hearing Officer
11. Referral to Law Enforcement or Department of Juvenile Justice

The following are specific violations of the Code of Conduct and the disposition for each. The administration reserves the right to apply dispositions on an individual basis. **Dispositions may be increased or decreased as warranted by circumstances.**

Violation	Disposition
Acts of physical violence: against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee.	Suspension pending hearing within 10 days, complaint filed with law enforcement and parents notified.
Alcohol or substances represented as drugs Possession, use, under the influence, or transmission of these on the school grounds, at any school function or on any school vehicle.	Suspension, pending hearing within 10 days. Parents and law enforcement notified. Minimum one semester assignment to alternative school recommended.
Arson	Suspension pending hearing within 10 days. Parents notified. Restitution for damages, notification to fire department. Law enforcement notified.
Assault/Battery: With significant provocation	1st Offense: Parents notified -5 days home suspension with arrest by Police and SST referral 2nd Offense: 10 days home suspension, pending hearing. Law enforcement notified. Recommendation-Expulsion
Assault/Battery: Without significant provocation	Suspension, pending hearing within 10 days. Parents notified. Minimum one year alternative school assignment recommended.
Body Piercing (refer to dress code for allowed piercings)	1st Offense: Teacher/administrator warning and parents notified. Violation may require correction before student is permitted to resume normal school activities. 2nd Offense: 1 day ISS/parent notified. 3rd Offense: 3 days ISS/parent notified 4th Offense: 5 days ISS/Required parent conference; behavior contract dependent upon severity (administrative discretion).
Bomb Threat/Terroristic Threats	Suspension pending hearing within 10 days. Parents and law enforcement notified. Recommend one year expulsion.
Bullying: <i>Parents of accused and victim will be notified in all cases.</i>	1st Offense: 3 days home suspension. 2nd Offense: 5 days home suspension. Notify law enforcement. 3rd Offense: Suspension pending hearing within 10 days. Notify law enforcement. Finding of 3 rd

	offense in school year results in assignment to alternative school.
<p>Bus Misconduct:</p> <p><i>{Fighting on the School Bus carries the consequences outlined under "Fighting" in this handbook, in addition to the loss of bus riding privileges as follows:</i></p> <p>1st Offense: 5-10 days bus suspension</p> <p>2nd Offense: 10-15 days bus suspension</p> <p>3rd Offense: 30 day minimum bus suspension + minimum 5 days OSS and consideration of placement in the Worth County Achievement Center</p> <p><i>*In all discipline cases (including on the bus) the administration has the discretion to impose consequences which it deems appropriate</i></p>	<p>Administrator discretion depending on severity of the offense.</p> <p>1st Offense: Warning</p> <p>2nd Offense: Parent Contacted and bus behavior contract signed.</p> <p>3rd Offense: 1-3 days bus suspension</p> <p>4th Offense: 5 days bus suspension</p> <p>5th Offense: 10 days bus suspension.</p> <p>Subsequent Offenses: Administrator discretion. Recommendation that bus riding privileges be suspended for the remainder of the year.</p>
<p>Bus Violations: Using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the bus driver's operation of school bus. <i>Items (devices) confiscated will not be returned to the student or parent.</i></p>	<p>1st Offense: Warning/Parent Conference</p> <p>2nd Offense: 5-10 days bus suspension</p> <p>3rd Offense: 20 days suspension from bus</p> <p>4th Offense: Suspension for the remainder of year.</p>
<p>Campus/Classroom Disturbance: Inappropriate student demeanor.</p>	<p>1st Offense: 3 days ISS. Parents notified</p> <p>2nd Offense: 5 days ISS. Parents notified.</p> <p>3rd Offense: 3 days home suspension</p> <p>4th Offense: 5 days home suspension</p> <p>Subsequent Offenses: 10 days pending hearing. Minimum one year assignment to alternative school recommended.</p>
<p>Cell Phones and Electronic Communication Device Use: A student may possess a cell phone or other electronic device (this includes smart watches and wireless earbuds) on school property or during school activities; however, the device may not be visible or in use during instructional time, including the use Bluetooth devices. Students may use in common areas when not in class. The administration has the authority to scroll/search a cell phones contents including its pictures, video, voice and text messages, address books, incoming/outgoing calls, calendars, e-mail and instant messages if the administrator has "reasonable suspicion" that there is student misconduct.</p>	<p>The school is not responsible for theft, loss or damage to electronic devices brought to school.</p> <p>For WCMS, the instructional school day begins at 7:30 AM and ends at 3:30 PM.</p> <p>For WCHS, the instructional school day begins at 7:52 AM and ends at 3:14 PM.</p> <p>Students who use an electronic device during the school day without permission from a school authority will be subjected to:</p>

