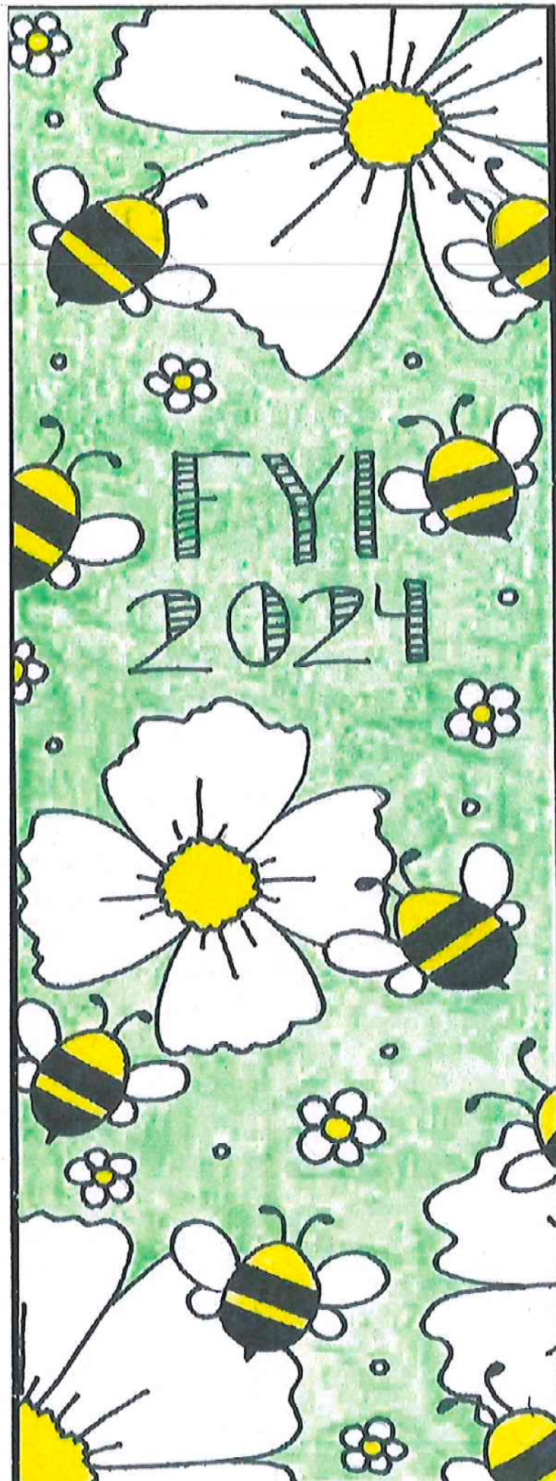


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Art Created By: Kailie Wingate
9th Grade
RHS

WALKER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

P. O. BOX 29
LAFAYETTE, GA 30728
Phone - (706) 638-1240

ELEMENTARY

Chattanooga Valley Elementary (706) 820-2511
Principal – Heather Culberson

Cherokee Ridge Elementary (706) 375-9831
Principal – Zac Wilson

Fairyland Elementary (706) 820-1171
Principal – Lisa Edwards

Gilbert Elementary (706) 638-2432
Principal – Brandon Mosgrove

Naomi Elementary (706) 638-2443
Principal – Kristi Cassie

North LaFayette Elementary (706) 638-1869
Principal – Jennifer Martin

Rock Spring Elementary (706) 764-1383
Principal – Kandy Gilstrap

Rossville Elementary (706) 866-5901
Principal – Courtney Gadd

Stone Creek Elementary (706) 866-3600
Principal – Leigh Davis

Saddle Ridge Elementary (706) 375-1219
Principal – Rachel Hodge

MIDDLE

Chattanooga Valley Middle (706) 820-0735
Principal – Wade Breeden

LaFayette Middle (706) 638-6440
Principal – Jamie Debitz

Rossville Middle (706) 820-0638
Principal – Robert Stinson

Saddle Ridge Middle (706) 375-1219
Principal – Rachel Hodge

HIGH

LaFayette High (706) 638-2342
Principal – Maggie Stultz

Ridgeland High (706) 820-9063
Principal – Karen Hughes

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Walker County Schools Code of Conduct will be distributed to students/parents at the beginning of each year as a link on the district website. Parent/student signatures are required, indicating receipt of the Code, which includes attendance and discipline policies. A hard copy of the Code of Conduct shall be provided to students/parents upon request.

Everything in this 2023-2024 FYI is up-to-date at the time this document was printed (July 2023). Any changes will be updated online at:

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Policy/ViewPolicy.aspx?S=4168&revid=UASon3SoNT4q3RvqDr4l1Q==&ptid=amIgTZiB9plushNjl6WXhfiOQ==&secid=p6v70fD4K8ukRv6vtplusTtSg==&PG=6&IRP=0>

A Message from Mr. Raines...

It is truly my pleasure to welcome you to Walker County Schools. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve your family as we work together to guide your child on their path toward graduation. We are committed to ensuring each child placed in our care is educated in a safe and positive learning environment, by a highly-qualified teacher with a curriculum that is rigorous and challenging. We fully understand our commitment to the mission and vision of Walker County Schools and embrace this pledge each day with a passion and desire to see everyone succeed.

I encourage you to read through the 2023-2024 FYI handbook you have received. This resource contains a variety of helpful information that will answer your questions and assist you as you guide your child on their educational journey. I am confident a relationship of teamwork and trust will develop as we work together to accomplish the goal of graduation.

Again, thank you for giving us this wonderful opportunity. If you have additional questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at 706-638-7949 or via email (damonraines@walkerschools.org).

*We look forward to a wonderful year of preparing your child to **Graduate--Ready for College, Ready for Work, Ready for Life!***

Sincerely,

*Damon Raines
Superintendent, Walker County Schools*

WHAT IS SCHOOL NUTRITION?

Every child needs a healthy breakfast and lunch each school day. Good nutrition is critical to student achievement.

The better-nourished student will generally have better attendance, be more attentive, and have more energy to cope with school-day challenges.

School lunch menus are planned to provide at least one-third of a child's Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA). The school nutrition program has come a long way since Congress passed the School Lunch Act back in 1946!

Walker County is a Provision II Breakfast participant; therefore, **breakfast is free to all students**. School breakfast provides at least one-fourth of a child's RDA. All of our schools offer breakfast programs. All schools offer Breakfast-on-the-Go, where students select their breakfast and go to the classroom. Studies have shown that students who eat breakfast at school score higher on standardized tests and have fewer discipline problems.

NUTRITION

The School Nutrition Program will ensure daily that reimbursable school meals meet the school nutrition program requirements and nutrition standards set forth under the federal USDA Healthy Hunger Free Kids (HHFKA) regulations and state requirements.

Schools will provide breakfast and lunch meals daily that adhere to all local, state, and federal guidelines.

Schools will encourage daily consumption of foods as recommended by the HHFKA which encourages increasing consumption of a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, and low-fat/fat-free dairy products.

Menus are planned at the local school level to incorporate students' suggestions and preferences. Choices can be made from a wide variety of fresh, tasty, nutritious menu items daily.

All extra sale items and snack offerings must meet the Federal Smart Snack regulations.

Drinking water will be available during all school meal periods at no charge to students.

Students with special dietary needs will be accommodated daily as required by USDA regulations. Special diets require a medical document completed annually by a physician. The form is available upon request, or you can find it online at www.walkerschoolnutrition.com.

Please, alert your child's classroom teacher of any illness(es) your child is encountering or experiencing on a given day for the safety of others. If a food safety violation occurs in the serving or cafeteria area, student(s) will need another plate given to them. School cafeteria staff will assure the situation is assessed and the student's needs are met.

The Walker County Wellness Policy states meals in the cafeteria must be purchased from the school or brought from home in the morning in food-safe containers. No outside vendor packaging should be brought into the cafeteria by students, parents, or staff. (Examples: McDonald's, Wendy's, etc.)

Guidelines will be provided by Food and Nutrition Services to the local school Health Advisory Councils to improve the nutritional content of foods and beverages offered as incentives or rewards, in fundraising activities, and for class parties.

The Walker County Wellness Policy encourages exercise and activity at school.

School Nutrition managers and staff provide individualized nutrition education.

Parents are encouraged to prepay for meals or extra items that can be purchased.

- * It is convenient.
- * Eliminates the need for daily lunch money
- * Avoids charged meals
- * Reduces the chance of losing money
- * Quicker service in cafeteria lines
- * You can view your student's meal balances on your Power School Parent account or your myschoolbucks account.
- * If the student account balance reaches \$10.00 in meal charges you will receive a phone call reminding you to send money in for each student's account
- * We feed your student(s) in good faith of payment. Parents, you are responsible for meal charges. Please call your school's cafeteria manager or the School Nutrition Office if you have questions.
- * Extra purchases are allowed only if funds are available in the student account.

Tips for paying and pre-paying student meals. . .

You may pay for your child's meals/extra sale items in advance by making online payments or by sending cash or check for the amount you wish to pay. Online payments can be made at www.myschoolbucks.com. My School Bucks will open on August 1, 2023. When paying cash, please place cash in an envelope with your child's name, student lunch account number, amount of deposit, and teacher's name on the front of the envelope. When paying by check, students' names and lunch account numbers should be written clearly on the front. The check should also have the name of the parent(s) or guardian(s), their physical address, and two telephone numbers. Checks should be made payable to the name of your child's school cafeteria for the amount to be deposited into your child's account. Envision Payment Solutions processes returned checks for school nutrition. If we receive a check that does not clear the bank, it will be handled by Envision. You will be contacted directly by Envision to make arrangements to pay the check amount plus any service charge that may be incurred. If you do not properly respond to Envision or Envision is unable to contact you, Envision may represent your check to the bank electronically along with applicable collection fees, which can be substantial. If a check is returned two times, we can no longer accept checks on that account until the returned check has been paid in

full. Please send cash until the outstanding checks have cleared. **Parents, you are responsible for meal charges.** We encourage you to keep your student's account current.

When transferring to any Walker County School, meal balances remain and roll with students to the new school.

Meal Prices for 2023-2024

Days	Elementary Breakfast	Middle/High Breakfast		Elementary Lunch	Middle/High Lunch
Daily	\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 2.35	\$ 2.60
5 days	\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 11.75	\$ 13.00
10 days	\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 23.50	\$ 26.00
20 days	\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 47.00	\$ 52.00

Free and Reduced Meals

MEAL APPLICATIONS ARE NEEDED FOR ALL STUDENTS FOR SY 2023-2024.

Meal applications will be made available to each student. The application process is a family application; therefore, only one application has to be completed for your family. Online applications will be available at the end of July at www.myschoolapps.com.

- All students/families, including foster children, must complete a Free & Reduced application every year to qualify for free & reduced meals.
- When completing the application, the student's legal name should be used (as shown on the birth certificate or in Power School).
- Please read the directions and complete the application very carefully. Remember to sign, and give the last 4 digits of your social security number and income when required. A complete application allows your application to be processed promptly.
- All information is kept very, very confidential. With the numerous systems in place, no one knows if a student is free, reduced, or full pay in the schools.
- Children who finished the previous school year on a free or reduced status will start the new school year on this status. This status is for the first 30 days of school only.
- You may bring an application to the School Nutrition Office anytime during the school year or contact us by phone (706-638-7970). We will do our best to help you.

