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# AMENDED CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

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WAKULLA COUNTY SCHOOLS  
Crawfordville, Florida

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT  
AND  
ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Wakulla County School District  
Crawfordville, Florida

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# WAKULLA COUNTY CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

## INTRODUCTION

The Code of Student Conduct is based on the philosophy that instruction should occur in an environment conducive to learning, and that the school atmosphere should be positive as well as safe and one in which students and school personnel work cooperatively toward common goals. The School Board, administration, faculty, staff, parent/legal guardian, and community hold the highest expectations for the conduct of students in Wakulla County Schools. Students are expected to be in school and learning every day and are to always demonstrate appropriate and responsible behavior. They are expected to refrain from any conduct which interferes with another student's opportunity to learn and are expected to contribute to a safe and orderly learning environment by respecting themselves and others, their property, and school rules and regulations.

This Code applies to all students K-12 and shall be carried out during the regular school day, at bus stops and on school buses/vans, when students are attending school functions, activities, field trips or athletic events, or when they are otherwise under the authority of the Wakulla County School System. As students increase in age and maturity, they will assume a greater responsibility for their actions and different types of disciplinary actions may be warranted. The Code of Student Conduct addresses the rights and responsibilities of students, specific acts requiring discipline, discipline procedures, dress code, attendance regulations, administration of medication, and grievance procedure.

All exceptional education students (ESE) are expected to abide by rules outlined in this Code, except as specified in student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

Students and parents/ legal guardians are asked to carefully read this Code so that they will know what is expected. Teachers, Counselors, and Administrators are always available if further information is needed.

All current Wakulla County Code of Student Conduct publications are available through the Wakulla County School District website at [www.wakullaschooldistrict.org](http://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org).



## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The intent of the Student Rights and Responsibilities section is to summarize the broad principles of student rights. With each right comes a responsibility in a free and democratic society. It is important to note that the rights exist within the context of responsibility and not in its absence. These statements on rights and responsibilities are not intended to diminish the authority of administrators in maintaining the orderly educational process.

### Rights

Students have the right to a free public education that is not to be denied except by due process.

Students have the right to make up work missed because of excused absences.

Students have the right to learn in an atmosphere conducive to learning.

Students have the right to a meaningful curriculum that will meet their immediate and future needs.

Students have the right to have made available to them classroom, school, and district rules of conduct and to know the possible consequences of their misconduct.

Students have the right to equal and consistent enforcement of all classrooms, school, and district rules.

Students have the right to freely express their viewpoints in an appropriate manner.

Students have the right to print and distribute publications within the guidelines of School Board Policy 4.51.

Students have the right to a healthy and safe school environment in which to learn.

### Responsibilities

Students have the responsibility to attend school and to use this educational opportunity to the fullest potential.

Students have the responsibility to provide the school with an adequate explanation with proper documentation indicating the reason for each absence and to make arrangements with teachers for makeup work to be completed within the specified time.

Students have the responsibility to contribute toward the development of a positive climate in the school that is conducive to learning.

Students have the responsibility to utilize the educational experience made available to them.

Students have the responsibility to be aware of and abide by all applicable classroom, school, and district rules.

Students have the responsibility to respect the free speech rights of others.

Students have the responsibility to refrain from slander and abusive language.

Students have the responsibility to make efforts to become informed and knowledgeable about controversial issues and express their opinions in a manner that is suitable for the forum in which the discussion is taking place.

Students have the responsibility to refrain from publishing and distributing libelous or other unlawful materials, to seek full



Students have the right to respect of their personal property.

Students have the right to assemble on school grounds and in school buildings in accordance with school rules and scheduled use of the facility.

Students have the right to privacy in their personal possession unless the principal has reasonable cause to believe that the student is concealing material, possession of which is prohibited by law.

Students have the right to notification that student lockers and other student storage spaces provided by the school system are the property of the Wakulla County School Board and are subject to search by school authorities at any time.

Students have the right to an equal opportunity to participate in school activities for which they are qualified. For additional details contact the principal at your child's school.

information on the topics about which they write, to observe the rules for responsible journalism, and to follow the guidelines of the school concerning publications.

Students have the responsibility to respect all school property and that of other students

Students have the responsibility to conduct themselves and their activities consistently with the educational objectives of the school.

Students have the responsibility not to carry or conceal any such material that is prohibited by law or would detract from the educational process.

Students have the responsibility to adhere to policies to governing the use of lockers, which are the property of the school system.

Students have the responsibility to organize activities within school guidelines.

Students have the responsibility to participate regularly in their respective organizations and to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

Students have the responsibility to pay the cost of any damage they inflict on school property.

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Each school principal and personnel designated by him/her are authorized to assist students in the administration of prescription and non-prescription medication when the following conditions have been met:

All prescribed medication shall be delivered to the office/clinic/health room with the following information on the label:

Student's name,

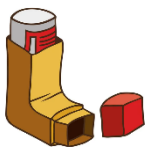
- Name of medication,
- Date of prescription and pharmacy, and
- Approximate duration of medication.

Before prescription medications are left at school, any prescription medications that are not delivered in a sealed container must be counted, verified, and documented by the parent/legal guardian and the school nurse, health aide, or principal-appointed designee. If a prescription inhaler has been opened, this will be noted in the Medication Log and the number of remaining doses listed as "unknown."

1. A permission form or letter signed by the student's parent/legal guardian shall be required. A permission form or letter shall be updated every school year. A two (2) day grace period will be extended to parent/legal guardian for renewal of authorization of medication.
2. Students with prescribed inhalers or EpiPens who must carry these medications on their persons will be allowed to do so with physician and parent/legal guardian written authorization.
3. All non-prescribed medications will be delivered to the clinic in the original sealed container with the manufacturer's recommended dosage. Upon receipt in the health room/clinic, the medication will be labeled with the student's name. The medication may be stored in the health room/clinic until the end of the school year at which time it must be picked up by a parent/legal guardian or destroyed. Dosage in excess of the manufacturer's recommended dosage must be accompanied by a physician's note. Non-prescription medication containing aspirin will not be administered without a physician's written order due to the association of aspirin with Reye's Syndrome. Only FDA-approved medications will be administered. No vitamins, nutritional supplements, etc. can be administered unless accompanied with a physician's written order.

Refer to School Board Policy 5.62+ and 5.222 in its entirety available at

[www.wakullaschooldistrict.org](http://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org) under School Board Policies.



## **Dress Code**

Student's mode of dress and grooming in the school shall meet standards of decency, modesty, personal hygiene, and safety and be conducive to maintenance of a proper educational environment. Accordingly, extreme hairstyles and make-up, excessively revealing clothes and costumes or accessories which tend to distract fellow students in the pursuit of their educational activities or disrupt the normal activities of the school will be prohibited. A specific code for each level is included in the school's handbook.

## **CONDUCT ON SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION**

Any student eligible to be transported is expected to abide by rules of conduct for riding the bus/van or any other vehicles in order to assure the safety of all students. Additionally, students are expected to ride their respective assigned buses/vans and not ride any other bus/van except under conditions of emergency as directed by the school system.

### **Responsibilities of Parent/Legal Guardian(s)**

The parent/legal guardian of a child transported at public expense shall have the following responsibilities:

1. To require the child to be at the transportation stop in the morning five (5) minutes prior to time provided by transportation schedule.
2. To provide necessary protection for the child in going to and from the transportation stop where adequate shelter is not provided.
3. To assume joint responsibility with school authorities for the proper conduct of the child.
4. To make a reasonable effort to understand transportation rules to cooperate with school personnel responsible for student transportation.
5. Any parent/legal guardian of a physically handicapped child shall have the following additional responsibilities:
  - a. To provide the necessary assistance to the child while he/she is enroute to and from the school transportation stop and to provide the necessary supervision of the child at the transportation stop.
  - b. To provide instructions in writing to the transportation driver as to any special symptoms or non-medical care which the child may need while on the bus/van.

### **Responsibilities of Students**

Any student riding a school bus/van or other school vehicle on a regular basis or on a field trip shall have the following responsibilities:

1. To occupy the seat assigned by the driver and to refrain at all times from moving about while the bus/van is in motion.
2. To observe classroom, conduct except for ordinary conversation while getting on or off the bus/van and while riding the bus/van.
3. To obey the driver without argument and to report promptly to the Principal when directed to do so by the transportation driver.

