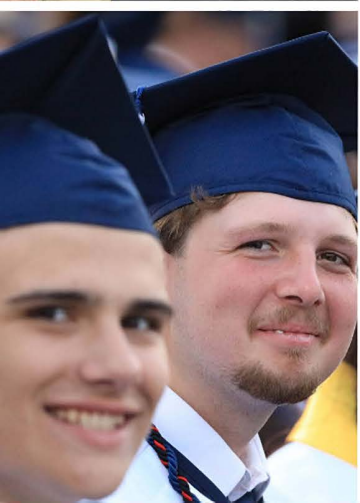


STUDENT & PARENT 24 25 **HANDBOOK**



MISSION

Make Every Moment Count Because Every Student Matters

VISION

Engaging Learners for Future Success

WE BELIEVE

- student engagement is key to success
- in high expectations for all
- that learning is a shared responsibility
- in supporting the whole child
- a positive, caring staff makes a difference
- in safe learning environments
- everyone should be treated with respect



Dr. Brigid Nesmith
Executive Director of
Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Timothy Hood
Asst. Superintendent
Administrative Services

Dr. Yancy Ford
Superintendent

Dr. Kirbi Ratner
Asst. Superintendent
Human Resources

Mr. Ron Womack
Chief Operations Officer

Ms. Lauren Cain
Director of Finance

Effingham County School District
WELCOME
Home

Welcome to a new year at Effingham County Schools! As the Superintendent, I am excited to welcome our returning families and extend a special welcome to those joining our community for the first time.

Our district is dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing, and academically challenging environment for all students. The detailed attention given by our District Leadership Team and School Board Members in setting expectations reflects our commitment to excellence. This handbook is a comprehensive guide designed to inform you about the rules, policies, and guidelines that ensure our schools remain safe and conducive to exceptional learning.

Why are these rules, policies, and guidelines so crucial? They serve multiple purposes:

- 1. Safety:** Our top priority is the safety of every student and staff member. Clear protocols help prevent accidents and respond efficiently to emergencies.
- 2. Academic Excellence:** Structured guidelines foster an environment where students can focus on their studies and achieve their full potential.
- 3. Respect and Responsibility:** Our policies promote respect among students, staff, and parents, creating a community where everyone feels valued.
- 4. Consistency and Fairness:** Having well-defined expectations ensures that all students are treated fairly and consistently, which is essential for maintaining trust and equity within our schools.

The collaborative effort of students, parents, and staff is vital for our success. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook and discuss its importance with your children.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Together, we will make this a fantastic year of growth and achievement.

Sincerely,

Dr. Yancy J. Ford
Superintendent
Effingham County Schools



*Left to Right (Back): Vickie Decker (District 5 - Chairperson), Jan Landing (District 2), Lynn Anderson (District 1 - Vice Chair)
Left to Right (Front): Ben Johnson (District 4), F. Lamar Allen (District 3), Yancy Ford (ECSD Superintendent)*

Dear Students & Parents,

As Chairperson of the Board of Education and an elected official, it is my honor to serve the families of Effingham County School District. The safety, well-being, and instructional focus for students are of utmost importance to our Board. We diligently establish policies and procedures to support these priorities and to maintain the high standard that has attracted families to our area.

With our continued growth, we must uphold our standard of excellence. The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook have been thoughtfully reviewed to protect our students and provide them with the best possible environment for success.

As parents and grandparents of students in the district, we take our responsibilities seriously. We have great faith in the leaders, teachers, and students of the Effingham County School District. We will continue to work together to keep Effingham County the best place to raise a family and we ask you to join us in achieving this goal and continuing the high standard of excellence.

Sincerely,

Vickie G. Decker
Chairperson of the Board of Education

Vickie Decker

District 5 Chairperson
Rincon, GA
Serving Since 2008

Lynn Anderson

District 1 Vice Chairperson
Bloomingdale, GA
Serving Since 2019

Jan Landing

District 2
Guyton, GA
Serving Since 2021

F. Lamar Allen

District 3
Clyo, GA
Serving Since 2005

Ben Johnson

District 4
Springfield, GA
Serving Since 2020

*Board Meetings are held at the Board of Education Central Office
405 N. Ash Street
Springfield, GA 31329
(unless otherwise announced)*

*Meeting agendas and approved minutes are posted on the district's website.
For more information contact Lisa Kessel at 912.754.2537*

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GENERAL SCHOOL SYSTEM INFORMATION

School Board

The schools are governed by a five-member board responsible for setting system-wide school policies designed to deliver the best possible education to each child. These policies govern budgetary, facility, and personnel resources, as well as the students, faculty, and staff at each school, and ensure that the local schools comply with state and federal laws. School board members are elected from five election districts and consider themselves servants of all Effingham County school children and their parents/guardians, representing the best interests of all citizens and all fifteen schools currently operating in the district. Board members are elected every two years on a staggered basis and hold four-year terms. Board members, as part of their service, expect to hear from constituents regarding school-related issues. Parents/Guardians and individuals who seek information regarding their own children's unique circumstances are asked to review the policies contained in the Appendix, speaking first with their children's teacher, and then the school principal, before contacting other administrative personnel and board members about those issues. Contact information for current board members can be found on the district website at www.effinghamschools.com or by calling the Board of Education at 912.754.6491.



