
Dodge County Elementary School

Teacher's/Staff Member's Handbook

2024-2025



PEACE • LOVE • Learn
TOGETHER

DODGE COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
167 Orphan Cemetery Road, Eastman, GA 31023

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MISSION STATEMENT

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: EVERY STUDENT. EVERY DAY.

VISION

EDUCATING TODAY’S STUDENTS TO SUCCEED IN TOMORROW’S WORLD.



Non-Discrimination Notification Statement

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability or gender in employment decisions or educational programs and activities. Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent or other individual who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the School District based upon any of the factors listed above should promptly report the same to the principal of the school or the appropriate coordinator listed below, who will implement the Board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor.

The Title VI Coordinator is:

Mariella Douglas
720 College Street
Eastman, GA 31023
478-374-3783

The Title IX and The Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator is:

Tonya Brown
350 Pearl Bates Road
Eastman, GA 31023
478-374-3783

Professional and Para-Professional Absences

A teacher who must be absent should contact the bookkeeper to secure a substitute. In the event of an emergency, the employee may notify the principals or the assistant principals by phone the night before or the morning of the absence. In all cases, employees should make every effort to see to it that lesson plans are provided for the substitute.

Leaves and Absences

Each professional employee shall be allowed twelve and one-half days of sick leave per year, provided the employee is employed a total of ten full months. The number of days allowed under sick leave will be one and one-fourth days for each complete school month of service during a term of ten months. Personal leave must be reported to the bookkeeper in writing **three days** prior to date requested, and professional leave must be reported in writing **ten days** prior to date requested. Both require approval by the principal/assistant principal and the superintendent. Personal, sick, and professional leave forms are available in their office.



Absences resulting from the following causes shall be chargeable to sick leave:

- Personal or critical illness in the immediate family.
- Death in the immediate family –Members of immediate family shall be confined to father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law or relatives living in the home of the employee. The number of days allowed for death in the family shall be three.

Non-Professional Leave and Absences

Each para-professional employee shall be allowed a twelve and a half (12.5) days of sick leave per year provided the employee is employed a total of ten full months. Twelve-month employees are entitled to fifteen (15) days a year.

TARDINESS

If you are going to be late, please call bookkeeper, assistant principal, or principal. In the event you are late, you will be responsible for securing someone to cover your duty/class until you arrive. If you are consistently late to work, the Corrective Action/Employee Discipline procedures will be followed.

Corrective Action / Employee Discipline Procedures

The following progressive discipline procedures will be followed by the administration of Dodge County Schools when addressing the actions and/or activities of employees who fail to comply or willfully disobey the policies, procedures, and or directives of the administration, superintendent, and Board of Education:

Step 1 1 to 4 Tardies: Verbal Warnings. Dated and noted in personnel file.

Step 2 5th Tardy: Formal Written Warning. Dated and copied to the employee and personnel file.

Step 3 6th Tardy and any subsequent tardiness. Formal Disciplinary Action. Reflected in staff member's *annual evaluation and possible PDP*. Dated and copied to the employee, personnel file, and superintendent. Failure to correct may result in termination.

*ALL CORRECTIVE ACTION LETTERS AND/OR LETTERS OF DIRECTION WILL REQUIRE EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE OF RECEIPT.

Planning Period

All teachers are afforded a planning period. This is a part of the paid school day and should be utilized as such. Planning periods are not free periods during which personal business is scheduled. Teachers should remain on campus during the school day, unless approval to leave campus is granted by administration. Due to limited space, we may need to use your assigned classroom for another class during your planning period.



Lesson Plans

Planning is a critical component of effective teaching. Teachers' plans should be based on the standards and grade-level expectations. They should also reflect pre-assessment data, formal or informal, and should demonstrate the teachers' ability to differentiate for students. Plans must be current and updated by Monday of each week. Plans should be available for review at any time by the administration. Standards and learning target statements ("I Can" statements, EQ, etc.) are expected to be posted daily and relevant to student activities.

Covering Classes

Teachers should always be with their assigned classes. Doctor appointments, dental appointments, etc. should be made at times other than during the school day. However, when an emergency arises, and it is necessary for a teacher to be absent from his/her class for not more than one hour, the front office will find coverage for you.

Fund Raising

Fund raising activities are limited to one per year, per committee. Committee expenditures should be for items related to the committee or the school. Expenditures must be approved by the principal.

Authorized Purchasing

Purchases of needed materials and supplies that are to be paid out of school accounts or the county; must be authorized by the principal. Unless such approval is secured, the individual making the purchase is responsible for all debts incurred. Receipts for all expenditures should be turned in to the bookkeeper.

Grading and Gradebooks

Please record class grades in such a manner that you may justify them in the event the grade is questioned. The grade book should contain a complete record of all the work done by each student that you teach. This book must be accurate and up-to-date at all times. All entries should be made in such a manner that others may readily interpret them.