<p><u>Note: Additional punishment will be issued if cell phone is used for purposes such as inappropriate pictures, cheating violations, or student's refusal to turn over cell phone. If student refuses to turn cell phone over, it is considered a campus disturbance and law enforcement may be notified. Habitual Violators of this policy are also subject to additional punishment</u></p> <p>*Teachers should not ask students to use their personal device (especially phones) for in-class assignments. WCSD provides access to classroom sets of electronic devices to all teachers. These devices should be used for in-class assignments.</p>	<p>1st Offense: Device is confiscated and turned in to the front office. Student may pick up the device at the end of school day.</p> <p>2nd Offense: Device is confiscated and parent must schedule a conference to have the device returned to parent.</p> <p>3rd Offense: Device is confiscated and turned in to the front office. Phone contract signed.</p>
<p>Computer/Internet Misuse:</p>	<p>Parents notified. When appropriate, legal action.</p> <p>1st Offense: 1 day ISS</p> <p>2nd Offense: 3 days ISS</p> <p>3rd Offense: 5 days ISS</p> <p>Subsequent Offense: Home suspension</p> <p><u>Consequences if misuse includes pornography:</u></p> <p>1st Offense: 3 day OSS</p> <p>2nd Offense: 5 days OSS</p> <p>3rd Offense: 10 days OSS</p>
<p>Destruction of Personal or School Property (Vandalism) disposition may depend on value of the vandalized property.</p>	<p>Up to 10-day suspension, pending hearing, restitution made. Parents notified. Law enforcement may be notified.</p>
<p>Displays of Affection</p>	<p>1st Offense: Warning</p> <p>2nd Offense: 1 day ISS-Parents notified</p> <p>3rd Offense: 3 days ISS</p> <p>4th Offense: Home suspension pending parent conference to sign behavior contract.</p>
<p>Dress Code Violation</p>	<p>1st Offense: Teacher/administrator warning and parents notified. Violation may require correction before student is permitted to resume normal school activities.</p> <p>2nd Offense: 1 day ISS/parent notified.</p>

	<p>3rd Offense: 3 days ISS</p> <p>4th Offense: 5 days ISS/Required parent conference; behavior contract dependent upon severity (administrative discretion).</p>
<p>Drugs: for example, but not limited to:</p> <p>Narcotics, Marijuana(THC/over the counter derivative of/edible forms of), Depressant, and Stimulant Drugs, or substances represented as drugs: Possession, use, under the influence, or transmission of these on the school grounds, at any school function or on any school vehicle.</p>	<p>Suspension, pending hearing within 10 days.</p> <p>Parents and law enforcement notified. Minimum one year assignment to alternative school recommended.</p>
Extortion	Suspension, pending hearing within 10 days, parents notified.
<p>Failure to comply with any reasonable directions, regulations, or rules (to include classroom assignments) by a teacher and/or adult</p>	<p>1st Offense: 1 day ISS</p> <p>2nd Offense: 3 days ISS</p> <p>3rd Offense: 5 days ISS/Parent conference to sign behavior contract</p> <p>4th Offense: 1 day home suspension</p>
<p>Falsification, Misrepresentation, Omission, Instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student</p>	Administrator discretion.
<p>Fighting {Includes fighting on the school bus and/or any school property and events}</p> <p><i>{Fighting on the School Bus carries the consequences outlined under "Fighting" in this handbook, in addition to the loss of bus riding privileges as follows:</i></p> <p>1st Offense: 5-10 days bus suspension</p> <p>2nd Offense: 10-15 days bus suspension</p> <p>3rd Offense: 30 day minimum bus suspension</p> <p><i>*In all discipline cases (including on the bus) the administration has the discretion to impose consequences which it deems appropriate</i></p>	<p>1st Offense: 3 days OSS/2 days ISS, notify law enforcement and charges may follow. Student also referred to counselor.</p> <p>2nd Offense: Suspension, pending hearing within 10 days. notify law enforcement and charges may follow. Minimum remainder of school year or one semester assignment to alternative school recommended.</p> <p>The recommended dispositions are minimums. The severity of the fight, to include cooperation with school staff will be considered.</p>
Gang Related Activity , including, but not limited to:	10 days OSS; Parents notified; referral to tribunal; law enforcement notified

