



# **DODGE COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

*5911 Oak Street Eastman, GA 31023*



GEORGIA  
SCHOOL OF  
EXCELLENCE

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025**

*This handbook belongs to:* \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to Dodge County Middle School, a school where a professional and qualified faculty and staff, parents and community who are valued and informed, and, most importantly, students who are supported and encouraged to do their best, come together to create a special place.

Our vision is for our school to be a place of high expectations leading to higher achievement for all. We are dedicated to providing the resources, the secure and positive environment, and the support necessary for student learning and high levels of achievement for all students. The partnerships formed between parents, students, staff, and community are valued and welcomed. This handbook provides information on opportunities, policies, and expectations for our students. Please use it as a reference throughout the year. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Jennifer Bellflower, Principal**

**Mr. Richard Gay, Assistant Principal**

**Mr. James Jones, Assistant Principal**



Dodge County Middle School  
5911 Oak Street  
Eastman, GA. 31023  
(478) 374-6492 (phone)  
(478) 374-6484 (fax)  
<http://dcms.dodge.k12.ga.us/>

**Our Motto**

**“Believing and Achieving Together”**

**Our Vision**

**Educating today’s students to succeed in tomorrow’s world.**

**Our Mission**

**Making a Difference: Every Student. Every Day.**

Este documento contiene informacion importante par la escuela. Si usted necisita esta information en Esponol por favor de llamar el Directorio de escolar Dodge en la Oficiana. El numero es 478--374-3783

**DCMS Policies and Procedures**

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### Parental Involvement

The DCMS administration and staff encourage parent involvement and participation in all aspects of the school's programs. Parents are informed of activities taking place at DCMS and are provided information regarding programs, meetings, parent/teacher conferences, student progress, and parental involvement activities via the school handbook, parent advisory and school council meetings, school and system websites, letters and announcements to parents, student agendas, and through the local media. Copies of the Dodge County School System's Parent Involvement Policy and the DCMS Parent Involvement Policy are available to parents in the school's media center, at open house, in the front lobby, and in the Dodge County Board of Education office. You can also download the Dodge County School System App for your smartphone to receive school updates.

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### Arrival Time

When students arrive on campus, they should report immediately to their homerooms or assigned area. Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria from 7:30 A.M. to 8:00 A.M. Students who do not ride the bus should arrive early enough to finish eating before the bell rings.

THE STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP AREA IS LOCATED IN THE BACK PARKING LOT BY THE GYM. STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE DROPPED OFF IN ANY OTHER AREAS OF THE CAMPUS.

STUDENTS ARRIVING ON CAMPUS BEFORE 7:45 A.M. SHOULD GO DIRECTLY TO THE CAFETERIA AND EAT BREAKFAST.

NO STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED ON CAMPUS PRIOR TO 7:15 A.M.

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### Tardiness/Early Sign-out

All students who arrive at school after 8:05 A.M. should report to the office for a tardy slip, and be signed in by a parent. In addition, students who sign out between 3:05-3:15 will receive a tardy for the class. Students who arrive later than 8:15 AM, or sign-out prior to 3:05 will be counted absent for the class.

When changing classes, students should go directly to their next class. If a student is tardy for a class, he must have a note from his/her previous teacher to be excused.

Excessive tardiness (more than 3 incidents) will result in disciplinary actions, which may include supervised lunch, after school clean up, time-out, and/or ISS.

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### Early Dismissal

Should a student find it necessary to leave school before 3:15 P.M., he/she must be signed out and picked up in the front office. Students who sign-out between 3:05-3:15 PM will receive a tardy for the class period. Parents are encouraged to limit early sign-outs to the beginning or end of class in order to prevent interruptions during instruction. **A student will be released only to the parents unless the school has been notified in writing by the parent that he/she has granted permission for someone else to pick up the child.** Students

should not leave the school campus at any time during the school day without permission from the office. Students who leave campus without permission will be considered truant and will be disciplined accordingly. Students will be counted absent for each class missed.

The school cannot prevent either one of a child's natural parents from picking him/her up from school unless the party having sole custody of the child provides the school with a legal copy of the court's custody order at the beginning of each school year and at any time when custody changes.

Students must be in attendance for at least ½ day in order to participate in extracurricular activities held on that day or evening.

**ALL CAMPUSES ARE OFF LIMITS TO STUDENTS DISMISSED EARLY.**

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### Attendance

Georgia law states that: "Every parent, guardian, or other person residing within the state of Georgia having control or charge of any child or children between their seventh and sixteenth birthdays shall enroll and send such child or children to a public or private school under such penalty for non-compliance, as provided."

(OCGA § 20-2-690.1)

Attendance at Dodge County Middle School is recorded by class period instead of by the day. Therefore, an absence from any class period is counted. **If a student misses more than 10 minutes from any class, he/she will be counted as absent from the class missed and can prevent a student from achieving perfect attendance, and may require the student go before the appeals committee.**

Students who are present at least half the school day, until 11:30 A.M., for the whole school year will earn a Perfect Attendance award at the end of the year.

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### Absences

The following reasons for absences are considered valid by the State Board of Education, and students will be permitted to make up work missed due to any of the following absences:

1. Personal illness
2. Serious illness in family
3. Death in the family
4. Religious observances
5. Military Leave
6. Instance where attendance would be hazardous

Students should present a written excuse, upon return after an absence, to the front office within three days. The following information should be stated on the excuse:

1. Date of excuse
2. Date of absence
3. Student's name
4. Reason for absence
5. Signature of parent or guardian

Students who have excused absences are responsible for arranging to make up their work. Makeup work must be completed within five days after returning to school.

Unexcused absences are subject to the student receiving a

zero for work missed. Absences for students who are suspended from school for disciplinary reasons are considered unexcused.

“A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent’s or legal guardian’s deployment or during such parent’s or legal guardian’s leave.”(OCGA § 20-2-692.1)

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### **Disciplinary Hearings**

If a student is involved in a discipline incident, and he/she and his/her parents/legal guardian elect to go before a disciplinary tribunal for a formal hearing, and if the student is found not guilty by the tribunal, any absences accrued during the suspension period will be excused by the school.

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### **Excessive Absences**

The Dodge County Board of Education's official policy is that a student absent for more than **14** days per year will not receive credit for course work. ***This also applies to classes missed when students sign out early or sign in late.***

***Appeals Procedure:*** Students desiring an appeal may obtain information from the principal's or counselor’s office. The administration of Dodge County Middle School realizes that occasionally students may be absent more than the 14-day limit. When the student or parent feels he/she has justification for an appeal, he/she may appear before the principal and request to appear before the absentee appeals committee. This committee shall hear the request and approve or reject the appeal for waiver of the policy. If the request is denied, an appeal may be made to the superintendent and/or the Dodge County Board of Education.

Students must be in compliance with the DCMS attendance policy to participate in reward-based field trips. Eighth grade students must comply with the attendance policy to ensure participation in end of the year activities, such as the promotion ceremony and picnic.

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### **Dismissal of Students**

School dismisses at 3:15 P.M. Students must leave the school campus immediately after being released from class. The school will not be responsible for the safety of students prior to 7:30 A.M. or after 3:45 P.M. **Changes in dismissal instructions for students will not be accepted on the phone because of the possibility of misunderstandings or misidentification. This includes early sign-outs. Parents should send or fax a signed note detailing any changes in dismissal for their child to the administration of DCMS.**

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### **School Visitors**

No one is permitted to enter a classroom for any reason

without a visitor's pass obtained from the front office. Official business by parents or others must be authorized through the office.

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### **Illness or Injury**

Students who become ill or injured will see the DCMS nurse. In case of illness or serious injury, an attempt will be made to notify parent or guardian. If parents cannot be reached, the person listed as the emergency contact will be notified. If it appears that the student is in a serious situation, the proper medical assistance will be secured; the parents will be notified as soon as possible.

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### **Medication**

No medication will be administered from the office, not even Tylenol. In case of cuts or scratches, a local antibacterial antiseptic will be used. Students who bring medicine from home should turn it in to the nurse upon arrival at school. Students will only be permitted to take medication at school with written instructions from the parent, when the medication is in the original container, and if administered by the school nurse. Students are not permitted to keep ANY medication on their person-prescription or over the counter. If a student is found to be in possession of medication, disciplinary action will be taken. Teachers are not permitted to give any medicine to students.

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### **Nurse**

A school nurse will be available to students at Dodge County Middle School. Parental release forms will be sent home during the first week of school. No medication can be administered without a signed release form. All students visiting the nurse must have a hall pass and nurse referral form. If a parent/guardian is called by the nurse to pick up a student, then the student absence will be coded as medical for the periods missed that day.

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### **Head Lice**

If a child is found to have head lice, he/she will be isolated until someone picks him/her up from school. The child will be readmitted to school after no live lice are present and all nits (eggs) have been removed. All children who have been sent home because of lice must be brought to school by the parent and checked for lice and nits by the school nurse. No child will be allowed to stay unless he/she is free and clear of lice and nits. If you have problems with nit (egg) removal or recurrent head lice, please contact our school nurse or the health department.

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### **School Breakfast and Lunch Program**

Dodge County Middle School provides a nutritious and well-balanced breakfast and lunch daily. Students who bring their lunches from home will eat them only in the cafeteria. **No canned or bottled drinks are allowed.** No commercially prepared meals are allowed.

Water is available for students who do not drink milk. Students may only purchase a la carte items if they have gotten a school meal. These items must be purchased as students go through the line; students will not be allowed to return to the line. Also, students should not take anything from the salad bar unless they purchase a salad as their meal. No charges will be allowed for the purchase of extra items. Students will need to make payment for extra items at the time of purchase.

### Wellness Plan

The mission of the Dodge County School Nutrition Program is to provide school meals that are consistent with the dietary guidelines and USDA standards for school meals and to make all foods and beverages available on campus during the school day consistent with a healthy lifestyle.

1. Dodge County School Nutrition Program complies with federal, state, and local requirements.
2. Dodge County School Nutrition Program is accessible to all students.
3. All food items **for sale** during the school day must be Smart Snack Compliant to include vending machines. All food-related fundraisers sold to students during the school day must receive prior approval by the School Nutrition Director and the Dodge County Board of Education. Food-Related Documentation of Smart Snack Compliance fundraisers will be kept on file at each school. Fundraiser Request form available at: <https://www.dodge.k12.ga.us/staff/food-related-fundraiser-request>
4. All foods **offered** on the school campus are encouraged to meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards (or state Standards) to include celebrations, classroom parties and classroom snacks. Additionally, due to the increase of food allergies and intolerances, it is recommended that parents provide non-food items for birthday celebrations instead of food items.
5. No food items should be available to students thirty minutes before or after a meal service.
6. Food or beverages within the school meal program shall not be withheld from students as a punishment.
7. Foods served in the school meal program are developmentally appropriate and encourage consumption within the time allotted.
8. A la carte food sales by the school nutrition program shall be limited to foods offered as part of the school meal and shall be served in the same portions as served in the school meal. A reimbursable meal must be purchased in order to purchase a la carte food items.
9. Sanitation deficiencies cited on local inspections are corrected accordingly, including facility deficiencies.

10. Each school kitchen has at least one person certified in food safety.

11. Drinking water is available to students throughout the day.

### **Smart Snacks**

Any food or beverage sold to students **on the school campus during the school day** must meet federal **Smart Snacks standards**. This includes food or beverages sold in a la carte sales, vending machines, school stores, snack carts, and fundraisers. Any entity selling food to students is required to maintain records, such as nutrition labels and product specifications.

**School campus:** All areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students.

**School day:** Midnight before until 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

### **Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools:**

The rule DOES NOT apply to:

- § Foods sold after school hours
- § Foods sold off school campus
- § Foods sold exclusively to adults

### **Fundraisers**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines a fundraiser as an event or activity during which students exchange currency/tokens/tickets, etc., for the sale/purchase of a product in support of the school or school-related activities. The *Smart Snacks* regulations apply only to products intended to be consumed during the school day.

*Examples:*

- § Giving away food but suggesting a donation
- § Vending machine when the profits are used to support a school-sponsored club or activity such as the school band or football team
- § Special treats sold during lunch hour by a student organization
- § Bake sales offered to students
- § Pizza sold in the classroom

### **Fundraiser Exemptions**

The Georgia Department of Education's Board approved 30 exempted fundraisers per school per school year not to exceed 3 days in length. However, there are time and place restrictions. Exempted fundraisers cannot operate anywhere on the school campus 30 minutes prior until 30 minutes after the end of breakfast and lunch meal services. Exempted fundraisers cannot be in vending machines, school stores, snack bars or a la carte sales. Fundraisers occurring in these venues must meet the *Smart Snacks* standards.