- Teachers should post grades often (weekly) in PowerSchool.
- Teachers cannot use student grades or excessive/unreasonable academic work as a discipline alternative.

Student Records

Teachers shall keep and maintain the following standard student records: Student attendance, grade books, and any other records requested by the principal.

Cell Phones

Please be respectful of our students and use your cell phone only in private (not during instructional time nor should students see teachers on their cell phones). Parent contacts should be during planning or before and after school. Personal calls should not be made during school/class time unless absolutely necessary.

Step 1 1 to 4 Verbal Warnings. Dated and noted in personnel file.

Step 2 5th Formal Written Warning. Dated and copied to the employee and personnel file.

Step 3 6th and any subsequent cell phone use. Formal Disciplinary Action. Reflected in staff member's *annual evaluation and possible PDP*. Dated and copied to the employee, personnel file, and superintendent. Failure to correct may result in termination.

*ALL CORRECTIVE ACTION LETTERS AND/OR LETTERS OF DIRECTION WILL REQUIRE EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE OF RECEIPT.



Acceptable Use Computer Policy

The Dodge County Schools Computer Network is established for the educational and professional use of Dodge County Schools' students, faculty, and staff ("Users"). This Technology and Acceptable Use Policy (the "Policy") is intended to govern Users with respect to Dodge County Schools Network and the Internet. Users are expected to conduct themselves on the Dodge County Schools Network in the same fashion as they do elsewhere in the community. Users who violate this Policy will have their Dodge County Schools Network privileges revoked and may be subject to further disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal. Dodge County Schools may also report offenders to applicable law enforcement agencies.

The Dodge County Schools Network provides access to the global Internet. Dodge County Schools have taken available precautions to restrict access to controversial materials on the Internet. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials. Dodge County Schools believe that the valuable information and interaction available on the Internet far outweighs the possibility that Users may find material that is not consistent with our educational goals.

The smooth operation of the Dodge County Schools Network relies upon the proper conduct of all Users. The signature on the Handbook Acknowledgement form is legally binding and indicates the parties who have signed have read the terms and conditions of this Policy carefully and understand their significance.

Dodge County Schools Network - Terms and Conditions (Acceptable Use and Illegal Actions)

Scope and Authority – The Dodge County Schools Network includes all hardware, software, and network services used by the Dodge community. Parents give the school permission to use applications that are educationally beneficial to our students.

Privileges

The use of the Dodge County Schools Network is a privilege, not a right. The use of an account must be consistent with the educational objectives of Dodge County Schools. The Technology Office and/or School Administration will deem what is inappropriate use and will refer any such conduct to Dodge County Schools Administration. Dodge County Schools, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to determine what conduct constitutes a violation of this Policy, and the discipline for any such violation. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, material protected by copyright, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade practice. Use of the Dodge County Schools Network for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited. Use of the Dodge County Schools Network and the Internet must be consistent with this Policy and all policies and practices of Dodge County Schools, and violations of this Policy and such other policies and practices may result in the suspension or loss of an account, loss of Internet access, or in other forms of disciplinary action.



No Expectation of Privacy

Dodge County Schools routinely monitor usage of the Dodge County Schools Network and may review any communications on its systems. Dodge County Schools is able to override all passwords. Users do not have a privacy right in the contents of their computer system, including messages sent, received, or stored on the email systems or in their use of the Internet. Passwords to these systems exist for the benefit of Dodge County Schools. Users should have no expectation that the ability to choose a password for a system in any way limits the ability or right of Dodge County Schools to monitor all activity.

Security

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many Users. No User may have access to another's files on the Dodge County Schools Network. The following guidelines will help maintain Dodge County Schools Network security:

- If you feel you have identified a security problem on the Internet, you must notify the Director of Technology.
- Do not allow anyone else to use your account and do not use another individual's account.
- Inappropriate attempts to access a server as an administrator will result in immediate cancellation of User privileges and/ or discipline.
- Any User identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Dodge County Schools Network.

Inappropriate Access

Not all of the information freely available on the Internet is reliable or helpful. Students and employees must evaluate the source of the information, as well as the information itself, to determine its appropriateness and usefulness.

In addition to providing information, the Internet is capable of providing the means to communicate directly with others via "instant or private messaging" programs, video conferencing programs, and other means. Also, there are many places and software technologies that will allow for the free exchange of files between computers over the Internet, such as email. Not all of these methodologies are appropriate for an educational environment as outlined in this document.

Downloading or loading of software on Dodge County Schools' computers is prohibited. There is an enormous quantity and variety of free software available on the Internet. However, widespread downloading of such software on the School's computers has a cumulative negative effect, and can result in the substantial degradation of performance, additional maintenance time, and increased threat of virus infestation. All software purchases must be approved by the technology staff.