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of gang related hand signs • Use of gang related handshakes • Display of gang signs, symbols, or insignia on personal belongings or placing/writing/drawing gang signs on Worth County School District property or the property of another student • Confirmed participation in a gang, with evidence of the commission, attempted commission, or conspiracy to commit a criminal offense • Conducting gang related business on campus or other Worth County School District property (recruitment, initiation, etc). 	
Habitual Offender/Chronic class or school disruption	<p>Parent conference to sign behavior contract. Guidelines outlined in behavior contract will be imposed.</p> <p>At 20 days of discipline (ISS/OSS and other discipline considered), the student will be recommended for a minimum of one semester at alternative school.</p>
Harassment	<p>1st Offense: 3 days ISS/Parents notified</p> <p>2nd Offense: 5 days ISS; Required parent conference to create behavior plan.</p> <p>3rd Offense: Begin disposition for 1st offense of Bullying (3 days home) as outlined in Code of Conduct as evidence of pervasive behavior.</p>
Inappropriate Student Demeanor (Minor) by Action or Words (including social media/electronic communications)	<p>1st Offense: 1 day ISS</p> <p>2nd Offense: 3 days ISS</p> <p>3rd Offense: 5 days ISS</p> <p>4th Offense: 3 day home suspension</p>
Inappropriate Student Demeanor (Major) by Action or Words (including social media/electronic communications)	<p>1st Offense: 3 days ISS</p> <p>2nd Offense: 5 days ISS</p> <p>3rd Offense: 3 days home suspension</p> <p>4th Offense: 5 to 10-day home suspension, pending disciplinary hearing, notify law enforcement.</p>
Leaving Campus without Permission	<p>1st Offense: 3 days ISS and parent conference</p> <p>2nd Offense: 5 days ISS and parent conference.</p> <p>3rd Offense: 3 to 5 days home suspension, pending disciplinary hearing.</p>

	<p>4th Offense: 5 days home school suspension; parent conference</p> <p>5th Offense: 10 days home suspension; parent conference; Referral to Tribunal.</p>
Leaving Class without Permission	<p>1st Offense: 1 days ISS</p> <p>2nd Offense: 3 days ISS, required parent conference to sign behavior contract.</p> <p>3rd Offense: 5 days OSS</p> <p>4th Offense: 3 days OSS</p> <p>5th Offense: 5 days OSS; referral to tribunal; parent conference.</p>
Misconduct while in ISS	<p>Student sent home for the remainder of the day. ISS will resume upon return to school.</p> <p><u>Students must complete the entire ISS term assigned to them.</u></p>
Prescription and Over the Counter Drugs	<p>Parents must sign a Medication Consent Form before any medication will be issued at school. Students are not permitted to bring any medication to or from school.</p> <p>1st Offense: Medication turned over to school nurse and parent contacted for conference.</p> <p>2nd Offense: 3 days ISS</p> <p>3rd Offense: 2 day OSS</p>
Sending false alarms (fire alarm, bomb threat)	<p>Suspension pending hearing within 10 days. Parents and law enforcement notified.</p>
Sexual misconduct/inappropriate sexual behavior (see definition)	<p>5-10 days suspension pending hearing within 10 days. Law enforcement notified. Depends on severity; administration discretion</p>
<p>Skipping Class:</p> <p><i>{Includes leaving class without permission}</i></p>	<p>1st Offense: 3 days ISS</p> <p>2nd Offense: 5 days ISS/Required parent conference to sign behavior contract.</p> <p>3rd Offense: 3 days OSS</p> <p>4th Offense: 5 days OSS</p>
Tardy to Class: Tardies and punishment will start over at beginning of the new semester	<p>1st and 2nd tardy handled by teacher (noted in grade book)</p> <p>1st Offense/3rd tardy to class: 1 day ISS/required parent contact</p>