- If you have any changes within the year (examples: income, number in household, foster children, SNAP--food stamps), please contact the school nutrition office at 706-638-7970, or fill out a new application immediately and return it to school with your child.

Choices can be made from a wide variety of fresh, tasty, nutritious menu items daily. Menus are available online at www.walkerschoolnutrition.com

Nutrition information will be integrated throughout the curriculum consistent with state and federal requirements.

Better health throughout life is established through good nutrition habits.

We believe this will be a fantastic school year and look forward to serving your child(ren). Parental involvement and support are encouraged!!! You must notify your child's teacher in advance if you wish to eat lunch with your student. Questions concerning the School Nutrition Program should be directed to the School Nutrition Office at 706-638-7970.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 (2) Fax:(202) 690-7442; or (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned to enhance our curriculum. Parents are encouraged to support participation. Trips are carefully planned by the teacher and approved by the administration and board of education. Permission forms must be signed by a parent or legal guardian before a child will be permitted to go on a field trip. Any student not participating is required to attend school that day unless he/she is ill. The student not attending the field trip will be assigned to another classroom teacher for regular instruction. Walker County provides for teacher discretion in allowing students the privilege of attending field trips based on the child's demonstrated ability to daily follow the required code of conduct and all safety procedures.

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

The Walker County Board of Education furnishes instructional resources to all students. The care of these materials is the responsibility of each student. Some reasonable user damage is expected in daily use. Unreasonable or intentional damage to resources will result in fines or damage fees. Lost resources must be paid for and replaced. Fines for damaged or lost resources are based on the current replacement cost.

CLASS RANK POLICY

For information on class rank please contact your school counselor or visit

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Policy/ViewPolicy.aspx?S=4168&revid=pfpiBNzdxSXgZFfE3KmUQ==&ptid=amIgTZiB9plushNjl6WXhfiOQ==&secid=qo79RxbUbdO3GjATNVIJ7Q==&PG=6&IRP=0&isPndg=false>

GEORGIA CAREER INFORMATION SYSTEM (GCIS)

In an effort to assist our students as they plan for career opportunities beyond high school, Walker County Schools has teamed with the Georgia Department of Education to utilize GCIS. GCIS is a unique online opportunity designed to give students, teachers, and parents access to important information concerning college and careers.

During the school year, teachers, as advisors, will meet with students to help them navigate the GCIS website as they explore the many careers available in a post-high-school environment. In addition to GCIS, students may also use the YouScience and GaFutures resources to understand their career interests, access dual enrollment opportunities, and complete college applications. Students create a private account that builds throughout their middle and high school years. These accounts allow students to create a portfolio of interests, inventories, and career profiles. Student accounts will only be shared with the Teacher Advisors and guidance counselors. Feel free to reach out to your child's school counselor to help you begin discussions with your child about college and career planning.

WALKER LAUNCH @GNTC

Walker Launch is an industry-driven initiative to prepare Walker County students for the 21st-century workforce. Launch students get technical training in high-demand career fields while receiving the soft skills needed to be successful. Students spend their last two years of high school on the campus of GNTC. Walker County Schools provides transportation, food service, and high school instructors on the GNTC campus.

If you are interested in more information about this program, contact your school counselor.

NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND ELIGIBLE STUDENTS OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) AND PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (the "Act"), you have a right to

(1) Inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the education records of a student who is your child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen (18) or older, or your own education records. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Superintendent a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Superintendent will make arrangements for access and provide notice of such arrangements.

(2) Request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. To request the school district to amend a record, parents or eligible students should write to the school principal, specify the part of the record they want to be changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district decides not to amend the record, it will notify the parents or eligible students of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided with the notification of the right to a hearing.

(3) Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a member of the school board; a person with whom the district has contracted to perform a specific task (such as attorney, auditor, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee.) A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school district forwards educational records without prior consent to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

(4) Understand the Walker County School District has designated the following information as directory information:

- a. Student's name, address, and telephone number;
- b. Student's participation in officially recognized activities;
- c. Weight and height of student if he/she is a member of an athletic team;
- d. Dates of attendance at schools within the school district;
- e. Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in the district's schools;
- f. Photograph;
- g. Grade level; and
- h. Parent/Guardian name

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. In addition, two federal laws require school systems receiving federal financial assistance to provide military recruiters or institutions of higher learning, upon request, with the name, address, and telephone numbers unless parents have advised the school system that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. You have the right to refuse to allow all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to refuse to allow it to be disclosed to the public upon request without your prior written consent. If you wish to exercise this right,

you must notify the principal of the school at which the student is enrolled, in writing of your objection within 10 days after officially enrolling in school or within 10 days of the date of the release of this notice.

(5) Be notified that from time to time students may be photographed, videotaped, or interviewed by the news media at school or some school activity or event. If you, as a parent/guardian object to your student being photographed, videotaped, or interviewed, you must object in writing to the principal of the school where your student is enrolled. You must notify the principal of your objection within 10 days after officially enrolling in school or within 10 days of the date of the release of this notice. The principal will take reasonable steps to control the media's access to students. However, your submission of a written objection does not constitute a guarantee that your student will not be interviewed in circumstances that are not within the knowledge or control of the principal.

(6) File with the United States Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of the Act or the regulations promulgated thereunder. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, and 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5920.

PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

Parents and eligible students (18 or older or emancipated minors) shall be notified at the beginning of the school year if the school district has identified the specific or approximate dates during the school year when any of the activities listed below are expected to be scheduled. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. The Board of Education has developed and adopted policies, in conjunction with parents, regarding the activities described below. In accordance with Board policies, prior written consent must be obtained from parents before students are required to submit to any survey that contains questions about one or more of the areas listed in paragraph (A) and that is funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education. You have the right to inspect any survey or instrument used in the collection of information under subparagraphs (A) and (B) before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student and to opt your student out of participation in any activities described below in accordance with regulations developed by the Superintendent.

- (A) The administration of any survey containing one or more of the following items:
- (i) Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
 - (ii) Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
 - (iii) Sex behavior or attitudes;
 - (iv) Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 - (v) Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 - (vi) Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
 - (vii) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
 - (viii) 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.

(B) 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).

(C) Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students.

You may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for your student.

The school is required by federal law to give this notice to parents. If any such activities are initiated during the school year, parents will be notified accordingly and will be afforded all the rights as described herein.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office/U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

McKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT

If your family lives in any of the following situations:

- In a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground
- On the street
- In an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations, or
- Doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing

Then, your preschool-aged and school-aged children have certain rights or protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.

Your Kindergarten-12th grade children have the right to:

- Receive a free, appropriate public education.
- Enroll in the local school; or continue attending their school of origin (the school they attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled), if that is your preference and is feasible.

*If the school district believes that the school selected is not in his/her best interest, then the district must provide the student with a written explanation of its position and inform the student of his/her right to appeal its decision.

- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents are normally required for enrollment.
- Enroll in the local school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents.
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to the student's needs.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested.

When you move, you should do the following:

- Contact the school district's local liaison for homeless education (see phone number below) for help in enrolling your child in a new school or arranging for your child to continue in his or her former school. Someone at a shelter, social services office, or school personnel can also direct you to the person you need to contact.
- Contact the school and provide any information you think will assist the teachers in helping your child adjust to new circumstances.
- Ask the local liaison for homeless education, the shelter provider, or a social worker for assistance with clothing and supplies, if needed.

Local Area Contacts:

Cory Lowe
(706) 375-7947

State Coordinator:

Eric McGhee
(404) 651-7555

If you need further assistance, call the National Center for Homeless Education at the toll-free Help Line number 1-800-308-2145

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories--names, addresses, and telephone listings--unless parents have advised the District that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want the Walker County School District to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing within 10 days after officially enrolling in school or within 10 days of the date of the release of this notice.

The Walker County School District has designated the following information as directory information:

- a. Student's name, address, and telephone number;
- b. Student's participation in officially recognized activities;
- c. Weight and height of student if he/she is a member of an athletic team;
- d. Dates of attendance at schools within the school district;
- e. Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in the district's schools;
- f. Photograph;
- g. Grade level; and
- h. Parent/Guardian name(s)

SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS NEEDS ASSESSMENT PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

In order to provide the best drug and violence prevention activities for your child and in accordance with the guidelines for the No Child Left Behind Legislation, your child may be asked to complete surveys that pertain to student involvement in attitudes toward substance abuse and violent situations (i.e. PRIDE, Life Skills and/or other state/local surveys.) These surveys are completely confidential and may be administered throughout the school year. Confidential survey information will be shared with The Council on Alcohol and Drugs, a United Way agency that is assisting Walker County Schools with the evaluation of the Life Skills Training program. Only group information (no individual information) will be reported by The Council to Walker County Schools.

The data collected will be used to identify critical areas of need and help us:

- Promote a social 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.

If you do not wish your child to participate or if you have any questions, please contact the school.

CONSENT FOR MEDIA RELEASE

Walker County Schools develop and/or participate in events, presentations, and/or virtual learning opportunities, as well as promotions for positive educational purposes. Students, parents, volunteers, and staff can participate in photographs, interviews, and/or videos which may be recorded, represented, and/or reproduced by the Walker County School District and/or the public media by print and/or electronic publication including but not exclusive to television, radio, newspaper, newsletter, yearbook, and/or internet.

If you do not wish for your own and/or your student(s)' name or image to be published in any way by Walker County Schools, you must write a letter to the principal of your student(s)' school(s) specifically stating your wishes for those specific individuals within the first ten days of school. Lack of receipt of said letter by the stated deadline will constitute your consent for media release.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Walker County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or sex in any student program or activity. It is the policy of the Walker County Board of Education ("Board") to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and all accompanying regulations.

TITLE IX NOTICE

The Board is required by Title IX and its implementing regulations to notify employees, students, parents or legal guardians, applicants for admission and employment, and professional organizations holding professional

agreements with the Board that the Board does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the operation of its education programs or activities, including admissions and employment.

Contact information for the Board's Title IX Coordinator is located on its website and in all handbooks or catalogs that the Board makes available to employees, students, parents or legal guardians, applicants for admission and employment, and professional organizations holding professional agreements with the Board.

Inquiries about Title IX and its implementing regulations may be referred to the Board's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any student, applicant for admission, parent or guardian, or other person who believes he or she has been unlawfully harassed because of his or her sex shall follow the complaint procedure in Board Policy JCAC.

The Board hereby designates its Director of Student Services as its Title IX Coordinator.