Visitors, Volunteers, & Chaperones

All visitors to school campuses must report to the front office before visiting other parts of the school, as required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1180. A visitor's badge will be issued that will provide identification for the individual visiting the campus. Persons not wearing such a badge will not be allowed on campus. Unauthorized visitors will be requested to leave, and failure to do so will result in official misdemeanor charges of a high and aggravated nature. Visitors are allowed to visit only the areas requested. Please check with the front office at the school site for further clarification of their visitation procedures. These measures are necessary to protect children from unauthorized persons.

The Effingham County School System does not require everyone who visits a school to complete the Mandated Reporter training process, so to help differentiate between a school visitor, volunteer, and chaperone we have created brief descriptions.

A parental visitor acting in the role of a parent/guardian is not required to register as a volunteer or complete the child abuse training. Examples include, but are not limited to, visitors to the school for parent/guardians-teacher conferences, 504/IEP meetings, school wide and classroom programs or events, PTO events, field day, eating lunch with their child, or any visit to sign in or check out their student. A non-parental visitor is not required to register as a volunteer or complete the Mandated Reporter training. Non-parental visitors include, but are not limited to, community members, business owners/partners, civic leaders, or emergency personnel who are visiting the school for a short, singular time and are under supervision of an administrator and/or teacher at all times. All visitors must sign in at the front desk upon entering the school.

A school volunteer is a non-paid individual who serves in any auxiliary capacity under the direction and supervision of school personnel. A volunteer is one who performs any essential duties that an employee could perform such as, but not limited to, making copies, filing, escorting students, working with extracurricular activity groups, or assisting with lunch duty, media center, and front office tasks. Any person who leads or assists student groups or students other than their own in school or extracurricular programs is considered a volunteer. Volunteers will typically serve in this capacity multiple times throughout the school year. All volunteers must complete the Mandated Reporter training prior to volunteering.

A chaperone is any non-school personnel who attends an off-campus school activity (i.e. field trip) whether as a parent or official chaperone. All chaperones must have completed the Mandated Reporter training prior to attending any off-campus school function.

A contracted service provider is a district-approved third party that has a memorandum of understanding or contract with the district to provide a necessary service for the operation of the district. A contracted service provider is a non-school employee. All service providers must sign

School Districts

Public education from kindergarten through high school is free for all children who are bona fide residents of Effingham County. Upon request by the school, the parent or guardian shall be required to present proof of residency (such as an electric bill, city water bill, etc.) and to certify that the student is a full time resident (i.e. 12 months a year). Each school age child must attend the appropriate school located in the school district of this county in which he or she resides unless formally approved to do otherwise. Anyone with a question regarding residency and the school district should contact the Transportation Coordinator, Ms. Dana King, at the bus shop at 912.754.3574. That office maintains detailed districting maps.

The school districts are evaluated by the Board of Education from time to time as the county's population grows and new schools are built. There are no guarantees offered by the board to county residents and taxpayers regarding the lines separating school districts. The board reserves the right to adjust district lines to maintain appropriate school and class size in the best interest of every boy and girl.

School Councils

Effingham County schools have councils in place on each campus. Councils are primarily concerned with school improvement that leads to academic success for every student. Council members will be elected on a staggered basis every year to hold two-year terms. Anyone interested in learning more about school councils may contact their school principal.

in at the front desk upon entering the school. All contracted service providers must have completed the Mandated Reporter training and complete a background check at no cost to the District.

Only those children enrolled in an Effingham County school shall be able to utilize school facilities, equipment, and programs, and participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities subject to all other existing rules of participation.

Parent & Booster Clubs

Parent and Booster organizations offer parents many opportunities to get involved and work in support of public schools to the benefit of our children. For more information about these organizations, check with band directors, athletic directors, coaches, and principals.

The school board prohibits door-to-door sales by students due to the fact that doing so can be dangerous and/or threatening to the safety of children. Students who participate in door-to-door fundraising for a school-sponsored organization do so without the school board's permission.

Enrollment/Withdrawal

According to Effingham County Board of Education policy, each school-age child must attend the appropriate school in the district of the county in which he/she resides unless approval has been granted to do otherwise. Registration of students in grades Kindergarten-12 who have never attended an Effingham County School or have been off roll from Effingham County Schools for more than ten consecutive school days must complete an online application and upload required documents. For those who cannot upload documents, there is a drop box on the porch of the Central Registration Center at 306 N. Ash Street, Springfield, GA. A link for online registration can be found on the district website by visiting www.inghamschools.com/CRC. Appointments can be made on an "as needed" basis by calling Central Registration at 912.754.2530. The enrollment age for Kindergarten requires that children be five years old on or before September 1 of the current school year; first-grade children must be six years old on or before September 1 of the current school year. Transfer students from other school systems are enrolled **pending receipt of their academic and disciplinary records** from the school they have previously attended. A transfer student's most recent report card and evaluation by Effingham school officials will determine a student's class assignment and placement. In the event that there is a delay in receipt of complete academic records, a student may be temporarily assigned to classes and programs based on information provided by the parent. In this event, class assignment and program placement may be changed upon receipt of complete academic records. Students transferring between two Effingham County schools as a result of an address change must present a Change of Address form and updated proof of residency. This documentation may be submitted to any Effingham County school or the district's Central Registration Center.