	<p>2nd Offense/4th tardy to class: 2 days ISS (2nd referral)</p> <p>3rd Offense/5th tardy to class: 3 days ISS (3rd referral)</p> <p>4th Offense: 5 days ISS/required parent conference to sign behavior contract.</p> <p>5th Offense: 3 days OSS</p> <p>Subsequent Offenses: 3 days OSS</p>
Theft (*disposition may depend on value of stolen item(s).	<p>1st Offense: 5 days ISS/Administrator's discretion*</p> <p>2nd Offense: 3 days home suspension</p> <p>3rd Offense: 10 days home suspension pending hearing, possible criminal charges and restitution for any offense. Administrator's discretion.</p>
<p>Threat: Any Verbal or Written Statement Toward Bodily Harm</p> <p>WCSD reviews all threats with the utmost seriousness. Any significant threat that is credible or viable will be reported to law enforcement.</p>	Administrative Discretion.
Tobacco Use and/or Possession , including but not limited to cigarettes, dip, snuff,	<p>1st offense: 1 day OSS</p> <p>2nd offense: 3 days OSS and behavior contract</p> <p>3rd offense: 5 days OSS</p> <p>4th offense: 10 days OSS pending hearing</p> <p><u>*All tobacco and associated paraphernalia will be confiscated by administration and not returned.</u></p>
Trespassing	Suspension pending hearing within 10 days. Parents notified. Law enforcement may be notified.
<p>Vape (Nicotine or Non-Nicotine)</p> <p>Use and/or possession of a vape. This includes possession of or use of corresponding accessories (pods, chargers, etc.)</p>	<p>1st offense: 3 days OSS</p> <p>2nd offense: 5 days OSS</p> <p>3rd offense: 10 days OSS pending hearing recommending placement in WCAC.</p>

	<u><i>*All vape devices and associated paraphernalia will be confiscated by administration and not returned.</i></u>
Vape (CBD or derivative) Use of or possession of a vape containing CBD, hemp or derivative thereof. This includes possession of or use of corresponding accessories (pods, chargers, etc.)	OSS, pending hearing within 10 days. Parents and law enforcement notified. Minimum one semester assignment to alternative school recommended.
Vape (THC) Use of or possession of a vape containing more than 3% THC (standard for an over the counter CBD pen). This includes possession of or use of corresponding accessories (pods, chargers, etc.)	OSS, pending hearing within 10 days. Parents and law enforcement notified. Minimum one school-year assignment to alternative school recommended.
Use of any electronic device for the purposes of photographing, filming (video), audio recording, circulating and/or posting inappropriate behavior to any website on the internet.	Parent notified. ISS to Suspension up to 10 days per administrator's discretion. May include hearing & referral to law enforcement.
Weapons: A student may not, possess, handle, use or transmit a dangerous instrument or weapon on school property, at school functions or on school bus. Weapons may include, but are not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-21, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade. 	Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion and reported to law enforcement. The Superintendent may either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing reduce the mandated one-year expulsion under circumstances where the one-year expulsion appears excessive to the superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment. Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as determined by the principal to be appropriate, which may include in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or a tribunal referral, depending on the seriousness of the offense, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

<p>2. Any hazardous object, including any fake weapon(s), dirk, bowie knife, switchblade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.</p>	
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DRESS CODE