4. To warn the transportation driver of an approaching danger if there is reason to believe that the driver is not aware of such danger.
5. To be at the place designated ready to board school board transportation five (5) minutes prior to the time indicated on the transportation schedule.
6. To walk to the left of any road facing traffic to and from the transportation stop.
7. To observe the proper rules of conduct while waiting for the bus/van, staying off the road and private property other than that on which the stop is established.
8. To enter or leave the bus/van only at the front door after the bus/van comes to a complete stop except in cases of an emergency or as directed during an emergency fire drill.
9. To cross the highway, if necessary, entering or leaving the bus/van as follows:
  - a. Make certain that the bus/van is at a complete stop.
  - b. Upon discharge from the bus/van, stand at the side of the road within sight and hearing of the bus/van driver and wait for signal from the driver to cross the road or to the park strip.
  - c. Upon signal from the driver to cross, look both ways and then proceed across the road or near the park strip always walking in front of the bus/van.
10. To keep head, elbows, hands, and feet inside the bus/van windows at all times except in case of emergency egress.
11. Students are prohibited from eating, drinking, the use of tobacco, vapes or gum on the bus/van.
12. Students are prohibited from throwing objects inside or outside the bus/van.
13. Students are prohibited from using profanity or objectionable language. No type of immoral conduct will be tolerated. There shall be no pushing, fighting or similar misconduct.
14. Students are prohibited from damaging or defacing school board transportation equipment. The student(s) will be responsible for the cost of any damage.
15. Students are prohibited from bringing any sharp instrument, weapon of any type, glass containers, large band instruments, animals, skateboards, radios, or any other potentially hazardous objects aboard the bus/van. The only approved exception to these items is band instruments that can be placed under the bus/van seat.

It is the responsibility of the teacher/coach to make certain students are familiar with bus/van rules and to maintain classroom conduct while riding the bus/van.

Failure to abide by these rules will result in the student being reported by the transportation driver to the Principal. The Principal will then follow the progressive discipline plan which may include suspension and/or recommendation to the Superintendent the expulsion of student(s) from school board transportation riding privileges. Students who have been suspended or expelled from school board transportation shall be required to attend school. Transportation shall be at the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian. If the behavior is severe enough that it has endangered the safety of other students, this may warrant bypassing the progressive discipline plan. FL Statute 1006.07(2).

## STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Failure to meet expectations for student conduct or other inappropriate behavior on the part of the student(s) shall require interventions. Reasonable punishment or correction may be administered to any student who creates any disorder or who is guilty of any act or omission of duty which obstructs, hinders, or interferes with the proper functioning of the school program. The student(s) involved has the right to be informed, before consequences are administered, of the exact nature of the charges against him/her and the possible consequences of that misconduct, and the right to offer an explanation in his/her defense. The proposed consequences may thereafter be administered if warranted.

Behaviors for which disciplinary action of some type will be taken include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Acts of disobedience against school personnel or insubordination.
- b. Stealing, extorting, larceny.
- c. Assault against other students or school personnel or fighting.
- d. Illegal use, possession, and/or sale of tobacco (including vaping), alcohol (or under the influence of); controlled substances (or under the influence of), or weapons.
- e. Defacing school property.
- f. Inappropriate displays of affection.
- g. Commission of a felony.
- h. General school or classroom disruption or misconduct which is detrimental to the ongoing process of education.
- i. Use of profane, abusive, insulting, or obscene language.
- j. Tardies, skipping, truancy, and leaving the school grounds without permission.
- k. Gambling.
- l. Threatening students or school staff.
- m. Cheating.
- n. Damage to personal property of students or school personnel.
- o. Non-conformity to the dress code included in individual school handbooks and Code of Student Conduct.
- p. Forming secret societies and/or membership in gangs.
- q. Being unprepared for classroom work.
- r. Misconduct on the school bus/van, or while waiting at bus/van stops.
- s. Loitering on campus before or after school.
- t. Forging notes or excuses.
- u. Boycotts, walkouts, sit-ins, leading a riot.
- v. Use of electronic devices unless specifically approved by the principal or his/her designee for educational purposes.
- w. Entering the premises or grounds of another school, trespassing.
- x. Indecent exposure or inappropriate sexual activity.
- y. Failure to correct repeated misconduct.
- z. Sexual harassment.

- aa. Intentionally making false accusations that jeopardize the professional reputation, employment, or certification of school staff.
- bb. Bullying and harassment.
- cc. Computer or cell phone offenses including, but not limited to hacking, cheating, accessing inappropriate sites, transmitting inappropriate text or photos, threats, stealing or creating another's identity.
- dd. Willfully entering a restroom/locker room that is designated for the opposite sex.

### **ZERO TOLERANCE OFFENSES**

Students who have been found to have committed the following zero tolerance offenses on school property, school sponsored transportation, or bus/van stops, or during a school sponsored activity shall receive the most severe consequences provided for by School Board Policy 5.32\*.

- a) Aggravated battery.
- b) Armed robbery.
- c) Arson.
- d) Battery or aggravated battery on a teacher or other school personnel.
- e) Kidnapping or abduction.
- f) Murder.
- g) Manslaughter.
- h) Possession, use, or sale of controlled substance.
- i) Possession, use, or sale of any explosive device.
- j) Possession, use, or sale of any firearm or weapon.
- k) Sexual battery.

The District shall report to the appropriate law enforcement agency any act that poses a threat to the safety or welfare of students, staff and to other persons on school property or at school events or is a serious violation of law. The following acts when committed on School District property or at a District activity shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency:

- a) Alcohol violation.
- b) Alcohol use, sale, or distribution.
- c) Arson.
- d) Battery.
- e) Bomb or biomechanical threat.
- f) Breaking and entering or burglary.
- g) Disruption of school, major.
- h) Drug use, sale, or distribution.
- i) Firearms violation.
- j) Extortion.
- k) False alarm.
- l) Firearms violation.
- m) Gang-related activity.
- n) Hate crime.

- o) Illegal organization, membership.
- p) Robbery.
- q) Sexual battery
- r) Sexual harassment.
- s) Sexual misconduct.
- t) Sexual offense.
- u) Stalking.
- v) Trespassing.
- w) Weapons Violation.
- x) Any felony as defined by Florida Statutes.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

Since misconduct of any degree of frequency is undesirable and not conducive to a positive learning environment for all, students should understand that certain consequences are applicable to their behaviors. A wide range of alternatives are offered as consequences to infractions. Positive means of discipline will be used to solve behavioral problems whenever possible. Such actions include conferences by various school personnel to determine the nature of the student's difficulty and to provide assistance to the student in working out a plan to resolve the problem. Other alternative measures are available to impress upon the student that disruptions to the learning environment will not be tolerated. Because some behaviors are more serious and disruptive than others, the frequency, nature, and degree of the misconduct as well as the age of the student will determine the specific disciplinary action to be taken. The Principal or his/her designee will make the decision as to which alternative(s) properly suits the infraction. Examples of disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to:

- a) Verbal or written reprimand.
- b) Parent/legal guardian conference, letter, or phone call.
- c) Assignment of school chores.
- d) Withdrawal of school privilege.
- e) Referral for counseling.
- f) Time-out placement.
- g) Probation.
- h) Administrative change in school program.
- i) Class assignments of educational value.
- j) Alternative assignments with the purpose of modifying behavior.
- k) Referral to outside agencies, including law enforcement for prosecution.
- l) Corporal punishment.
- m) Alternative education.
- n) Positive Alternative to School Suspension (P.A.S.S.)
- o) In-school suspension.
- p) Suspension from the school bus/van.
- q) Suspension from school.
- r) Referral to school board for expulsion.

- s) Referral for peer mediation when available.
- t) Suspension from participation in school activities.
- u) Lunch detention.
- v) Assignment to Second Chance School (Grades 6-12)
- w) Confiscation of electronic devices.

### **Alcohol and Tobacco**

Possession, use (use means the person(s) is caught in the act of using, admits to use, or is discovered to have used in the course of an investigation) or sale of alcohol on school property, school sponsored transportation or bus/van stops, or during school sponsored activity shall result in a minimum consequence of out of school suspension and/or assigned to P.A.S.S. for the first offense. No participation in extra-curricular activities is allowed during any OSS or P.A.S.S. placement. A first alcohol offense which adds to a profile of behavior that persistently interferes with the learning of self and/or others or is of severe or disruptive nature may result in a Second Chance Placement or expulsion. A second alcohol offense will result in suspension with assignment to Second Chance Placement or expulsion. Under the influence also subject to discipline. In accordance with the most current School Board Policy 2.90, all use of tobacco products in any form are prohibited in any District owned facility, vehicle, and property. Any violation of this policy will result in a disciplinary action.

### **Controlled Substances**

Any student(s) apprehended for use, possession, offering for sale, or giving to another person(s) any drug or other controlled substance, or any drug paraphernalia during the time he/she is under school authority shall be subject to suspension, alternative placement, and/or expulsion. In such case, the student and parent/legal guardian will be afforded an opportunity to meet in a conference with the Principal. In the event the student(s) involved has previously been involved in a drug-related offense within a school system, the student(s) will be recommended to the School Board for expulsion. Under the influence also subject to discipline.