In the interest of maintaining a safe and productive school environment for all children, and in accordance with state law, parents will also be asked to provide any information about a child's history with law enforcement and the judicial system, if such exists. Under O.C.G.A § 20-2-751.2 (b), a local board of education which has a student who attempts to enroll or who is enrolled in any school in its school system during the time in which that student is subject to a disciplinary order is authorized to refuse to

enroll or subject that student to short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion for any time remaining in that other school system's or school's disciplinary order upon receiving a certified copy of such order if the offense which led to such suspension or expulsion in the other school system or school was an offense for which suspension or expulsion could be imposed in the enrolling school. Additionally, under O.C.G.A § 20-2-768 (a), each local board of education is authorized to refuse to readmit or enroll any student who has been suspended or expelled for being convicted of, being adjudicated to have committed, being indicted for, or having information filed for the commission of any felony or any delinquent act under O.C.G.A. §§ 15-11-602 and 15-11-707 which would be a felony if committed by an adult.

The parent or guardian who registers a child for school will then control the child's enrollment, enrollment information, who has access to the child while at school, who can transport the child to and from school, and who can transfer the child to another school. Georgia Law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-780) states that no person shall make a change of custody of a minor child by removing the child from the premises of a private or public elementary or secondary school without the permission of the person who enrolled the child in the school, notwithstanding (in spite of the fact that/even if) the person seeking to obtain custody of the child from the school has a court order granting custody of the child to such person.

Student Enrollment Requirements

In order to complete the registration process, the following documents are required. These required documents can be uploaded during the online application process. If you cannot upload documents, there is a drop box at the Central Registration Center or you can call to make an appointment at 912.754.2530.



- **Proof of Residency** - must be CURRENT (less than 30 days old): Parent/Guardian **MUST** provide a current electric, water, or gas bill **AND** one of the following:
 - Current Driver's License with matching address
 - Current Residential Property Tax statement or bill
 - Current Lease/Rental Agreement WITH current rent receipt
 - Current Home Purchase and Sales Agreement
 - Current Mortgage Statement
 - Current Homeowner/Renters Insurance

NOTE: Cell phone bills will not be accepted as valid proof of residence.

- Certified copy of student's original birth certificate or other acceptable evidence of age as specified in Effingham County Board of Education Policy JBC: School Admissions.
- A copy of the enrolling student's social security card. Social security numbers are used by Effingham County Schools as a student identifier when reporting to the Georgia Department of Education and to the Georgia Student Finance Commission, as required to establish eligibility for financial aid including HOPE scholarship. Social security numbers may also be reported to the Georgia Department of Human Services in billing for certain services provided to Medicaid-eligible students, with parental permission. (Parent may elect to sign a form at the time of registration stating the individual does not wish to provide the social security number, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150.)

- Completed Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) and Georgia Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental, and Nutrition Screening (Form 3300). Alternately, parents may be issued a temporary waiver by providing an appointment card from a healthcare provider showing they have made an immunization appointment.
- Custody papers through the court or applicable affidavit provided for in policy JBCA Resident Students if student lives with anyone other than the natural parents, as listed on the birth certificate.
- Any court orders that prevent or limit access of a parent to the child or the child's educational records.
- Any restraining orders or other legal documents specifically limiting the access of any individual to the student(s) being enrolled.
- Picture ID of parent/guardian registering child. Picture ID may be government issued identification, employee identification, student identification, or other identification that provides acceptable evidence of the registering parent or guardian's identity.
- If the family is living in the household with someone else, you must submit a Family Resident Affidavit signed by the homeowner stating that the parent and child(ren) live in the house with them, along with valid proof of residency. A Family Residency Affidavit is valid for 12 months. The signatures of both the parent / legal guardian and the person the family is living with must be notarized by an ECSD employee on this statement. Also, when you complete the online application, please be prepared to provide the following information in order to complete the enrollment process:
 - Student/Parent Phone Numbers, Addresses, and E-Mail Addresses (if applicable)
 - Emergency Contact Phone Numbers
 - Physician Name & Phone Number (optional)
 - Documentation of any health concerns or allergies of which the school should be aware.

In accordance with the Effingham County Schools JBC(1) Homeless Students policy and the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, students experiencing homelessness shall not have their enrollment denied or delayed due to lack of any document normally required for enrollment.

Pre-K Program Registration

Children must be four years old on or before September 1 of the upcoming school year to be eligible for the Effingham County Pre-K program, as required by the Bright from the Start: Department of Early Care and Learning. Only valid Effingham residents or full-time district employees (Georgia residents only) are eligible for the Pre-K lottery drawing. Pre-K students cannot be co-enrolled in multiple Pre-K programs (either public or private). Pre-K students are not eligible for school choice. Additionally, Pre-K students are not eligible for residential or childcare hardship situations.

Enrollment: Maximum Age

All students who have not attained the age of 20 by September 1 are eligible for enrollment in appropriate education programs, unless they have received a high school diploma or the equivalent. Students who have not dropped out of school for one complete semester or more and who have not attained the age of 21 by September 1 are eligible for enrollment, provided they have not received a high school diploma or the equivalent. Federal law declares that a free appropriate public education must be

made available for all children three through 21 years of age with IDEA defined disabilities.