Students may not use school computers to access any Internet site or sites that contain information that is inappropriate for educational purposes or sites that teachers, staff or administration deem inappropriate for the instructional program. Examples of inappropriate information and/or content include; but are not limited to, the following:

Students may not access, upload, download, transmit, display or distribute:



- a.) offensive material – content that is in poor taste or could be considered obscene; abusive or sexually explicit language, racist, illegal, harassing or inflammatory.
- b.) distribute dangerous material – content that provides direction in the construction of explosives or similar devices or instruction or practices that could injure the students themselves or others.
- c.) inappropriate contacts – materials that can lead to contact with strangers who could potentially threaten the student’s health or safety.

If a student is uncertain as to whether or not a site’s material might be considered inappropriate, the student should consult his or her teacher or a member of the administrative staff for clarification.

Privacy

School staff and administrators have access to student email for monitoring purposes. Students should have no expectation of privacy on the Google Apps for Education system.

Limited personal use - Students may use Google Apps for Education tools for personal projects but may not use them for:

1. Unlawful activities.
2. Inappropriate sexual or other offensive content.
3. Threatening another person.
4. Misrepresentation of Dodge County Schools, staff or students.

Safety

- Students will tell their teacher or other school employee about any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Students are responsible for the use of their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their accounts.
- Under no conditions should a user provide his or her password to another person.

Access Restriction - Due Process

Due to the rapidly changing technology environment, Dodge County Schools reserve the right to determine if an action not listed in this document is inappropriate, and the student may be subject to discipline.

Hardware

Student Chromebooks/Devices are managed in order to allow for student use of systems only for educational purposes. Under no circumstances is a student to attempt to modify the existing hardware configuration. Modification can be considered either opening the case or changing hardware or software settings. Students are responsible for any damage on their computers.

Dodge County Schools Information Technology offers a Guest Network for connection purposes.



Contact

Each student and employee is responsible for all activity that occurs under his/her user account. Students and employees may not place information on the Internet that is inappropriate or unacceptable.

Students may not give out any personal information (e.g., address, phone number, user name, passwords, etc.) about themselves or about other people. Students may not use school computers for commercial purposes or political lobbying.

Summary

This is a list of the more common things students, faculty and staff are specifically NOT permitted to do.

1. Download any files, especially music and videos, from the Internet.
2. Use any form of "instant or private messaging" software on student devices.
3. Install any applications or software onto Dodge County Schools' computers.
4. Disable or modify any running tasks or services.
5. Transfer and/or store music files from any personal devices to Dodge County Schools systems.
6. Play games, unless directed to by an instructor or supervisor for educational purposes, at any time on Dodge County Schools computers, including Internet-based games.
7. Use proxies or other means to bypass the content filtering systems in place and/or defeat any settings that prevent the access of material deemed and flagged as inappropriate by the blocking devices.
8. Use remote accessing software or hardware to take control of any network attached device or workstation.
9. Remove License decals or inventory control tags attached to the systems.
10. Disrupt its use by other individuals by connecting to other Dodge County Schools networks to perform any illegal or inappropriate act, such as an attempt to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network.
11. Anyone who inadvertently accesses an inappropriate site must immediately leave the site and report it to his/her instructor or supervisor.
12. Attempt to log onto the network as a system administrator.
13. Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access to the network.
14. Damage caused by the intentional misuse or vandalism of equipment will be charged to the person who committed the act.
15. Any damage to the student Chromebook/or device is the responsibility of the user.



Consequences

Use of school's internet is a privilege. Failure to abide by the terms of this policy will result in the following disciplinary actions:

Willful damage of computer hardware, computer software (including the deletion of programs and/or files) and computer networks will result in the student being responsible for the current repair and replacement cost of the damaged software and/or equipment. Any student violating the terms of this document will receive appropriate disciplinary action as defined by the school administrations.

Students could lose computer/network privileges, and/or receive detention, suspension or expulsion.

The Director of Technology or his/her designee may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty and staff of Dodge County Schools may make a request to the Director of Technology or his/her designee to deny, revoke or suspend specific user accounts based upon violations of this policy.

Improper Use and Content

Users may not use the Dodge County Schools Network for purposes of harassment, intimidation or bullying of others.

Bullying is the repeated use of a written, verbal or electronic expression, physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
2. places the student in reasonable fear of physical injury or of damage to property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for the student;
4. infringes on the rights of the student at school; or,
5. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
6. A hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Cyber-bullying involves an act of bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including but not limited to electronic mail, internet communications, or instant messages. Cyber-bullying also includes the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; or, the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions described in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions described in the definition of bullying.