Complaints made to the Board by any student, an applicant for admission, parent or guardian, or another person regarding alleged discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, or disability, or discrimination on the basis of sex in violation of the above statutes will be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Any student, applicant for admission, parent or guardian, or other person with a complaint as described above shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, the principal of his/her school. If the complaint is oral, the school principal to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to him or her by the complainant and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement if it accurately reflects the complaint made. A copy of the complaint shall immediately be forwarded to the Title IX Coordinator.
2. If the alleged offending individual is the school principal, the complaint shall be made by the complainant to the Title IX Coordinator. If the alleged offending individual is the Title IX Coordinator, the complaint shall be made by the complainant to the superintendent.
3. The Title IX Coordinator shall have fifteen school days to gather all information relevant to the complaint made, review the information, determine the facts relating to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved. The Title IX Coordinator shall prepare a written response to the complaint detailing any action to be taken in response to the complaint and the time frame in which such action will be taken and copies of this response shall be furnished to the complainant, the Title IX Coordinator and the Superintendent or his or her designee. (If the alleged offending individual is the Title IX Coordinator, the Superintendent shall perform the tasks outlined in this paragraph. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response of the Superintendent, the complainant shall proceed to step 6 of this procedure.)
4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant shall have the right, within five school days of receiving a copy of the written response, to have the complaint referred to the Superintendent of Schools. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complaint shall be referred to the Board of Education, rather than the Superintendent.
5. The Superintendent shall have fifteen school days to review the complaint and the response of the Title IX Coordinator and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent shall furnish to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action recommended by the Title IX Coordinator or the action to be taken by the system in response to the complaint in lieu of that recommended by the Title IX Coordinator and the time frame in which such action shall be taken.

6. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response of the Superintendent, then the complainant shall have the right, within five school days of the receipt of the written response of the Superintendent, to have the complaint referred to the Board of Education. In order to have the Board review the Superintendent's decision, the complainant must file with the Superintendent a written statement setting forth the reasons he or she disagrees with the response of the Superintendent and the action the complainant is requesting the system to take. The complainant shall also include in the written response a request that his or her complaint be referred to the Board of Education.
7. The Superintendent shall present the matter to the Board of Education at its next regular meeting which is at least ten school days after the Superintendent's receipt of the complainant's response. The Board shall review the original complaint, the response of the Title IX Coordinator, the response of the Superintendent, and the response of the complainant. In addition, the Board may, but is not required to, hear directly from any individuals with knowledge of any relevant facts relating to the complaint.
8. The Board will either uphold the recommendation of the Superintendent or require some other action in response to the complaint. A copy of the action of the Board will be furnished to the complainant, either as a part of the minutes of the Board or as a separate written statement. The Board shall be the final reviewing authority within the system.
9. This policy is not intended to deprive any student, applicant for admission, parent or guardian, or other person of any right they may have to file a grievance pursuant to any other policy of the Board where appropriate. The complainant retains at all times the right to contact the Office of Civil Rights with regard to any allegations that the system has violated the statutes described above.
10. The Board shall be responsible for distributing and disseminating information relevant to this policy and procedure to students, applicants for admission, parents and guardians, and other persons through appropriate procedures.
11. No reprisal shall occur as a result of reporting unlawful discrimination under this policy, and any attempt to retaliate against a complainant shall be disciplined as is appropriate.
12. The confidentiality of any individual making a complaint or report in accordance with this policy, to the extent it is reasonably possible and complies with the law, shall be protected, although the discovery of the truth and the elimination of unlawful discrimination shall be the overriding consideration.

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The Title IX Coordinator for this school system is:

Heather Holloway
P.O. Box 29
LaFayette, GA 30728
(706) 638-7954

GENDER EQUITY POLICY

State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Act 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that the Walker County School System does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs.

The Sports Equity Coordinator for this school system is:

Heather Holloway
P.O. Box 29
LaFayette, GA 30728
(706) 638-7954

STUDENT HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Walker County Board of Education to maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee of the Walker County Board of Education to harass a student. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students. Any violation of this policy should be reported immediately to the principal or assistant principal.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

All students have the right to study in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. The school's position is that sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the student. No student--either male or female--should be subject to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct--either verbal or physical. Sexual harassment refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that debilitates morale, and that, therefore, interferes with work effectiveness. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

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STUDENT REPORTING OF ACTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

(a) Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator, or other school system employee is urged to make a verbal report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

(b) Any teacher, counselor, or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employees shall make a verbal report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, verbal and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.

(c) Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make a verbal report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

BULLYING POLICY

The Walker County School District believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All schools within the district have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance among students, staff, and volunteers. Behavior that infringes on the safety of any student will not be tolerated. A student shall not bully, harass, or intimidate another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes but is not limited to direct physical contact such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults such as teasing or name-calling; the use of electronic methods to harass, threaten or humiliate, and social isolation and/or manipulation. The school district policy prohibiting bullying is included in the student code of conduct and includes but is not limited to the following:

- Any student who engages in bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- Students are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designee.
- Students can rely on staff to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner.
- If the complainant or the parent of the complainant feels that an appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached after consulting the school principal, the student or the parent of the complainant should contact the local superintendent or his or her designee.
- The school system prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

All students and/or staff shall immediately report incidents of bullying, harassment, and intimidation to the school principal or designee. School staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. Each complaint of bullying shall be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling on a school bus to and from school, and/or a school-sponsored activity. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be taken after each incident of bullying and upon a finding of guilt. Disciplinary action after the first incident of bullying may include but is not limited to the following:

- Loss of a privilege
- Reassignment of seats in the classroom, cafeteria, or school bus
- Reassignment of classes
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Detention
- Expulsion (through appropriate due process hearing)

STUDENT CONDUCT

It is the purpose of the Walker County Board of Education to operate schools in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will ensure the safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. The Board believes that in order for classrooms to be satisfactory learning environments, the conduct of students must be wholesome, orderly, and respectful of authority. Students shall behave in such a way as to facilitate the learning environment for themselves and other students, respect each other and school district employees, and obey student behavior policies established by the Board and by each school. In addition, students are expected to attend class regularly, be prepared for class, demonstrate courtesy toward others, dress appropriately, cooperate with school officials, respect others' property, and avoid violation of the student code of conduct.

The primary goal of schools is to educate students, not to punish them. When a student violates the rules of this behavior code, corrective action may be necessary in order for the student and the school as a whole to benefit. The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the school staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. The principal is responsible for the rules of this behavior code and may undertake corrective measures which he/she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school. Additionally, the principal may discipline students for conduct off campus that is felonious or which may pose a threat to the school's learning environment or the safety of students and employees.

CODE OF CONDUCT RULES

The following code of conduct rules serve to guide the actions of principals and other appropriate district employees when disciplining students. These rules are in effect during the following times and in the following places:

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

Rule 1: Alcohol

A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or violate laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or use of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol.

Rule 2: Arson

A student shall not unlawfully and intentionally damage or attempt to damage any real or personal property by fire or incendiary device. This includes firecrackers, fireworks, and trash can fires if they are contributing factors to a damaging fire. Without a fire, firecrackers and fireworks are included under Rule 23, Weapons - Other.

Rule 3: Battery

A student shall not intentionally touch or strike another person against his or her will or intentionally cause bodily harm to an individual. For example, when one individual physically attacks or “beats up on” another individual. This includes an attack with a weapon or one that causes serious bodily harm to the victim. This category should be used only when the attack is very serious, serious enough to warrant calling the police or bringing in security, where the intent is to do bodily harm to someone.

Rule 4: Breaking and Entering - Burglary

A student shall not unlawfully enter into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a crime. This applies to school buildings or activities related to a school function.

Rule 5: Computer Trespass

A student shall not use a computer or computer network with the intention of deleting, interrupting, altering, damaging, or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program, or data.

Rule 6: Disorderly Conduct

A student shall not engage in any act which substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

Rule 7: Drugs

A student shall not unlawfully use, cultivate, manufacture, distribute, sell, purchase, possess, transport, or import any controlled drug or narcotic substance, equipment, or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics. This includes being under the influence of drugs or substances represented as drugs and it includes over-the-counter medications if abused by the student.

Rule 8: Fighting

A student shall not mutually participate in a fight involving physical violence where there is not one main offender and no major injury. It does not include verbal confrontations, tussles, or other minor confrontations. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

Rule 9: Homicide

A student shall not commit murder or non-negligent manslaughter.

Rule 10: Kidnapping

A student shall not unlawfully seize, transport, and/or detain a person against his/her will, or a minor without the consent of his/her custodial parents or legal guardians.

Rule 11: Larceny/Theft

A student shall not unlawfully take, carry, lead, or ride away the property of another person. This is theft without threat, violence, or bodily harm. This includes pocket picking, purse or backpack snatching if left unattended, theft from a building, theft from a motor vehicle, theft from a coin-operated machine, and all other types of larcenies. Typically, this category should be used only when theft is serious enough to warrant calling the police or bringing in security. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

Rule 12: Motor Vehicle Theft

A student shall not engage in theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. This includes theft of a car, truck, motorcycle, dune buggy, RV, or anything that is self-propelled.

Rule 13: Robbery

A student shall not take, or attempt to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization, under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. An essential difference between robbery and larceny is that a threat or battery is involved in a robbery.

Rule 14: Sexual Battery

A student shall not engage in oral, anal, or vaginal penetration, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object, or attempt forcibly and/or against the person's will. An act is forcible or against a person's will because the victim is below the age of consent or where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of temporary or permanent mental incapacity. This includes rape, fondling which includes touching of private body parts of another person (either through human contact or using an object), indecent liberties, child molestation, and sodomy. This rule should be used only when the incident is severe enough to warrant calling in law enforcement.

Rule 15: Sexual Harassment

A student shall not engage in deliberate, repeated, and unsolicited physical actions, gestures, or 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.

Rule 16: Sex Offenses

A student shall not engage in sexual intercourse, sexual contact, or other unlawful behavior or contact intended to result in sexual gratification without force or threat of force and where the victim is capable of giving consent. This includes indecent exposure and obscenity. Examples include entering or downloading pornographic content onto school computers. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

Rule 17: Verbal Threat/Intimidation

A student shall not unlawfully place another person in fear of bodily harm through written or verbal language, or act without displaying a weapon or subjecting the person to an actual physical attack. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

Rule 18: Tobacco

A student shall not possess, use, distribute, or sell tobacco products on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, and/or on transportation to or from school. See Board Policy JCDA A (<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/policy.aspx?PC=JCDA A&Sch=4168&S=4168&C=J&RevNo=1.34&T=A&Z=P&St=ADOPTED&PG=6&SN=true>)

Rule 19: Trespassing

A student shall not enter or remain on a public school campus or School Board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose of entry. This includes students under suspension or expulsion and unauthorized persons who enter or remain on campus after being directed to leave.

Rule 20: Vandalism

A student shall not willfully and/or maliciously destroy, damage, or deface public or private property, real or personal, without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it. Examples include graffiti, destroying school computer records, carving on desktops, or spray paint on walls.

Rule 22: Weapons - Knife

A student shall not possess, use, or intend to use any type of knife, including a pocket or pen knife.

Rule 23: Weapons - Other

A student shall not possess, use, or intend to use any instrument or object that could inflict harm on another person or intimidate any person. This includes chains, pipes, razor blades, ice picks, dirks, nunchakus, brass knuckles, Chinese stars, billy clubs, tear gas guns, electrical weapons or devices, explosives, fireworks, mace, or propellants.

Rule 24: Other Discipline Incident

Any misconduct that directly affects the orderly mission of the school or that is otherwise obviously inappropriate whether or not such misconduct is specifically listed in this Code of Conduct.

Rule 25: Weapons - Handgun

A student shall not possess any weapon which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device; any machine gun. A destructive device is any bomb, grenade, mine, rocket, missile, pipe bomb, or similar device containing some type of explosive that is capable of causing bodily harm or property damage. This includes firearms of any kind, loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable.