### **Dodge County Wellness Specific Goals**

Dodge County is committed to the wellbeing of all students, staff and our community. In accordance with the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, this wellness policy provides the guidelines for a sustainable environment of wellness.

**Nutrition Education-** The Dodge County School Nutrition Program will be responsible for implementing age appropriate nutrition education programming in all Dodge schools, these procedures are maintained and monitored by the SNP Director. **Nutrition and Health Education is integrated into the core curriculum, including math, science and language arts. Students also participate in health topics in physical education and Family and Consumer Sciences classes.**

**Nutrition Promotion-** Nutrition promotion and marketing will encourage participation in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. These procedures are maintained and monitored by the School Nutrition Program. **Dodge County Schools will only market food and beverages that meet the Smart Snack standards and nutrition guidelines.**

School staff, stakeholders and parents receive health information at the monthly Parent Support Cafe, Staff Health Fairs, and visits from Healthcare Providers.

**Physical Activity-** Physical Activity is an integral part of developing healthy lifestyles. Dodge County Physical Education Teachers will meet all state requirements in terms of physical education curriculum and will encourage recreational activities. **All Dodge County teachers are encouraged to increase student's physical activity by offering physical activity breaks and active academics. The after school programs at each school include physical activity to increase recreational time.**

Other school-based activities will encourage wellness by promoting physical activity and healthy food choices. Teachers and administrators will be encouraged to find alternatives to food and physical activity as methods of reward or discipline strategies for student behavior. In addition, students will be given sufficient time to consume meals in a clean dining environment. These areas are maintained and monitored by each school site's administrator.

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### **Searching Students**

Any student may be searched where there is reasonable suspicion but circumstances make it impractical to secure a warrant. Example: If a student appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or if school officials have reasonable, reliable reports or suspicions that a student has in his/her possession drugs or a weapon, he/she may be searched. Other conditions under which school authorities would be acting properly in searching a student or his possessions are:

1. If the student has consented.
2. If the contraband item is in plain view.
3. If the evidence or contraband is discovered while responding to an emergency.
4. If the official has reasonable suspicions to believe the individual is armed and dangerous.
5. In all other circumstances where the school official acts to protect the life, property, and health of students, teachers, and other individuals. School lockers, as well as book bags, pocketbooks, and other private possessions may be searched

by school officials and/or drug sniffing dogs if deemed necessary when private property is brought onto school property.

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### **Classroom Rules**

1. Follow directions when they are given.
2. Have pencils and ALL materials ready.
3. Raise hand to be recognized before speaking or getting out of your desk.
4. Food is to be eaten only in the lunchroom or at break.
5. Chewing gum is prohibited.
6. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
7. Groom only in the restroom. No aerosol spray deodorant or perfume allowed at school.
8. Show respect for others at all times.
9. Remain on task.
10. Classroom disruption is prohibited.
11. Inappropriate behavior in the hall, lunchroom, bathroom, and on the school bus is prohibited.

### **Consequences**

The teacher may utilize any of the following discipline management techniques to address classroom rule infractions:

- Classroom detention.
  - Isolation during lunch.
  - Classroom isolation from peers.
  - Student participation in conference with parent/guardian and teacher.
  - Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s).
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### **Dress Code**

Students should dress appropriately for classroom instruction. Extreme styles and fads should be avoided. Proper dress is conducive to good scholarship and behavior.

1. Students must wear shoes at all times. For the safety of the students, it is recommended that students wear tennis shoes or sandals with straps in an effort to prevent injury. In addition, tennis shoes must be worn during physical education. No bedroom shoes of any kind allowed.
2. No short shorts or skirts. Shorts or skirts should not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee.
3. Mesh shirts, fish net jerseys, or sheer shirts may be worn only over another shirt that meets dress code requirements. No see-through or low cut blouses. No mid-riffs visible.
4. Hats, bandanas, head-rags, do-rags, hoods, etc. and/or sunglasses are not allowed to be worn in the building unless permission is given from the office or a medical condition requires it.
5. Halter tops, crop tops, racerback tops, tank tops, spandex tops, open back tops, and/or strapless dresses or tops are not permissible. Sleeveless shirts must be at least 3 inches wide at the shoulder.
6. All students must wear undergarments. All undergarments must be covered at all times. Pants must be worn no lower than hip level. Shirts longer than 6 inches below the student's

natural waist must be tucked in. **NO SAGGING.** Repeat offenders may be subject to a “Shirt-Tail” agreement to tuck in their shirt and wear a belt for the remainder of the year.

7. Any clothing with obscene or suggestive slogans and/or pictures is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, advertisements for beer, drugs, other alcoholic beverages, portrayals of violence, symbols for death or the occult, skulls, weapons, or any other image deemed inappropriate for school by the administration.

8. No excessively baggy pants, or bike shorts are allowed. Jeans with slashes, holes, or cuts above the knee that expose any skin are prohibited. Holes of extreme size are prohibited. Leggings, flare leggings, and jeggings are allowed as long as the shirt worn with the leggings, flare leggings, or jeggings is ‘finger-tip’ length, which means the shirt meets or is longer than the fingertips when the student is standing straight with their arms down by their side.

9. Any dress, emblem, jewelry, etc. that symbolizes any gang type of activity is prohibited. This includes hand signs, symbols or gang books, symbols or lettering cut into the hair, and/or gang related graffiti.

10. Belts must be buckled, sashes tied, buttons buttoned (except at the neck) and suspenders properly worn.

11. Piercings: The only type of piercings allowed at school are ear piercings and small nose studs. Gauges, nose rings, eyebrow rings, or other facial piercings are NOT allowed.

12. No “grills” or non-corrective dental appliances are to be worn at school.

13. Pajamas and/or bedroom shoes are not allowed and should not be worn to school.

14. No “healies” or skate-type shoes allowed at school.

#### **School dress code applies to all school activities.**

Student dress shall be neat and in good taste as dictated by common sense and propriety. The school authorities reserve the right to make the final judgment as to what is neat and in good taste. If a student is out of dress code, he/she will be allowed to change into appropriate clothes. However, the student will have the choice to wear a lab coat and return to class, or sit in timeout in ISS until appropriate clothes are provided.

1<sup>st</sup> Offense-Warning and allowed to change into appropriate clothes-receive MIR

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense-Allowed to change into appropriate clothes and sign dress code agreement-receive MIR

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense-Receive office referral-consequences may include after-school clean up, ISS, Restorative Justice, or being sent home.

Refusal by students to comply with the consequences may result in out of school suspension.

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#### **Conference**

There are scheduled parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Students and parents are encouraged to initiate other conferences with teachers and administrators about attendance, behavior, class work, grades, and extracurricular activities. Conferences may be scheduled by telephoning the

school office. Parents should schedule a conference if their child receives a failing grade in any subject on his/her report card or progress report. Please schedule conferences to see administrators/counselors at any time if you have concerns about DCMS. Drop-ins are okay, however, appointments are preferred and they also confirm the availability of the person(s) that you need to meet with.

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#### **Promotion Policy**

Students are required to pass all 4 academic subjects (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies) for promotion. Summer school may be an option for some students needing to earn credit in one of these failed classes. In addition, students who received course credit for the year, but did not pass second semester may attend summer school for remediation and earn credit for the second semester. There will be a fee for summer school and it will need to be paid before a student can begin classes.

A student that attends but does not successfully complete, does not attend, or is not eligible to attend summer school, will be retained. The student will be placed in credit recovery at Dodge Achievement Center for the following year in order fulfill his/her academic requirements.

Eighth Grade students must also pass the Language Arts and Math sections of the Georgia Milestones Test to be eligible for promotion. Students who do not pass the required sections of the Georgia Milestones Test will need to meet with an Appeals Committee to be considered for promotion.

\*Administrators will determine Promotion/Retention for significant extenuating circumstances.

**Please note: Due to unusual circumstances brought about by the Covid-19 Pandemic, state guidelines for the 2020-2021 school year may change. DCMS policies will change in compliance with any changes implemented by the state.**

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#### **Bus Students**

Riding a school bus is a privilege that can be taken away at any time for disruptive or unsatisfactory conduct. Bus students are expected to obey the rules and regulations given by the bus driver. A bus conduct report will be sent home to notify parents of a student who persists in disregarding the bus driver's authority. He/she may be denied bus transportation or may be duly punished. School bus rules are designed to ensure the student's safety while being transported. Please make sure that your child is aware of the bus rules and is encouraged to obey them. Bus discipline is handled by the bus shop. Questions or concerns about discipline incidents that occur on the bus should be addressed to the Bus Shop at 374-6487.

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#### **Media Center**

The school library or media center is open at all times during the school day. This enables students and teachers to have open access to the library at all times. All students are taught library skills, courtesy, and usage. Misuse of the library privileges could result in the loss of such privileges. Books checked out from the library are to be returned promptly and



in good condition by the due date. Students are expected to pay for any book that is lost or excessively damaged while it is checked out. The media specialist is most willing to assist students, teachers, and parents in the library. **Students who owe library fines or Chromebook fines will be denied participation in extracurricular activities.** Students are encouraged to use the media center.

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### **Accelerated Reader**

Dodge County Middle School encourages all students to read. Participation in the Dodge County Middle School Accelerated Reader Program is supplemental to the Reading curriculum and rewards those students who endeavor to read above and beyond that required in class. Any student involved in any form of cheating on the Accelerated Reader will be dealt with by the administration. Accelerated Reader tests taken under another student's name will be removed from the student record and both parties will be punished for cheating. If caught cheating, all students involved will be disqualified from receiving any Accelerated Reader rewards, honors, and/or prizes, as well as any extra credit awarded for participation.

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### **Lockers**

Lockers may or may not be provided to students at DCMS in order to reduce the amount of materials students are required to take with them from class to class. Lockers and locks will be assigned to students by the school. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain a neat locker and to utilize the locker in an appropriate manner. **Lockers may be searched at any time.** Locker privileges may be revoked and disciplinary action taken if a student misuses their locker or tampers with another student's locker. Students may only visit their lockers at assigned times, therefore, it is important that students secure all required materials needed for class from their locker. Students will not be allowed to visit lockers during instructional time.

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### **Counselor**

The guidance program at Dodge County Middle School is developmental and preventive. We are interested in the total positive development of students. A school counselor is available to work with students and teachers in classroom guidance activities. Students are offered the opportunity for individual or group counseling sessions. Students may make appointments by coming by the guidance office. In an emergency, students should obtain permission from their teacher to come to the counselor's office immediately.

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### **Scheduling**

Students will be scheduled for 4 academic classes and up to 2 Connections classes daily. Unless students are scheduled for semester or year-long Connections, they will rotate Connections each nine weeks. Any schedule changes must be made within the first 5 days of the new nine weeks, and **NO CHANGES** will be made unless approved by the principal.

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### **Telephone**

The telephone at school is for **emergency use only**. Unless approved by an administrator, students will not be allowed to call home for non-emergency reasons. In case of sickness, the school nurse will evaluate the student and call parents if necessary.

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### **Dodge County Schools' Rules for Electronic Devices**

Student use of cell phones and personal electronic devices are prohibited on all DCSS campuses upon arrival through 3:45 pm each school day. This rule includes while on a DCSS school bus. Devices should be powered off and not on your person. Devices include, but are not limited to, smart watches, earbuds, headphones, air pods, and any other similar device. Failure to comply with this rule will result in confiscation of the device and disciplinary consequences for the student which may include parent contact, supervised cleanup, ISS, and/or OSS.

Appointments should be made by parents/legal guardians to bring the student and meet with the principal (or his/her designee) to pick up device(s) before or after school (7:45-8:00 AM, 3:15-3:45 PM). Appointments can be scheduled for the school day following a student's device being confiscated by calling DCMS and speaking with someone in the front office. Appointments will be scheduled based on the availability of the principal (or his/her designee).

Students may not use tape recorders, video cameras, cell phones, or other electronic devices to record at school. Students are not permitted to post on-line the images, videos, pictures, etc. depicting events that occur on campus or at a school function that negatively reflect on the school or school system or violate the privacy rights of others. Violation of this rule is considered an infraction of the Code of Conduct. Refusal to surrender a device to a staff member will be considered an infraction of the Code of Conduct and handled at the discretion of the school administration. Any other infractions that violate the Code of Conduct will be handled at the discretion of the school administration and possible notification of the resource officer.

Dodge County Schools will not be responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal communication or personal electronic devices. School personnel will not be responsible for tracking lost or stolen devices. Due to limited technology personnel, Dodge County Schools' technology department will not be able to troubleshoot problems on students' personal devices.