Dodge County Schools shall, in its sole discretion, determine whether such conduct violates this policy and any other policies of Dodge County Schools. Users must remember that material distributed through the Internet is public. On the Internet, there is no central authority, so each site is responsible for its own Users. Complaints received from other sites regarding any of our Users will be fully investigated, and disciplinary action may be taken as a result.

Social Networking Sites

While Dodge County Schools respects the right of employees, students and families to use social media and networking sites, as well as personal websites and blogs, it is important that any such personal use of these sites does not damage Dodge County Schools' reputation, its employees, or its students or their families. Student use of social networking sites is prohibited on Dodge distributed technology devices. All users should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding that what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public, even without their knowledge or consent.

Dodge County Schools strongly encourages all employees, students and families to carefully review the privacy settings on any social media and networking sites they use (such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, etc.), and exercise care and good judgment when posting content and information on such sites. If an employee has a community that extends to persons who are parents, alums, or other members of the Dodge County Schools community, she/he must exercise good judgment about any content that is shared on the site.

Additionally, employees, students and families should adhere to the following guidelines, which are consistent with Dodge County Schools' community standards on harassment, student relationships, conduct, professional communication, and confidentiality:

- Users should not make statements that would violate any of Dodge County Schools' policies, including its policies concerning discrimination or harassment;
- Users must uphold Dodge County Schools' value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory or disparaging statements about the school, its employees, its students, or their families;
- Users may not disclose any confidential information of Dodge County Schools or confidential information obtained during the course of his/her employment, about any individuals or organizations, including students and/or their families.

Dodge County Schools has a strong interest in promoting a safe and supportive learning environment, as well as maintaining a positive reputation in the community. If the school believes that an employee's activity on a social networking site, blog, or personal website may violate the school's policies or otherwise may have a detrimental impact on the learning environment, the school may request that the employee or student cease such activity. Depending on the severity of the incident, the employee or student may be subject to disciplinary action. Dodge County Schools reserves the right to impose discipline, up to dismissal or termination, for any behavior on or off campus that Dodge determines may impair or negatively impact the reputation of the school.



Dodge County Wellness Policy

School Nutrition Meal Charge Policy

Emphasis on federal regulations has required the Dodge County School District to establish a procedure for meal charges. Meal charges cannot exceed \$10.00 for any student or adult. ALL charges must be paid prior to the last school day of the month. An Alternative Meal will be served once this charge threshold is reached. An Alternative Meal consists of a sandwich and a carton of milk. Please view all account activity at myschoolbucks.com or contact the School Nutrition Cashier at the school.

School Nutrition Meal Payment Information

Please take advantage of the options to prepay meal accounts. Prepaid meal accounts help the lunch lines go faster and gives students more time to enjoy lunch. It also gives you the peace of mind of not having to worry about looking for lunch money every day or worry that it might get lost, stolen or used for other things other than lunch.



Online payments are a simple, safe and secure way to make payments to your account 24 hours a day at your convenience.

You can always bring money personally. Please place it in an envelope marked clearly with your name and the \$ amount and the check #. Turn in prepaid deposits to the cafeteria cashier(s) or school office.

Theft and Vandalism

Users must acknowledge the use of the intellectual property of others. Users must treat information found electronically in the same way as information found in printed sources. Rules against plagiarism will be enforced. It is the responsibility of each User to comply with the terms and condition for the acquisition and use of software found on the Internet. Dodge County Schools will not allow the copying or storing of illegally acquired software. In this case, vandalism refers to deliberate attempts to damage the hardware, software, or information residing on Dodge County Schools Network or any other computer system attached through the Internet. Attempts to violate the integrity of private accounts, files or programs; the deliberate infecting of a computer with a "virus," attempts at "hacking" computers using any method, or other such actions shall be a violation of this Policy.

"Netiquette"

Users must abide by accepted rules of network etiquette, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Do not reveal personal information – your address or telephone number, or those of students or colleagues.
- Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Use appropriate language and do not use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
- Do not use the Dodge County Schools Network in such a way that would disrupt its use by others.



Waiver of Warranties; Limitation of Liability

Dodge County Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, concerning this service. Dodge County Schools shall not be held responsible for any damages suffered, including the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, service interruptions, or errors and omissions. Dodge County Schools denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through this service. All terms and conditions as stated in this Policy are applicable to the use of computer resources at Dodge County Schools, in addition to internet use.

Preservation of Resources

All resources are limited; computer resources are not an exception. Because space on disk drives and bandwidth across the lines, which connect Dodge County Schools Network both internally and externally, are limited, neither programs nor information may be stored on the system without the permission of the system administrator. Users are not to load software on any school computer. Each User is permitted reasonable space to store e-mail, Web, and personal files, as mandated by system file quotas. Dodge County Schools reserves the right to require the purging of files in order to regain disk space without warning. Users whose need for the resource is more pressing will have priority of space.