### **Weapons and Other Prohibited Articles**

No student, during the time he/she is subject to the supervision of school authorities, shall be in the possession of any object prohibited by law or School Board Rules, or any article which could reasonably be considered as a weapon. For purposes of this policy, the definitions of weapons are defined in Florida Statute Chapter 790, and include but are not limited to; air guns, B.B. or pellet gun, rifle, shotgun, zip gun, stun gun, pistol, ammunition or explosive devices (no matter how limited) ice pick, box cutter, razor blade, nunchakus, machete, flammable materials, fireworks, noxious objects or materials, knives, clubs, "look alike" weapons, objects used as or intended to function as a weapon or any other object or material that could be used to inflict bodily harm, and for which the student has no reasonable use on school property. Any student who possesses, uses, or threatens to use a weapon on school grounds, on school transportation or at any school activity shall be suspended or expelled. Any such objects or materials found to be in the possession of a student shall be confiscated by the Principal. If the confiscated



materials are illegal, they shall be turned over to appropriate law enforcement personnel with recommendation that appropriate charges be filed. Any student who brings any form of firearm or other deadly weapons to school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. Florida Statute 1006.13. This policy does not apply to rifles intended solely for educational purposes or for authorized school sponsored activities.

### **Bomb Threats and False Reports**

Any student who is determined to have made a threat or false report about any bomb or explosive involving school property, personnel's property, school transportation or school sponsored activities shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) full year and shall be referred for criminal prosecution.

Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm or weapon to school or who is determined to have made a threat or false report, in addition to other existing action, will be referred to mental health services identified by the School District {per s. 1012.584 (4)} for evaluation or treatment, when appropriate as stated in the Wakulla County School Board Mental Health Plan.

### **Threats and Intimidation**

An incident where there was no physical contact between the offender and victim but the victim, felt that physical harm could have occurred based on verbal or non-verbal communication by the offender. This includes non-verbal threats and verbal threats of physical harm which are made in person, electronically or through any means.

### **Bullying and Harassment**

Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment is defined in Wakulla County School Board Policy 5.321\* found in its entirety at [www.wakullaschooldistrict.org](http://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org) under School Board Policies. Consequences for investigated and confirmed incidents of bullying and harassment may range from positive behavior interventions up to and including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, referral to the long-term disciplinary program or criminal charges if warranted. This includes cyber bullying and/or harassment that results from investigated and confirmed identity theft or misrepresentation using any social network.

### **Hazing**

Conduct that constitutes hazing is defined in Wakulla School Board Policy 5.327\* found in its entirety at [www.wakullaschooldistrict.org](http://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org) under School Board Policies. The district expects students to conduct themselves appropriately for their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and the educational purpose underlying all school activities. Consequences for investigated and confirmed incidents of hazing may range from positive behavior interventions up to and

including, but limited to, suspension, expulsion, referral to the long-term disciplinary program or criminal charges if warranted.

### **Felony Charges and Convictions**

1. A student who is formally charged with a felony involving any area of the Wakulla County School System is subject to disciplinary action outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, including, but not limited to suspension, expulsion, and/or assignment to the Second Chance School.
2. A student who is formally charged with a felony for an incident that allegedly occurred on property other than school property may be assigned to alternative education at the Second Chance School, if the Threat Assessment Team deems the incident may have an adverse impact on the educational program, discipline, or welfare in the school in which the student is enrolled.
3. A student convicted of, or found to have committed, a felony or a delinquent act which would have been a felony if committed by an adult, regardless of whether adjudication is withheld, shall be assigned to the Second Chance School for a minimum period of one (1) year from the date of conviction, provided there are no serious violations requiring further discipline, or there is no formal expulsion as result of the felony conviction. For the application of this policy, the term “conviction” is defined as a finding of guilt, plea of guilty, a plea of nolo contendere or a verdict of guilty. The withholding of adjudication or entry of an order sealing or expunging a record based upon intervention, diversion or completion of probation shall not be considered an exception to this definition. A student assigned to the Second Chance School may not participate in any activities extracurricular, co-curricular or otherwise, in any Wakulla County School for the duration of his/her placement.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is the moderate use of physical force or physical contact by a Teacher or Administrator that may be necessary to maintain discipline or to enforce school rules. However, the term “corporal punishment” does not include the use of such reasonable force by a teacher or administrator as may be necessary for self-protection or protection of other students from disruptive students. The following are guidelines for identifying the types of punishable offenses, conditions under which the punishment shall be administered, the specific personnel on the school staff authorized to administer the punishment, and the procedure for parents/legal guardians to inform the school of their wish to opt-out of corporal punishment for their child or children as a disciplinary option.

Types of punishable offenses are listed in the most current School Board approved Wakulla County Code of Student Conduct, under “Student Conduct and Disciplinary Action,” with the exception of (m) Cheating and (q) Being unprepared for classroom work.

Corporal punishment shall be administered to the buttocks. In no case shall such punishment be unduly severe or degrading in nature. Such punishment shall not be administered in the

presence of other students. Corporal punishment shall be permitted for disciplinary reasons, but never for lack of work or for unsuccessful work.

As directed by the Superintendent, the school principal shall be permitted to give approval to any member of the school's instructional staff to administer corporal punishment and shall disseminate these guidelines to him/her before corporal punishment may take place. A teacher or administrator shall administer corporal punishment only in the presence of another adult who is informed beforehand, and in the student's presence, of the reason for the punishment. Corporal punishment shall not be administered by a person while he/she is angry, nor shall such punishment be administered with malice. Upon request, the teacher or administrator must provide the parent/guardian with a written explanation of the reason for the punishment and the name of the other adult who was present.

#### **opt out Procedure:**

A parent/legal guardian may request, in writing, to the principal that his/her student should not have corporal punishment used as a means of discipline. A parent/legal guardian is responsible for submitting this opt out request in writing annually to the principal.

An opt out request must be submitted by the parent/legal guardian to each new school in the Wakulla County School District that the child may attend, including if the child transfers to a different school during the same school year. The principal is responsible for keeping this annual written request on file and sharing it with appropriate personnel to disseminate that corporal punishment is not a disciplinary option for this child.

The principal or his/her designee may then administer an alternate disciplinary measure, one which may include the parent/legal guardian picking the child up from school if the child is not responsive to the alternate disciplinary measure or measures. A parent/guardian's request to opt out of corporal punishment for their child does not exempt the student from other forms of discipline as outlined in the most current Wakulla County Code of Student Conduct.

## **STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONE/WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES/COMPUTERS**

1. Personal cell phones may be brought to the school with the following conditions applying:
  - a. Phones must be turned off and kept out of sight during school hours and while riding on the school buses/vans or using school transportation at any time.
  - b. If emergency calls to or from students are necessary, they should be placed through the school office and not to or from the student's-cell phone.
  - c. Phones should be kept secure to prevent theft (vehicles, purses, backpacks, lockers, etc.). The school is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen phones.
2. Violation of these provisions shall result in the confiscation of the personal cell phone and its return only to the parent/legal guardian and/or other disciplinary action. Subsequent or severe violations may result in further disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension.

3. Use of cell phones for the purpose of cheating will result in disciplinary and academic consequences.
4. Use of cell phones or computers for inappropriate photographs, inappropriate internet use, or threats may result in disciplinary consequences including but not limited to suspension, expulsion, referral to the long-term disciplinary program, and possible criminal penalties. This includes use of any social media.
5. Using a wireless communication device to commit any criminal act may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal penalties.
6. Any form of investigated and confirmed misrepresentation or bullying/harassment used through any form of cyber social networking may result in disciplinary consequences including, but not limited to suspension, expulsion, referral to long-term disciplinary program, and/or possible criminal penalties.
7. Use of electronic devices for educational purposes must be approved by the principal or his/her designee. See individual school handbooks for more details.

Notice that use of a wireless communications device includes the possibility of the imposition of disciplinary action by the school or criminal penalties if the device is used in a criminal act. A student may possess a wireless communications device while the student is on school property or in attendance at a school function; however, a student may not use a wireless communication device during instructional time, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes. A teacher shall designate an area for wireless communications devices during instructional time FS 1006.07.

## **OUT-OF-SCHOOL-SUSPENSION**

The principal or his/her designee may suspend a student from school for reasons specified in this Code and in School Board Policies provided that notice of reason(s) for such suspension shall be communicated within twenty-four (24) hours, to the student, parent/legal guardian, by mail, and emailed to the Superintendent/his/her designee in a daily FOCUS report. Suspension from the regular program of the Wakulla County Schools is defined as removal of a student from riding a school bus/van, all classes or instruction on public school grounds, and all other extra-curricular school sponsored activities for no more than ten (10) school days, unless extended by the Superintendent of Schools until the next regular or special meeting of the School Board, or by the School Board to a date certain, as provided herein, from Pre-kindergarten through twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) grade (PreK – 12) programs.

### **Conditions of Suspension**

- a) When a student is suspended from riding a school bus/van due to misconduct, his/her absence from school is not excused. The parent/legal guardian is expected to provide transportation during the time the student is excluded from the bus/van. For an ESE student with transportation listed as a related service on the IEP, an alternative mode of transportation must be provided by the district.
- b) Absence due to suspension shall be considered an excused absence. Students may make up any work missed during the period of suspension.