Withdrawal

In accordance with state law, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-780, the parent or guardian who enrolls a student is the only person who may withdraw the student from school.

When a 16 or 17-year-old student desires to withdraw from school, he/she must have the written permission of his/her parent or guardian prior to withdrawing. Prior to accepting such permission, a school administrator and the student's guidance counselor will have a conference with the student and parent/legal guardian within two school days of receiving notice of the intent of the student to withdraw. The purpose of the conference is to share with the student and parent/guardian educational options available and the consequences of not earning a high school diploma.

Parents should notify the student's teacher a day or two in advance of withdrawal of a student. If transferring to a school outside of Effingham County, permanent records will be forwarded to the new school upon receipt of the request for records, signed by the parent. If transferring to another Effingham County school, the records will be automatically sent. Original permanent records will not be given to parents to hand-carry to a new school. All textbooks, technology items, and media materials must be returned prior to withdrawal. If a parent wishes to withdraw a student, it is requested that the school be notified at least two days in advance, if possible, to allow time to complete the necessary paperwork and collect all materials. High school students should be especially mindful of these guidelines. Failure to adhere to these procedures may cause difficulty in receiving proper credit for completed courses towards graduation.

Central Registration Center

New student enrollment is managed by Central Registration, located at 306 N. Ash Street in Springfield. 912.754.2530.

Registration can be completed online at <https://www.effinghamschools.com/CRC>.

Parents' Rights To Know Qualifications

Parents may request the following information regarding teacher qualifications as required by the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA): Information regarding their student's classroom teacher's certificate or credentials, and/or college major and graduate degree information. Parents may also request information regarding the licensing and training of paraprofessionals.

Requests may be made in writing to the school principal or Dr. Kirbi Ratner, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Effingham County BOE, 405 N. Ash Street Springfield, GA 31329.

Nondiscrimination Notice

State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A. §20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that the Effingham County School System does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs (including athletics), activities it operates, nor in admission to or employment in its education program or activities. The

Sports Equity and Title IX Coordinator for this school system is Assistant Superintendent Mr. Tim Hood, Effingham County Board of Education, 405 N. Ash Street, Springfield, GA 31329; phone 912.754.6491. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this system may be submitted to the Sports Equity/Title IX Coordinator.

School Nutrition

Effingham County Schools participate in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. Meals are planned to meet USDA Dietary Guidelines while providing students choices from a variety of nutritional food items offered.

Prices for **school meals** are as follows:

	Daily	Weekly
BREAKFAST	\$1.75	\$8.75
Reduced	\$0.30	\$1.50
LUNCH	\$2.75	\$13.75
Reduced	\$0.40	\$2.00

Meals and a la carte items may be paid for at the point of purchase, or parents may opt to pre-pay for meals either by the week or for longer periods of time. Parents may pre-pay for student meals with cash, check, and credit or debit card using the online service "MySchoolBucks".



Information on how to enroll and participate in this program can be found on the homepage of the district website under "Find It Fast" > "MySchoolBucks". Information on how to apply for free/reduced lunch may

be found on the School Nutrition webpage. Students who qualify for free meals may never be denied a meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance prior to the processing and approval of the current year's Free and Reduced Priced Meal Application. Students with free or reduced plan will be able to charge the equivalent amount of two lunches and two breakfast meals according to their approved status. Once a student has reached that charge limit, he or she will be offered an alternate meal. The alternate meal consists of a cheese sandwich and milk. The student will continue to receive the alternate meal until adequate funds are received or up to three consecutive days, whichever comes first. Students whose accounts hold a negative balance are ineligible to purchase extra or a la carte items until the balance is paid in full. Students with negative balances or who lack sufficient funds to purchase a reimbursable meal may purchase a main entrée item only at the a la carte price as long as they have the funds to do so. No extra or a la carte items may be charged. All negative balances must be repaid prior to the end of the current school year. Students and guardians will be notified of low and negative balances through letters and emails sent home.

Checks will gladly be accepted as payment for the amount of a meal and for pre-payment, but parents are asked to send separate checks for each child. Two-party checks will not be accepted. All non-sufficient fund checks (NSF) are turned over to Envision Payments Solutions for recovery. Envision utilizes the federal and state laws allowing the electronic recovery of NSF checks. The cost of recovery becomes the responsibility of the one who writes the check. When a check is used as a payment, the check writer authorizes Envision either to use information from the check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from the check writer's account or to process the payment

as a check transaction. The check writer also authorizes Envision to collect a fee through an electronic fund transfer from the check writer's account if the payment is returned unpaid. THIS SAME PROCEDURE APPLIES TO ANY AND ALL CHECKS WRITTEN TO THE SCHOOL SYSTEM. Questions regarding this procedure can be answered at 877.290.5460.