Rule 26: Weapons - Rifle/Shotgun

A student shall not possess any weapon which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device; any machine gun. A destructive device is any bomb, grenade, mine, rocket, missile, pipe bomb, or similar device containing some type of explosive that is capable of causing bodily harm or property damage. This includes firearms of any kind, loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable.

Rule 27: Serious Bodily Injury

A student shall not inflict serious bodily injury upon another person (an injury that involves substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental facility).

Rule 28: Weapons - Other Firearms

A student shall not possess any weapon which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device; any machine gun. A destructive device is any bomb, grenade, mine, rocket, missile, pipe bomb, or similar device containing some type of explosive that is capable of causing bodily harm or property damage. This includes firearms of any kind, loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable.

Rule 29: Bullying

A student shall not engage in any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so, or in any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm. A student shall also not engage in any intentional written, verbal or physical act, that a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass or intimidate and which act causes another person substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm; has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. "Bullying" constitutes an act that occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school-related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology.

Rule 30: Other - Attendance Related

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school function during required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, except with written permission of the teacher, principal, or other duly authorized Board personnel nor shall any student encourage, urge, or counsel other students to violate this rule.

Rule 31: Other - Dress Code Violation

A student shall not violate the Dress Code adopted by the Board. A student shall not dress, groom, or wear or use emblems, insignias, badges, or other symbols where the effect thereof is to direct unreasonably the attention of other students or otherwise to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school. The principal or other duly authorized Board personnel shall determine whether any particular mode of dress, apparel, grooming, or use of emblems, insignias, badges, or other symbols results in such interference or disruption as to violate this rule.

Rule 32: Academic Dishonesty

A student shall not cheat or assist others in cheating on tests, homework, or other assignments.

Rule 33: Student Incivility

A student shall not act with incivility towards any other student or employee in a Walker County School or at a function of Walker County Schools. Incivility is defined as disruptive, ill-mannered, or offensive behavior contrary to the well-being of the classroom or school community. This includes any and all forms of disrespect or disregard for instruction to an employee or a fellow student.

Rule 34: Possession of Unapproved Items

A student shall not be in possession of unapproved items ("contraband") that are inappropriate for a school setting. Contraband means a property, other than which is unlawful to produce or possess, which, as defined by local school rules, is prohibited on school premises and has in the past led to bodily injury or disruption of school operations.

Rule 35: Gang Related

A student shall not engage in any “gang-related” activities at school or at any school-related functions. A “gang” is defined as any group or association of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, which encourages, solicits, promotes, urges, counsels, furthers, advocates, condones, assists, causes, advises, procures, or abets any illegal or disruptive activity or behavior of any kind, whether on or off school campuses or school property.

Rule 36: Repeated Offenses

A student shall not refuse to obey or engage willfully in repeated attempts to violate the rules of the classroom, school, or Board.

Rule 40: Other Non-Disciplinary Incident (only to be used to report “physical restraint” with action 95).

Rule 42: Electronic Smoking Device

A student shall not possess, use, distribute, or sell tobacco products on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, and/or on transportation to or from school. This specifically applies to nicotine innovations such as electronic or vapor cigarettes. See Board Policy JCDA A

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/policy.aspx?PC=JCDA A&Sch=4168&S=4168&C=J&RevNo=1.34&T=A&Z=P&St=ADOPTED&PG=6&SN=true>

Rule 44: Violence Against a Teacher

A student shall not commit any act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee.

Rule 45: Terroristic Act

A student shall not engage or attempt to engage in any behavior of a terroristic nature, such as bomb threats. Students may not knowingly make comments, whether oral or written, that reasonably could be perceived as a threat of school violence including comments made in a joking manner.

Rule 46: Unacceptable Computer Use

A student shall not engage or attempt to engage in a computer-related crime as defined in the Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act (O.C.G.A. 16–9–90) including, but not limited to, computer invasion of privacy, computer forgery, computer password disclosure, or the transmission of misleading data through a computer or telephone network.

Rule 47: Unacceptable Internet Use

A student shall not violate or attempt to violate the Internet Acceptable Use Policy of the Walker County Board of Education (IFBGA).

Rule 48: Unauthorized Area

A student shall not be in any area of the school campus without the permission of the teacher, principal, or other duly authorized Board personnel.

Rule 49: Unpaid Debt

A student shall not fail to pay all monies owed to the school.

Rule 50: Electronic Communication Devices (ECD)

For the purposes of this rule, the term “electronic communication device” shall be defined as follows: an

electronic device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message, or otherwise operates to send or receive a communication through the user.

The term “electronic communication device” shall include, but not be limited to, pagers, cell phones, smartphones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), smart watches, smart-hearing devices, smart glasses, smart jewelry, tablets, Chromebooks, or laptops.

Possession and use of a cellular phone or any other ECD by a student is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms and conditions of this rule, or otherwise engages in misuse of the ECD so as to violate the law, any Walker County Board of Education (“Board”) policy, or other school or Board rule.

A student is prohibited from using his/her ECD to make video recordings at school, to cheat or plagiarize, to bully or haze others, to disrupt the learning environment, to view or transmit pornographic, vulgar, or inappropriate content, to post derogatory content on social media sites, or to take unsolicited or unwelcome photographs of students, staff, or facilities.

Students must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and the Board’s acceptable use policy while using their ECDs at school on school property, at after-school activities, and at school-related functions. Students who inappropriately use their ECDs at school will be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the Student Code of Conduct.

Elementary school students shall have the privilege to bring a personal ECD(s) to school but the ECD(s) shall remain off and out-of-use from the time they come onto the school campus at the beginning of the day until the end of the instructional day. Elementary students will keep their ECD(s) in their bag/locker/cubby throughout the entire school day. As a condition of this permission, the student must assume all risk of loss, damage, and/or theft of the ECD(s).

Middle school students shall have the privilege to bring a personal ECD(s) to school that shall remain out-of-use from the time they come onto the school campus at the beginning of the school day until the end of the instructional day. Middle school students may keep their ECD(s) in their lockers (if available) or in their personal bags, and they shall remain out of use throughout the day. As a condition of this permission, the student must assume all risk of loss, damage, and/or theft of the ECD(s).

High school students shall have the privilege to possess and use a personal ECD(s) during school hours, on school property, at after-school activities, and at school-related functions as long as such usage and or possession does not interfere with the educational process, school function, safety, and/or security. A high school student shall not be permitted to use an ECD during classroom instructional time unless specific permission is granted by the instructor for instructional purposes. A high school student shall be allowed to use an ECD during class change or at lunch provided such use does not violate any part of this rule or any other school rule. As a condition of this permission, the student must assume all risk of loss, damage, and/or theft of the ECD(s).

In all circumstances (K-12):

- Students are prohibited, by law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.5(b)(1)(B)), from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; tablets; iPads; iPods; pagers; audible radios, tape or compact disc players; or any other electronic device without headphones

or earbuds; or any other electronic device, in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

- Students are **never** permitted to use mobile phones in the restrooms and locker rooms.

All Board employees have the right to confiscate ECDs when used in violation of policy JCDA-E(1) and its implementing regulation. If a student refuses to relinquish an ECD to a Board employee, the staff member may refer the student with the ECD to the principal or designee.

Neither the Board nor its employees assume any liability for the theft, loss, or damage of mobile telephones and other ECDs possessed by students on school property or held by school officials during the confiscation period. Board employees will not be responsible for searching for lost or stolen ECDs.

Student discipline for violation of Rule 33 may result in:

- 1st Offense: The teacher (or Board employee) will contact the parent/guardian and share the incident and turn in both the discipline form and the ECD to Administration
 - The student may collect ECD after school
 - 2nd Offense: The teacher (or Board employee) will contact the parent/guardian and share the incident, the student meets with Administration, and the student will be assigned 1 day ISS/ACS
 - The parent/guardian may collect phone after school
 - 3rd Offense: The teacher (or Board employee) will contact the parent/guardian and share the incident, the student meets with Administration, and the student is assigned 3 days ISS/ACS
 - The parent/guardian may collect phone after school
 - 4th and subsequent disciplinary action(s) will be subject to administrative discretion.
-

Progressive Discipline Procedures

Violation of the code of conduct or school rules or any other act of misconduct or insubordination on the part of a student may result in disciplinary action. Teachers and principals have the opportunity to take customary and reasonable measures to maintain proper control and discipline among students placed under their care and supervision. This behavior code allows a process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them learn appropriate behaviors. Such discipline measures shall not include a reduction of grades or loss of credit previously earned by the student.

When it is necessary to discipline a student, school administrators, and teachers shall adhere to a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each administrator or teacher shall be in proportion to the severity of the inappropriate behavior of the student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student, and other relevant factors. The least extreme disciplinary measure that will produce the desired effect shall be used. Students who are involved in the same incident or in a similar incident from time to time shall be entitled to equal protection under the rules and regulations of this school district. However, such students need not necessarily receive the same disciplinary treatment (whether imposed as punishment or as measures to protect the other student, school mission, or for other reasons) for the same offense.

The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for a violation of the code of conduct rules:

Warning by teacher or administrator
Conference with student
Counseling with student by teacher, guidance counselor, or administrator
Loss of recess
Loss of privileges
Isolation or time out
Temporary removal from class or activity
Notification of parent
Parent conference
Development of written or graphic representation that reflects an understanding of the misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait
Participation in the cleaning/repairing of any damage caused to the school environment
Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school environment
Participation in a school-service project which enables the student to learn the appropriate behavior and desired character trait
Detention
Assignment to Saturday school
Suspension from school bus
In-school suspension (ISS)
Short-term out-of-school suspension (OSS)
Placement in an alternative education program
Long-term out-of-school suspension (by the action of the Board or its designee)
Referral to law enforcement officials
Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes appropriate behavior and the desired character traits.
Corporal punishment (only after many other disciplinary actions have been utilized)
Permanent expulsion (by action of the Board or its designee)

The Walker County Board of Education believes that it is preferable to reassign disruptive students to isolated, individually oriented in-school suspension programs or alternative educational settings rather than suspend or expel such students from school.

Students in grades 6 through 12 who have violated Rule 29 – Bullying, for the third time in a school year, shall be assigned to an alternative educational program. If a student in grades 6 through 12 violates Rule 26 - Bullying or engages in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus, the parent or guardian of the student shall meet with a school administrator for the purpose of forming an age-appropriate school bus behavior contract for the student.

Any student who is found by a discipline tribunal or the Board of Education to have committed any act of physical violence, as defined in O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.6, against an employee of the Walker County Board of Education is subject to the penalties described in Georgia Code Section 20-2-751.6 and shall, at its discretion, either be expelled from Walker County Schools for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school or permitted to attend an alternative education program for the length of the expulsion as determined by the discipline tribunal or the Board of Education.

Nothing in this policy shall 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.

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student

A chronic disciplinary problem student is one who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics that interfere with the learning process of students around him/her and which are likely to recur. Any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify the parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem by telephone call or by mail (certified or first class), invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request that at least one parent or guardian attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavior correction plan.

Before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return from an expulsion or suspension, the school to which the student is to be readmitted shall request by telephone call or by mail (certified or first class) at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference with the principal or his/her designee to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan. Failure of the parent or guardian to attend shall not preclude the student from being readmitted to the school. At the discretion of the principal, a teacher, counselor, or other person may attend the conference. The principal shall ensure that a notation of the conference is placed in the student's permanent file.