- c) Suspension proceedings may be initiated against any student who is formally charged with a felony, or with a delinquent act which would be a felony if committed by an adult, by a proper prosecuting attorney for an incident which allegedly occurred on property other than public school property if that incident has an adverse impact on the education program, discipline, or welfare in the school in which the student is enrolled. The principal shall conduct the investigation and administrative hearing in the manner prescribed by Section 1006.09, Florida School Code. Any student who is suspended as the result of such proceedings may be suspended from all classes of instruction on public school grounds during regular classroom hours for a period of time, which may exceed ten (10) days, as determined by the Superintendent. Such suspension shall not affect the delivery of educational services to the student(s), and the student shall be immediately enrolled in a daytime alternative educational program.
- d) *Extension of Suspension* by the Superintendent. If the principal or his/her designee recommends, and the Superintendent finds it necessary, the Superintendent may extend the ten (10) day suspension until the next or special meeting(s) of the Board if the Superintendent is recommending the student(s) be expelled. The student and parent/legal guardian shall be notified in writing if the Superintendent's intention to recommend expulsion and of the extension of suspension.
- e) *Extension of Suspension* by the School Board. The Superintendent may request the School Board to extend suspension beyond the next regular or special meeting(s) of the School Board. The student and parent/legal guardian shall be notified in writing of the School Board's intention to extend the suspension. The Board must specify a date certain and provide for educational alternatives and the opportunity for a hearing.

#### Reasons for Suspension

- a) Willful disobedience.
- b) Open defiance of authority to a staff member.
- c) Other serious breach of conduct.
- d) Repeated misconduct of a less serious nature.
- e) Any act which substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of the school.
- f) Violence against persons or property.
- g) Misconduct as specified under School Board Policies.

#### Prior to Suspension

There shall be compliance with the following procedure(s):

- a) The student(s) shall be given oral or written notice of the charges and evidence against him/her; this may be accomplished through an informal conference between the student(s) and the principal or his/her designee. The opportunity afforded a student to respond and explain, as provided in subparagraph (c) of this paragraph, may be provided at the same time the student is given notice of the charges.
- b) The principal or his/her designee shall explain the charges and the evidence to the student(s).
- c) After the charges and evidence against the student(s) are explained by the principal/or his/her designee, the student(s) shall be given the opportunity to respond to the charges

and evidence, explain his/her actions, and bring to the attention of the principal/designee any additional further information. The principal or his/her designee shall specifically inform the student(s) of these rights.

### Additional Considerations

Following an informed conference, the principal, at the request of the student's parent/legal guardian, may convene an additional hearing and offer the student an opportunity to present testimony and further evidence.

A principal or his/her designee is not required to hold a conference prior to suspending a student for ten (10) days or less if the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or if the student represents an ongoing threat of disrupting the educational process. In each such cases, notice and conference should be provided as soon as is practicable.

Following suspension, the principal or his/her designee shall immediately notify the Superintendent or his/her designee and the suspended student's parent/legal guardian of the action taken and the reasons for the suspension.

## EXPULSION

Expulsion is a denial of access to the Wakulla County Public School System. Serious and/or repeated misconduct may be cause for expulsion. Expulsion may be affected and rescinded only by the School Board. The length of the expulsion shall not exceed the end of that school year, during which it was affected and one additional year of attendance.

The Superintendent is authorized to prohibit a student from attending any one or more specified schools and to administratively assign that student to a specific disciplinary program or Second Chance School as an alternative disciplinary measure. Failure to attend or meet program requirements or other School Board policies shall be grounds for expulsion of the student from the school district.

The School Board has the authority to honor the final order of expulsion or dismissal of a student by another in-state or out-of-state public-school board or private school or developmental research school for an act that would have been grounds for expulsion also by the Wakulla County School Board.

### Procedures for Expulsion

The Superintendent shall develop procedures for the expulsion of non-ESE students which shall include, but are not limited to the following:

Upon receiving the suspension notice, the Superintendent shall notify the student, parent/legal guardian, in writing of the recommendation for expulsion, with signed receipt requested. This letter shall include:

- a) A written recommendation and report from the principal which shall include a report on the alternative measures, if any, taken prior to such a recommendation.
- b) A notice to the student(s) and parent/legal guardian of charge(s) against the student(s) specifying the school rule, which was broken, or a detailed explanation of the school policy which was offended and the proposed action by the School Board.
- c) Advise to the date, time, and place of the School Board hearing to act on the expulsion recommendation.
- d) Advise to the student(s), parent/legal guardian of their legal rights, at their own expense, to counsel or other qualified representative at the hearing.
- e) Advise to the student(s), parent/legal guardian of their opportunity to present witnesses or evidence on the accused student(s) behalf, and to cross-examine witnesses.
- f) Notification that written statements about the misconduct, person(s) who may be called as witnesses, the student's records, and other information, are available at the School Board Office for examination by the student, his/her parent/legal guardian, and his/her representative.

### Expulsion Hearings

- a) The student(s) and the parent/legal guardian may be present and represented, at their own expense, by counsel or another qualified representative.
- b) Hearings shall be conducted pursuant to Florida Statute 1006.07. At the hearing, the student(s) may, own his/her own or through his/her counsel or other qualified representative, present the testimony of himself/herself and/or other witnesses, cross examine the accusers or witnesses to the alleged misconduct, and make a statement to the Board in defense of mitigation.
- c) Within a reasonable time following the conclusion of the hearing, the Board will determine whether to expel the student(s) or impose lesser discipline.

### SECOND CHANCE SCHOOL (PATHWAYS)

Students may be involuntarily assigned to Pathways, as a behavior intervention, or as an alternative to suspension and/or expulsion (Grades 6-12), or if they demonstrate problems with discipline which include gross insubordination, disruptive, assaultive or violent behavior, substance abuse, weapons on campus, behaviors which persistently interfere with the learning of self or others, or serious offenses in or out of school, including those which result in involvement with the Juvenile Justice system.

A student assigned to Pathways cannot be on the campus of or participate in any activities, extracurricular or otherwise, in any of the Wakulla County schools for the duration of his/her placement in Pathways, including if withdrawn or not attending. Students may be allowed to attend open to the general public paid school events not occurring during school hours unless that privilege has been revoked. Driving privileges must be applied for through the principal or his/her designee.

If a parent/legal guardian chooses to withdraw his/her student from the Wakulla County school system, the time assigned for attending Pathways will still have to be fulfilled at a Second Chance School before the student may return to any other Wakulla County school(s). The assignment to the Pathways may be extended if the student has not complied with Pathways policies or has failed his/her classes, as determined by the Case Review and Reassignment Committee.

During each review by the Case Review and Reassignment Committee, the student's ongoing behavior, attendance, achievement, and demonstrated attitude will be taken into consideration to determine if an early return to the home school can be considered only after completing a full grading period in the program. Students who have been placed more than once in the program must complete one (1) full semester before being considered for an early release to their home school. The committee will meet at the end of every grading period to determine students who are eligible for an early return. In the case of an early return (before the end of the original one-year placement), the placement will be deemed in abeyance pending the student's ongoing continuation of good behavior, attendance, achievement, and demonstrated attitude at the home school. Should the student's behavior or other attributes noted above decline, the student may be returned to Pathways to fulfill the duration of the original placement. Time may be added to the original placement if warranted by the student's behavior. No student can exceed one (1) placement abeyance at middle school or high school. Once a placement is deemed in abeyance, the student will remain in the probationary status for the remainder of the middle school years or the high school years, as determined by the original placement. Students who are placed for actions that are deemed to a threat to the overall well-being of the school or students, may not be afforded an abeyance.

### **TRANSITIONING FROM A JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAM**

Records of students transferring in from another disciplinary program or transitioning from a Juvenile Justice program will be reviewed by the Case Review and Reassignment Committee. A transitional meeting with the student and parent/legal guardian must take place with the Superintendent or his/her designee to discuss the Case Review and Reassignment Committee's recommendation. Placement at the Second Chance School for a specified time may be determined to be the most appropriate placement. As with other Committee decisions, any placement is an involuntary assignment.

### **STUDENT DETENTION, SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The Wakulla County School System is responsible for establishing a climate in schools which encourages learning and protects the health, welfare and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the schools. In order to prevent unwarranted disruptions to a safe learning environment and to enforce School Board Policy and provisions of the Code of Student Conduct, searches may be made within school buildings, on school grounds, or at school functions according to the following procedures. In all cases of searches, the School District recognizes the rights of individuals to be free from unreasonable searches, and whenever possible, personally intrusive searches shall be avoided.



### Detention

Any full-time employee of the district shall be authorized to temporarily detain and question a student under circumstances which reasonably indicate that such student has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a violation of law or Rules of the School Board. No student shall be temporarily detained longer than is reasonably necessary. Such temporary detention shall not extend beyond the place where it was first affected, or the immediate vicinity thereof.

### Personal Search

The right of students as citizens to be free from unreasonable search shall be preserved in the schools. As such, school officials shall proceed with caution when engaging in the search of a student's person. Personal search may be conducted by school authorities when the health or safety of the student or other students is threatened. Reasonable suspicion for this assumption must exist prior to the search.