Appropriate Use of Social Media

Approved July 9, 2015

Descriptor Code: IFBGC

The Dodge County Board of Education recognizes that today's students and parents engage in electronic forms of communication for their daily interactions with friends, family, and their larger social networks. The Dodge County Schools will utilize telephones, emails, websites, text messaging, and social media to communicate with similar groups. Whereas these forms of communications are dynamic, mobile, and quickly reach their audience through technologies that have become an integral part of our online lives, they may, in some circumstances, not meet the public and professional standards for communicating with parents and students.

The Dodge County School System realizes that part of the 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of staff, students, and parent engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in these digital environments is a part of 21st century learning. These expectations for communicating electronically are to provide direction for employees when participating in online social media activities. It is important to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability, keeping in mind that information produced by Dodge County School System employees is a reflection on the entire district. By assessing, creating, or contributing to blogs, wikis, or other social media, both personal and school related, you agree to abide by these expectations. Please read them carefully before posting or commenting, or utilizing any form of social media, including, but not limited to, blogs, wikis, Remind 101, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or podcasts.

Schools may maintain an official social media presence. These official pages will be designed with logos and language to maintain the branding of the schools and system. All employees must adhere to the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators. All electronic communication between staff,



students, and parents should be transparent. As a public school district, we are expected to maintain openness, visibility, and accountability in regards to communications. All electronic communications between staff, students, and parents are a matter of public record and/or may be accessible by others. All electronic communication from staff to student or parent should be written as a professional representing your school and system. This includes word choices, tone, grammar and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a professional employed by the Dodge County Schools. Always choose words that are courteous, conscientious, and generally businesslike in manner. Ensure that electronic communications are made during reasonable hours and with reasonable frequency.

As role models for Dodge County's students, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting within the course and scope of district employment and whether even when they are on or off school property and whether or not the use takes place within the workday. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in the public use of electronic media as for any other public conduct in accordance with District policies, state and federal laws, and professional ethics. An employee's use of electronic media should never interfere with his or her ability to effectively perform his or her job duties. Employees of the school system should not use personal email accounts or social media to communicate with students or parents regarding school matters.

Employees are subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices of Georgia Educators, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. The wall between the role of a public educator and personal friendships should always be visible and strongly communicated. Employees are responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content of social media and are responsible for monitoring the social media source for appropriate content on a continuous basis.

Restrictions include:

- Confidentiality of student records. This includes discussing any information online or otherwise that could lead to the identification of a particular student or in any manner violate the Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Confidentiality of health or personnel information regarding colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- Confidentiality of district records, including education evaluations, private emails, and residential addresses.
- Copyright law.
- Prohibition against harming others by making false statements about a colleague, students, or the school system.
- Upon request from a parent, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, social media, or any other form of one-to-one communication.



Housekeeping

We cannot emphasize too much the value derived from a clean, attractive, neat classroom. Please strive daily to keep your room attractive as well as to create and maintain the right classroom atmosphere. Students' desks should be left in order, floors free from trash and paper, and all equipment and instructional material in proper order at the close of each day. Please encourage cleanliness in classrooms and halls. During your last class period, have your students clean their desks of trash.

The following policies should be observed by all teachers and all other staff members:

Teachers/Staff should remain on campus during the entire school day unless permission to leave is granted by the principal or her designee. Teachers are required to sign out in the office when they leave campus and sign back in there when they return.

Teachers are required to sign in no later than 7:45 a.m. and will report to their assigned duty or classroom. Teachers will not permit any unauthorized visitor to enter their classes without a visitor's pass from the office.

Teachers will not be called to answer the telephone during class except in case of an emergency. Notification of telephone messages will be placed in the teacher's mailbox after they have been received.

Announcements for the P.A. system will be made at 8:05. Please do not ask for an announcement to be made during the school day unless it is an absolute emergency.

Teachers and paraprofessionals are expected to constantly monitor student activities during the school day.

Staff development days/work days/pre-post planning days are for staff members only, and children should not accompany staff members to work on these days.

Student Welfare: Medicines

Teachers and office personnel are not to dispense medicines to students. This service is available at the school-based clinic. A teacher should not call parents regarding sick children. The nurse is responsible for determining whether a student should go home or remain at school.

Student Welfare: Child Abuse or Neglect

Approved July 9, 2015

Descriptor Code: JGI

All employees of the Dodge County Board of Education, as well as persons who attend to a child pursuant to their duties as a volunteer for the school system, who have reason or cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred shall notify the principal or the school system's designee, who shall report such abuse immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred, in accordance with Georgia law and the protocol for handling child abuse cases for Dodge County, Georgia.

Under no circumstances shall the principal or designee to whom a report of child abuse has been made exercise any control, restraint, modification or make any other change to the information provided by a mandated reporter, although the reporter may be consulted prior to the making of a report and may provide any additional, relevant and necessary information when making the report.