The Board of Education shall make available to all Qualified Student Discipline Hearing Officers and Disciplinary Tribunal or Panel Members the initial and ongoing tribunal training course prior to the individual(s) serving in such capacity. The local board of education shall ensure initially trained student discipline hearing officers and disciplinary tribunal or panel members undergo continuing education so as to continue to serve in such capacity.

Rules for Removal of Dangerous Students

A student who has been charged with the unlawful distribution of narcotics or other such serious violation of the criminal law may be removed from the school by the principal upon the approval of the Superintendent when it is necessary to protect other students or avoid substantial disruption to school operations. The school must be able to show that the continued presence of the student endangers other students or would substantially disrupt school operations.

COMMENT: Unlike the Code of Conduct Rules for serious student misconduct, this provision is not designed for punishment, but is solely to protect other students in circumstances where such protection is clearly necessary. Thus, the removal of dangerous students is a separate part of the code. This section is intended to deal with the problem of the student who has been charged with a serious violation of the criminal law, such as unlawfully selling narcotics or other serious felony, and immediate return to the school either would pose a substantial threat to other students or would probably cause substantial disruption to school operations because of the fear or intimidation that such presence creates for other students or teachers. Such situations will be **rare**, and the burden is placed on the school to demonstrate that the student's continued presence endangers other students.

UNSAFE SCHOOL INFORMATION

The Georgia Department of Education is committed to providing safe and secure learning environments for all Georgia students. The focus of USCO is not to label schools as unsafe, but to work with LEAs and identify schools at risk of being designated as "persistently dangerous". The GaDOE provides these schools with the professional development and technical assistance needed to improve.

Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO) Facts

All states must develop a definition of "persistently dangerous" schools and allow public school choice for students who have been victims of a violent criminal offense or who attend a school that meets the definition of "persistently dangerous".

Georgia's Definition of a Persistently Dangerous School

Any school in which for three consecutive years:

- At least 1 student is found by official tribunal action to have violated a school rule related to a violent criminal offense (including aggravated battery, aggravated child molestation, aggravated sexual battery, aggravated sodomy, armed robbery, arson, kidnapping, murder, rape, & voluntary manslaughter) either on campus or at a school-sanctioned event;
- At least 2% of the student body or 10 students, whichever is greater, have been found to have violated school rules related to other identified criminal offenses, including non-felony drugs, felony drugs, felony weapons, terroristic threats;
- Any combination of 1 & 2.

For more information on Unsafe Schools please refer to the Georgia Department of Education website at: <https://www.gadoe.org/Pages/Home.aspx>.

TEACHER REPORTING REQUIREMENT

A teacher shall have the authority, consistent with board policy, to manage his/her classroom, discipline students, and refer students to the principal or designee in order to maintain discipline in the classroom. Any teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior that violates the Student Behavior Code and repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his/her class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn shall file a report of such behavior with the principal or the principal's designee. Thereafter, the principal and teacher shall follow the procedures set forth in Georgia law, O.C.G.A. 20-2-737 & 738. The superintendent shall fully support the decision of teachers and principals, or their designee, to remove students from the classroom after following the proper procedures.

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PROCESS

The behavior support process is a mechanism for addressing the behaviors and influences that may need to be changed in order to promote the positive emotional, mental, social, and physical health needs of students. The Walker County Board of Education provides a variety of resources to help address student behavior problems. These resources, which are available at every school within the District, shall be utilized to help students eliminate unacceptable behaviors and learn appropriate behaviors and desired character traits. These resources include teachers, guidance counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, school nurses, student support teams, chronic disciplinary problem student plans, parent involvement program, special education services, referral to the Department of Family and Children's Services, referral to Lookout Mountain Community Services, referral to the Health Department, Juvenile Court, and any other resource or agency which can assist the student.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

This Student Behavior Code is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers, and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance. Furthermore, it is expected that these individuals will communicate their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School personnel recognize that two-way communication is extremely important in order to improve the schools. Therefore, they provide information to parents as well as ongoing opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments.

This Student Behavior Code specifies that school staff members may request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support process designed to promote positive behaviors and character traits.

The General Assembly of Georgia requires the district to encourage parents and guardians to inform their children of consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

DRESS CODE

The Walker County Board of Education supports an educational environment for students which is safe, conducive to learning, and free of distractions. While making every effort not to interrupt instruction, school administrators may evaluate a student's clothing to determine whether an item might be substantially likely to interfere with the function of the school.

General:

Each student shall wear clothing that is the appropriate size for his/her body. All clothing shall not have rips, tears, slits, cuts, etc., which reveal areas of the body. Transparent clothing is prohibited. Appropriate undergarments shall be worn at all times and shall not be visible. Any type of apparel which has a reference (i.e. pictures, symbols, words, etc.) to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sex, obscene language, suicide, violence, vulgarity, gang symbols/affiliation, cult symbols/affiliation or ethnic, sexual, or religious disparagement is prohibited.

Pants/Slacks/Jean:

All pants/slacks/jeans shall not show undergarments.

Dresses/Skirts/Shorts:

Dresses/Skirts/Shorts shall not be shorter than mid-thigh.

Shirts/Blouses/Tops:

Tank tops, tube tops, spaghetti straps, see-through blouses, and shirts/blouses/tops with torn-out sleeves or sides are prohibited. Sleeveless blouses may be worn provided the armpit area is well fitted. Shirts/blouses/tops shall not show undergarments.

Shoes:

Students shall wear safe shoes at all times.

Coats:

Coats shall not be longer than mid-thigh, except for JROTC uniforms.

Hair:

Hair, including facial hair, shall be kept neat and clean. Hair that is painted or dyed in unnatural colors and hairstyles that have a distracting appearance are prohibited.

Jewelry:

Jewelry that may create a hazardous condition, such as chains, wallet chains, or spiked or studded bracelets or necklaces, are prohibited.

Miscellaneous:

Students are prohibited from wearing hats, caps, hoods, non-religious head coverings, combs or brushes in the hair, sunglasses (except prescription sunglasses with a doctor's note), or bandanas inside the school building. Oversized book bags and oversized backpacks (those wider than the student's back and longer than the distance from the shoulder to the hip) are prohibited. An exception to this dress code will be made for school-sponsored extracurricular activities as appropriate.

DRUG TESTING OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN ATHLETICS, EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, AND DRIVING A VEHICLE ON CAMPUS

The Walker County Board of Education firmly believes that the use and abuse of drugs that are not prescribed or used as prescribed are detrimental to the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of its students. The Board further believes that this abuse seriously interferes with the academic and athletic performance of students and creates an unhealthy learning environment. These concerns have prompted the Board to authorize the Superintendent and his/her administrative staff to develop and implement drug screening procedures for all students who wish to participate in any interscholastic athletic activity, any interscholastic extracurricular activity, or any student who applies for a parking permit and intends to park a vehicle on school grounds of Walker County Schools.

WALKER COUNTY DRUG SCREENING PROCEDURES

I. Definitions

Chain of Custody refers to the procedures for maintaining control and accountability from initial collection to final disposition for all such materials or substances and providing for accountability at each stage in handling, testing, and storing specimens and reporting test results.

Drugs shall mean any substance screened for under this policy and can include amphetamines, methamphetamines, barbiturates, cocaine, marijuana, opiates, & hallucinogens.

Specimen means a urine or other sample collected from a student in accordance with the procedures designated by the testing laboratory.

Participating Student is any student enrolled in Walker County Schools who participates in or applies for participation in any interscholastic athletic activity, any interscholastic extracurricular activity, or any student who applies for a parking permit and intends on parking a vehicle on school grounds.

Initial Drug Test refers to a drug screening that is required for all student-athletes before they may participate on a particular athletic team.

II. Drug Testing Procedures

Testing: The system shall select a certified drug-testing laboratory to assist with implementing its drug-testing program.

Chain of Custody: The system shall utilize strict “chain of custody” procedures as established by the drug-testing laboratory conducting the testing process.

Consent and Cost: Each participating student and his or her parents are required to sign a written consent form for drug testing prior to being allowed to participate in any interscholastic athletic activity, any interscholastic extracurricular activity or to apply for a parking permit and intends on parking a vehicle on school grounds of Walker County Schools. The cost of any of the initial drug testing will be paid for by the participant. Any random testing done throughout the course of the school year will be paid for by the school system. Should a student test positive for drug abuse, the cost of the mandatory follow-up drug test will be paid by the student.

Medication: Participating students who are currently or have been taking prescription or nonprescription medication must disclose that fact at the time of drug testing and upon request, provide verification. Verification could consist of a copy of the prescription with the physician's written authorization, an original prescription bottle on which the label indicates the physician's authorization, or a nonprescription bottle containing the label of contents or other information requested by the medical review officer.

Initial Testing: Participating students in athletics are required to submit to and pass an initial drug test before being allowed to participate in any interscholastic athletic activity. The initial drug test will be administered on a day determined by the Athletic Director in coordination with the laboratory conducting the test. The student will be responsible for paying for the initial exam each season of participation. The student may participate during the time between the initial test and the time the results are submitted to the school. Students participating in extracurricular activities, excluding athletics, will be subject to a random test between the first and last days of practice and competitions during the year.

Random Selection Process: Drug testing of participating students shall occur at various times throughout the year as determined by the Principal, Athletic Director, Drug Testing Coordinator, and the lab conducting the drug test. Individuals will be selected at random, using a numerical selection process whereby each participating student's name and identity remain unknown until the random selections are completed. The random selection process will be coordinated by the Drug Testing Coordinator (hereafter referred to as "Coordinator") to be appointed by the Principal if other than the principal.

Specimen Collection Procedures: Procedures for the collection, testing, and result verification of specimens will be developed by the testing facility in conjunction with appropriate school officials as designated by the Superintendent. A copy of the collection procedures will be distributed to all students involved in the testing process.

Drug Testing Coordinator: The Coordinator will receive all reports of positive drug test results. The Coordinator shall contact the participating student whose test resulted in a positive drug test report and that participating student's parent(s) to afford them the opportunity to confidentially discuss the test result and any available options for treatment and/or counseling available or known to the high school.

III. General Prohibitions and Penalties

- A. **Standard of Conduct for Participating Students:** The use or possession of a drug, as defined herein, by a participating student creates an unhealthy learning environment and is both dangerous and detrimental to a student's ability to participate in any interscholastic athletics, any interscholastic extracurricular activity or to operate a vehicle on school grounds of Walker County Schools and is hereby prohibited.
- B. **Penalties:** Any participating student whose drug test administered pursuant to this policy renders a positive test result as indicated by the testing laboratory or who otherwise violates this policy shall be subject to the following consequences:
- C. (Note: All drug test screening results are cumulative for the student's high school career).

Refusal to Test: A student's refusal to test will be treated the same as a positive test result and will be counted in the cumulative number of positive test results. No student testing positive or refusing to test will be penalized academically. Testing results will not be released to criminal or juvenile authorities unless required by state or federal laws.