All students are issued a personal ID number to access their meal accounts, and to maintain privacy, all students enter their number into a keypad at the register. Personal ID numbers remain with each student for the entire time they attend Effingham County Schools. Pre-K, kindergarten, and new students are issued a temporary card to use until they are able to memorize their number. Free and reduced price-meal applications are provided to each student's parent. Only those parents wishing to apply should return the form. **Parents will complete one form per family, listing all eligible children on the same form. The form should be completed and returned with the youngest child within five days of enrollment. Students must pay for lunch and breakfast until the form is returned and the student(s) is approved for the program.**

In addition to the school meal, students may buy extra or a la carte items such as milk, juice, water, fruit, and vegetable servings. Additional entree items may only be purchased in addition to the school meal. Drinks brought with sack lunches must not be in glass bottles. Students are not to bring cans or bottles of soda in lunches. **There are no heating facilities for a child's sack lunch.** When food substitutions are necessary due to a student's medical condition, food service personnel will work with parents to make those changes, based on a written statement from a recognized medical authority, such as the child's physician. Those statements must include information identifying the nature of the problem, and include a list of foods that should be omitted from the child's diet along with appropriate substitutions.

Lunchroom Safety: Students caught throwing food and endangering the safety of others, and any other inappropriate behavior, will be subject to the consequences of their behavior.

Check out our website for daily menus
www.effinghamschools.com/menus

Asbestos Management

The Effingham County School System maintains a complete, updated copy of the Asbestos Management Plan for its campuses. It is available for all workers before they begin work in any area of the buildings. This plan is available to the EPA, the state, parents, and other members of the public, teachers, and other employees for inspection within five working days after receiving a request for inspection.

School Insurance

Student insurance will be available to all students through our district website:

www.effinghamschools.com/student-insurance

No information will be sent home with students. All transactions must be handled directly with the vendor.

Outstanding Debts

In the case of outstanding debts for lost books, photos, annuals, and lunches, schools may file the debt with the small claims court.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of this code is to provide students in the Effingham County School System an effective and safe learning environment. This code has been prepared in accordance with the Discipline Procedures of the Effingham County School System. It contains information for school personnel, students, and parents. Included in the code is an outline of expected behaviors and the consequences relating to various violations. Expected behavior is behavior that promotes learning and encourages maturity during the school day as well as during all school-related activities. **Students and their parents need to know and understand this code in order to achieve these goals.**

Students Are Expected To:

- Participate fully in the learning process. Students need to report to school and class on time, attend all regularly scheduled classes, remain in class until excused or dismissed, pay attention to instruction, complete assignments to the best of their ability, and ask for help when needed.
- Avoid behavior that impairs their own or other students' educational achievement. Students should know and avoid the behaviors prohibited by this code, take care of books and other instructional materials, and cooperate with others.
- Show respect for the knowledge and authority of teachers, administrators, and other school employees. Students must obey reasonable directions, use acceptable and courteous language, avoid being rude, and follow school rules and procedures.
- Recognize and respect the rights of other students and adults. All students should show concern for and encouragement of the educational achievements of others and act as a good neighbor in the school community.

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

- At school or on school property at any time;
- Off school grounds at any school activity, function, or event and while traveling to and from such events;
- On vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system and while waiting for and leaving such vehicles, including, but not limited to, while at bus stops;
- Any time and place covered by the definition of the term "bullying," as defined in Student Code of Conduct Rule 17;
- Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school and which disrupts the educational process. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Student Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communications with their children and others in the community.

Parental Involvement

This Student Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers, and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance

student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contacts is extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents as well as on-going opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments. The General Assembly of Georgia requires that this code of conduct include language encouraging parents and guardians to inform their children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult. Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16, Unsafe School Choice Options.

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

Student Support Processes

The Effingham County Board of Education provides a variety of resources that are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include student support teams, school counselors, chronic disciplinary problem student plans, Individualized Educational Programs (IEP), and behavioral intervention plans that work within the IEP.

Authority Of The Principal

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

Authority Of The Teacher

The superintendent fully supports the authority of principals and teachers in the school system to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to provisions of state law.

Each teacher shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-737 which requires the filing of a report by a teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior that repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his or her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn, where such behavior is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct. Such behavior report, which describes the behavior and does not exceed one page, will be filed

with the principal or designee within one school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior.

The principal or designee shall, within 24 to 48 hours after receiving such a report from a teacher, send to the student's parents or guardian a copy of the report and information regarding how the student's parents or guardians may contact the principal or designee.

The principal or designee shall notify in writing the teacher and the student's parents or guardian of the discipline or student support services which has occurred as a result of the teacher's report within one school day from the imposition of discipline or the utilization of the support services. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable attempt to confirm that the student's parents or guardian has received the written notification, including information as to how the parents or guardian may contact the principal or designee.

Administrative Prerogative

The administration may assign discretionary punishment as appropriate for all offenses covered, or not expressly covered, by the following rules, except those offenses that require a student disciplinary hearing under Georgia law. Depending upon the offense and the circumstances, the alternative punishment might be given in lieu of or in addition to the progressive punishment outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary action for violations of expected behaviors will include appropriate hearings and reviews. In all cases, the rights of individuals will be ensured and protected. The Effingham County School System will make every reasonable effort to administer the discipline code consistently in all schools. When applicable, individualized plans (i.e. IEP, 504, and SST) will be reviewed for appropriate consequences.

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student

Students who exhibit consistent patterns of misconduct will be identified as chronic discipline problem students. A student identified as a chronic discipline problem will begin a behavioral correction plan process that includes three steps to be implemented as the student violates the Student Code of Conduct. The first and second steps may result in a suspension and referral to the superintendent's designee for discipline. The third step shall result in a suspension and referral to the superintendent's designee for discipline. At all points of the correction process, parents are encouraged to come to school and take an active part in helping to correct their child's behavior.