Employee Dress Code

There is abundant research to show that personal appearance has a significant effect upon other people. School system personnel are professionals. The dress, grooming, and mannerisms of school system staff members have an impact upon the way students and parents respond to our leadership. Staff members are expected to dress in a **professional manner at all times. Without fail, all staff should know the student dress code and go above and beyond to meet the expectations of the student dress code.**

Teacher dress and personal appearance while attending the schools of Dodge County, and while representing the schools in connected activities, should be such as to reflect dignity and pride in the schools. Dodge County School System employees are expected to dress in an appropriate and professional manner as dictated by job duties and responsibilities. The building level administrator has the authority to make exceptions on “special days.”

The following are considered inappropriate professional dress and are unacceptable:

- Sweat suits and wind pants;
- Any oversized or tight fitting clothing;
- Low-cut tops, bare and midriff outfits;
- Any see-through garments;
- Bedroom slippers, house shoes, or flip flops (No rubber slipper type sandals/flip flops --- Shoes should be appropriate for safe participation in all job related activities.

Dresses, skirts and shorts must be ***no higher than one inch above the knee and must look professional.*** Leggings, jeggings, tights, yoga pants, or spandex pants may be worn only under appropriate length (no higher than one inch above the knee) dress, skirt, shirt, etc. **No baggy, sagging, ragged pants, or pants with holes may be worn.** Body piercing (eyebrows, nose, lip, tongue, etc.) is not permitted. No other visible body piercings are allowed. No employee is allowed to wear gauges. No earrings for males.

PE instructors may wear wind-pants and coaching shorts of an appropriate length only in the gym and on the field.

More casual dress may be worn during pre-planning, post-planning and on teacher work days but must be an appropriate length and fit the dress code. (No mini-skirts or short-shorts, etc.)

Each principal or supervisor is responsible for maintaining an acceptable standard for employees under his/her supervision. The first time a staff member is dressed inappropriately, he/she will be sent home to change to appropriate clothing, will receive a warning, and the incident will be documented. The second time a staff member is dressed inappropriately, he/she will be sent home to change to appropriate clothing, the incident will be documented and his/her personal leave will be docked for the time away from school related duties. Schools’ maintenance, janitorial, cafeteria, and custodian employees are required to wear nonskid closed-toe shoes.



Teachers: Smoking and Usage of Tobacco Products

Board Policy – Effective December 9, 2010

Tobacco Use Prohibited

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

- In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented, or chartered by the Dodge County Schools.
- On any school grounds and property – including athletic fields and parking lots – owned, leased, rented, or chartered by Dodge County Schools; or
- At any school-sponsored or school-related event on campus or off campus.

Selling In Schools

School system employees involved in selling and buying must restrict their activities to before and after the school day and/or during pre and post planning.

American Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, and protects qualified applicants and employees with disabilities from discrimination in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, job training, fringe benefits, and other aspects of employment. The law also requires that covered entities provide qualified applicants and employees with disabilities with reasonable accommodations that do not impose undue hardship. The law covers applicants to and employees of most private employers, state and local governments, educational institutions, employment agencies and labor organizations.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against under any of the above laws, you should immediately contact:

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC, 1801 L Street, N. W., Washington, D.C. 20507 or an EEOC field office by calling toll free 800-669-EEOC. For individuals for hearing impairments, EEOC's toll free TDD number is 800-800-3302.

Dodge County School District Fraud, Waste, Abuse, and Corruption Procedure

Purpose

The Dodge County School System provides all employees, clients, vendors, and individuals with confidential channels to report suspicious activities. The Dodge County School System shall not tolerate fraud, waste, abuse or corruption of any kind and has an established system for the reporting and investigating of suspicious activities. **These procedures include, but are not limited to the following programs: Title 1, Part A; School Improvement 1003 (a); Title 1, Part C; Title 1, Part D; Title II, Part A; Title III, Part A; Title IV-B, 21st CCLC; Title VI, Part B, Special Education and Rural and Low Income, Title X, and Part C-McKinney-Vento Act.**

“**Fraud**” means the intentional deception perpetrated by an individual or individuals, or an organization, either internal or external to Dodge County Schools that could result in a tangible or intangible benefit to themselves, others, or the locality or could cause detriment to others or the locality. Fraud includes a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by



conduct, by false or misleading statements, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, which deceives and is intended to deceive.

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

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

“Corruption” includes dishonest proceedings, bribery, debasement, alteration, or perversion of integrity. Corruption threatens equal access, quantity and quality of education.