Penalty for First Positive Drug Test Result:

- In Athletics: The participating student will be suspended from participating in interscholastic athletic

competitions for 10 school days. Before returning to interscholastic competition the participant must submit to another drug test paid for by the participant. *Any positive results at the time of the follow-up test will be considered the participant's Second Positive Drug Test Result.

- Extracurricular Activities Not Including Athletics: The participant will be suspended from participating in competitions or performances for 10 school days. Before returning to interscholastic competition the participant must submit to another drug test paid for by the participant. *Any positive results at the time of the follow-up test will be considered the participant's Second Positive Drug Test Result.
- Parking on Campus: The student will not be allowed to drive or park a vehicle on campus for 10 school days. Before being allowed to park on campus the student must submit to another drug test paid for by the student. *Any positive results at the time of the follow-up test will be considered the student's Second Positive Drug Test Result.

Penalty for Second Positive Drug Test Result:

- The participating student will be suspended from participating in all interscholastic athletic activities (practices and competitions), any interscholastic extracurricular activity (practices, competitions, or performances), or parking a vehicle on school grounds of Walker County Schools for one calendar year. Any student applying for a parking permit who has had a second positive drug screening test may not obtain a parking permit until the one-year suspension has been completed.

Penalty for Third Positive Drug Test Result:

- The participating student will be permanently suspended from interscholastic athletics, any interscholastic extracurricular activity, or from parking his or her vehicle on school grounds of Walker County Schools.

Code of Conduct: This procedure is intended to supplement the existing policies of the Walker County School District. All students are governed by the Walker County Schools Code of Conduct and are subject to regular discipline procedures if violations are detected through means other than random drug testing procedures.

*The student will be required to submit to a drug test on the next random test day, and the results must be determined to meet the requirements of the policy and procedures before the student will be allowed to participate or gain parking privileges.

Note: All positive drug tests are cumulative over a student's high school career and are also cumulative toward the suspension of practice, competitions, performances, and parking, regardless of what activity in which the student is involved during the time of the positive result.

TRANSPORTATION

The Walker County Schools Transportation Department is excited about the upcoming year, and we look forward to making a positive difference in the lives of our students. Because the school bus is an extension of the classroom, we are an integral part of the education of all students within our school district. Safety is a high priority and a group effort. Students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and drivers are all assigned responsibilities. We value each and every student and will emphasize that by treating each student with dignity and respect. We are committed to providing the safest, most consistent, most reliable transportation possible and will strive to continually upgrade our service to students and parents.

We encourage you to read the Student Transportation Education Plan (S.O.A.R.), which is listed below, and discuss the responsibilities that students assume when riding a school bus. Your assistance with this task would be greatly appreciated.

We also want to mention a few additional items not covered in the Student Transportation Education Plan that are very important to be aware of for the upcoming school year.

** Due to a shortage of bus drivers, regular education bus routes have been streamlined to allow for more coverage with fewer drivers with travel taking place on primary roadways and connector roads. Many smaller roadways will no longer be traveled. Community Bus Stops have been incorporated into our transportation plans to give an additional option to our students to have a pickup and drop-off location. Please check the walkerschools.org website for a list of roadways to be traveled and community stop locations.

** Safety procedures are being utilized in order to keep school buses as clean as possible. All buses will have “high touch areas” sanitized following each route. Windows will be strategically opened to allow for ample airflow in the bus while it is in operation as well as parked. Hand sanitizer will be made available for anyone boarding the school bus. Also, strategic seating will take place to separate students as much as feasible while they are on the school bus.

** Elementary students that are 8 years or younger are not allowed to get off the bus at home without a caretaker being present. A caretaker must be at least thirteen years old and be able to indicate to the driver that they are present at the residence. Students are not allowed to “ride around” on the elementary route and go home with the middle or high school students. Students that ride our special needs buses must be released to an adult.

Students that utilize community stops must have a parent/guardian/caretaker present at the community bus stop in order for the student to be released from the bus, regardless of age.

Please note that if a caretaker is not present to receive students that are required to have someone present at their drop-off location on three different occasions, future bus-riding privileges may be revoked. This will be documented by the driver, and after the third occurrence, they may lose riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

****School bus transportation is designed for students to be transported to residential or community stop locations. We are not able to drop students at places of business.**

****When illness or other circumstances dictate, we may have a shortage of drivers. If this occurs, we may be required to “double routes” which can lead to varied times for student pick up or drop off. When this situation takes place, schools are notified and have the option of utilizing the *School Messenger* system to notify parents**

****Each day, we experience **extremely high call volume** between the hours of **6:00 am – 8:00 am** and between **2:00 pm – 5:00 pm**. During these hours, it is extremely difficult to get through to the Transportation Department. If you cannot get through, please keep trying!**

Student Transportation Education Plan **S.O.A.R. (Safely, Ordery, And Respectfully)**

The primary focus of the Walker County School System is to prepare students to graduate from school Ready for College, Ready for Work, and Ready for Life. One important component of this focus is the promotion of physical and emotional health in a safe learning environment within each school.

The Walker County School Transportation Department believes that we can support these key strategies by teaching and developing safe and appropriate bus-riding behaviors by our students. We will protect the safety (physical and emotional) of each individual student on the bus and help develop bus-riding behaviors that will be relevant and meaningful when the student is out in the community. Student behaviors are expected to be **safe, orderly, and respectful**.

The Behavior Management Plan is a three-part program that uses steps to help the bus driver and student to achieve that goal by developing and maintaining appropriate student behavior on the school bus. It consists of: 1) Prevention Steps 2) Intervention Steps and 3) Consequences. The first steps of the program are administered by the bus driver. The final step of the program (consequences) is administered by the school administrator or designee.

Prevention: Prevention steps are used by the bus driver to educate the students about safe and appropriate riding behaviors, clarify the bus driver’s expectations for the students, and assist students to understand how to successfully demonstrate safe riding habits every day.

Intervention: Intervention steps are used by the bus driver to help the student stop unsafe or inappropriate behaviors or habits while assisting students to identify the appropriate habit or behavior. Intervention steps may also provide notification to the parent/guardian so that the parent can be involved in assisting the driver to change unsafe or inappropriate riding habits.

Consequences: If prevention and intervention steps are unsuccessful at improving the student’s behavior or safe riding habits, a bus discipline form is submitted by the bus driver to the transportation office. The school administrator is then responsible for assigning appropriate, effective consequences for the student's inappropriate behavior in an effort to affect the necessary improvement.

PREVENTION

Expectations: Bus drivers should clearly communicate expectations and reinforce them appropriately and often. Expectations should be based on the student transportation principles of what is "Safe, Orderly, And Respectful."

Seat Assignments:

Bus drivers will learn the name of each student and their stop locations. Students will be assigned seats as part of the prevention step.

Assigned seating will help with:

- *Promoting ownership of property surrounding the student seat area.
- *Knowing if a student is/was on board.
- *Knowing who is on board for emergency purposes.
- *Emergency evacuation procedures.
- *Improved structure, routine, and consistency, especially during loading and unloading procedures.

School Bus Rules:

Students will receive ongoing instruction in safe bus riding procedures. Bus drivers will explain expectations to students starting the first day of school and continue the teaching process throughout the year to enhance the safety of the children being transported. When a bus driver talks about the expected behaviors, they should offer practical examples to help them be more consistent. We encourage all parents to review these rules with their children and help instill in their children the importance of safe, orderly, and respectful bus behavior.

Students should follow the directions of their bus driver. (This demonstrates **respect** to those with authority who are trying to keep us **safe** or maintain **order**.)

Students should be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives, waiting in a **safe** place, clear of traffic, and 12 feet from where the bus stops. While waiting at the bus stop, students should be well-behaved and respectful of the property where the stop is located.

Students may be required to cross the roadway in front of the bus after the bus has stopped. They shall not proceed until they have looked at the driver for a hand signal, and they have looked in both directions for traffic; left, right, left (This is a **safe** walking habit that protects students while traveling to their bus stop.)

Students will signal the driver with a waving motion if something is dropped and wait for the driver to give a signal before picking up the object (Never, ever lose sight of the driver or do anything that would make her/him lose sight of you! This is a procedure that can never be broken if we are to keep you **safe**.)

Students will go directly to their assigned seat when entering the bus and keep the aisles and exits clear (This is **orderly behavior**. An **orderly** bus minimizes distractions and is **safer** for students a) walking down the aisle or b) in the case of a sudden stop or emergency evacuation. This conduct also helps us to minimize inconvenience to the public.)

Students will remain properly seated, back against the back of the seat, bottom against the bottom of the seat (**safely** seated within the compartment,) and keep hands to themselves (**respectful** to others and their personal space.).

Students will not eat, drink, chew gum, or bring tobacco, tobacco substitutes, alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substances on the bus (this helps us to maintain a neat and **orderly** environment and is consistent with the code of conduct which keeps us **safe**.)

Students will not carry animals, glass objects, nuisance items, hazardous materials, or weapons onto the bus. Electronic items are not to be used during loading or unloading and shall not distract students or prevent the driver from communicating with students (maintains a **safe** environment for all riders, even in case of an emergency or accident.)

Students may carry only objects that can be held in their laps (This helps us maintain an **orderly** environment and reduces **safety** issues that would occur in the event of a sudden stop or emergency evacuation.)

Students will refrain from using loud voices, profanity, and/or obscene gestures, and **respect** the rights and safety of others.

Students will not extend their heads, arms, or objects out of the bus windows. This is important to student **safety** in every circumstance. This is a non-negotiable **safety** issue and a major offense when broken.

Students will be totally silent at railroad crossings (The driver is required by law to look and listen after establishing silence on the bus. This is a non-negotiable **safety** issue and a major offense when broken.)

Students will stay seated until time to get off the bus. The driver will signal when to get up from the bus seat if you are at your stop. Use classroom voices until the unloading (or loading) process is complete. It is an **orderly** way to unload and increases **safety** by minimizing distractions.)

Students will help keep their bus clean and in a good, safe condition (This helps us maintain an **orderly** and **safe** bus and is **respectful** to the next group of riders who will use it.)

*****We will not be returning back to the schools or a residential stop if a student missed the bus.**

INTERVENTION

Bus drivers may use the interventions listed below during the intervention step of the process. A minor offense is considered inappropriate or unsafe student behavior that may be improved with minor assistance from the driver.

Documentation:

Bus drivers will maintain written documentation of occurrences in the driver's daily logbook.

Verbal Reminder:

Bus drivers will remind the student of the bus rule(s) not being followed.

Seat Reassignment:

A student's assigned seat may be changed by the bus driver when such change may help the student to demonstrate appropriate riding behaviors and/or allow the driver to more effectively monitor that student's behavior. *(The assignment of seats at the beginning of school is part of the prevention step.)*

Talk individually with the student & Parent/Guardian Courtesy Call:

Bus drivers will talk individually with the student to determine what steps could be taken to help the student demonstrate appropriate and safe riding behaviors. Bus drivers/transportation employees will also call the

parents/guardian to notify them of the student's inappropriate behavior, with a request for help to achieve appropriate behavior.

Parent / Guardian notified in writing:

Bus drivers/transportation employees will complete a Parent Notification Form, which includes written documentation of the student's inappropriate behavior, with all steps taken by the driver documented on the form. The form will be taken home by the students to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the bus driver within two school days. A phone call to the parent/guardian should be made if the form is not returned by the second day.