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### **Advisement**

Academic Advising is an opportunity to exchange information designed to help students reach their educational and career goals. Advising is a shared responsibility between an adviser and the student. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the student to make decisions about his/her life goals by creating a plan to reach those goals.

Academic advisers can assist in this process by helping the student understand options, determine resources and, when necessary, identify alternatives. While students are urged to

keep parents informed of plans and progress, the advising relationship uniquely is between the academic adviser and the student. Homeroom teachers will be the student advisor.

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### Curriculum

Dodge County Middle School offers a comprehensive curriculum that enables each student to develop to his/her maximum potential. In addition to the regular academic subjects, connections courses are offered to stimulate interest and expose students to possible career choices. Additional programs provided at DCMS include gifted, learning disabled, behavior disordered, and other special education programs.

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### Distance Learning Plan

In the case of school closures due to unforeseen circumstances, the Dodge County School System will utilize a Distance Learning Plan for all students. In the plan, students are expected to continue learning and demonstrating mastery of their content. Each teacher will provide content and course-specific assignments for students to complete according to grade level and class type. Each school in the district has a Distance Learning Plan and other resources on the school website and at the school's front office.

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### Honor Students

Any student who has an overall average of 90 or above for the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades will be considered an honor student. Honor students will be determined at the end of the third nine weeks grading period during the eighth grade year.

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### Honor Roll

Students obtaining a 90 or above in every subject are listed on the honor roll. Students who obtain all A's and B's for a grading period will also be recognized.

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### Grading System

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
Below 70	F
Incomplete	Inc

Students cannot receive a grade over 100 on their report card **EXCEPT** in classes where Quality Points are earned.

### Common Grading Scale

50% Summative and diagnostic assessments: Major  
Exams  
Benchmarks  
Projects

30% Formative assessments: Daily  
Quizzes  
Daily grades  
Journals  
Labs

Drawings

20% Extras: Other

Homework grades  
Extra credit  
Participation grades  
Signed/returned papers  
Other activities

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### Quality Points

Quality Points will be awarded for the Advanced, Gifted, and Accelerated classes because they exceed the core education requirements. These points will be added to the student's cumulative average each nine weeks. Quality points will be given in the following courses:

6th, 7th, 8th grade Advanced/Gifted Classes                      2 points

Only report card averages will reflect student's average with the quality points already included. If a student's quality points cause his or her average to exceed the maximum score of 100 points, the score will still reflect the quality points.

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### Gifted Education

In Dodge County and the state of Georgia, a gifted education student is defined as one who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability(ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her ability(ies). Many gifted education decisions and procedures are left to the discretion of our local school system so that we may address the unique needs of our students and our schools. Testing for eligibility of referred students takes place in the late winter/early spring of each school year. If you have any questions regarding the referral and testing process, please contact your respective schools' gifted coordinator or Mariella Douglas at the Dodge County Board of Education at (478)374-3783.

**Dodge County Primary Dana Yawn 374-6691**  
**Dodge County Elementary Joni Barton 374-6690**  
**Dodge Co. Middle Angela Peacock 374-6492**  
**Dodge Co. High Amy Mullis 374-7711**

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### Gifted Probation

All Gifted students must maintain an overall average of 85 or above in the Gifted class for the semester. Failure to maintain **an overall average of 85** or above will result in the following semester of probation for the student to increase their average. If the average is not 85 or above after the probationary semester period, the student will be **permanently** removed from the Gifted class that he or she failed to maintain the average required. If your child fails to maintain 85 or above average, your child will not be able to

reenter the Gifted class again while enrolled in Dodge County Middle School.

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### Current Advanced/Accelerated Class Student Requirements

Students must meet the requirements for 3 of the 4 indicators listed below to be considered an advanced/accelerated student:

- Georgia Milestones Scores should be a 3 or 4 Achievement Level in the appropriate content.
- Final yearly average of 90 or above in the content area
- Lexile Score:
  - 6<sup>th</sup> grade-850 & above
  - 7<sup>th</sup> grade-900 & above
  - 8<sup>th</sup> grade-1000 & above
- STAR score should be one grade above or higher than current one

Once students are chosen for the Advanced classes they must maintain an overall average of 85 or above in the appropriate content area for the semester. Failure to maintain an overall average of 85 or above will result in a semester of probation for the student to increase their average in order to remain in the class. If the average is not 85 or above after the probationary period, the student will be removed from the advanced class.

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### New Advanced Student Requirements

Students must meet the requirements of 3 of the 4 indicators listed below to be considered for advanced content classes:

- Milestone Achievement Level must be a 3 or 4
- Final Yearly average of 90 or above in the content area
- STAR score should be one grade above or higher than current one
- Lexile score: 6th grade-900 & above  
7th grade-1000 & above  
8th grade-1100 & above

Once students are chosen for the advanced class, they must maintain an overall average of 85 or above in the advanced math/ELA class for the semester. Failure to maintain an **overall average of 85** or above will result in a semester of probation for the student to increase their average in order to remain in the class. If the average is not 85 or above after the probationary semester period, the student will be **permanently** removed from the advanced class that he or she failed to maintain the average required. If your child is removed due to parent request or failure to maintain 85 or above average, your child will not be able to reenter the

advanced class again while enrolled in Dodge County Middle School.

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### Progress Reports

A progress report is given to each student every 4 1/2 weeks. It is to be signed by the parent. Progress reports should be signed and returned within three days. Failure to return progress reports may result in break detention until returned or other consequence determined by the administration. Replacement or additional progress reports may be purchased for \$1.00 in the office.

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### Report Cards

Report cards are issued every nine weeks. The report card is to be signed by the parent and returned to the school within three days. Failure to return report cards may result in break detention until returned or other consequence determined by the administration. Replacement or additional report cards may be purchased for \$1.00 in the office.

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### Hall Pass

Any student who is out of class must have a designated hall pass and/or required SmartPass. Teachers should minimize the amount of time students are out of the classroom. Students should not leave the classroom without permission and the appropriate hall pass.

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### Break

All students will have a break during the day. Break may be taken away for misbehavior or failure to comply with school rules.

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### Snacks and Beverages

Students should consume snacks and drinks **ONLY** during lunch and break. No outside beverages may be brought in bottles or containers, such as Yeti cups. Water may be brought in original container or clear, refillable water bottles. Beverages purchased from the Media Center Café may be bought and consumed while **IN** the media center **ONLY**.

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### Extracurricular Activity/Field Trip Policy

Field trips will be taken to support academic classroom instruction, in addition to rewarding students for positive behaviors. Students will be allowed to participate in school-sponsored activities and/or field trips unless they are currently serving out-of-school suspension, ISS, or have a discipline record determined by the administration to be excessive. Additional guidelines may be established for students participating in 'reward-based field trips'. Parents and students will be notified, in writing, what the requirements will be for students to be eligible to participate. Students must be cleared of all fines and/or fees due to Dodge County Middle School to participate in field trips and/or extracurricular activities. Students must also be meeting the

requirements of the promotion policy to participate in field trips. Promotion policy is based on the student's current yearly averages.

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### **Fine and Fee**

Students may be put on the DCMS Fine and Fee list for;

- overdue or damaged books
- vandalism
- theft
- damage to property
- cafeteria bill
- Chromebook damage

Students on the list do not receive report cards or progress reports until the fee is paid. Students are also not allowed to participate in field trips, reward days, assemblies, or extracurricular activities until the fee is paid. Parent notifications will be sent home each nine weeks.

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### **School Clubs and Organizations**

The following information is provided in order that parents or legal guardians may be informed of the opportunities available to students at DCMS. Parents and guardians have the option of declining permission for their student(s) to participate in any club or organization offered at Dodge County Middle School on the form provided in this handbook. **OCGA 20-2-705**

Clubs and organizations are comprised of students who wish to organize and meet for common goals, objectives, or purposes and which are directly under the sponsorship, direction, and control of the school. Dodge County Middle School offers our students the opportunities to be involved in the following clubs listed below along with the Faculty Advisor/Advisors, Mission or Purpose, and a description of possible activities. The following clubs have met protocol and will be active during the 2022-2023 school year. New clubs will only be started at the beginning of each school year and should be submitted NO LATER than the last two weeks of the previous school year in order to be considered for the following year. All clubs submitted will have to follow the school procedures of submitting a statement, purpose of the club, and a faculty advisor, to be considered.

#### **BETA Club**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the National Beta Club shall be to promote the ideals of character, service and leadership among elementary and secondary school students, to reward meritorious achievement and to encourage and assist students in continuing their education after high school.

**Advisors:** Angela Peacock, Kristen Jones, Paula Cook, Sarah Ashley Winans, and Brooke Villegas

**Activities:** The BETA club is a service organization and as such recognizes teachers and staff on Teacher Appreciation Day, provides a Faculty Christmas Breakfast, collects and donates money, food, and toys to local charities at Christmas, recognizes Secretaries on Secretary's Day, sponsors the Miss Dodge County Middle School Pageant, recognizes 8<sup>th</sup> graders at the annual awards program, and participates in academic and arts competitions at the state and national level.

#### **4-H**

**Purpose:** The mission of Georgia 4-H is to assist youth in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive, and contributing members of society. This mission is accomplished through "hands on" learning experiences focused on agricultural and environmental issues, agriculture awareness, leadership, communication skills, foods and nutrition, health, energy conservation, and citizenship.

**Advisor:** Keisha Jones

**Activities:** County 4-H Curriculum/Club Meetings, 4-H Camp, Project Achievement, State 4-H Council the Georgia Youth Summit.

#### **Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)**

**Purpose:** To present to athletes and coaches, and all whom they influence, the challenge and adventure of receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, serving Him in their relationships and in the fellowship of the church.

**Advisors:** Juaquita Williams, Calvin Wilcox, Jr., Marcie Jones

**Activities:** Summer camps, retreats, rallies, clinics, banquets, coaches outreach events, and other programs.

#### **Future Farmers of America (FFA)**

**Purpose:** FFA helps its members to develop their own unique talents and explore their interests in a broad range of agricultural career pathways.

**Advisors:** Ag Education Teacher

**Activities:** Competitions, livestock shows, banquets, and other programs.

#### **Warrior News**

**Purpose:** Provides students with the opportunity to display their technological and communication skills during the year.

**Advisors:** Angela Peacock

**Activities:** School newscast, website design, and school announcements

#### **Drama**

**Purpose:** Provide students the opportunity to display their acting skills through try-outs, practice, and participation in a stage play during the school year.

**Advisors:** Paulina Walden

**Activities:** School play

#### **Students with a Goal (SWAG)**

**Purpose:** The SWAG program is designed to promote achievement and overall growth socially and emotionally. Students will be exposed to setting goals, making healthy decisions, and the appropriate way to handle and overcome adversity as they move through the stages of life.

**Advisors:** Victor Baxter and Juaquita Williams

**Activities:** Field trips, monthly meetings, mentorship opportunity, and community involvement activities.

#### **Student Council**

**Purpose:** Advise administration in regards to student concerns, suggestions, and ideas for school improvement.

**Advisors:** Marcie Jones

**Activities:** Weekly meetings, student orientation trainings, hall decorations, etc.

### **Math Club**

**Purpose:** Provide students with a fun and creative outlet to become better math students. Students will work to build math skills and participating in math competitions.

**Advisors:** Math Department Members

**Activities:** Pi day activities, Math competitions

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### **Athletic Program**

Dodge County Middle School offers a competitive interscholastic program for athletics. All students who participate must meet eligibility requirements specified by State Code IED No Pass/No Participate Policy. Students who participate in the competitive program must have a physical examination signed by a licensed physician prior to the student's participation in any tryout, practice, or conditioning. Proof of insurance is required for all students who participate in any athletic activity, including tryouts.

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### **Sportsmanship**

Students are expected to display good sportsmanship at all times during athletic events. Students are reminded that they are under the rules and regulations of DCMS during all athletic events and subject to disciplinary action in the event of inappropriate behavior. Disciplinary action, if necessary, may include immediate removal from the activity and may result in being banned from other such activities for the remainder of the school year. It should be stressed that visiting teams are our guests and should be treated in a manner that we would want to be treated when visiting other schools.

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### **School Discipline**

All rules and regulations concerning student behavior at Dodge County Middle School are designed to give every student an opportunity to participate in an orderly educational process. Students who disrupt class are depriving others of this opportunity. The administration and faculty of DCMS will not allow any student to disrupt the educational process in our school. All rules and regulations cannot be covered in the space of this handbook. However, **students can be held accountable for any unwritten rule or regulation that might impede the educational process in our school.** Each classroom teacher is responsible for the discipline of his/her students. However, serious or continual discipline problems will be referred to an administrator.