### Lockers

Lockers remain the property of the school(s) and are subject to search by school officials. The rights of personal property, however, as well as the rights of the school must be afforded consideration. The school principal or his/her designee is authorized to open lockers and to examine their contents to include personal belongings of students when such person has reasonable suspicion to believe that the contents threaten the safety, health, or welfare of any student or include property stolen from the school, school personnel, or other students. This policy does not preclude administrators from being able to randomly search lockers.

### Motor Vehicles

Any motor vehicle parked in a parking area in which students or visitors are permitted to park or which is designated as a student or visitor parking area may be searched by the site administrator or his/her designee without a warrant under certain circumstances.

### Use of Metal Detectors

As part of an overall plan to protect the health, welfare, safety and lives of students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the public schools, and to enforce provisions of the Code of Student Conduct, metal detectors may be used by administrators or their designee(s) to scan and screen for firearms and other weapons in order to locate and deter the use of firearms and other weapons which have no place in public schools.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Problems which students may encounter are solved as they arise by sincere efforts of all persons concerned to work toward constructive solutions of such problems in an atmosphere of courtesy and cooperation. Whenever a student or parent/legal guardian feels that he/she has a complaint, every effort is made to arrive at a satisfactory resolution of the problem on an informal basis. Any dispute concerning the interpretation and/or application of student rights and responsibilities, discrimination or harassment may be grieved under these procedures. This

grievance procedure does not apply beyond the third step to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspensions of up to ten (10) days, or to expulsion.

1. If the problem or complaint is unresolved in informal conference with the principal and appropriate personnel, a formal notice of complaint shall be filed with the principal or Equity Coordinator. This request shall be in writing and shall include names, dates, places, and pertinent facts to the grievance.
2. The principal shall confer with the parties involved to attempt resolution.
3. The principal shall respond in writing within three (3) working days.
4. If the problem is unresolved, the parent/legal guardian may request a review of the disposition by the Superintendent. This request shall be made in writing within five (5) days of the principal's written response and shall include names, dates, places, and pertinent facts related to the grievance. The Superintendent shall render his decision in writing within five (5) working days.
5. If the grievant is still unsatisfied after the Superintendent has rendered his/her decision in writing, the grievance may be appealed to the School Board, which will render a final decision within ten (10) working days following the next regular or special meeting which includes the appeal on its agenda. This appeal must be placed on the next agenda possible following its receipt. The Board's disposition shall be published in writing, and its decision shall be final as to local disposition of the grievance.

## **HOPE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, contingent upon available funds, and on a first-come, first-served basis, a K-12 student enrolled in a Florida public school is eligible for a scholarship under this program if the student reported an incident of battery, harassment, hazing, bullying, kidnapping, physical attack, sexual offenses, sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual battery, threat, or intimidation, or fighting at school.

In accordance with Emergency Rule 6AER21-02 COVID-19 from the Department of Education beginning with the 2021-2022 school year a student who has been subject to COVID-19 harassment will be eligible for a HOPE Scholarship. COVID-19 harassment is defined as any threatening, discriminatory, insulting, or dehumanizing verbal, written, or physical conduct an individual student suffers in relation to, or as a result of, school district protocols for COVID-19, including masking requirements, the separation or isolation of students, or COVID-19 testing requirements, that have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance opportunities or benefits.

Upon receipt of a report of an incident, the school principal or his/her designee must provide a copy of the report to the parent/legal guardian within twenty-four (24) hours as required by section (s.) 1002.40 (6) Florida Statutes (F.S.). The principal or his/her designee will investigate the incident to determine if the incident must be reported as required by section (s.) 1006.09 (6), Florida Statutes (F.S.). The principal or his/ her designee shall also provide a copy of the report to the parent/legal guardian of the alleged offender and superintendent within twenty-

four (24) hours after the receipt of the report. Upon conclusion of the investigation or within fifteen (15) days after the incident was reported, whichever occurs first, the school district shall notify the parent/legal guardian of the student, providing said parent/legal guardian with the option of enrolling his or her child in another public school that has capacity or requesting and receiving a scholarship for the child to attend an eligible private school, subject to available funding.

The school district in which the student resides must notify each student (parent/legal guardian) participating in the program in an eligible private school of the location and times to take all statewide assessments.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

### **Compulsory Attendance**

There is probably no factor more important to successful school progress than regular attendance. Students who are absent excessively from the instructional program will fall behind in academic achievement. Excessive school absenteeism precedes grade failure, and loss of interest. Regular attendance correlates directly to a student's educational growth. At the Elementary level parent/legal guardian are the controlling factor in attendance. The school expects the parent/legal guardian to be supportive in meeting attendance policies.

- A. All students of compulsory attendance age must attend school regularly. Students attaining the age of six (6) by September 1 through sixteen (16) years of age are required by law to attend school unless excused under the extenuating circumstances described in the law. The Superintendent, working with teachers, parents/legal guardians, and principals shall take appropriate action when necessary to enforce the state compulsory attendance law.
- B. Married, pregnant, or parenting students shall not be prohibited from attending school. These students shall be entitled to the same educational instruction or its equivalent as other students but may voluntarily be assigned to a special class or program better suited to their special needs.
- C. Married, pregnant, or parenting students of compulsory attendance age shall be required to attend school regularly. Pregnant students may be exempt from such attendance requirements for health reasons. Students participating in teenage parent programs shall be exempt from minimum attendance requirements for absences related to pregnancy or parenting but shall be required to make up work missed due to absence. A student of compulsory school age who is a parent/legal guardian of a child may be exempted from compulsory attendance by the Superintendent when a determination has been made that the parent has no access to childcare.

### **Explanation of Absences**

Parent/legal guardians are responsible for sending their children to school. Whenever a student is absent from school, the parent/legal guardian of that student are required by state statutes to

contact school officials in order to justify the cause of each absence. School officials are required by state statutes to define each absence and tardy as “excused” or “unexcused.”

### **Responsibilities Defined**

- A. The teacher is expected to:
  - a) Encourage good class and school attendance with quality instruction and curriculum and by demonstrating an interest in the welfare of students.
  - b) Take and record attendance for the students enrolled in each class. The record should reflect excused or unexcused absences.
  - c) Notify the parent/legal guardian and the principal or his/her designee when a student has missed three (3) consecutive days.
  - d) Upon request of the student or the parent/legal guardian, provide make-up assignments for absences in accordance with established policies.
- B. The principal is expected to see that:
  - a) Attendance is taken and recorded by duly authorized persons at a designated time(s) every official school day.
  - b) A determination is made by duly authorized persons in accordance with established policies as to the excused or unexcused status of each absence.
  - c) Students and parent/legal guardians are notified of absences in accordance with established policies.
  - d) Truancy Officer is contacted using designated form.
- C. The student is expected to:
  - a) Attend school regularly and to use this educational opportunity to his/her fullest potential.
  - b) Make arrangements with teachers for make-up work in accordance with established policies.
  - c) Provide the school with an adequate explanation with proper documentation indicating the reason for each absence in accordance with established policies.
- D. The parent/legal guardian is expected to:
  - a) Be responsible for each child’s school attendance as required by law.
  - b) Stress the importance of regular school attendance with his/her child.
  - c) Report and explain an absence to the school within two (2) working days of the student’s return to school.
  - d) See that the student has made arrangements for make-up work within two (2) days of his/her return to school in accordance with established policies.
- E. The district Truancy Officer is expected to:
  - a) Communicate and monitor adherence to the attendance policy.
  - b) Work with schools to promote good attendance.
  - c) Investigate the absence of students where the principal of a school has reason to believe that the absence is due to truancy or where the absences are excessive and report the findings of this investigation in writing to the principal as soon as reasonably possible.
  - d) Follow up with the principal regarding ongoing truancy investigations.

- e) Maintain a watch list of students who have exhibited or are exhibiting truant behavior.
- f) Adhere to policy regarding referrals to the Department of Juvenile Justice.
- g) Serve as the Superintendent's designee when a truancy petition must be filed.

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Elementary Excused and Unexcused Absences**

Determination of when an absence is excused or unexcused is the responsibility of the principal or his/her designee. Excused absences are absences resulting from:

- A. Illness or injury of the student. A certificate of illness from a licensed health care professional may be required in individual cases at the principal's discretion.
- B. Documented appointment(s) with health care professionals.
- C. Death in the family.
- D. Religious holidays or services which are mandated for all members of faith, and which cannot be observed outside of the regular school day.
- E. School sponsored events or activities.
- F. Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent/legal guardian, or student. As determined and approved by the principal or his/her designee.
- G. Students who are sent home with head lice will be excused for three (3) days to receive treatment. All absences after this day will be considered unexcused.
- H. Pre-arranged absences that have been requested in writing and approved prior to the absence by the principal or his/her designee.
- I. Out of school suspension.

Any absence which does not fall into one of the excused absence categories will be considered unexcused. Repetitive unexcused absences will be dealt with within the district's attendance policy.