If a student is identified as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal, or designee, must:

- notify the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem by telephone and by email,
- invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and
- require at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference in order to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

If the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan, the school-based team will convene a meeting.

Progressive Discipline Procedures

Definition: Progressive discipline processes "shall be designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior leading to the discipline, that the previous

discipline history of the student being disciplined and other relevant factors will be taken into account, and that all due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed." (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-735).

Guiding Principles

Each incident of inappropriate behavior is unique in terms of situational variables. Similarly, disciplinary action will reflect consideration of a number of factors specific to the student involved in the misbehavior. This code strives for a safe and orderly student learning environment through a systematic process of behavioral correction.

- Inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences.
- Inappropriate behaviors are substituted with those that are consistent with the character traits identified in Georgia's Character Education Program.

Students in violation of the Student Code of Conduct cannot be assumed to have had sufficient instruction and/or practice in utilizing the particular character trait(s) related to the misbehavior. As such, disciplinary action should include engaging students in activities/events that reflect desirable character traits.

- Parents are viewed as integral partners to be utilized when addressing students' misbehavior.

Students, who engage in continual minor acts of misconduct, as well as those who engage in even a single act of more serious misconduct, are considered candidates for the school's behavior support processes.

Common Elements

Disciplinary action shall be in response to alleged violations of the Student Code of Conduct established and approved by local board policies.

1. Due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed.
2. The degree of disciplinary action will be in proportion to the severity of the misbehavior. In determining the level of seriousness of the misbehavior and the level of discipline necessary, a number of factors must be considered. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Student's discipline history
 - Degree of premeditation, impulse, or self-defense
 - Age and/or disability
 - Strength of evidence
 - Cooperation/remorse

In most situations, disciplinary action should reflect both a consequence and an opportunity to be successfully engaged in related character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

Considerations:

1. All progressive discipline components noted in this section are minimum requirements. Additional components may be set forth by the local board of education.
2. Students are responsible to all those with whom they come in contact during the school day. As such, progressive discipline supports granting authority to professional staff members to impose discipline consequences for minor acts of misconduct. (Teachers, for example, may require students to serve a classroom detention after school for a minor infraction occurring during that class.) However, when a student is believed to be engaging in a similar pattern of minor misbehavior,

or when a student has committed a more serious violation of the school rules, the principal must assume responsibility for the discipline process.

3. Georgia's Character Education Program reflects character traits that must be routinely demonstrated and identified by all stakeholders in the education process.
4. Utilization of the behavior support process should be considered for students who repeatedly engage in minor acts of misbehavior and for those who have engaged in behaviors resulting in more severe disciplinary actions. The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of this Student Code of Conduct. Professional staff members may utilize any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation, including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Parental contact by teacher reporting the misbehavior;
 - b. Loss of recess or other free choice time.
 - c. Isolation during lunch;
 - d. Classroom isolation from peers;
 - e. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian and teacher;
 - f. Participation in a school-service project that enables the student to be engaged in the desired character traits;
 - g. Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character traits.

The principal and/or administration may utilize any of the above discipline management techniques, and/or may employ:

1. Student participation in a conference with parent/guardian, teacher, and/or principal;
2. Restriction from school programs, such as clubs, activities, teams, extra- and co-curricular events, field trips, and special assemblies;
3. Partial day in-school detention;
4. Full day in-school detention for one school day.
5. In-school suspension (Grades 6-12);
6. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment;
7. Suspension from riding the bus;
8. Suspension from school;
9. Request placement into an alternative school program (Grades 6-12);
10. Referral for probation to superintendent's designee for discipline to be placed on probation;
11. Referral to superintendent's designee for discipline for a disciplinary hearing for long-term suspension or expulsion;
12. Referral to law enforcement agencies;
13. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the Student Code of Conduct and desired character trait(s).

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only after a disciplinary hearing as outlined in the Effingham County Board of Education policies. Parents/Guardians or students may elect not to contest whether a student referred to a disciplinary hearing has violated the Student Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving the right to a hearing before a disciplinary hearing. Such

an arrangement and waiver must be approved by the superintendent's designee for discipline in accordance with local board policy. Before a student is suspended from school for ten days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parents/guardians will be notified if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. This search may include, but is not limited to, searches of any vehicle brought on campus, any clothes, bags, or other items brought on campus, and any school property. These searches may occur at any time without further notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate with any such search. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities which occur after normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of administrators.

Discipline General Terms Glossary

Alternative School

Students in grades 6-12 may be placed in the Effingham County Schools Crossroads Academy Alternative School. The length of a student's stay in this program will be determined according to various factors to include but not limited to the student's academic work, behavior, and attitude toward school.

Alternative School Placement

Students who exhibit extremely disruptive behavior or who continue with chronic disciplinary problems may be removed from the regular school program and placed in an alternative school setting.

Bus Probation

A student found guilty of accumulated bus offenses may be placed on bus probation by the local school and the Coordinator of Transportation or their designee. Probation is a trial period during which a student continuing to receive additional bus offenses is subject to further disciplinary action.