**Failure to return any signed office referral on the next school day may result in ISS.**

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### **Discipline Procedures**

Disciplinary action will include appropriate hearings and reviews. In all cases, the rights of individuals will be ensured and protected. Discipline may include:

- \*Student participation in conference with parent/guardian, teacher, and/or principal.
- \*Restriction from school programs and special assemblies.
- \*Assignment to supervised study, lunch, or clean-up.
- \*Isolation from peers.
- \*In-school suspension (ISS).
- \*Loss of Connections
- \*Corporal punishment.
- \*Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment.
- \*Suspension from school (OSS).
- \*Financial restitution for the repair of any damage.
- \*Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s).
- \*Participation in a school-service project which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s).
- \*Participation in a small group or individual counseling session(s) for repeat offenders in conjunction with assigned disciplinary disposition.
- \*Placement in an alternative education program until such a time as the student meets the exit requirements for the alternative school program.
- \*Disciplinary tribunal and/or recommend expulsion from the regular school program for up to one calendar year.
- \*Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s).
- \* Students who have been incarcerated during the school year will be required to attend the alternative school for a transition time to be determined by the administration.

**Parents who adamantly object to the disciplinary measures outlined above should notify the school administration at the time of the student's enrollment.** Students who receive an office referral which warrants corporal punishment shall return a consent form with a parent's signature. The administration must have written consent of the parent/guardian on file prior to the administration of corporal punishment.

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### **Due Process**

All students are entitled to due process. Accordingly, any student who feels the assigned punishment for an infraction of rules is unjust or too severe has the right to appeal. In keeping with the standard policy, appeals must be made in the following chain of command: teacher, school administrator, superintendent, and Dodge County Board of Education.

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### **Supervised Lunch**

Supervised lunch is an alternative available to administrators in lieu of paddling, ISS, and OSS. Like ISS, this option enables students to remain in school and complete all school assignments. Supervised Lunch may be offered as a choice to parents and students, along with paddling and ISS, for certain infractions. The ISS coordinator, or designee, will supervise each day. Students assigned to Supervised Lunch will be

served a boxed sandwich lunch that meets nutritional requirements.

### **In-School Suspension (ISS)**

The In School Suspension Program will serve all students at Dodge County Middle School who have displayed a pattern of behavioral problems such as disrespect, disruption of classes, failure to follow rules, etc. This program will enable these students to remain in school during a specified period of suspension and allow them to complete all school assignments. Grades will not be affected if all work is completed satisfactorily. Extra ISS time can be added if work and/or behavior are not satisfactory. A student in the In School Suspension Program will remain in the program for a set number of days. The number of days spent in the program will be counted as a student being present in regular classes. A student assigned to the ISS program is not allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, class field trips, dances, etc., until ISS time is completed. Students assigned to ISS will be served a boxed sandwich lunch that meets nutritional requirements. If students are absent, sign in late, or leave early from ISS/Time-Out for any reason (Medical or Non-Medical), the student must make up all time before he/she is released and will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities until all time is made up.

**A student's days in ISS are not unlimited. If ISS appears ineffective, alternative disciplinary options will be considered.**

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### **After School Clean-up (ASCU)**

After School Clean-Up (ASCU) is an alternative available to administrators in lieu of paddling or ISS for some offenses. Only administrators may assign ASCU. Like ISS, this option enables students to remain in school and complete all school assignments. DCMS staff members will supervise ASCU each day. After school clean-up will require students to remain on campus from 3:15-3:45 PM. **Students are required to have their own transportation.** If a student is late, does not complete the assignment, or misses a day of ASCU, the administrator may assign ISS or OSS for the balance of the assigned time. Four days of ASCU are required to equal 1 day of ISS. **A student's days in ASCU are not unlimited. If ASCU appears ineffective, alternative disciplinary options will be considered.**

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### **Restorative Justice**

Restorative Justice may be used in lieu of ISS, OSS, or corporal punishment. Students will complete modules such as character building, behavior modification, etc. in an after school setting. Parents may also be asked to participate in the modules and meetings.

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### **Out-Of-School Suspension (OSS)**

In some disciplinary dispositions, out-of-school suspension may be necessary. Students assigned OSS are not permitted on campus for any reason at any time during the period of

suspension. All absences that result from a student being suspended are considered unexcused. In addition, allowing students to make-up missed assignments due to the suspension will be left to the discretion of the teacher.

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### **Time-Out**

Students may receive time-out as a disciplinary consequence. Time-out is not considered the same as ISS although it may be housed in the same location. While students are in time-out they can be served by their teachers being allowed to pull them out for periods of special instruction. Students can be released early from time-out for extra-curricular activities and other activities as approved by an administrator. Time-out will mainly be used for tardies, excessive MIRs, less severe infractions, and as an alternate consequence for students receiving supplemental services but can also be used for other infractions as well.

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### **Dodge County Achievement Center (DCAC)**

In lieu of expulsion, students may be assigned to Dodge County Achievement Center for a prescribed period of time. Also, a student who has been incarcerated for any reason during the school year will be required to attend DCAC for a transition time to be determined by the administration. Students who are assigned to DCAC will be required to sign and adhere to a behavior contract upon returning to DCMS. Students will also successfully complete a transition period, a minimum of one week through ISS, before returning full time to their class schedule. If a student violates the behavior contract, he/she may not be allowed to participate in activities, such as field trips, reward activities, or end of the year activities, and/or may be sent back to DCAC for a prescribed period of time. For 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, this may include field trips, picnic, and/or promotion ceremony.

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### **Students' Behavior Code**

The following list of disciplinary offenses and possible dispositions are in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Dodge County Board of Education. They are submitted as information for school personnel, students, and parents. **All rules and regulations cannot be covered in the space of this handbook. However students can be held accountable for any unwritten rule or regulation that might impede the educational process of this institution. Students that have an excessive number of Office Referrals for the previous year or who acquire an excessive amount of Office Referrals during the year will be required to sign a Behavior Contract.**

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### **Disciplinary Offenses and Dispositions**

which includes, but not limited to the following:

1. Classroom disruption. - Administrator's discretion.
2. Campus disturbance. Students are not permitted to participate in activities that cause substantial disruptions of learning opportunities and/or threaten safety of other students. This includes walkouts, petitions, picketing, trespassing, or

- inciting disturbances, etc. - Administrator's discretion, and possible suspension.
3. Breaking and entering, theft, vandalism. - Immediate suspension with recommendation for expulsion, restitution required.
  4. Rude or disrespectful behavior. - Administrator's discretion, possible suspension.
  5. Refusal to follow instructions. - Administrator's discretion, possible suspension.
  6. Threatening staff or students. - Immediate suspension with recommendation for expulsion. Proper notification of law enforcement authorities.
  7. Verbal or physical assault or battery toward school employees, other students, or persons attending school events. - Immediate suspension with recommendation for expulsion. Proper notification of law enforcement authorities.
  8. Bullying. - 3 days ISS first offense, 5 days ISS second offense, immediate suspension, possible notification of law enforcement authorities and/or assignment to alternative school third offense. Refer to the state law on bullying on page 13.
  9. Profanity, vulgarity, obscene language, gestures, writing, pictures, etc.- Administrator's discretion, possible suspension.
  10. Fighting or instigating a fight. - Immediate suspension, proper notification of law enforcement.
  11. Weapons and related objects. Weapons of any kind are not allowed on the school campus or at any school function. This includes "look-alike" play weapons. Refer to weapons policy pg. 12. - Immediate suspension with recommendation for expulsion, proper notification of law enforcement.
  12. Drugs/alcohol use, sale, possession, distribution and/or under the influence. This also includes "look-alike" substances or paraphernalia. - Immediate suspension with recommendation for expulsion, proper notification of law enforcement.
  13. Tobacco products possession, use, and/or distribution. Tobacco is not allowed on campus. This also includes paraphernalia, e-cigarettes, matches, and/or lighters. – Administrators' discretion, possible suspension.
  14. Inappropriate personal contact. (hugging, kissing, holding hands, etc...)- Administrator's discretion.
  15. Gambling. - Administrator's discretion.
  16. Skipping class, being in an area without permission, or leaving class without permission. - Administrator's discretion.
  17. Cheating – Receive zero and notification of parents. Administrator's discretion.
  18. Refusal to accept disciplinary action. - Immediate suspension.
  19. Sexual harassment / misconduct. - Administrator's discretion and possible suspension. Proper notification of law enforcement.
  20. Chronically disruptive behavior. - Administrator's discretion and possible suspension.
  21. Forgery. Students shall not forge or falsify signatures on any school documents such as tests, discipline slips, and/or report cards. - Administrator's discretion.
  22. Misbehaving for a substitute teacher. - Administrator's discretion.
  23. Gangs or gang-related activity- Immediate suspension with recommendation for expulsion, proper notification of law

enforcement.

24. Any other conduct considered by the principal to be disruptive. – Administrator's discretion.

25. Administrators are authorized to take disciplinary action for conduct which occurs: (a) on the school grounds at any time; (b) off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or (c) en route to or from school or a school activity. Authority to take disciplinary action also extends to any off-campus non-school related actions by students, at any time of the year, which have a direct impact on school discipline, the educational function of the school, or the welfare of the students and staff.

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### Gangs and Gang-related Activities

The Dodge County Middle School administration takes seriously its responsibility to maintain a school environment free of violence, intimidation, or other behaviors which threaten the safety and well-being of students and staff. Anti-social and/or criminal activities of gangs or gang-like groups threaten the school environment and interfere with the educational process. Anti-social and/or gang activities will not be tolerated. Gangs, gang affiliations, and gang related activities are barred from all school buildings, school buses, school related activities, and school property at all times. A "*gang*" is defined as any group of students who are known to be associated or affiliated by common colors, creeds, symbols, signs, names, etc. and who engage in delinquent or disruptive activities at school or school sponsored events. Activities of gangs/associations/organizations including recruitment, initiations, hazing, intimidation, retaliation and/or related activities which could potentially cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace and result in physical or mental harm to students are prohibited as are all forms of criminal activity. The use of language, hand signals, graffiti, tattoos, haircuts, or the presence of any wearing apparel, footwear, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, symbol or any other attribute indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group is hereby prohibited. School administrators will monitor the school environment and parents will be informed of suspected gang involvement and/or activities. If an administrator verifies a student's involvement in gang activity, the parent or guardian will be informed and appropriate law enforcement agencies will be notified. **An administrator need only show association with a known gang or group and any violation of school rules or disruptive behavior to verify gang activity.** Students violating this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion.

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### Drug-Free School Policy Compliance

The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. Disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution will be imposed if the standards of conduct are violated. The sanctions to be imposed for violations may include conferences, suspension, or expulsion. Information

concerning drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and reentry programs can be obtained from the school counselor or administrative staff. Compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory.

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### **Weapons Policy**

It shall be unlawful for any person to carry, to possess or to have under control any weapon within a school safety zone, at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school. "School safety zone" means in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, secondary school, or school board and used for elementary or secondary education and in, on, or within 1,000 feet of the campus of any public or private technical school, vocational school, college, university, or institution of postsecondary education." "The term **weapon** means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind, and any stun gun or taser as defined in subsection (a) of Code Section 16-11-106." O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1184 requires schools to report weapons violations to law enforcement if a student possesses a firearm, incendiary device, or other dangerous weapon; or if the student is involved in an assault using a "hazardous object," as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751 of the education code or is involved in a second offense with a weapon on campus. It shall be a violation of school rules for any person to carry to or to possess or have under such person's control while within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school any weapon or explosive compound." O.C.G.A. S16-11-127.1

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### **Bullying**

The Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Such prohibition shall be included in the Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system.

Bullying is defined as follows: An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer

network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
  - b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
  - d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
4. Applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, "whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication
  - a. is directed specifically at students or school personnel,
  - b. is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and
  - c. creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose."

Procedures are developed at each school encouraging a teacher or other school employee, student, parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student, either anonymously or in the person's name, at the person's option, to report or otherwise provide information on bullying activity. Any teacher or other school employee who, in the exercise of his or her personal judgment and discretion, believes he or she has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that someone is a target of bullying is encouraged to immediately report it to the school principal. Any report will be appropriately investigated by the administration based on the nature of the complaint in a timely manner to determine whether bullying has occurred, whether there are other procedures related to illegal harassment or discrimination that should be implemented and what other steps should be taken. Any report of retaliation for reporting bullying will also be investigated and



addressed as called for in this policy and in accordance with school procedures.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which may be done electronically.

Students and parents will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at each school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.

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### **Harassment/Discrimination**

It is the policy of the Dodge County school district that racial, sexual, or other forms of harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district based upon his/her race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or gender should promptly report the same to the principal of this school or the appropriate coordinator, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor. Students and employees shall not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination.