### **Contacting Parent/Legal Guardians Concerning Student Absences in Elementary School**

The Wakulla County School Board has the affirmative obligation to increase student attendance through a monitoring process, to inform parent/legal guardian(s) of student absences, and to see that compulsory attendance laws are enforced. This obligation will be satisfied through the implementation of an attendance review procedure.

Parent/legal guardians will be notified about their children's absences regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

The procedure for parent/legal guardian notification is:

- A. Upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the school will contact the student's parent/legal guardian.

- B. If a student has been absent three (3) consecutive days with no known reason, the parent/legal guardian will be contacted. The attendance officer may be sent to the home if the parent/legal guardians cannot be contacted by phone.
- C. If a student has had five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences within a ninety (90) day calendar period, the student shall be reported to the school principal or his/her designee. Following the principal or his/her designee's review, the student may be referred to the Intervention Support Team (IST) to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.
- D. If a student has been absent ten (10) cumulative days, unexcused, a letter will be sent, and a parent/legal guardian conference must be held either in person or by phone with the principal or his/her designee. The student may be referred to the Intervention Support Team (IST) to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.
- E. If the student study team determines that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent/legal guardian must be scheduled to identify potential remedies.
- F. The principal or his/her designee may require official documentation from a third party such as medical for excessive excused absences.
- G. If the initial meeting with the parent/legal guardian does not resolve the problem, the student study team will implement interventions that best address the problem. These interventions may include, but not be limited to frequent communication between the teacher and the family, changes in the learning environment, mentoring, student counseling, tutoring, placement into different classes or programs, evaluation for alternative education programs, attendance contracts, referral to other agencies for family services, or other appropriate interventions. The student study team must report all cases to the superintendent when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance are unsuccessful.
- H. Parent/legal guardian contact must be documented. The Tier I plan form may be used as documentation for the initial and follow-up parent/legal guardian contact.
- I. Unsuccessful attempts to remedy the truancy problem must be communicated to the District Truancy Officer.
- J. If the parent/legal guardian refuses to participate in the strategies recommended by the student study team because he or she feels that those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent/legal guardian may appeal to a hearing officer who will make a recommendation to the school board. If the school board determines that the strategies of the Intervention Support Team (IST) are appropriate, and the parent/legal guardian refuses to cooperate, the superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.
- K. If a child subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the superintendent or his/her designee may file a truancy petition.
- L. If after continued efforts by school personnel to resolve the nonattendance, a student has fifteen (15) cumulative unexcused days within a ninety (90) day calendar period, the

student and parent/legal guardian shall be referred to the Department of Juvenile Justice for habitual truancy.

- M. Students who are absent twenty (20) or more days, excused or unexcused, during the school year may be retained or assigned to summer school pending the principal's review of the case.
- N. If a pattern of absenteeism develops in one (1) year, during the following year the principal shall have authority to take steps to intervene and resolve the problem of truancy.

### Elementary Make-up Work for Absences

Any student who misses a class with an excused absence may make up the work missed.

Procedures for making up work are:

- A. The student and or parent/legal guardian must contact each teacher by the end of the second day after returning to school to obtain make-up work. Failure to obtain make-up work within the two (2) days may result in the student's loss of the right to make up work missed for full credit.
- B. Time lost due to absence may be made up in a variety of ways. Determination of the manner for making up work, the time frame for handing the work in, and satisfactory completion of the make-up work will be made by the teacher.

### Elementary Perfect Attendance

Any student who has perfect attendance with no tardies during each grading period will have one (1) point added to his/her grade average for each subject. However, grades cannot exceed one hundred (100).

### Elementary Student Leaving School Grounds

Students excused from school shall be signed out in the office and be in the custody of a parent/legal guardian.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Excused Absences

Determination of when an absence is excused or unexcused is the responsibility of the principal or his/her designee. Any absence which does not fall into one of the excused absence categories will be considered unexcused. Excused absences are absences resulting from:

- A. Illness or injury of the student. A certificate of illness from a licensed healthcare professional will be required when cumulative absences accrue.
- B. Documented appointment with health care professionals. Documentation should be submitted to the school.
- C. Death in the family.
- D. Religious holidays or services which are mandated for all members of the faith, and which cannot be observed outside of the regular school day.

- E. Required attendance at a school sponsored activity.
- F. Pre-arranged absences that have been requested in writing and approved prior to the absence by the principal or his/her designee in writing.
  - Student/parent/legal guardian gets pre-approval form from the front office.
  - Pre-approval form is submitted to front office at least one (1) week, prior to requested absence.
  - front office submits form to principal or his/her designee for approval/disapproval.
  - Student/parent/legal guardian responsibility to pick up form prior to the requested activity.
- G. A ten (10) minute tardy will be counted as an absence for the period in which the tardy occurs.
- H. Out of school suspension.
- I. Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent/legal guardian or student, as determined and approved by the principal or his/her designee.

### Unexcused Absences

- A. Any absence which does not fall into one of the excused absence categories will be considered unexcused. Repetitive unexcused absences will be dealt with within the district's attendance policy.
- B. Students who have three (3) or more unexcused absences during a nine (9) week grading period may be assigned to either After School or In-School Detention.

### Make-up Work for Absences

Any student who misses a class due to absences from school is expected to make up the work missed. Procedures for making up work are:

- A. The student and/or parent/legal guardian must contact each teacher by the end of the second day after returning to school to obtain make-up work.
- B. Failure to obtain make-up work within the two (2) days and complete it within two (2) weeks will result in the student's loss of the right to make up work for full credit (the teacher determines how much to count off for late work).

### Perfect Attendance in Middle School

Any student who has perfect attendance during a nine (9) week grading period will have two (2) additional points added to his/her grade point average for each class in which the student has perfect attendance. Any student who has only one excused absence during a nine (9) week grading period will have one (1) additional point added to his/her grade point average for each class in which this true. However, grades cannot exceed one hundred (100). Attendance will be evaluated at the end of each nine (9) weeks and at the end of the year. Students with perfect attendance for the year will receive an award.



## Contacting Parent/Legal Guardians Concerning Student Absences in Middle School

The Wakulla County School Board has the affirmative obligation to increase student attendance through a monitoring process, to inform parents/legal guardians of student absences, and to see that compulsory attendance laws are enforced. This obligation will be satisfied through the implementation of an attendance review procedure.

Parents/guardians will be notified about their children's absences regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

### **The procedure for parent/legal guardian notification is:**

- A. Upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the school will contact the student's parent/legal guardian.
- B. If a student has been absent three (3) consecutive days with no known reason, the parent/legal guardian will be contacted. The attendance officer may be sent to the home if the parent/legal guardian cannot be contacted by phone.
- C. If a student has had five (5) absences, within a calendar month or ten (10) absences within a ninety (90) day calendar period, the student shall be reported to the school principal or his/her designee. Following the principal's or his/her designee's review, the student may be referred to the Intervention Support Team (IST) to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. (*See DHSMV Reporting Requirements on page ?*)
- D. If a student has been absent ten (10) cumulative periods, a letter will be sent, and a parent/legal guardian conference must be held either in person or by phone with the principal or his/her designee. The student may be referred to the Intervention Support Team (IST) to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.
- E. If the Intervention Support Team (IST) determines that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent/legal guardian must be scheduled to identify potential remedies.
- F. The principal or his/her designee may require official documentation from a third party such as medical documentation for excessive excused absences.
- G. If the initial meeting with the parent/legal guardian does not resolve the problem, the Student Study Team (SST) will implement interventions that best address the problem. These interventions may include, but not be limited to frequent communication between the teacher and the family, changes in the learning environment, mentoring, student counseling, tutoring, placement into different classes or programs, evaluation for alternative education programs, attendance contracts, referral to other agencies for family services, or other appropriate interventions. The Student Study Team (SST) must report all cases to the superintendent when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance are unsuccessful.
- H. Parent/legal guardian contact must be documented. The Tier I Plan form may be used as documentation for the initial and follow-up parent/legal guardian contact.
- I. Unsuccessful attempts to remedy the truancy problem must be communicated to the District Truancy Officer.
- J. If the parent/legal guardian refuses to participate in the strategies recommended by the Student Study Team (SST) because he/she feels that those strategies are unnecessary or

inappropriate, the parent/legal guardian may appeal to a hearing officer who will make a recommendation to the School Board. If the School Board determines that the strategies of the Intervention Support Team (IST) are appropriate, and the parent/legal guardian refuses to cooperate, the Superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.

- K. If a child subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the Superintendent or his/her designee may file a truancy petition.
- L. If after continued efforts by school personnel to resolve the nonattendance, a student has fifteen (15) cumulative unexcused days within a ninety (90) day calendar period, the student and parent/legal guardian shall be referred to the Department of Juvenile Justice for habitual truancy.
- M. Students who are absent twenty (20) or more days, excused or unexcused, during the school year may be retained or assigned to summer school pending the principal's review of the case.
- N. If a pattern of absenteeism develops in one year, during the following year the principal shall have the authority to take steps to intervene and resolve the problem of truancy.