Any or all of the above steps may be bypassed when a student's actions are illegal or judged by the driver to be so unsafe or disrespectful that immediate corrective action is required.

Violations that should be considered major offenses include, but are not limited to the following:

drugs (includes alcohol, cigarettes, vapes, lighters)

throwing objects off the bus

fighting/affray

weapons, dangerous instruments, and explosive/implosive devices

threats/bullying (verbal and physical threats)

Sexual harassment

Such violations should be reported immediately to the Lead Driver Trainer on a Bus Discipline Form. The Lead Driver Trainer will then enter the information into PowerSchool. The School Administrator will then enter the consequences into PowerSchool to complete the disciplinary write-up.

Consequences

When student behavior escalates beyond a driver's control or is not improved after using the appropriate intervention steps, the bus driver will submit a bus discipline form to the transportation office.

Bus Discipline Form sent to the Lead Driver Trainer which will then enter into PowerSchool.:

Reasons:

Behavior escalates beyond a driver's control or is not improved after using the appropriate intervention steps.

Major offense.

The School Administrator will assign appropriate consequences based on

a) the severity of the misbehavior and

b) number and frequency of the student bus referrals.

Suggested Guidelines:

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
1 st Referral	1-Day Bus Suspension	3-Day Bus Suspension	3-Day Bus Suspension
2 nd Referral	3-Day Bus Suspension	5-Day Bus Suspension	5-Day Bus Suspension
3 rd Referral	5-Day Bus Suspension	10-Day Bus Suspension	10-Day Bus Suspension
4 th Referral	Bus Suspension for Remainder of School Year	Bus Suspension for Remainder of School Year	Bus Suspension for Remainder of School Year

The School Administrator may tailor consequences to account for individual circumstances in each situation. The goal of assigning consequences is to bring about the desired student behavior on the school bus and the Transportation Department supports any consequence that achieves that goal.

ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL PROCEDURES

Georgia compulsory attendance laws identify truancy as a Code of Conduct violation. To promote and encourage regular attendance, Walker County Schools will implement the following procedures:

Perfect Attendance Requirements: Present every day with no tardies or dismissals.

Excellent Attendance Requirements: Present every day with no more than ten combined tardies/dismissals.

Excused (lawful) Absence: Any absence permitted by the policies and regulations of the local board of education in accordance with State Laws and State Department of Education policies and regulations.

Unexcused Absence: Any absence with no communication (note, call, or message) from the parent or guardian. Seven days can be excused by parent note, call, or message per school year. After the seventh day excused by the parent, a doctor's note will be required or the absence shall be unexcused.

1 to 4 unexcused absences: The teacher (or Principal's designee) should attempt personal contact with the parent on the day of absence; attempts and contacts should be documented and a record maintained.

5 unexcused absences: As required by law, the school will attempt to notify the parent by telephone or letter, informing the parent of five unexcused absences and stating the law and possible consequences for continued unexcused absences. Parent/student meetings (in-house Truancy Treatment Team) with school staff (must include Principal or designee) will be required. This is an attempt to address student attendance. The parent/student will be informed that a referral will be made to the school social worker if attendance does not improve. Documentation of the meeting will be maintained. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or another person who has charge of the student, Walker County Schools will send a written notice via first class mail or via certified mail with the return receipt requested. The school will maintain documentation.

7 Unexcused Absences: Referral to the school social worker and all relevant correspondence and documentation must be attached. The school social worker will work with the student and family in order to address attendance problems. This outreach should include telephone calls, home visits, or conferences at school. The school personnel will notify the school social worker if attendance has not improved.

Tardies: For truancy purposes, every three unexcused tardies, three early dismissals, or any combination of the two shall amount to one unexcused absence.

SCHOOL NOTIFICATION

Before admission to class upon returning to school following an absence, a student should provide a written note from a parent, guardian, physician, or legal authority stating the reason for the absence. These notes should be dated and give the date of the absence, state the reason for the absence, and have the parent's/guardian's signature.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

In accordance with Georgia law, Walker County Schools will notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of the student when such student has **five unexcused absences**. The notice will outline the penalties and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense.

After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of the student, Walker County Schools will send a written notice via first-class or certified mail with the return receipt requested.

Walker County Schools require that all of its schools provide the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in public 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 Walker County Schools, the parent guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student must sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age 10 or older by September 1 must sign a statement indicating receipt of a written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to this policy.

Walker County Schools are authorized to withdraw a student who:

1. has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences,
 2. is not subject to compulsory school attendance and
 3. is not receiving instructional services from the Walker County Schools through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Walker County Schools shall use its best efforts, including, but not limited to, phone calls or first class mail, to notify the parent/guardian, or other person who has charge of the student if the school system plans to withdraw the student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

The school system is authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance **if** the superintendent or designee determines that the student is no longer a resident of the school system or is enrolled in a private

school or home study program.

All absences must be verified in writing by a student's parent or guardian, medical doctor, or appropriate legal documents. This verification is due on the date that the student returns to school after the absence(s). The Board's school social workers and other staff are authorized to visit the home of a student to verify an illness or other hindering cause at the direction of the school principal.

Parents of elementary students who are tardy will sign students into school.

JUVENILE COURT

Upon completion of a Juvenile Court Complaint, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Intake staff shall review the complaint, past history with the Court and/or school, the severity of the behavior, and prior interventions by the Court or the school as well as any other history with the Court or school involving the child. The DJJ Intake Officer will make the decision to handle the referral outside of court or to refer the case to court.

If the case is handled outside of court the following options are available:

Motion to Dismiss, which must be approved by the Court

Informal Adjustment, which must be approved by the Court

If the case is referred to court a Juvenile Court Petition is prepared and a copy of the file is forwarded to the Assistant District Attorney for Juvenile Court. The case is then set for a formal Arraignment and the child and parent(s) or guardian are given notice of the hearing date and time. The complainant is also sent notice of the hearing date and time.

The following dispositions are available:

Dismiss

Withdraw the petition and do an Informal Adjustment

Abeyance with a protective order

Probation with a protective order

DJJ Commitment

Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) Commitment

Joint Commitment to DJJ and DFCS

The Court may also utilize the following options before a final disposition in the case:

Continue Disposition with or without detention for a period of time

Order a Psychological with a disposition at a later date

A DFCS referral

Adjudicatory Hearing (trial)

An Informal Adjustment is a process by which the child admits to the offense and the child and parent(s) or guardian agree to the Informal Adjustment. The intake officer assigns consequences that may include any combination of classes or programs either operated by the court, mental health, or DJJ. The initial time period may be extended with Court approval.

A commitment to DJJ or DFCS is where custody is removed from the parent(s) or guardian and given to the State.

MAGISTRATE COURT

Upon application for an arrest warrant for a parent or guardian violating O.C.G.A. 20-2-690, Compulsory School Attendance Law, a hearing is set. The parties are given notice and testimony is heard to determine if there is probable cause that this statute has been violated. If the parent or guardian does not appear, a warrant will be issued upon showing probable cause. If the parent or guardian is present and probable cause is shown, the court may and usually does delay the issuance of the warrant by at least 30 days and sometimes as much as 60 days at the request of the applicant. At the end of this time, the applicant contacts the court and either request that the warrant be dismissed or forwarded to the sheriff's office for the arrest of the accused. This extension is granted in order for the parent or guardian to have an opportunity to improve the child's attendance and if they do so the warrant is dismissed.

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Walker County Department of Family and Children Services provides social services to families of children that are truant from schools in conjunction with services provided relevant to cases of abuse or neglect.

In support of the Walker County Attendance Protocol, the Walker County Department of Family and Children's Services shall:

- Accept and consider information related to school attendance, behavior, and performance in conjunction with reports and investigations of suspected abuse and/or neglect.
- Address school attendance in departmental case plans and safety plans.
- Monitor school enrollment and regular attendance for students in emergency shelter care, temporary guardianship arranged by the department, or foster care.
- Attend court proceedings, when necessary, for cases involving truancy and/or complaints against parents related to mandatory school attendance.

INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of Walker County Schools to (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via the Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

DEFINITIONS

Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE MATERIAL

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Walker County Schools online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Walker County Schools staff to supervise and monitor the usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children's Internet Protection Act.

As required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, Walker County Schools will educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Procedures for disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Information and Technology Supervisor or designated representatives.

CIPA DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE.

The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. OBSCENE, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, as that term is defined in section 2256 of Title 18, United States Code; or
3. Harmful to minors.

HARMFUL TO MINORS.

The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT.

The terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meanings given in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP) FOR STUDENTS

It is the belief of the Walker County Board of Education that the use of technology for the purpose of information acquisition, retrieval, manipulation, distribution, and storage is an important part of ensuring all students graduate - ready for college, ready for work, ready for life! The Board further believes that a “technology-rich” classroom can significantly enhance both the teaching and learning process. This technology includes computer hardware, software, local and wide area networks, and access to the Internet. Due to the complex nature of these systems and the magnitude of information available via the Internet, the Walker County Board of Education believes guidelines regarding acceptable use are warranted in order to serve the educational needs of students.

It shall be the policy of the Walker County Board of Education that the school system shall have in continuous operation, with respect to any computers belonging to the school having access to the Internet via the school district’s network:

1. A qualifying “technology protection measure,” as that term is defined in Section 1703(b)(1) of the Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2000; and
2. Procedures or guidelines developed by the superintendent, administrators, and/or other appropriate personnel which provide for monitoring the online activities of users and the use of the chosen technology protection measure to protect against access through such computers to visual depictions that are (i) obscene, (ii) child pornography, or (iii) harmful to minors, as those terms are defined in Section 1703(b)(1) and (2) of the Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2000. Such procedures or guidelines shall be designed to:
 - a. Provide for monitoring the online activities of users to prevent, to the extent practicable, access by minors to inappropriate matters on the Internet and the World Wide Web;
 - b. Educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act;
 - c. Prevent unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking,” and other unauthorized activities by minors online;
 - d. Prevent the unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and
 - e. Restrict minors’ access to materials “harmful to minors,” as that term is defined in Section 1703(b)(2) of the Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2000.

The district’s technology resources are provided for educational purposes that promote and are consistent with the instructional goals of the Walker County School System. Use of computers and network resources outside the scope of this educational purpose is strictly prohibited. Students and employees accessing network services or any school computer shall comply with the district’s acceptable use guidelines. The district reserves the right to monitor, access, and disclose the contents of any user’s files, activities, or communications.

It must also be understood that the Internet is a global, fluid community, which remains largely unregulated. While it is an extremely valuable tool for educational research, there are sections that are not commensurate with community, school, or family standards. It is the belief of the Board that the Internet’s advantages far outweigh its disadvantages.

The Walker County Board of Education will, through its administrative staff, provide an Internet screening system that blocks access to a large percentage of inappropriate sites. It should not be assumed, however, that

users are completely prevented from accessing inappropriate materials or from sending or receiving objectionable communications.

Additionally, access to the Internet and computer resources is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, users violating the Walker County Board of Education's acceptable use policy shall be subject to revocation of these privileges and potential disciplinary action.

The Superintendent and the Superintendent's appropriate designees shall have the ability to override any or all protection measures and waive portions of the Acceptable Use Policy as deemed necessary for accomplishing the mission of the Walker County School System.