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### **State Code 20-2-1013 - Textbooks**

FREE TEXTBOOKS SYSTEMS; CARE AND PROTECTION OF TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, AND MEDIA MATERIAL; REIMBURSEMENT BY PUPILS OR PARENTS.

(a) The State Board of Education is authorized and directed to inaugurate and administer a system of free textbooks for the public schools of this state. The State Board shall have authority to promulgate and enforce such rules and regulations as may be necessary for that purpose.

(b) All textbooks, library books, and media materials purchased by local units of administration with State Quality Basic Education Program funds or any other means of acquisition shall remain the property of the local unit purchasing or acquiring them. Each local unit of administration shall establish such policies as it deems necessary for the care and protection of its textbooks, library books, and media materials as a condition to receiving all or part of the state contributed Quality Basic Education Program funds allotted to the local unit. Such policies may include any of the following sanctions against a pupil who fails or refuses to pay for lost or damaged textbooks, library books, or media materials at replacement cost.

(1) Refusal to issue any additional textbooks, library books, or media materials until restitution is made; or

(2) Withholding of all grade cards, diplomas, or certificate of progress until restitution is made.

No local unit of administration shall require any pupil or parent to purchase any textbook, library book, or media materials except in cases where the pupil damages, loses, or defaces such items either through willful intent or neglect. (Ga. L. 1937, p.896&3; Ga. L. 1994, p.1936&2)

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### **Agenda**

An agenda will be provided to each 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade student at the beginning of the school year at no cost to the student. However, if an agenda is lost, stolen, or damaged, it must be replaced at the expense of the student. The replacement cost of an agenda is \$5.00. Students will be referred to an administrator for misuse of the agenda.

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### **Bus Ramp Rules**

1. All students must be seated until their bus arrives and has come to a complete stop.
  2. Students should remain seated until given permission by the staff member on duty to board the bus.
  3. When boarding the bus, students should form a single file line with no pushing or breaking.
  4. Students who do not remain seated or fail to follow the directions of the staff member on duty will receive an office referral.
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### **School Insurance**

School insurance may be purchased through the school. All students taking part in extracurricular activities must present proof of insurance.

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### **School Policies**

The student is the responsibility of the school from the time he/she boards the school bus in the morning until he/she returns home on the bus at the end of the school day. All school policies apply to students on any campus, the school bus, or any school sponsored activity away from campus. Disruptive behavior may result in the student being banned from a specific school campus and/or any extracurricular activities.

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### **Restroom Use**

Students are not allowed to leave their classes to use the restroom without permission and a hall pass. Students who have a physical problem that would necessitate using the restroom more often than regularly scheduled times should have a doctor's statement on file in the office. Students are expected to use all bathroom facilities appropriately. Vandalism or damage to restroom facilities will result in disciplinary action and restitution in accordance with school policy. Horseplay and roughhousing in the restrooms are prohibited.

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**Moment of Reflection/ Pledge of Allegiance**

Each day during homeroom, a moment of reflection will be observed. All students are expected to stand and remain quiet during this time, but not required to participate. Misbehavior will be subject to the behavior code of the school and handled just as any other behavior problems.

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**Assemblies**

Good behavior is expected at all assembly programs. The number and frequency of assemblies will be determined by the overall student behavior. Individual students who misbehave may also be banned from participating in future assemblies.

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**Non-Discrimination--Title IX –Section 504**

There will be no discrimination on the basis of sex, race, age, creed, color, or handicap in the educational programs, activities or employment practices in this school system. The Superintendent or designee who has been appointed as the school system Title IX/ Section 504 Coordinator shall be responsible for supervising the Dodge County Board of Education’s efforts to comply with all aspects of the legislation regarding discrimination including Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, for investigating both employee and student complaints and for establishing and monitoring grievance procedures that provide for prompt and equitable resolution of such complaints.

Tonya Brown  
Section 504 / ADA  
Coordinator  
720 College Street  
Eastman, Ga  
(478) 374-3783

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**Parent Notice of Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications**

The Dodge County School District informs parents that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student’s teacher(s) and of paraprofessionals who provide instructional services to children. The following information may be requested:

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

If you wish to request information concerning your child’s

teacher’s qualifications, please contact the Dodge County Board of Education office at 478-374-3783.

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**Complaints of Discrimination/Harassment**

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, including its athletic programs. 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 as 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 IIA, Vb Coordinator is:**

Name or Title: Mariella Douglas  
Office Address: 720 College Street, Eastman, Georgia 31023  
Telephone Number: 478-374-3783

**The Title IX Coordinator is:**

Name or Title: Athletic Director Phillip Brown  
Office Address: 350 Pearl Bates Road, Eastman, Georgia 31023  
Telephone Number: 478-374-7711

**The Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act/Title II Coordinator is:**

Name or Title: Tonya Brown  
Office Address: 720 College Street, Eastman, Georgia 31023  
Telephone Number: 478-374-3783

**The Sports Equity Coordinator is:**

Name or Title: Phillip Brown  
Office Address: 350 Pearl Bates Road, Eastman, Georgia 31023  
Telephone Number: 478-374-7711

Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. A copy of the discriminatory complaints procedure under Policy JAA (Equal Educational Opportunities) or under Policy IDFA (Equity in Sports)

is located in the School District policy manual which is available in the school office, the central office, or on the District website.

**COMPLAINT PROCEDURES for Title I, Part A**

Dodge County Schools are committed to open communications between staff and parents at the county’s Title I, Part A schools in order to reach the goal of educating all students. We are aware that disagreements may arise periodically. These disagreements need to be resolved in a timely manner. The following procedures have been developed to handle complaints dealing with Title I, Part A programs, services, and staff members. All Title I, Part A complaints are to be directed to the Title I Director as described below.

Filing a complaint process:

1. Gather all information related to complaint.
2. Complete complaint form with specific details.
3. Send complaint form to Title 1 office at the address listed on the form.

Once the complaint is received, the central office staff responsible for complaint procedures will do the following:

1. Investigate and prepare a response to the complaint.
2. Set an appointment with the originators of the complaint in order to resolve the complaint. The director of Title I usually arranges this meeting within five (5) working days after the receipt of the complaint

Additional Steps (if required)

1. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Title I Director, a meeting will be set up with the superintendent, the Director of Title I, and the concerned parties.
2. The superintendent will work with the Title I Director to resolve the complaint.
3. If the issue is still unresolved, the Title I Director will contact the State Department of Education's Title I, Part A office for guidance.
4. Meetings with officials from the district may be scheduled in order to resolve the complaint.
5. If additional steps beyond the State Department of Education are required in the resolution of the complaint, these steps will occur in accordance with the federal No Child Left Behind legislation.

Contact for Complaints

Dr. Patricia Connell, Title I Director  
 Dodge County Board of Education  
 720 College Street  
 Eastman, GA 31023  
 Phone: (478) 374-3783  
 Fax: (478) 374-6697  
 Email: pconnell1@dodge.k12.ga.us

**FERPA Directory Information Notice**

Dodge County Middle School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student name
- Student participation in official school clubs and sports
- Weight and height of students if he/she is a member of an athletic team
- Awards received during the time enrolled in the Dodge County School System

Unless the parent / guardian requests otherwise, the directory information may be disclosed to the public in the form of newspaper articles (honor roll, athletics, etc.), the school yearbook, and /or any other school-related publication. You have the right to refuse to allow all or part of the above information to be disclosed. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify **the principal of Dodge County Middle School** in writing.

**Band**

Band classes of wind and percussion instruments are offered in grades 6 through 8. Band registration is handled through the band director. Each student must provide his/her own

instrument; however, scholarships are available. Beginning band students start instruction in their sixth grade year. Seventh and eighth grade band students participate in various school performances. Students are enrolled in the band course for the entire school year. A student may be removed from the band or denied the privilege of participating in performances, parades, field trips, extracurricular activities, etc. at the discretion of the band director and principal if the student is in violation of school or band policies. Band policies and guidelines will be provided to parents of any band student when he/she enters the program. A parent-teacher contact is required before a student will be allowed to leave the band program. Any schedule changes must be made within the first 5 days of the new nine weeks.

**Personal Items**

Since many articles of clothing, notebooks, books, etc. get misplaced, students should mark their personal items with some identification. Large amounts of money should not be brought to school. Purses, jewelry, and other valuable items should not be left unattended. Magazines and other materials that are not school related should not be brought to school. **Dodge County Middle School is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items brought to the school by the student. The school is under no obligation to investigate or recover lost, stolen, or damaged property.**

**GRIEVANCE AND SUGGESTION POLICY**

The School Board is interested in receiving valid complaints and suggestions. Public complaints or suggestions shall be referred to the appropriate level staff member or school administrator. Each complaint or suggestion shall be considered upon its own merit. An individual, not satisfied after following the channels of authority, may file a grievance under the Uniform Grievance Procedure. This policy shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Board.

**Grievance Procedure:**

- Level One: Appropriate school level staff member
- Level Two: Administrator or Supervisor
- Level Three: Superintendent
- Level Four: District Board of Education

**Water Safety/Swimming Lessons**

According to the CDC, swimming can help with chronic diseases and mental health. Learning to swim can open a world of opportunity for people. With the great health benefits of swimming, there are also many risks. Water safety and swimming lessons could help reduce the risks. These lessons can also be lifesaving. People who take formal swim lessons have an 88% less chance of drowning, according to the CDC. Additionally, teaching children to swim at a young age helps prepare them to be safer around bodies of water. Dodge County Schools are not responsible for providing water safety or swimming lessons, but may be able to provide information to

parents. This information is in compliance with the Edna Mae McGovern Bill (HB 402). More information on this bill can be found at <https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20232024/215778>

## **PBIS**

PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) is a school wide approach to discipline and a process for creating safer and more effective schools. PBIS is a systems approach to enhancing the capacity of schools to educate all children by developing research based, school wide, and classroom discipline systems. The process focuses on improving a school's ability to teach and support positive behavior for all students. With PBIS, instructional time is more effectively used for teaching and the overall school environment is calm and conducive to learning.

PBIS Mission Statement:

Building character and teaching responsibility by developing, outstanding, accountable, respectful students within a safe learning environment.

PBIS promotes optimal student achievement (academic and behavior) by using a proactive systems approach for creating and maintaining a safe and effective learning environment by utilizing a Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports system.

Appropriate student behaviors, found on the behavior matrix, are acknowledged in the classroom, within the team, and by the school. The DCMS behavior matrix will be posted throughout the school, on the website, and in each classroom.

At Dodge County Middle School our school expectations are represented by the letters PRIDE.

**P-Positivity      R-Respectful      I-Integrity**

**D-Determination      E-Excellence**

Ways to be recognized as having **PRIDE**

- Individual **PRIDE** Points
- Team **PRIDE** Points
- School **PRIDE** events
- Grading Period Celebrations
- End-of-Year Celebrations
- Student of the Week
- Breakfast of Champions
- Positive Office Referral

## **Educator's Handbook (EH)**

Educator's Handbook is a tool to help teachers, parents, and administration track student behavior. **Any student who receives corrective action should receive an MIR (Minor Incident Report), and it should be reflected in EH.** This tool allows teachers to document behaviors and classroom discipline strategies. It is important that teachers involve parents in the behavior modification of these classroom disruptions. Please refer to the progressive classroom management plan.

### **Classroom Behavior Plan per 9 Week Grading Period**

1 MIR =	Detention
2 MIR =	Detention & Parent Contact (Call or Email)
3 MIR =	Detention
4 MIR =	Isolated Lunch & Parent Contact (Call or Email)
5 MIR =	Isolated Lunch & Parent /Teacher Conference (In-person Conference call)
6 MIR =	Office Referral & Admin Contact (Call or Email)

- 3 Consecutive MIRS in 1 day: Counselor Referral/ Office Referral
- Student MIRS start over each 9 week grading period.
- When students receive their 6<sup>th</sup> MIR, the teacher should enter the MIR for the offense. Then, the teacher should choose the action 'Office Referral' (for excessive MIRS). Finally, the teacher will enter an office referral, and the offense will be for EXCESSIVE MIRS.
- For each MIR after #6 (example #7, #8), the teacher will need to be enter as MIR plus Office Referral.
- Each additional MIR after 6, will result in an Office Referral. Consequences may include administrative conference, timeout, ISS, Restorative Justice, OSS, and/or possible DAC referral.