Bus Suspension

The student is suspended from the bus for a specified period of time by the local school administrator or transportation administrator. The student is expected to attend school, but the parents are responsible for providing transportation to school.

Detention

Student attends a work/study session outside or inside of regular school hours. Student makes arrangements for transportation.

Disciplinary Probation

A student found guilty of certain offenses may be placed on probation by the local school and the superintendent's designee for discipline. Probation is a trial period during which a student violating school and/or school system rules is subject to further disciplinary action.

Due Process

A student is afforded oral or written notice of the charges against him/her and is given an opportunity for a review, hearing, or other procedural rights in accordance with state and federal laws.

Expulsion

Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school semester. With certain limited exceptions permitted by Georgia law, in a case where a disciplinary hearing officer has found a student guilty of an act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee involving intentional physical contact which causes physical harm (unless such contact was in self defense), the student shall be expelled from school for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school and shall be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior, (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6(c)(1)-(2)).

Hearing Officer

A person appointed by the board of education or superintendent to make decisions in disciplinary hearings.

In-School Suspension

An alternative school program in which the student is removed from regular classes for a specified period of time at the local school. Class work assignments are sent to the student by the teachers.

Referral to Law Authorities

Severe disciplinary offenses and violations of federal and state laws may require referral to local law enforcement agencies and the local district attorney's office as well as Department of Family and Children Services and Department of Juvenile Justice.

Referral to Superintendent's Designee for Discipline

The superintendent has appointed a superintendent's designee for discipline whose responsibilities include working with school administrators and students' parents/guardians in determining the proper discipline to be received by students for violations of the Student Code of Conduct, placing students in an alternative school, and placing students on disciplinary probation.

Referral to a Disciplinary Hearing

A student may be referred to a disciplinary proceeding for a determination of a consequence of a major Student Code of Conduct violation or for exhibiting a pattern of disruptive behavior demonstrated by cumulative violations of the Student Code of Conduct. These student disciplinary hearing proceedings and penalties shall comply with the guidelines set forth in the Public School Disciplinary Tribunal Act, as amended (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-750 et. seq.).

Student Disciplinary Hearing

A proceeding at which a hearing officer hears evidence presented by the school and the student when a student has been referred by the local school principal or his/her designee to the superintendent's designee for a disciplinary hearing for long-term suspension or expulsion. After the evidence is presented, the student's guilt or innocence is determined by the hearing officer and, if found guilty, the student's penalties are set by the hearing officer. Decisions of the hearing officer may be appealed to the board of education.

Suspension

Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed ten days (short term) or for a period greater than ten days (long term, which may only be imposed by a disciplinary hearing officer). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.

Waiver

A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Student Code of

Conduct and acceptance of consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary hearing officer.

Video Surveillance

Video surveillance provides a tool for monitoring activity on Board of Education property, including schools and buses, to help protect the health, welfare, and safety of students, staff, and visitors, and to collect evidence for use in student and faculty/staff disciplinary matters and in appropriate cases for law enforcement purposes.

There is no expectation of privacy on buses nor in the public areas of Effingham County Schools. Video cameras may be placed on buses, classrooms, and in the public areas of the campuses of Effingham County Schools. Video cameras should not be placed where they can record bathrooms, locker rooms, showers, or private offices. The presence of a video camera means that there is no expectation of privacy in that location.

Students and staff should be aware that video surveillance may occur on any school property or on any transportation vehicle. Video surveillance shall only be used to promote the order, safety, and security of students, staff, and property.

Persons recorded committing violations of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules and/or procedures, or law may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and/or referred to law enforcement agencies.

Video recordings may become a part of a student's/guardian's educational record or a staff member's personnel record if it could be used as evidence in a disciplinary matter.

Behaviors Which Result In Disciplinary Action

RULE 1: DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

No student shall engage in behavior that disturbs or interferes with school activities or the educational process.

RULE 2: UNRULY BEHAVIOR ON SCHOOL BUS

As defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1181, it shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop as designated by local school boards of education. Any person violating this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. Unruly behavior on the school bus is failure to comply with the following rules established for the use of school transportation.

Bus behavior is governed by the same rules stated in this handbook for behavior on school grounds or at school functions. Students are expected to follow school rules at bus stops and while otherwise waiting to board the bus and while on the bus. Loud disruptive behavior, being out of assigned seat, and not following directives of bus drivers is prohibited.

In addition to the school rules set forth in this handbook, students are expected to:

- Respect their bus driver and cooperate with his/her instructions or requests;
- Remain in their assigned seats when the bus is moving and keep their hands and feet out of the aisle and off other riders or their property;

- Keep their heads, hands, and feet inside the bus at all times;
- Remain absolutely quiet at all railroad crossings;

Students are likewise prohibited from:

- Fighting or “rough housing”, which includes disruptive behavior such as pushing, shoving, shouting, slapping, pinching, kicking, etc;
- Throwing items from the school bus;
- Acts of physical violence (as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6), bullying (as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4(a)), physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior * ;
- Possessing or using drugs, alcohol, other legal or illegal intoxicants, weapons, fireworks, or tobacco products (including, but not limited to, any form of vaporizer (vape pen), e-cigarette or related paraphernalia);
- Using profane, vulgar, or obscene gestures to anyone on or outside the school bus;
- Eating, drinking, or chewing gum on the bus;
- Damaging any portion of the interior or exterior of the school bus or its equipment;
- Having toys, pagers, radios, tape, or compact disc players, tasers/shockers or other electronic devices, or using a cell phone (smartwatch/gizmo watch, etc.) on the school bus, and, even if permission to have possession of such items on the school bus has been obtained, to refrain from using such items in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver’s operation of the bus;
- Using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other light or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver’s operation of the school bus.