#### **Middle School Students Leaving School Grounds**

Students are not permitted to leave school grounds during the regular school day without a written note from the parent/legal guardian to the principal or his/her designee stating the reason. The principal or his/her designee must approve the student's leaving. The note shall be kept on file in the school. Violators shall be subject to disciplinary action. Students excused from school shall be in the custody of a parent/legal guardian or excused pursuant to specific instructions from the parent/legal guardian.

### **HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

#### **Awarding Credit for High School Courses**

State Statute requires that a student be in attendance for a minimum of one hundred thirty-five (135) hours of instruction to be awarded high school credit. The one hundred thirty-five (135) hours required for attendance for instruction corresponds to twenty (20) absences in a school year or ten (10) for each semester. A student who has been in attendance less than one hundred thirty-five (135) hours may be provided an opportunity to receive credit by demonstrating mastery of the student performance standards in that course of study in alignment with requirements of the District Student Progression Plan.

#### **High School Excused and Unexcused Absences**

Parents and legal guardians are responsible for sending their children to school. Whenever a student is absent from school, the parent/legal guardian of that student is required by state statutes to contact school officials in order to justify the cause of each absence. School officials are required by state statutes to define each absence and tardy as "excused" or "unexcused." Determination of when an absence or tardy is excused or unexcused is the responsibility of the principal or his/her designee. To receive an excused absence, each student must present a note

signed by his/her parent/legal guardian or professional provider when required by this policy within two (2) school days of the student's return to school.

Excused absences/tardies may only be used for the following legitimate documented reasons:

1. Illness or injury of the student.
2. Death in the family.
3. Legal reasons that directly involve the student.
4. Religious holidays or services which are mandated for all members of faith, and which cannot be observed outside of the regular school day.
5. Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent/legal guardian or student as determined and approved by the principal or his/her designee.
6. Required attendance at a school sponsored activity.
7. Pre-Arranged absences.
  - a) Student/parent/legal guardian gets pre-approval form from the front office.
  - b) Pre-approval form is submitted to front office at least one (1) week prior to requested absence.
  - c) Front office submits form to principal or his/her designee for approval/disapproval.
  - d) Student/parent/legal guardian(s) responsibility to pick up form prior to requested activity from front office.
8. Out of school suspension

Any absence that does not meet criteria to be excused is unexcused.

## **High School Make-up Work for Absences and Semester Exams**

### **Make-Up Work for an Excused Absence-High School**

Any student who misses a class with an excused absence may make up the work they missed.

#### **Procedures for making up work are:**

1. The student/parent/legal guardian must contact each teacher by the end of the second day after returning to school to obtain make-up work.
2. Failure to obtain make-up work within the two (2) days will result in the student's loss of the right to make up the work for full credit (at teacher discretion as to how much less to count work). Make-up work should be completed within a two (2) week time period unless other arrangements are agreed upon with the teacher.
3. Time lost due to absence may be made up in a variety of ways. Determination of the manner for making up work, the time frame for handing the work in, and satisfactory completion of the make-up work will be made by the teacher.
4. Out of school suspension will be considered excused absences and students will be allowed to make up any missed work as cited above.

### Make-Up Work for an Unexcused Absence-High School

1. Any student who misses a class with an unexcused absence is required to contact each teacher by the end of the second day after returning to school to obtain make-up work for half credit.
2. Failure to obtain make-up work within the two (2) days will result in the student's loss of the right to make up the work for half credit (at teacher discretion how much less than half to count work). Make-up work should be completed within a two-week period unless other arrangements are agreed upon with the teacher.

### Absence for Semester Exam(s)-High School

Students who miss a semester exam will only be allowed to make up the semester exam if they have official third-party documentation.

### Number of Absences and Appeals Process-High School

Parents/Legal Guardians are required to provide written notes or other documentation to the attendance office to explain the reason for every absence. A student with four (4) or more unexcused absences and a passing grade in any class during any nine-week grading period will receive a grade of fifty-nine (59) for that class until a successful appeal is made as outlined below. Official documentation from a third party is required for five (5) or more absences in a nine-week grading period. Limited medical services may be available at the Wakulla County Health Department facility on the Wakulla High School campus pending staffing and signed parental permission.

### Appeals Process

Students with four (4) or more unexcused absences and a passing grade will receive a grade of 59 (F) on his/her report card for that class.

1. Students and parent/legal guardians will be notified of the need to appeal a student's unexcused absences.
2. Students and parents/legal guardians will have five (5) school days to set an appointment on the designated appeals day with the attendance review committee.
3. If an appeal is denied or the student or parent/legal guardian does not set an appointment within the five (5) day deadline, a failing grade of 59 for the class will remain in effect.
4. If an appeal is granted, the student may be allowed to restore his/her original grade one time in each class per year by attending a pre-arranged make-up day.
5. If a student has no more than four (4) unexcused absences in a class, he/she may attend one (1) class period for each unexcused absence in a class on a pre-arranged make-up day. A student with more than four (4) unexcused absences in a class during a nine-week grading period will not have this option. Attendance on the make-up day does not remove the unexcused absence or change it to an excused absence.
6. Students who miss ten (10) or more minutes of any class will be considered absent from that class.

7. Any student who has perfect attendance and no unexcused tardies during a nine-week grading period will have one (1) additional point added to his/her grade average for each class in which this criterion was met. However, grades cannot exceed one hundred (100).

### Contacting Parent/Legal Guardian(s) Concerning Student Absences in High School

The Wakulla County School Board has the affirmative obligation to increase student attendance through a monitoring process, to inform parents/legal guardians of student absences, and to see that compulsory attendance laws are enforced. This obligation will be satisfied through the implementation of an attendance review procedure.

Parents/legal guardians will be notified each nine (9) weeks about their children's absences regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

#### **The procedure for parent/legal guardian notification is:**

- A. Upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the school will contact the student's parent/legal guardian.
- B. If a student has been absent three (3) consecutive days with no known reason, the parent/legal guardian will be contacted by phone. The attendance officer may be sent to the home if the parent/legal guardian cannot be contacted by phone.
- C. If a student has had five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, with a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences within a 90-day calendar period, the student shall be reported to the school principal or his/her designee. Following the principal or his/her designee's review, the student may be referred to the Student Study Team (SST) to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. (*See DHSMV Reporting Requirements on page?*)
- D. If a student has been absent ten (10) cumulative days, unexcused, a letter will be sent, and a parent/legal guardian conference must be held either in person or by phone with the principal or his/her designee. The student may be referred to the Intervention Support Team (IST) to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.
- E. If the Intervention Support Team (IST) determines that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent/legal guardian must be scheduled to identify potential remedies.
- F. The principal or his/her designee may require official documentation from a third party such as a medical professional for excessive excused absences.
- G. If the initial meeting with the parent/legal guardian does not resolve the problem, the Intervention Support Team (IST) will implement interventions that best address the problem. These interventions may include, but not be limited to frequent communication between the teacher and the family, changes in the learning environment, mentoring, student counseling, tutoring, placement into different classes or programs, evaluation for alternative education programs, attendance contracts, referral to other agencies for family services, or other appropriate interventions. The Intervention Support Team (IST) must report all cases to the Superintendent when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance are unsuccessful.
- H. Parent/legal guardian contact must be documented. The Tier I Plan form may be used as documentation for the initial and follow-up parent/legal guardian contact.

- I. Unsuccessful attempts to remedy the truancy problem must be communicated to the District Truancy Officer.
- J. If the parent/legal guardian refuses to participate in the strategies recommended by the Intervention Support Team (IST) because he/she feels that those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent/legal guardian may appeal to a hearing officer who will make a recommendation to the School Board. If the school board determines that the strategies of the Student Study Team (SST) are appropriate, and the parent/legal guardian refuses to cooperate, the superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.
- K. If a child subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the superintendent or his/her designee may file a truancy petition.
- L. If after continued efforts by school personnel to resolve the nonattendance, and the student has fifteen (15) cumulative unexcused days within a 90-day calendar period, the student will be reported to the DHSMV (see below), and the student and parent/legal guardian shall be referred to the Department of Juvenile Justice for habitual truancy.
- M. Students who are absent twenty (20) or more days, excused or unexcused, during the school year may be retained or assigned to summer school pending the principal's review of the case.
- N. If a pattern of absenteeism develops in one (1) year, during the following year the principal shall have authority to take steps to intervene and resolve the problem of truancy.

#### High School Student Leaving School Grounds

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the regular school day without a written note or documented phone call from the parent/legal guardian to the principal or his/her designee stating the reason. The principal or his/her designee must approve or disapprove the student's leaving. The note shall be kept on file in the school. Violators shall be subject to disciplinary action. Students excused from school shall be in custody of a parent/legal guardian or excused pursuant to specific instructions from the parent/legal guardian.