# **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **Student Offenses and Disciplinary Actions**



**Dr. Susan Long, Superintendent**  
**P. O. Box 1029 – 720 College Street**  
**Eastman, Georgia 31023**  
**[www.dodge.k12.ga.us](http://www.dodge.k12.ga.us)**

## To Dodge County Students and Parents:

The Student Code of Conduct is provided to serve as an overview of the various discipline strategies and actions used in the Dodge County School System. As you review the information contained in this code, you will observe that the disciplinary actions range from warnings or counseling to expulsion. Your knowledge of the information contained in this Code of Conduct will hopefully help us to maintain a positive school climate in our schools. **Please be aware that further details regarding discipline can be found in the student handbooks for each school. The following information supports rather than replaces the information you may find in the individual school's student handbook.** This Code of Conduct is not an all-inclusive list of misconduct for which a student may be disciplined. An act of misconduct not listed will be subject to the discretionary authority of the principal. Violations of the Code of Conduct and/or with local, state, and federal law may result in the termination of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities.

One discipline strategy utilized by our schools is In-School Suspension (ISS). This program serves as an alternative for students who would otherwise be suspended home. Students and parents are also reminded that actions which are in violation of local, state, or federal law may result in the notification of the appropriate law enforcement agency.

The Dodge County School System operates the Dodge Achievement Center. This program serves as an alternative to suspending or expelling students completely out of the school system. This allows students to continue with their studies until they can eventually graduate or return to regular school.

The Board of Education and the Dodge County School System seek the support of both parents and students in their approaches to student discipline. Overwhelmingly, we support the notion that our schools need to be safe places to learn.

This code of conduct and its rules and regulations are effective during the following times and in the following places:

- 1) on school grounds at any time.
- 2) off school grounds during a school activity, function, or event.
- 3) en route to and from school.
- 4) en route to and from school functions, activities, or events.

Please review the discipline code that follows. We earnestly desire your support for an effective school discipline program.

Dr. Susan W. Long, Superintendent

*\*Please note, each student will be given a handbook containing the Code of Conduct at the beginning of each school year. Each student will participate in a review of the handbook's content within the first days of school. The handbook will also be available on the school's and district's website, and in each classroom. I know that I may also request an additional copy from the school at any time.*

## **Dodge County Schools Student Code of Conduct**

It is the purpose of the Dodge County School District to operate each school in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with that purpose, the Board of Education has adopted a policy which requires all schools to adopt codes of conduct which requires students to conduct themselves at all times in order to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the district.

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

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

- 1) on school grounds at any time.
- 2) off school grounds during a school activity, function, or event.
- 3) en route to and from school.
- 4) en route to and from school functions, activities, or events.

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

Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16, Unsafe School Choice Options.

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

### **Authority of the Principal**

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

### **Progressive Discipline Procedures**

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors, including board policies and procedures. The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program. The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of this Code of Conduct:

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Time Out
- Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Corporal Punishment
- Detention

- Temporary Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- Short-term Suspension
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The school will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Dodge County Board of Education policies. Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved by the parents and administrators from both the home school and the Dodge Achievement Center. The Dodge County Board of Education shall approve tribunal training provider(s). It shall also 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 Dodge County 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.

Before a student is suspended for ten days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parents will be notified if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

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

### **Behavior Which Will Result in Disciplinary Procedures**

The degree of discipline imposed will be in accordance with the progressive discipline process unless otherwise stated.

1. Verbal assault, including threats of violence or bodily harm and/or sexual assault or harassment, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.
2. Physical assault or battery, including sexual battery, of students or persons attending school-related functions: possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.
3. Physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher or other school personnel: Expulsion for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public schools for acts of physical violence found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contact or physical harm was in defense of himself or herself, as



provided in Code Section 16-3-21; or the Board may authorize the student to attend alternative school for the period of the expulsion; provided, however, that if such student is in kindergarten through grade six, then the Board upon the recommendation of the tribunal may permit the student to re-enroll in regular programs for grades 9 through 12; and provided further that if the Board does not operate an alternative education program for grades kindergarten through grade six, then the Board may permit the student in kindergarten through grade six who commits such an act to re-enroll in the public school system. The student shall be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior. Possible punishments may include expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension for students found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another.

4. Verbal assault including threatened violence of teachers, administrators, and other school personnel.
5. Disrespectful conduct toward teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions including use of vulgar or profane language.
6. Any behavior based on a student's race, national origin, sex, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient is prohibited, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature, up to and including sexual harassment as used in connection with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
7. Transmitting sexually explicit or suggestive material to other students at school or circulating such material at school through electronic devices or in any other manner.
8. Violating the school/school system's acceptable use of the Internet/electronic resources agreement/policy.
9. Possession, sale, transmission, use in any amount, distribution, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, Cannabidiol (CBD) product, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturates, marijuana, drug paraphernalia, inhalant, prescription drug not currently prescribed for possessing student, or alcoholic beverage or other intoxicant or substance that creates the same effect of the items listed. Use of a drug or medication authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician or available over the counter are still subject to disciplinary action according to board policy and procedures if required procedures are not followed. All medications to be administered on campus must be stored in the original container in the nurse's office. These medications are to be disposed by and/or administered in the presence of the school nurse or his/her designee.
10. Possession, distribution, attempted sale or sale of substances represented as drugs or alcohol or any of the items listed here.
11. Sale, attempted sale, distribution, or being under the influence of a prescription or over the counter drug.
12. Failure to comply with compulsory attendance as required under Code Section 20-2-690.1.
13. Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts.
14. Willful and persistent violations of the student code of conduct.
15. Possession or use of a weapon or dangerous instrument as provided for in Code Section 16-11-127.1: A student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:
  1. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.
    - a. Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. The Superintendent shall have the authority either
    - b. r before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one-year expulsion under circumstances where the one-year expulsion appears excessive to the Superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment.
  2. Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or

propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

- a. Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as determined by the principal to be appropriate based on the seriousness of the offense, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

16. Possession or use of tobacco in any form, including e-cigarettes.
17. Marking, defacing, or destroying school property (vandalism); and/or marking, defacing, or destroying the property of another student. Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of the school or to personal property of any person legitimately at the school.
18. Theft.
19. Extortion or attempted extortion.
20. Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive.
21. Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat.
22. Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives; disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff.
23. Classroom and school disturbances and/or disruption.
24. Violation of school dress code.
25. Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words or indecent exposure.
26. Possession of a pocket pager, cell phone or electronic communication device, except for health or other unusual reasons approved by the school administration.
27. Inappropriate public displays of affection.
28. Gambling or possession of gambling devices.
29. Moving and non-moving driving violations.
30. Giving false information to school officials.
31. Cheating on school assignments.
32. Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, leaving campus without permission.
33. Falsifying, Misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student.
34. Bullying: Georgia law mandates that upon a finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.
35. Criminal law violations/Off-Campus Misconduct: A student whose conduct off campus results in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the education process may be subject to disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, short-term suspension and referral to a disciplinary tribunal.

***The General Assembly of the State of Georgia has directed, through the Official Code of Georgia 20-2-735, that our Code of Conduct encourage parents to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.***

### **Definition of Terms**

1. Assault: Any threat or attempt to physically harm another person or any act which reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: threatening language or swinging at someone in an attempt to strike).
2. Battery: Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person.
3. Bullying: In accordance with Georgia law, Bullying is defined as an act which 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 of a local school system that is 1) any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or 2) any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or 3) any intentional written, verbal, or physical act which a reasonable

person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that a) causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1; b) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; c) is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or d) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

a. The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose. Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.

4. Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student: A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur.
5. Corporal Punishment: Physical punishment (paddling) of a student by a school official in the presence of another school official as provided for and outlined in Georgia law.
6. Detention: A requirement that the student report to a specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official. Detention may require the student's attendance before school or after school. Students are given advanced notice so that arrangements for transportation can be made by the parents or guardians.
7. Disciplinary Tribunal: School officials appointed by the Superintendent to sit as fact finder and judge with respect to student disciplinary matters.
8. Dress Code: The current dress code is explained in the student handbook for each school.
9. Drug: The term drug does not include prescriptions issued to the individual, aspirin or similar medications and/or cold medications that are taken according to product use recommendations and board policy. Caffeine pills are considered drugs. Use of a drug or medication authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician or available over the counter are still subject to disciplinary action according to board policy and procedures if required procedures are not followed. All medications to be administered on campus must be stored in the original container in the nurse's office. These medications are to be disposed by and/or administered in the presence of the school nurse or his/her designee.
10. Expulsion: Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school quarter or semester. Such action may be taken only by a disciplinary tribunal or by a signed waiver.
11. Extortion: Obtaining money or goods from another student by violence, threats, or misuse of authority.
12. Fireworks: The term "fireworks" means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance of combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance.
13. Gambling: Engaging in a game or contest in which the outcome is dependent upon chance even though accompanied by some skill, and in which a participant stands to win or lose something of value.
14. In-School Suspension: Removal of a student from class(es) or regular school program and assignment of that student to an alternative program isolated from peers.
15. Physical Violence: Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another; or intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or physical harms were in defense of himself or herself.
16. Suspension: Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed 10 days (short-term) or for a period greater than 10 days (long-term, which may be imposed only by a disciplinary tribunal). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.
17. Theft: The offense of taking or misappropriating any property of another with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

18. Waiver: A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.
19. Weapons: The term weapon is defined in Code Section 16-11-127.1 and for the purpose of this Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.
  - b. Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or Taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

### **Student Support Processes**

The Dodge County Board of Education provides a variety of resources which are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include Response to Intervention, Student Support Teams, school counselors, and chronic disciplinary problem student plans. When a student's behavior becomes a chronic discipline problem, the principal or principal's designee shall send written notification to the teacher and the student's parents or guardians of the student support services being utilized or the disciplinary action taken within one school day and shall make a reasonable attempt to confirm receipt of such written notification by the student's parents or guardians. Written notification shall include information regarding how student's parents or guardians may contact the principal or principal's designee. Through one or more school or school related organizations, students may have access to a mentor. Parents who are interested in their child being assigned a mentor should notify the school principal of this desire.

### **Parent Involvement**

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

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code which may result in a school staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior. Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify by telephone call and by mail the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

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

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

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

### **Medications**

All medications to be administered on campus must be stored in the original container in the nurse's office. These medications are to be disposed by and/or administered in the presence of the school nurse or his/her designee. Students requiring an inhaler or injectable epinephrine (Epi-Pen) are allowed to have them. It is critical that parents discuss their child's medical condition(s) with the school nurse or her designee.

### **Visitors on Campuses and in Schools**

To enhance student safety as well as to comply with Georgia law, "any person who is not a student at such school, an employee of the school or school system, a school board member, an approved volunteer following the established guidelines of the school or a person who has been invited to or otherwise authorized to be at the school by a principal, teacher, counselor or other authorized employee of the school shall check in at the designated location as stated on posted signs and provide a reason for his/her presence at the school immediately upon entering the campus. Unless otherwise allowed by the state law, the person failing to check in at the designated location may be guilty of a misdemeanor.

### **Private Therapists in the Dodge County Schools System**

If a parent requests for a private therapist to see his/her child during the school day, the private therapist must obtain a background check following the procedures set out by the Dodge County Board of Education Human Resources Department and schedule a meeting with the school principal/designee. Upon an approved background check, the private therapist will then be permitted to meet with the student at an agreed upon time in an assigned location. Private therapists will not be permitted to visit/observe/work with the student in the classroom, lunchroom, or playground where other students are present.

### **Student Conduct on School Buses**

The goal of the Transportation Department of the Dodge County Board of Education is to transport children in a safe and timely manner to and from school. While the law allows the school system to furnish transportation, it does not relieve parents of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once the child boards the bus, and only at that time, does he or she become the responsibility of the school system. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the appropriate bus stop at the end of the day. It is the intent of the Dodge County School System to operate a safe and efficient transportation program for students. Such intent is predicated on desirable behavior of bus passengers and consequences of misbehavior. Bus incidences will be dealt with by the Transportation Director and a school administrator. Since the bus is considered an extension of the classroom, discipline for incidents on the bus may also include discipline on the school level as well.

### **Bus Misbehavior**

The following specific provisions shall govern student conduct and safety on all school buses:

1. All provisions of the Student Code of Conduct apply to behavior on the school bus, including but not limited to, acts of physical violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined by subsection (a) of the Code Section 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior;
2. During regular school day transportation, students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; pagers; audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device. On field trips, driver discretion should be used regarding students' use of any electronic devices.

3. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices.
4. If a student is found to have engaged in physical acts of violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, a student shall be subject to the penalties set forth in such Code Section. If a student is found to have engaged in bullying as defined by subsection (a) of Code Section 20-2-751.4 or in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus, a meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and the appropriate school district officials will be held to form a school bus behavior contract for the student. Such contract shall provide for progressive age-appropriate discipline penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Contract provisions may include, but shall not be limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus. If a student is suspended from one bus route, he or she may not ride another bus to and from school.