WORTH COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL

2023-2024

Students should dress in an appropriate and reasonable manner that is not distracting to other students and teachers. **The administration, faculty and staff reserve the right to decide the suitability of any and all garments and accessories.** The following guidelines will be employed though they are not all-inclusive:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No clothes with slits or holes that show skin above the knee are to be worn to school without wearing another layer under such items.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students may not wear any outer garments, accessories or clothes that have any printed words that might be considered suggestive, vulgar, degrading, violent or profane; or advertise and/or promote the use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco products; and/or show affiliation with any gang, group or social club not approved by the school administration. No gothic or “emo”-like appearance is allowed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No dresses or skirts are to be worn which are more than three inches above the knee. Shorts may not be more than four inches above the knee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dresses, blouses, sweaters and shirts must not be strapless, low-cut front and/or back, halter top or see-through fishnet or crotch type material. Bare midriffs or tank tops are NOT allowed. Pants and jeans should fit around the waist and should be the proper length. No sleeveless shirts for boys are to be worn. All clothes must be worn as intended; not backwards, inside out, etc. No oversized shirts may be worn.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No wallet chains, vendor chains, biker chains, combs with exaggerated points or medallions (greater than 2” in length) are allowed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoes (except for medical reasons) must be worn at all times. No bedroom shoes are allowed. Appropriate footwear may be required for specific courses and/or specific areas. For example, flip flops or shower shoes may not be worn to school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No clothing such as spandex shorts, leggings, jeggings and tights unless outer clothing worn over it is no more than 3 inches above the knee. Items considered appropriate to wear over such clothing: shorts, skirts, dresses. This does not include coats/jackets. <u>Leggings</u> - The length of the dress or top worn over the leggings must fall below the fingertip length when arms are held loosely at the side.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pants made of soft material such as: yoga pants, sleepwear or swim suits are not acceptable as school apparel (any exception to this rule requires the explicit approval of the principal). See-through material allowing undergarments or skin to be visible is not permitted. No pajama pants, lounge pants or pajama-like clothing is allowed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hats, caps, head coverings of any type are not allowed (including hoods). Sunglasses are not to be worn inside the building. This includes sunglasses worn on top of the head.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For student safety, jewelry must not be worn during physical education. All PE attire must adhere to the dress code guidelines. For example, if a student wears basketball shorts in school, shorts may not be more than four inches above the knee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belts, suspenders and overalls will be buckled and/or buttoned. All clothing will be worn at the appropriate level and not below the waistline. If necessary, a belt will be worn to keep clothing at the appropriate waist level. No “sagging” is allowed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neatly trimmed mustaches and/or beards and sideburns are allowed. Hairstyles must not be unruly or unkempt.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No visual body piercing is allowed except for ear studs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will not be allowed to leave school to correct dress code violations. Administrator’s discretion will be used to the method to correct a violation.

***Regardless of personal taste in clothing, all clothing must meet the above requirements.**

Code of Conduct

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PROCESS

Behavior support process is a mechanism for identifying and addressing the behaviors and environmental influences that promote the positive emotional, mental, social and physical health needs of students. With the foregoing in mind, the following is a list of support suggestions, recommendations and opportunities available for students in the Worth County School District:

Adult Education	702 Walnut Street Sumner, GA 229-776-7645 Worth County High School 229-776-8625
Aspire Behavioral Health	601 11 th Avenue Albany GA, 31701 229-430-4140
Churches	Family's Choice
Department of Family & Children Services	503 North Henderson Street Sylvester, GA 229-777-2000
Family Connections	304 N. Isabella St., P.O. Box 171 Sylvester, GA 31791 229-886-3067 ldylinski@hotmail.com (Lisa Dylinski)
Fellowship of Christian Athletes	WCMS & WCHS
Georgia Crisis & Access Line (Suicide Hotline)	1-800-715-4225
Guidance Counselors /Advisors	WCPS 229-776-8660, WCES 229-776-8605 WCMS 229-776-8620, WCHS 229-776-8625
Intervention Prevention Services, Inc. (Youth/Adult prevention and development service company)	128 First Street Suite #226 Tifton, GA 31794 229-386-2100
Mental Health Services	Dougherty County Mental Health Services 601 W. 11 th Ave. Albany, GA 31701 229-430-4140
Network of Trust	WCHS Guidance Counselors
Pathways to Hope Counseling Service	1341 W. Hill Avenue Valdosta, GA 31601 229-249-7730
Response to Interventions	WCPS 229-776-8660, WCES 229-776-8605 WCMS 229-776-8620, WCHS 229-776-8625
School Resource Officers	WCMS & WCHS; also available at other schools for specific programs
School Social Worker	Worth County Board of Education Sylvester, GA 31791 229-776-8600
Student Support Teams (all schools)	All schools; see guidance counselor
Title I Parent Coordinators	WCPS 229-776-8660, WCES 229-776-8605 WCMS 229-776-8620, WCHS 229-776-8625
Worth County Health Department	1012 West Franklin Street Sylvester, GA 229-777-2150
Other - Professional agencies that parents may select	

CLUBS

2023-2024

Parents or legal guardians may decline permission for his or her student to participate in a club or organization designated by him or her.