Examples of Fraud, Waste, Abuse, and Corruption (Not all-inclusive)

- Personal use of district-owned vehicles
- Long distance personal phone calls
- Personal use of district owned supplies or equipment
- Violations of system and/or state procurement policy
- Excessive or unnecessary purchases
- Falsification of official documents (timesheets, leave reports, travel vouchers, etc.)
- Contract Fraud
- Serious abuse of time
- Inappropriate expenditures
- Embezzlement
- Theft or misuse of school funds or property
- Neglect of duty
- Bribery

Statement of Administrative Regulations:

Any and all reports of suspicious activity and/or suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption, shall be investigated. The Dodge County School System shall not tolerate fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption of any kind, and any reported cases of suspected fraud, waste, abuse, and corruption will be thoroughly investigated to determine if disciplinary, financial recovery, and or criminal action should be taken.

Confidentiality

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



Procedures and Responsibilities

- Anyone suspecting fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption whether it pertains to local, state, or federal programs, shall report his or her concerns to the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee of the Dodge County Board of Education at 720 College Street, Eastman, GA 31023.
- Any employee with the Dodge County Board of Education (part-time staff, full-time staff, and contractors) who receives a report of suspected fraudulent activity MUST report this information within the next business day. The employee should contact the Superintendent or Superintendent's designed at (478) 374-3783. Employees have the responsibility to report suspected fraud, waste, or abuse. All reports can be made in confidence.
- The Dodge County Board of Education or its designees shall conduct investigations of employees, providers, contractors, or vendors against which reports of suspicious activity are made. All investigations shall be thorough and complete in nature and shall occur in a prompt manner after the report is received.
- If necessary, the person reporting the fraudulent activity will be contacted for additional information.
- Periodic communication through meetings should emphasize the responsibilities and channels for reporting suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption.
- A hard copy of these Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Corruption Administrative Regulations shall be available at all schools and facilities and on the Dodge County Schools website (www.dodge.k12.ga.us)
- A report shall be made to the Chairman of the Dodge County Board of Education if fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption is suspected of or by the Superintendent.
- Each employee shall review the document and will sign attesting that he or she has indeed received this information and understands its contents.

Chain of Command

Schools create a chain of command in order to flow instructions downward and accountability upward by providing each level of workers with a supervisor. To support staff with concerns they should follow the chain of command and seek building administration before reaching out to the next level.

Title IX

The following information is provided in response to the 2020 Title IX Regulations, mandating notice of a nondiscrimination policy and adoption and publication of grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints. The district does not, and is required by Title IX, not to, discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities.

The district has designated and authorized the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment as defined by the 2020 Title IX Regulations.

Title IX Coordinator: Tonya Brown

Office Address: 720 College Street, Eastman, GA 31023

Email Address: tbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us

Telephone Number: 478-374-3783



Any individual may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, at any time, including during non-business hours, by mail, phone, or email. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person.

An electronic copy of the District's Title IX policies, GAAA-Equal Opportunity Employment, GAEB-Sexual Harassment of Employees, JAA-Equal Educational Opportunities, and JCAC-Sexual Harassment of Students, may be viewed at:

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Policy/PolicyListing.aspx?S=4055>

To obtain a copy of the District's Title IX policies, including the formal complaint of sexual harassment grievance process that complies with the 2020 Title IX Regulations, please contact:

Title IX Coordinator: Tonya Brown
Office Address: 720 College Street, Eastman, GA 31023
Email Address: tbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us
Telephone Number: 478-374-3783

Upon receiving an allegation of sex-based harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly respond in accordance with the applicable board policy(ies) cited above.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Harassment

It is the policy of the School District to prohibit any act of harassment of employees by other employees based upon race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace or at any school event or activity. Any such act shall result in prompt and appropriate discipline, including the possible termination of employment.

Harassment may include conduct or speech which entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, demands or physical contact which creates a hostile environment. There may be other speech or conduct which employees experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment which should also be reported; harassment can take many forms and it is not possible to itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by this policy.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment can take many forms and it is not possible to define or itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by the School District. Sexual harassment may include conduct or speech that entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests or demands for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, or physical contact that creates a hostile environment. There may be other speech or conduct which students experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment, all of which is forbidden. Sexual harassment defined in the Federal Regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is defined as follows:

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the District conditioning the provision of a District aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;



2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District’s education program or activity; or

3. “Sexual assault”- an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; or “Dating Violence”- sex-based violence committed by a person-

(A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and

(B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

(i) The length of the relationship.

(ii) The type of relationship.

(iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship; or

“Domestic Violence” - sex-based violence which includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction; or

“Sex-based Stalking” - engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to-

(A) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or

(B) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Students, parents or other persons wishing to report alleged sexual harassment of a student should promptly notify the student’s school principal, school counselor, or Title IX Coordinator. All reports or complaints regarding alleged sexual harassment of students will be handled in accordance with Board Policies JAA and/or JCAC, as applicable.

Inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Tonya Brown, Title IX Coordinator, Dodge County Schools
720 College Street
Eastman, Georgia 31023
tbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us
478-374-6489



Procedures for Students to Report Inappropriate Employee Behavior

"20-2-751.7(a) The Professional Standards Commission shall establish a state mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student which shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities. Each local school system shall be required to implement and follow such state mandated process and shall include the mandated process in student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies.

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 an oral 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 employee shall make an oral 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 the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral 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 an oral 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.



TEACHER EVALUATION APPEALS

Board Policy - Descriptor Code: GBIA

The appeal process described in this policy shall be available to teachers who have accepted a full-time, full school year contract with the Dodge County Board of Education for the fourth or subsequent consecutive school year. Such teachers may appeal summative performance ratings of "Unsatisfactory" or "Ineffective" contained in personnel evaluations conducted pursuant to Code Section 20-2-210, procedural deficiencies on the part of the school system in conducting an evaluation, and job performance.

No more than 5 school days after the summative evaluation conference, the teacher shall provide a written notice of appeal to the responsible evaluator detailing every factual basis for the appeal. If the principal is the responsible evaluator, the principal shall respond in writing within 5 school days after the principal receives the appeal; if the responsible evaluator is not the principal, the appeal shall be forwarded to the principal, who shall conduct the first level of review. In either circumstance, a written response shall be provided to the teacher within 5 school days after the principal receives the appeal. The decision may be hand delivered to the teacher or sent by electronic mail.

If the teacher is dissatisfied with the principal's response, an appeal may be filed within 5 school days with a certified and TKES (Teacher Keys Evaluation System) trained administrator in the central office to be designated by the Superintendent (or in the discretion of the Superintendent, a qualified third party administrator from outside the District will be appointed). A written response shall be provided to the teacher within 5 school days of the appeal being received by the designated administrator. The decision may be hand delivered to the teacher or sent by electronic mail. The level two decision shall be final.

The appeal at either level must include a review of the complete evaluation record, including all documentation on the electronic platform, the original appeal and the response of the principal. In the discretion of the reviewer, a meeting may be scheduled with the teacher and, in the discretion of the reviewer, with the principal or original evaluator.

A teacher shall not be the subject of any reprisal as a result of filing an appeal under this policy. Any reprisal may be referred to the Professional Standards Commission.



PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

The Board of Education shall make paid parental leave equally available to all eligible employees of the Board of Education under the following terms:

1. An employee of the Board of Education shall be eligible for paid parental leave for qualifying life events upon satisfying the following criteria:
 - a. The employee is classified as full-time by the District and is eligible to participate in the TRS (Teacher Retirement System of Georgia) or the PSERS (Public School Employees Retirement System); and
 - b. The employee has six continuous months of employment with the Board, regardless of whether he or she is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under federal law. An employee paid on an hourly basis must have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested paid parental leave date.
2. A qualifying life event means:
 - a. The birth of a child of an eligible employee;
 - b. The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee; or
 - c. The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.
3. The maximum amount of paid parental leave that may be taken by an eligible employee during a rolling 12-month period is 120 hours, regardless of the number of qualifying life events that occur during such period.
 - a. The rolling 12-month period shall be measured backward from the date an eligible employee first uses parental leave.
 - b. Parental leave may be taken as needed and may be taken in increments of less than eight hours. The smallest increment of parental leave that may be taken is 2 hours
 - c. Any unused paid parental leave that remains 12 months after the qualifying event shall not carry over for future use.
 - d. Unused paid parental leave shall have no cash value at any time of the eligible employee's separation from employment with the Board of Education.
4. Paid parental leave under state law shall run concurrently with any leave provided under federal law.
5. Eligible employees requesting paid parental leave must submit the district's designated form to the Superintendent or designee at least 5 school days in advance of the requested leave start date.
6. The Superintendent or designee shall develop paperwork needed to administer paid parental leave, which shall specify the documentation required to establish the existence of a qualifying life event.



Dodge County Elementary School

167 Orphan Cemetery Road ♦ Eastman ♦ GA ♦ 31023 ♦ (478) 374-6690

Dr. Sheila Honeycutt
Principal

Dana Lowery
Assistant Principal

SIGNATURE PAGE

By signing this electronic technology and Internet contract, staff are stating that they have read the rules for acceptable uses of electronic technology, acceptable on-line behavior, understand the rules, and agree to comply with all of the above stated rules at Dodge County Schools. Violations may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary and/or legal action.

I have read and understand the Dodge County School System electronic technology and Internet contract.

Staff Signature

Date

I affirm that I have reviewed the contents of the Dodge County Elementary Schools Teacher's/Staff Member's Handbook for 2021-2022 which includes the information that I will abide by while employed by the Dodge County Board of Education.

Staff Signature

Date