### **Student Behavior Expectations**

Outside the bus pupils shall: Be at the designated bus stop at scheduled time; Never stand or play in the roadway; Line up orderly and safely away from the traffic lane until the bus has completely stopped; Board the bus in a safe and orderly manner without pushing or shoving; Follow the bus driver's instruction carefully by proceeding safely and alertly when getting off the bus and/or crossing the roadway; Exit the bus at their assigned stop, unless prior written permission from the parents has been given to the school and subsequently to the driver; Go home promptly after leaving the bus at the end of the school day.

Inside the bus pupils shall: Go immediately to their seats and courteously share seats with others boarding the bus; Sit in assigned seat (Bus Drivers have the authority to assign seats.); Be held responsible for any vandalism that may occur to the seats in which they ride. (Promptly report any damage found to the bus driver.); Change seats only with the bus driver's permission, and only when the bus is not in motion; Get on or off the bus only when it is completely stopped; Cooperate with any bus monitor on duty; Cooperate with the bus driver to keep the bus clean. Eating and drinking on the bus are prohibited; Observe classroom conduct, except for ordinary conversation, to enable the bus operator to give attention to safe driving; Keep head and limbs inside the bus windows at all times; Report any open exit or released latch to the bus driver immediately; Provide enrollment information to bus driver as requested.

### **Consequences of Inappropriate Behavior**

Consequences for inappropriate behavior on the school bus may consist of the following based on the severity and nature of the behavior:

- Verbal Warning by Driver/Administrator
- Written warning
- Written referral
- Meeting with Parent
- Loss of bus privileges for 3, 5, 10 days
- Loss of bus privileges for the semester or school year
- Any other appropriate consequence as prescribed the school Code of Conduct, Student Handbook, or Georgia State Law

### **Notification of Rights Under PPRA**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) gives parents and students who are 18 or older or emancipated minors ("eligible students") certain rights regarding the school district's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and conduct of certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. **Consent to federally funded surveys concerning "protected information"**. If the U.S. Department of Education funds a survey in whole or in part, a student's parents or an eligible student must consent in writing before the student may provide information relating to the following categories:
  - a. Political affiliations;
  - b. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
  - c. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
  - d. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  - e. Critical appraisals of student's family members;

- f. Privileged or similar relationships recognized by law, such as with attorneys, doctors, and ministers;
  - g. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parents; or
  - h. Income other than that required by law to determine program eligibility.
    - i. A survey that concerns any of these points is called a "protected information survey".
2. **Opt out of certain surveys and exams.** Parents and eligible students will receive notice of any of the following activities and will have the right to opt out of them:
- a. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for purposes of marketing or selling or otherwise distributing the information to others;
  - b. Any protected information survey, regardless of funding; and
  - c. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance administered by the school or its agent and scheduled by the school, and not necessary to protect the immediate health, and safety of a student or of another student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.
3. **Inspect certain material.** Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect the following, upon request, before the district administers or uses them:
- a. Protected information surveys of students (including any instructional materials used in connection with the survey);
  - b. Documents used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
  - c. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.
4. **Receive notification of district policy.** The School District has developed a policy, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, and has made arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The School District will directly notify parents and eligible students of this policy at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes are made.
5. **Report violations.** Parents and eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

**Family Policy Compliance Office**

U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

**Public School Choice Options**

Under state law passed by the Georgia State Legislature in 2007, parents of students who receive special education may choose to transfer their child to another public school or private school in Georgia. 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. If the parent chooses this option, then the parent shall be responsible for transportation to the school. The parent may request a transfer to a school in another school system if there is available space and the system and school has a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program. 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 that 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 <http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/>.

### **Teacher Authority & Administrative Support**

Georgia Code provides that a teacher shall have the authority to remove from his or her class a student who repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn, where the student's behavior is in violation of the student's code of conduct, provided that the teacher has previously filed a report pursuant to Code Section 20-2-737 or determines that such behavior of the student poses an immediate threat to the safety of the student's classmates or the teacher. Each school principal shall fully support the authority of every teacher in his or her school to remove a student from the classroom under this Code section. Each school principal shall implement the policies and procedures of the superintendent and local board of education relating to the authority of every teacher to remove a student from the classroom and shall disseminate such policies and procedures to faculty, staff, and parents or guardians of students. Removal from the classroom may mean for as little as one class period or up to permanent removal. It will be the goal and expectation that all parties involved will work to restore the student's regular placement in the classroom where the student demonstrates appropriate respect for the classroom teacher and the learning environment.

### **School Closing Procedure**

The primary consideration regarding whether to have school on bad weather days will be the safety of our children. Heavy rain, and on some occasions, snow and ice, cause some of our primary and secondary roads to become unsafe. If a threat to health and safety exists, school will be dismissed. Once the decision is made the local radio station will be used to communicate the decision. The superintendent will make a decision regarding school closing by 6:00 A.M. The decision will be communicated by WUFF 97.5 FM, or you may tune into Channel 13 WMAZ TV. Announcements may also be shared on social media. In addition, the emergency calling/messaging system will be utilized. Therefore, it is extremely important to report changes in telephone numbers to your child's school. The call system pulls numbers from our student information system.

### **Discrimination or Harassment**

The Board of Education prohibits discrimination or harassment and retaliation for reporting such acts against students on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion or disability. Students/ parents are entitled to express concerns or dissatisfaction regarding discrimination because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion or disability. The purpose of this procedure is to describe a process that can be used to resolve such concerns or dissatisfaction. Students/parents may discuss matters informally with teachers, counselors and administrators at the school level. Special Education teachers and Special Education coordinator are also available to provide assistance to students and/or parents who feel that the school or school system has discriminated against students with disabilities. If matters in question in the above paragraphs cannot be resolved informally and the student/parent feels that a formal complaint should be made, then the student/parent should use the complaint process outlined in Policy JAA, which is available on the district's website.

### **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



4. "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
5. "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
6. "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.

### **Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct**

1. 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 this act to any teacher, counselor, or administrator at his/her school.
2. 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 misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.*
3. 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 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.
4. Reports 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 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.

### **Drug Free Schools**

#### **Rationale**

The foremost priority of the Dodge County School System is to provide a safe and secure environment for all students with a deliberate consideration for the well-being and health of each individual. An appropriate learning climate must be established and maintained to ensure such an environment. Since alcohol and other drug use is illegal and interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of children and adolescents, the school has a fundamental, legal, and ethical obligation to prohibit drug use and to maintain a drug-free educational environment.

1. The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. A student shall not possess, sell, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any prohibited drug to include: alcohol, narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, amphetamines, barbiturates, or intoxicants of any kind. Use of a drug or medication authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician or available over the counter are still subject to disciplinary action according to board policy and procedures if the required procedures are not followed. All medications to be administered on campus must be stored in the original container in the nurse's office. These medications are to be disposed by and/or administered in the presence of the school nurse or his/her designee.
2. Disciplinary sanctions, up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution, will be imposed if the standards of conduct are violated. The sanctions to be imposed for violations may include conferences, suspension or expulsion.
3. Information concerning drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs can be obtained from the school counselor or administrative staff.
4. Compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory.

### **Student Participation in Surveys**

As a part of certain school/educational programs, students will participate in surveys periodically. If you prefer that your child NOT participate, please notify your child's principal in writing. Otherwise, consent is implied. A copy of all surveys are available for review upon request.

### **HOSPITAL HOMEBOUND (HHB)**

Hospital/Homebound (HHB) is an academic service designed to provide continuity between the classroom and home or hospital for students whose medical needs, either physical or psychiatric, do not allow them to attend school for a limited period of time (Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-. 31 HHB services). HHB services are not intended to supplant regular school service and are by design temporary. Students approved to receive HHB services must meet the eligibility requirements approved by the Dodge County Board of Education. Dodge County School System does not allow students who receive HHB services to participate in extracurricular activities, including travelling or competitive sports teams. Additionally, hospital homebound students are not permitted to participate in work based learning. Students who are physically able to take the GMAS (Georgia Milestone Assessment) at school will be tested in small group settings or at an alternative time to accommodate any physical considerations. For those unable to come to school to test, the school will provide an instructor who is proctor-trained and who can administer the assessments.

### **Equity in Sports**

State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A. 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that the Dodge County School System does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. The sports equity school-level contact is:

Phillip Brown, Athletic Director  
350 Pearl Bates Road  
Eastman, GA 31023  
(478)374-7711.

Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this system may be submitted to the sports equity coordinator.

### **FERPA Directory Information Notice**

The Dodge County School System has designated the following information as directory information:

1. Student's name, address and telephone number.
2. Student's date and place of birth.
3. Student's participation in official school clubs and sports.
4. Weight and height of students if he/she is a member of an athletic team.
5. Dates of attendance at the Dodge County School System schools; and
6. Awards received during the time enrolled in Dodge County School System.

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. You have the right to refuse to allow all or part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to be disclosed to the public upon request. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the Principal of your child's school in writing within 30 days of the first day of school, or upon enrollment if after that point.

**NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND ELIGIBLE STUDENT OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT**

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) years of age or older, or those who are emancipated, your own education records. Parents or eligible students should submit to the administration a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The administration 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 the school principal, specify the part of the record they want 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 interest. 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. File with the United State Department of Education a complaint under 20 C.F.R. 99.64 concerning the alleged failures by the Dodge County Board of Education to comply with the requirements of the Act of the regulations promulgated thereunder. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

**Civil Right Laws**

Federal Law prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin (Title I of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Employees, students and the general public are hereby notified that the Dodge County School System does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities or in employment policies. The following individuals have been designated as the employees responsible for coordinating the department's effort to implement nondiscriminatory policies.

CTAE/Perkins Act	Brande Vaughn
Title VI	Dr. Patricia Connell
Section 504 & ADA; Title II	Tonya Brown
Sports Equity Coordinator & Title IX	Tonya Brown

Inquiries concerning the application of the Perkins Act, Title VI, Title IX, Sports Equity or Section 504 and ADA to the policies and practices of the school system may be addressed to the persons listed above at the Superintendent of

Schools office; to the Georgia Department of Education, Twin Towers East, Atlanta 30334; to the Regional Office for Civil Rights, Atlanta 30323; or the Director, Office for Civil Rights, Education Department Washington, D.C. 20201.

### **Section 504 Procedures**

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

### **Parental Right to Know**

ESSA Section 1112(e)(1)(A) In Georgia, all LEA schools are required to notify parents at the beginning of the school year of their ‘right to know’ the professional qualifications of the student’s classroom teacher(s) and paraprofessional(s). Right to Know In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, parents may request the following information:

1. Whether the student’s teacher –
  - a. Has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction
  - b. Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived: and
  - c. Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher
2. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications
2. In Georgia, parents’ right to know notification requirements apply to all LEAs and schools/programs within each LEA. Notification best practices:
  - a. All parents must be notified within 30 calendar days of the start of school or upon enrollment.
  - b. The notification must:
    - Include the name of the LEA and school
    - Use the language of the law
    - Contain the month/year of dissemination - if included in another document, the primary document must contain a date.

If you wish to request any of this information, please contact Dr. Mariella Douglas, Director of Curriculum and Professional Learning, at 478-374-3783, or email her at [mdouglas@dodge.k12.ga.us](mailto:mdouglas@dodge.k12.ga.us).

### **Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Guidelines for the Computer Network of the Dodge County School District**

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 is not limited to, the following:

**1. 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.
  - i. 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.

### **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.

By signing this electronic technology and Internet contract, both student, parent/guardian and 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.

## **Dodge County Schools 1:1 Chromebook Acceptable Use & Guidelines**

The Chromebook device and accessory issued to students are, and will remain, the property of Dodge County Schools. The device is on loan to students and must be used in accordance with the guidelines outlined below:

- The student's parent/guardian must sign and return the Device Acceptable Use Guidelines.
- Students, parents/guardians should keep logins and passwords private as use by others creates a security risk to files and the network. If students forget or need to change a password, they should consult with their teacher or media specialist.
- Students should have no expectation of privacy while using the device either on the district's network.
- The District has the right to randomly inspect any device, application, or peripheral device on a regular basis. This includes, but is not limited to, browser history, email, media that has been accessed, downloaded or created, documents, pictures, and all files. The District has the right to review these items for appropriateness and to limit or revoke a student's access to them.
- Students should never "swap" or "share" their device with another student.
- Use of the device for anything other than teacher-directed or approved activity is prohibited during instructional time. This includes, but is not limited to, internet or computer games and other entertainment activities, email, instant messaging, chat, and use of the internet for anything other than school-related research.
- Obscene, or vulgar images, sounds, music, language or materials, including screensavers, backgrounds, and or pictures are prohibited. The District Internet Acceptable Use Policy will be followed.
- Copyright laws must be followed at all times.
- Students are not allowed to download or install any software or other materials.
- Devices are not to be used to make sound recordings without the consent of all persons being recorded.
- Sound on the device must be turned off at all times except when being used as part of the class.
- Use of personal headphones to listen to music is allowed with express permission of the classroom teacher.
- The school or district will assume no liability for personal items of this nature being lost, damaged, or stolen.
- Devices are not to be used to take pictures without the consent of all persons being photographed. Cameras are to be turned off at all times except when being used as part of a class.