WCMS CLUBS

Below is information regarding school clubs and organizations at Worth County Middle School. **Parents or legal guardians may decline permission for their student to participate in a club or organization.** Students are regularly photographed during school activities. Photographs may be displayed on classroom bulletin boards, in the newspaper, school and/or system websites, the school year book, newsletters, etc. **Parents or legal guardians may decline in writing, permission for photographs of their student to be displayed.**

Yearbook Club – Yearbook staff is a great way to get involved! Being on yearbook staff allows students to help create the WCMS yearbook and to learn the level of commitment necessary for many important real world tasks. It requires being a superlative student, a diligent worker, and a team player. Sample of activities: Fundraisers and production of school yearbooks. Advisors: Sheila Jackson

The Environmental Club – The mission of this club is to educate students on issues that impact our planet and to improve eco-friendly practices in our school and community. Sample activities include aluminum can recycling, school grounds beautification, fundraisers, school awareness and community projects. Advisors: Jennifer Easom and Brent Joyner

Eighth Grade Ambassadors –The Ambassadors are representatives of our school to schoolmates and the community. Students are nominated by their seventh-grade teachers based on academics and behavior. Sample activities: assist the Guidance Department during Red Ribbon Week, Smooth Moves, special events, and morning and afternoon announcements. Advisors: Dr. Saudia Powell and Deirdere Smith

The Beta Club recognizes academic achievement, promotes character, develops leadership skills, encourages service involvement, and provides technological advantages to students in grades 6-8. The purpose of the Beta Club shall be to promote the ideals of character, service and leadership among middle school students, to reward meritorious achievement and to encourage and assist students in continuing their education after high school. Beta Club members learn to lead while serving others. Members are selected by the faculty of WCMS based on the criteria of good academic standing, worthy character, creditable achievement, and commendable attitude. Sample of activities: fundraisers and community service projects. Advisors: Angela Rachels, Sheila Jackson

Future Farmers of America – The FFA programs and activities help members develop public speaking skills, conduct and participate in meetings, compete in various events requiring agricultural knowledge, carry out supervised agricultural projects, manage financial matters, strengthen problem-solving, and assume civic responsibilities. Students will attend conferences and competitions throughout the year. Sample of activities: participation in meetings, various competitions, and civic activities. Advisor: Alan West

Fellowship of Christian Athletes - The mission of the club is to present Christian values to athletes, coaches, and all whom they influence. Students will meet monthly to discuss integrity, service, teamwork, and excellence. Sample activities: meetings and community service activities. Advisor: TBA

GEMS – The objective of GEMS is to focus on positive character development of young ladies. The GEMS will develop a nurturing environment to help the students grow and develop an empowered attitude that will help them make positive choices. Sample of activities: afterschool activities and community service. Advisors: TBA

T.I.E Club- The T.I.E. Club is a collaborative effort between male students, mentors and school staff with the purpose of *Together Impacting Education*. Once a month, students meet with the Mr. Walker and a 7th grade teacher, Mr. Beverly to learn how to tie a tie. After the students learn how to tie a tie, they will then learn how to tie a bow tie and afterwards, they will learn how to tie and wear an ascot. The long-term goals are for each member to expand and increase their reading skills, dress with tie, bowtie or ascot once a week, participate in a school/community related projected, speak to different classes pertaining to a character trait, and set examples for their peers in what it means to be a “Ram”. Advisors: Mr. Jacque Walker and Mr. Robert Beverly

Girls of Promise – The objective of The Girls of Promise is to focus on positive character development of young ladies. The Girls of Promise will develop a nurturing environment to help the students grow and develop an empowered attitude that will help them make positive choices. Sample of activities: afterschool activities and community service. Advisors: Sheila Jackson, Kathy Albritton, and Shelby Gaulding

Note: The clubs on this list are subject to change without notice per administration.

NEW CLUB REQUESTS

Requests for new clubs should be presented to the Principal of the school by April 1st of each year for the club to begin the following school-year. For clubs to be considered, the following information will be needed: Club name, club purpose, target participants, how the club serves the school, how club activities will be financed, and club sponsor. Proposed clubs without a sponsor will not be considered. Approval for new clubs will originate at the school level and become fully granted only after the Board of Education adopts the club as part of the annual student handbook."

PARENTAL OPT-OUT OF CLUB PARTICIPATION



Student Name: _____

School: _____

I hereby acknowledge receipt of information regarding student clubs that are scheduled to be operational at the school during the current school year. I understand that if a club for which information has not been provided is started after this information is distributed, I will be provided the club information at that time and my written permission will be required prior to my student's participation.

I wish to withhold permission for my child to participate in the student club(s) listed below:

Parent/Guardian

Name: _____
(please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date