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

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

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

Students are responsible for ensuring that any computers or computing devices, diskettes, CDs, memory sticks, USB flash drives, or other forms of storage media that they bring in from outside the school are virus free and do not contain any unauthorized or inappropriate files.

In some situations, students may be permitted to connect to the district network via the secure wireless connection provided by the school system, but all access must be in accordance with this Acceptable Use Policy. Students are NOT permitted to use their own computing devices to access the Internet via personal Wi-Fi accounts or by any manner other than connecting through the secure wireless connection provided by the school system.

Safety Issues:

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

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

1. Accessing, sending, creating, or posting materials or communications that are:
 - a. Damaging to another person's reputation,
 - b. Abusive,
 - c. Obscene,
 - d. Sexually oriented,
 - e. Threatening or demeaning to another person,
 - f. Contrary to the school's policy on harassment,
 - g. Harassing, or
 - h. Illegal
2. Using the network for financial gain or advertising.
3. Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without his/her consent.
4. Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages.
5. Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other system users.
6. Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's licenses or social security numbers, bank cards, or checking account information.
7. Using the school's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music, or images, or violation of copyright laws.
8. Downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware, or any other unauthorized program on any school's computer or computer system.
9. Purposely bringing on-premises or infecting any school computer or network with a virus, trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information.
10. Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person.
11. Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account.
12. Using the school's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended.
13. Using the school's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with a teacher's directions and generally accepted network etiquette.
14. Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software.
15. Attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any network or computer component.
16. Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by the teacher or inconsistent with school policy.
17. Providing another student with user account information or passwords.
18. Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software that are not school system property to or in the district's technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel. Students may be permitted to connect to the district network via the secure wireless connection provided by the school system, but all access must be in accordance with this Acceptable Use Policy. Students are NOT permitted to use their own computing devices to access the Internet via personal Wi-Fi accounts or by any manner other than connecting through the secure wireless connection provided by the school system.
19. Bringing on premises any computer, disk, or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data.
20. Downloading or accessing via e-mail or file sharing, any software or programs not specifically authorized by Technology personnel.

21. Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies.
22. Possessing or accessing the information on school property related to “Hacking”, altering, or bypassing network security or policies.
23. Participating on message boards without teacher direction, or in live chat using but not limited to AIM, Yahoo, or MSN Messenger.
24. Students should follow the guidelines below when performing Internet searches.
 - Elementary: Students in grades K-5 may visit sites pre-selected by a teacher and must be done with teacher supervision.
 - Middle: Students in grades 6-8 may only perform Internet searches with teacher supervision.
 - High: If students in grades 9-12 use any search engine other than a child-friendly search engine, they must use the advanced search page of internet search engines in order to develop more reliable, useful, and relevant search results.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, children, and their parents or guardians are entitled to procedural safeguards with respect to actions taken by the Walker County Board of Education regarding the educational program of students who are identified under these statutes. In this regard, the following rights are afforded:

1. Notice of any action taken with regard to the educational program of the student;
2. An evaluation that draws on information from a variety of sources who are knowledgeable about the student, evaluation data, and placement options;
3. An opportunity to examine all relevant records;
4. An impartial hearing with the opportunity for participation by the student’s parents or guardians and representation by counsel; and
5. A review procedure.

If you need further explanation of these rights, please contact Glen Brown, Director of Student Services at (706) 375-7945.

NOTICE OF RIGHTS OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS UNDER SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your local system's Section 504 Coordinator at the following address:

Glen Brown
925 Osburn Road
Chickamauga, GA 30707
(706) 375-7945
glenbrown@walkerschools.org

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/or students with the following rights:

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for the least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.

11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with the opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

SECTION 504 PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

1. Overview: 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.

2. Hearing Request: The Request for the Hearing must include the following:

- a. The name of the student.
- b. The address of the residence of the student.
- c. The name of the school the student is attending.
- d. The decision that is the subject of the hearing.
- e. The requested reasons for review.
- f. The proposed remedy sought by the grievant.
- g. The name and contact information of the grievant.

Within 10 business days of receiving the grievant's Request for a Hearing, the Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for a Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request for Hearing does not contain the necessary information noted above, the Section 504 Coordinator will inform the Grievant of the specific information needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will be stayed until the Request for Hearing contains the necessary information noted above.

3. Mediation: The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues detailed by the grievant in his or her Request for Hearing. Mediation is voluntary and both the grievant and school system must agree to participate. The grievant may terminate the mediation at any time. If the mediation is terminated without an agreement, the school system will follow the procedures for conducting an impartial hearing without an additional Request for Hearing.

4. Hearing Procedures:

- a. The Section 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official who will conduct a hearing within 45 calendar days from the receipt of the grievant's request for a Hearing unless agreed to otherwise by the grievant or a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
- b. Upon a showing of good cause by the grievant or school system, the impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may grant a continuance and set a new hearing date. The request for a continuance must be in writing and copied to the other party.
- c. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.
- d. The grievant will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel at his or her own expense at the hearing and participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If the grievant is to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, he or she must inform the Section 504 Coordinator of that fact in writing at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify the Section 504 Coordinator in writing of representation by legal counsel shall constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.
- e. The grievant will have the burden of proving any claims he or she may assert. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the recipient to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A recipient shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the recipient unless it is demonstrated by the recipient that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R. §104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony, and answer questions posed by the review official.
- f. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.
- g. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence based on its reliability and probative value.
- h. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
- i. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request or the hearing.
- j. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.
- k. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the recipient. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the recipient.
- l. Unless otherwise required by law, the impartial review official shall uphold the action of the school system unless the grievant can prove that a preponderance of the evidence supports his or her claim.
- m. Failure of the grievant to appear at a scheduled hearing unless prior notification of absence was provided and approved by the impartial review official or just cause is shown shall constitute a waiver of the right to a

personal appearance before the impartial review official.

5. Decision: The impartial review official shall issue a written determination within 20 calendar days of the date the hearing concluded. The determination of the impartial review official shall not include any monetary damages or the award of any attorney's fees.

6. Review: If not satisfied with the decision of the impartial review official, any party may pursue any right of review, appeal, cause of action or claim available to them under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

RIGHT TO KNOW PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, parents have the "Right to Know" professional qualifications of their student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals.

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 student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If parents would like to know more about these and other questions, contact the school's principal. If there are still questions after speaking with the principal, please contact:

Heather Holloway
Director of Personnel
706-638-7954
heatherholloway@walkerschools.org

GEORGIA SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP

The Georgia Special Needs Scholarship provides eligible special education students with the opportunity to attend another public or approved private school.

Public School Choice Options

A parent 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 chooses this option, then the parent shall be responsible for transportation to and from the school. The deadline for requesting a school transfer within the Walker County School System for the 2023-2024 school year is September 15, 2023

A parent may request a transfer to a school in another school system if there is available space and the school has a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing IEP. The school system must agree to accept the student, however. If the parent chooses this option and the school system accepts the child, then the parent shall be responsible for transportation to a school in that system.

The parent 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 if the setting is appropriate for the student's needs. If the parent chooses this option, then the parent 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.

Private School Choice Option

If you are interested in transferring your child to a private school in Georgia, you 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, please visit the Georgia Department of Education's website at [Georgia Department of Education](https://doe.ga.gov).

Walker County Schools 2023-2024

Student Calendar

August 3, 2023 Students First Day

September 4, 2023 Labor Day Holiday

October 9 - 13, 2023..... Fall Break

November 20 - 24, 2023 Thanksgiving Break

December 19, 2023 1st Semester Ends

December 20, 2023 – January 5, 2024..... Holiday Break
Teacher In-Service Days – January 3,4, & 5, 2024

January 15, 2024 MLK Holiday

February 16 & 19, 2024 Winter Break
Teacher In-Service Day – February 16, 2024

April 1 – 5, 2024 Spring Break

May 24, 2024 Students Last Day
2nd Semester Ends

INTERNET POLICY

STUDENT AGREEMENT

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the provisions of the attached Acceptable Use Policy of the Walker County School District ("School District").

I understand and agree in the event that a third party makes a claim against the School District as a result of my use of the computer network or the Internet provided by the School District, the School District reserves its right to respond to such a claim as it sees fit and to hold all offending parties, including myself, responsible.

I release the School District, its affiliates, and its employees from any claims or damages of any nature arising from my access or use of the computer network or the Internet provided by the School District. I am responsible for toll charges (if any) as a result of using WCSDnet services. I also agree not to hold the School District responsible for materials improperly acquired on the system or for violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or any costs incurred by users.

Student Signature

Date

PARENT OR GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read, understand, and agree my child or dependent must comply with the provisions of the attached Acceptable Use Policy of the Walker County School District ("School District"). I give full permission to the School District to give my child or dependent access to a WCSDnet Account and to the WCSDnet system.

I accept full responsibility for the supervision of my child or dependent's use of his/her WCSDnet Account and the Internet at home or while not in a school setting. I understand and agree in the event a third party makes a claim against the School District as a result of my child or dependent's use of the computer network or the Internet provided by the School District, the School District reserves its right to respond to such a claim as it sees fit and to hold all offending parties, including my child or dependent, responsible.

I release the School District, its affiliates, and its employees from any claims or damages of any nature arising from my child or dependent's access or use of the computer network or the Internet provided by the School District. I am responsible for toll charges (if any) as a result of using WCSDnet services. I also agree not to hold the School District responsible for materials improperly acquired on the system, or for violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or any costs incurred by users.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

WALKER COUNTY SCHOOLS

Name of Student_____

This information was gathered to communicate important information to students and parents regarding the rules and procedures of Walker County Schools. We ask that you read it and thoroughly discuss its contents with your child(ren). Also, keep it handy so that you can refer to it throughout the school year when questions arise. Please complete the information below and return it to your child's school within the first ten days of school. Thank you for your cooperation.

My signature below acknowledges that I have received a copy of the following items:

Parents are responsible for all student meal charges (pg. 6)
Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Applications (pg. 6)
Notice of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (pg. 9)
Notice of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) (pg. 10)
Directory Information (pg. 12)
Student Behavior Code (pg. 18)
Dress Code (pg. 29)
Drug-Screening Procedures (pg. 31)
Attendance Procedures and Consequences for Absences (pg. 39)
Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy (pg. 42)
Section 504 Notice of Rights and Procedural Safeguards (Pg. 47)
Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Eligibility Criteria (pg. 52)

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

Signature of Student (10 years or older) Date

*Please attach a note to this sheet if you want to address any of the following situations:

- (1) If you do not want your child to receive services or screenings from school.
- (2) If you do not want your child's name or picture to be in a newspaper or a television news video story. (pg. 13)
- (3) If you do not want any Directory Information released on your child. For high school parents, this includes information on college and military recruiters. (pg. 12)
- (4) If you do not want your child to participate in any school system confidential surveys during the school year provide information on school safety, tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. (pg. 13)
- (5) If you do not want your child to participate in any school-sponsored clubs or activities.
- (6) If you do not want your child to have computer access to the Internet and/or the Walker County School District (WCSDnet) network. (pg. 42)
- (7) If you do not want your child to have an account on GA Career Information System (GCIS). (pg. 8)
- (8) If you do not want school officials to share information from my Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application with the Walker County Office of Curriculum and Instruction. (pg. 7)