#### DHSMV Policy and Statutory Requirements

For youth under the age of eighteen (18), holding a driver's license is a privilege that is directly linked to school enrollment and attendance. In order to qualify for a license, a youth must be actively enrolled in public school, private school, or a home education program. The student cannot accumulate more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a 90-day period or be withdrawn with a withdrawal code that indicates the youth has dropped out.

If a student accumulates fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a 90-day period or is withdrawn with a drop-out code (DNE, W05, W15, W18, W21, W22, W23), the Wakulla County School System notifies the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. The DHSMV automatically issues an order to suspend the student's license or the student's ability to obtain a license. The DHSMV sends a letter to the student and the student's parent/legal guardian explaining that the license is pending suspension. Once the student receives the letter, he/she

has fifteen (15) calendar days to provide proof of compliance to the DHSMV or to request a Hardship Waiver from the school's principal or his/her designee.

The school that is responsible for the transmission of suspension to the DHSMV is also responsible for clearing the record when the student is back in compliance with the attendance policy. The only school that can verify compliant attendance is the school the student is currently attending.

Please see the link below for a copy of the required form.

<http://www.flhsmv.gov/forms/72870.pdf>

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Wakulla County School District Financial Reports can be viewed online at:

<http://www.wakulla.schooldesk.net/Departments/Finance/BudgetandFinanceDocuments/tabid/54265/Default.aspx>

## **STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The following policy applies to students, applicants for admission, employees, and applicants for employment:

The School Board of Wakulla County, Florida does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, genetic information for applicants and employees, or any other reason prohibited by Federal and State law regarding non-discrimination. See 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d); 34 C.F.R. 106.9; C.F.R. 110.25.

In addition, the School Board provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society). This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. See 34 C.F.R. 108.9.

Disabled individuals needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services, programs, and activities of the School Board are required to notify the administrator at the school/center at which the event or service is offered to request reasonable accommodation in advance.

The designated Equity Coordinator, Title IX and Section 504 Compliance Coordinator as required by 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d) is Lori Sandgren, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327; 850.926.0065; [lori.sandgren@wcsb.us](mailto:lori.sandgren@wcsb.us).

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

1003.44 Patriotic programs; Each District School Board may adopt rules to require, in all of the schools of the district, programs of a patriotic nature to encourage greater respect for the government of the United States and its national anthem and flag, subject always to other existing pertinent laws of the United States or of the state. When the national anthem is played students and all civilians shall stand in attention, men removing the headdress, except when such a headdress is worn for religious purposes. The pledge of allegiance to the flag, "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," shall be rendered by students standing with the right hand over the heart. The pledge of allegiance to the flag shall be recited at the beginning of the day in each public Elementary, Middle, and High school in the state. Each student shall be informed by a written notice published in the Student Handbook or a similar publication pursuant to s.1006.7 (2) that the student has the right not to participate in reciting the pledge. Upon written request by his/her parent or legal guardian, the student must be excused from reciting the pledge, including standing and placing the right hand over his/her heart. When the pledge is given, unexcused students must show full respect to the flag by standing at attention, men removing the headdress except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes, as provided by Pub. L. Ch. 77-435, s. 7, approved June 22, 1942, 56 Stat. 377, as amended by Pub. L. Ch. 77-806, 56 Stat. 1074, approved December 22, 1942.

## **DRUG FREE WORKPLACE**

The School Board maintains a drug-free workplace. Drug abusers will be prosecuted as prescribed in the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988. (WCSB Policies 2.90, 3.42 and 6.33)

## **REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS PROVIDED**

Disabled individuals needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services, programs, and activities of the School Board are required to notify the administrator at the school/center at which the event or service is offered, in advance, to request reasonable accommodations.

## **HARRASMENT**

Harassment of any kind, religious, sexual, or racial to name a few is considered undesirable behavior. It is each individual's responsibility to respect the rights and integrity of others. It is the responsibility of each individual to report incidences of harassment witnessed or suspected to a person(s) of authority. Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Federal and State law regarding this policy or a specific act or situation should be brought to the attention of the Equity Coordinator. The grievance procedure timeline will be followed for resolution of issues. (WCSB Policy 2.70) Revised 07/19/12

## **A MESSAGE FROM WAKULLA DRUG FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

The Wakulla County School Board is committed to providing a system of education that is safe and conducive to learning. The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. Along with other serious disciplinary sanctions for substance



abuse violations, referral for prosecution is a possibility. We hope that students who have questions and problems related to alcohol or drug use will contact the school guidance counselor or health aide. In addition, the following list of local agencies offering drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation is provided to assist individuals who are seeking information or assistance.

## RESOURCES FOR HELP

**WAKULLA COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES CENTER:** (850) 926-2452

**PARENT HELP LINE;** Information, referrals, and counseling for parents – Toll Free in Florida 800-352-5683

**FLORIDA ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE ASSOCIATION:** (Tallahassee) (850) 878-2196

**TASC (Treatment Alternatives to Street Crimes):** (Tallahassee) (Wakulla) drug and alcohol screening and assessments; clearinghouse for referrals to treatment, (850) 488-6700, (850) 926-2452

**APALACHEE CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES:** (Wakulla) outpatient programs for chemical dependency; evaluation and referral; (850) 926-5900

**APALACHEE CENTER MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM;** 800-342-0774

**HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES** (Tallahassee) (Wakulla) listings of drug treatment programs and parent groups; (850) 488-0900; (850) 926-3591

**TURN ABOUT INC.;** (Tallahassee) family oriented, alcohol/drug and behavioral treatment programs for adolescents; (850) 671-1920.

**DISC VILLAGE TREATMENT CENTER;** (Tallahassee) (Wakulla) adolescent and adult inpatient and outpatient service; (850)575-4388; (850) 926-2452

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS;** (Tallahassee); (Wakulla) free and self-help program for alcohol users who may also be drug users; (850) 656-4388; (850) 926-6380.

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PRESERVATION HOTLINE; 24-HOUR** suicide prevention and mental health counseling; 800-273-TALK (8255)

**ALA-TEEN;** (Tallahassee) for teens who live in an alcoholic family situation or who have friends who have drinking problems; (850) 222-2294.

**NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUPS;** (Tallahassee) free family support groups for the loved one of drug abusers: (850) 656-5112

**NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS;** (Tallahassee) fellowship of men and women for whom drugs have become a major problem; support groups for staying clean; 24-hour, HELP LINE; (850) 599-2876.

## **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS ACT (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parent/legal guardian(s) certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

These include the right to:

*Consent* before student is required to submit a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (DOE).

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent/legal guardian.
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family.
3. Sex behavior or attitudes.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileges relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent/legal guardian(s); or
8. Income, other than is required by law to determine program eligibility.

*Have the opportunity to opt a student out of:*

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding.
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, in any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

*Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Protected information surveys of students.
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parent/legal guardian(s) to a student who is eighteen (18) years of age or an emancipated minor under State law. Parent/legal guardian(s) who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education.

## McKAY SCHOLARSHIPS

Parents must notify the district of their intent to participate in the “within district” McKay Scholarship Program for Exceptional Education Students (ESE). In order to be eligible for the McKay Scholarship Program, your child must meet the following:

- Be enrolled and reported for K-12 funding in a Florida public school for two (2) prior FTE periods.
- The student must be identified as a student with a disability.
- The student must have a current IEP or Section 504 Plan.
- Parents must file intent via the website [www.opportunityschools.org](http://www.opportunityschools.org).

## SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Section 504 guarantees certain rights to individuals with disabilities, including the right to full participation and access to a *free and appropriate public education* (FAPE) to all children regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. To view the Wakulla County 504 Plan, including Procedural Safeguards, visit the website at [www.wakullaschooldistrict.org](http://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org) or contact Belinda Crowson, Director of Exceptional Student Education and Student Services at (850) 926-0065.

## NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parent/legal guardians and students over eighteen (18) years of age certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education record within forty-five (45) days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parent/legal guardians or students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/legal guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/legal guardian or student believe are inaccurate. Parent/legal guardians or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record they believe is inaccurate. They should write the school principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/legal guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/legal guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/legal guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff, and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board, person or company with whom the school board has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (34CFR§99.31)
4. The right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Please refer to School Board Policy 5.711+ for additional details.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

School Board rules and procedures for disclosure of directory information from education records shall be consistent with Florida Statutes, State Board of Education rules, and the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

1. Directory information is defined by FERPA as “information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed” and consists of the following for Wakulla County students:
  - Student’s name.
  - Photograph.
  - Grade level.
  - Participation in officially recognized activities and sports.
  - Weight and height of members of athletic teams.
  - Recognition.
  - Honors and awards received.
2. The Directory information shall not be published when the student’s parent/legal guardian submits written notification to the principal within thirty (30) days of publication of the Wakulla County Code of Student Conduct and Attendance Policies. Failure to advise the student’s principal in writing shall be deemed a waiver of any right to preclude release of such directory information pursuant to Florida Statutes of Federal laws.