- Students will not use the device for illegal purposes. Students will not deliberately use the device to personally attack, annoy, harass, or bully others. Any such activities will be reported to the appropriate local, state, or federal authorities.
- Students may save files locally on the device but should copy them to their Google Drive as a backup in case of drive failure. All data stored in district created accounts, either locally or in the cloud, will be deleted when the student graduates or is otherwise no longer enrolled in DCS.
- Appropriate and responsible use is expected of all users. Violation of any policies or procedures outlined in the Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) or the Device Acceptable Use Guidelines will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action as outlined in the AUP's.

### **GENERAL USE AND CARE OF THE DEVICE**

- During the school day, students must never be left unattended. Unattended devices will be seized by school personnel and delivered to the administration.
- Never walk with the device lid open. This puts stress on the device and the screen.
- Students should not use their device while walking or being transported. Devices should be used on a flat, stable surface. Devices should not be taken on school sponsored activity trips unless expressly needed for the activity.
- Devices should be protected from the weather, water, liquids, and pets. Eating or drinking near the devices is strictly forbidden. Devices cannot be used during meal times.
- The display screen is the most sensitive part of the device. Heavy objects should never be placed on or stacked on top of the device. This includes books, musical instruments, sports equipment, etc. Do not place or leave the unit on the floor or any area where someone may sit or step.
- Students may not deface the device or cover in any way with stickers, tape, whiteout, markers, pens, engravings or any other items or marks.
- The device should only be cleaned with a soft dry cloth. Never use sprays of any kind.
  - Consequences for not complying with the use and care guidelines will result in the suspension of or loss of device privileges as determined by an administrator.
  - In addition, all other appropriate consequences as outlined in the Student Handbook may be applied. ALL damage incidents will be investigated by an administrator.

### **Compulsory Student Attendance**

Georgia Code Section 20-2-690.1 establishes consequences for parents and students who fail to comply with compulsory school attendance. The law establishes that: "Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of a child or children and who shall violate this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25 and not greater than \$100, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school in violation of this part after the child's school system notifies the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of five unexcused days of absence for a child shall constitute a separate offense." Furthermore, it is recognized that students who miss more days from school typically do not perform as well in their academic achievement. For both educational purposes as well as for compliance with state law, parents or guardians are strongly encouraged to insure that students arrive at school on time, remain at school all day, and attend school unless extreme and justified circumstances merit their absence. The Dodge County School System's Attendance Protocol establishes penalties and procedures for enforcing excessive tardiness, early releases, and absences. Violation with the court sanctioned attendance protocol may result in referrals to the Department of Family & Children Services, Department of Juvenile Justice, and/or the Superior Court. Help us support student achievement by supporting student attendance.

### **Student Organizations, Clubs, and Co-Curricular Organizations**

Each school offers unique opportunities for student involvement. These organizations are comprised of students who wish to organize and meet for common goals, objectives, or purposes and which are directly under the sponsorship, direction, and control of the school. The specific opportunities offered at each school are included in the school's student handbook. Any parent or legal guardian can decline permission for his or her student to participate in a club or organization by signing the form provided and returning it to your child's respective school.

## Chromebook Agreement (English/Spanish)

The Chromebook device and accessory issued to students are, and will remain, the property of Dodge County Schools. No outside devices will be allowed to be brought into the school and used on campus in order to reduce security threats and damages. Chromebook will be used in school for academic and DCSS purposes. When a student uses a DCSS device, the device is on loan to the students and must be used in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the student. Any Chromebook that is found to have any damage needs to be reported as soon as discovered. All damage incidents will be investigated by an administrator. If the device is damaged, lost or stolen, and a student is found to be responsible, the parent(s) are responsible for the cost of repair or the fair market value at the time loss.

El dispositivo Chromebook y el accesorio entregado a los estudiantes son y seguirán siendo propiedad de las Escuelas del Condado de Dodge. No se permitirá que se traigan dispositivos externos a la escuela y se usen en el campus para reducir las amenazas y los daños a la seguridad. Chromebook se utilizará en la escuela con fines académicos y de DCSS. Cuando un estudiante usa un dispositivo DCSS, el dispositivo se presta a los estudiantes y debe usarse de acuerdo con las pautas descritas en el estudiante. Cualquier Chromebook que se encuentre dañado debe informarse tan pronto como se descubra. Todos los incidentes de daños serán investigados por un administrador. Si el dispositivo se daña, se pierde o es robado, y se determina que un estudiante es el responsable, los padres son responsables del costo de la reparación o del valor justo de mercado en el momento de la pérdida.

### **Potential Costs/ Costos potenciales:**

Replacement /Reemplazo	\$300
Charger/Cargador	\$30
Replace screen/Reemplazar pantalla	\$60
Replace keyboard/ Reemplazar teclado	\$50
Motherboard or other major damage would be the same cost as complete replacement La placa base u otro daño importante tendría el mismo costo que el reemplazo complete	

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Last Name/APELLIDO del estudiante*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student First Name/ Nombre del estudiante*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Homeroom Teacher/ Profesora de aula*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date/ Fecha*

As the student, my signature indicates I have read or had explained to me the guidelines of use and care of the device and accessories. I accept responsibility for abiding by the guidelines and direction of my teacher(s). I will use the device and accessories for educational purposes.

Como estudiante, mi firma indica que he leído o me han explicado las pautas de uso y cuidado del dispositivo y los accesorios. Acepto la responsabilidad de cumplir con las pautas y la dirección de mi maestro (s). Usaré el dispositivo y los accesorios con fines educativos.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature/ Firma del alumno*

As a parent/guardian, my signature indicates I have read, understand, and agree to the acceptable use guidelines. I give permission for my student to have access to the device and I along with my student, accept responsibility for the care and protection of the unit and accessories.

Como padre / tutor, mi firma indica que he leído, entiendo y estoy de acuerdo con las pautas de uso aceptable. Doy permiso para que mi estudiante tenga acceso al dispositivo y yo, junto con mi estudiante, acepto la responsabilidad por el cuidado y la protección de la unidad y los accesorios.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent Signature/ Firma del padre*



**Parent/Student Signature Page (ESPAÑOL)**  
**Formulario de exclusión voluntaria de los padres para participar en el club**

Nombre del estudiante \_\_\_\_\_

Escuela \_\_\_\_\_

Por la presente reconozco haber recibido información sobre los clubes de estudiantes que están programados para estar operativos en la escuela durante el año escolar actual. Entiendo que si se inicia un club para el cual no se ha proporcionado información después de que se distribuye esta información, se me proporcionará la información del club en ese momento y se requerirá mi permiso por escrito antes de la participación de mi estudiante.

Deseo retener el permiso para que mi hijo participe en los clubes de estudiantes que se enumeran a continuación:

Nombre del padre / tutor (en letra de imprenta) \_\_\_\_\_

Firma del Padre / Tutor: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

**Code of Conduct Acknowledgement**

Firme a continuación indicando que ha leído el Manual del estudiante, todos los acuerdos incluidos y el Código de conducta del estudiante y devuelva el formulario a la escuela de su hijo. Si tiene alguna pregunta, hable con el director de la escuela de su hijo o su designado. La información también ha sido presentada a su hijo en la escuela. Gracias por su cooperación para ayudar al sistema a brindar una educación de calidad para todos nuestros niños. (Todos los estudiantes, independientemente de su edad, deben leer y firmar a continuación)

1. Pautas de uso aceptable y seguridad de Internet Acuerdo entre el estudiante y el padre / tutor (páginas 16-20): He leído, entiendo y acepto cumplir con los términos de las Pautas de uso aceptable y seguridad de Internet anteriores. Si cometo alguna infracción o de alguna manera uso indebidamente mi acceso a la red informática del distrito escolar e Internet, entiendo y acepto que mi privilegio de acceso o el de mi hijo puede ser revocado y que la escuela puede tomar medidas disciplinarias en mi contra. Si firmo este acuerdo cuando sea menor de 18 años, entiendo que cuando cumpla 18 años, este acuerdo seguirá estando en pleno vigor y efecto, y acepto cumplir con este acuerdo.
2. Asistencia Obligatoria de los Estudiantes (página 21): He leído, entiendo y acepto cumplir con los términos de las Leyes de Asistencia Obligatoria de los Estudiantes
3. Conducta del estudiante en los autobuses escolares (páginas 9-10): He leído, entiendo y estoy de acuerdo en cumplir con los términos de las reglas de Conducta del estudiante en los autobuses escolares.
4. Entiendo que cada estudiante ha leído el Manual del Estudiante y el Código de Conducta al comienzo de cada año escolar. El manual también estará disponible en el sitio web de la escuela y del distrito, y en cada salón de clases. Sé que también puedo solicitar una copia adicional de la escuela en cualquier momento.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nombre del estudiante (ESCRIBA CLARAMENTE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma del estudiante

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nombre del padre (ESCRIBA CLARAMENTE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma del padre

\_\_\_\_\_  
Número de teléfono

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fecha

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dirección física del estudiante

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ciudad

\_\_\_\_\_  
Código postal

**SIGNATURE PAGE**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade** \_\_\_\_\_ **Homeroom Teacher** \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign below indicating that you have read the Student Handbook (pages 1-15). If you have any questions, please talk with your child's principal or his/her designee. Failing to sign below does not excuse your student from compliance of DCMS policies and procedures. Thank you for your cooperation in helping the system provide quality education for all of our children.

*Este documento contiene informacion importante par la escuela. Si usted necesita esta information en Esponol por favor de llamar el Directorio de escolar Dodge en la Oficiana. El numero es 478--374-3783*

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dismissal of Students (page 4)**

Changes in dismissal instructions for students will not be accepted on the phone because of the possibility of misunderstandings or misidentification. This includes early sign-outs. **Parents should send or fax a signed note detailing any changes in dismissal for their child to the administration of DCMS.**

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of the school's policy on dismissal of students.

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Movie Policy**

Occasionally, students are allowed to watch movies in the classroom. All movies shown will carry the rating G or PG. I give permission for my child to view PG movies.

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Surveys**

My child has permission to complete surveys deemed necessary by the Georgia Department of Education, RESA, educational institutions, and the guidance and administrative staff of DCMS.

**Parent/ Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**DCMS Student Media Consent and Release Form**

Throughout the school year, students may be highlighted in efforts to promote DCMS activities and achievements. For example, students may be featured in materials to train teachers and/or increase public awareness of our schools through newspapers, radio, TV, the web, DVDs, displays, brochures, and other types of media.

DCMS nor its representatives will reproduce said photograph, interview, or likeness for any commercial value or receive monetary gain for use of any reproduction/broadcast of said photograph or likeness. Also please understand that you will not receive monetary compensation for your child's participation.

DCMS, Dodge County Board of Education, employees, and other representatives are released and relieved from any liabilities, known or unknown, arising out of the use of this material.

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**Please sign IF YOU AGREE to allow DCMS and its employees, representatives, and authorized media organizations to print, photograph, and record your child for use in audio, video, film or any other electronic, digital and printed media.**

Signature of parent or guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## HELP PREVENT POSSIBLE ACTIONS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

PLEASE REPORT ANY SUSPECTED INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE OR WEAPON POSSESSION TO YOUR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR THE GEORGIA TOLL-FREE SCHOOL SAFETY HOTLINE:

# 1-877-729-7867

### SCHOOL PRINCIPALS/DIRECTORS

Dodge Achievement Center	Mrs. Kati Mincey	374-4756
Dodge County Primary School	Mr. Russell Bazemore Mrs. Darla Faulk	374-6691
Dodge County Elementary School	Dr. Sheila Honeycutt	374-6690
Dodge County Middle School	Dr. Jennifer Bellflower	374-6492
Dodge County High School	Mrs. Marcie Jones	374-7711

Este documento contiene informacion importante para la escuela. Si usted necesita esta information en Espanol por favor de llamar el Directorio de escolar Dodge en la Oficina. El numero es 478-374-3783. Gracias