** If a student is found to have engaged in physical acts of violence as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6, the student shall be subject to the penalties set forth in such code section. If a student is found to have engaged in bullying as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4(a) or in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus, there shall be a meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and appropriate school district officials to form a school bus behavior contract for the student. Such contract shall provide for progressive age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Contract provisions may include but shall not be limited to assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.5)*

RULE 3: PARKING & TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS ON CAMPUS

(This rule only applies to students enrolled in high school.) Parking at school is a privilege, not a right. Students must have a valid driver’s license and insurance to obtain a parking permit. Students are to park cars immediately upon arrival at school and must leave the parking area immediately. Students must park in their assigned parking spaces. Vehicles parked in other areas are subject to being towed at the owner’s expense. Students may not visit vehicles until they are ready to leave campus at the end of the day unless the office gives special permission. (Refer to the Driving Rules and Regulations at ECHS, SEHS, ECCA, and Crossroads Academy for additional guidelines.) Vehicles

parked on school grounds are subject to searches by school administrators and law enforcement officers at the request of the school administration.

No student shall abuse school parking regulations or operate a motor vehicle in such a way as to cause damage to public or private property located on school grounds or in such a way as to endanger life or limb of persons utilizing school facilities, driveways, or parking areas. This includes driving recklessly around school buses in route to and from school or school functions.

Students who have lost their driving and other privileges and who violate the intent of this policy by driving to school, and parking on and off campus shall be subject to discipline that may include permanent loss of parking and other privileges and punishment for insubordination.

Vehicles that are parked on school premises, which do not display a properly authorized parking permit, may be towed away at the owner’s expense.

RULE 4: USE OF PROFANE, VULGAR & OBSCENE LANGUAGE , INCLUDING OBSCENE GESTURES

No student shall use profane, vulgar, or obscene language or gestures.

RULE 5: ATTENDANCE

Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, and leaving campus without permission are prohibited. Students must attend school as required by the Compulsory Attendance Law in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1. Failure to be at school and in class as specified by a student’s school class schedule, in accordance with the Effingham County Board of Education Attendance Policy, may result in disciplinary action.

RULE 6: DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Students shall comply with the Effingham County Board of Education Administrative Procedures for Student Dress Code printed in this handbook.

RULE 7: INAPPROPRIATE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Embracing, other physical displays of affection, or any acts of a sexual nature are strictly prohibited.

RULE 8: FOOD, DRINK, CANDY, AND GUM

Food items brought for lunch are to be consumed in the cafeteria. No gum, candy, chips, or drinks are allowed or sold in class or between classes, other than school-approved and sponsored activities, such as special assemblies and parent or booster organization functions.

RULE 9: INSUBORDINATION/NON-COMPLIANCE

No student shall engage in insubordination or non-compliance by failure or refusal to comply with the reasonable rules or requests of school personnel. This behavior includes disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations or directives, and/or being dishonest or untruthful when questioned by school officials.

RULE 10: CHEATING & PLAGIARISM

Cheating on tests or examinations will not be tolerated. No student shall cheat or copy on any exam, project, homework, storage device, or report. This includes providing answers, work, or materials for another student to use without the expressed consent of the classroom teacher. Students shall not use scanned documents in a plagiaristic or illegal manner.

RULE 11: DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR/VERBAL ASSAULT

No student shall engage in disrespectful conduct or a verbal assault, including threatened violence, directed toward teachers, administrators, school bus drivers, other school officials or school personnel, other students, or other persons attending school related functions. Disrespectful conduct includes, but is not limited to, the use of vulgar or profane language or behavior based on a person's race, national origin, sex, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact that constitutes sexual harassment as defined pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

RULE 12: DAMAGE

No student shall mark, deface, or destroy school property or the property of another student or staff member. No student shall cause willful or malicious damage, during the school day or during off-school hours, to real or personal property of the school or to personal property belonging to a teacher, other school official, employee, student, or any person legitimately at school. No student shall cause or attempt to cause damage to property to include library books or reference materials. This includes vandalism of school furnishings, fixtures, and structures. Students are responsible for books and other materials or items assigned to them or checked-out by them. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1013 grants to local boards of education the right to set policies concerning lost or damaged school materials.

"Such policies may include any of the following sanctions against a pupil who fails or refuses to pay for any lost or damaged instructional materials and content; computer hardware, software, and technical equipment necessary to support such materials and content; library book; or media material at the replacement cost:

Refusal to issue or make available any additional instructional materials and content, any computer hardware, software, and technical equipment necessary to support such materials and content, any library books, or any media materials until restitution is made; or

Withholding of all grade cards, diplomas, or certificates of progress until restitution is made."

RULE 13: THEFT

No student shall take or steal any property of another person or the school with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or stolen.

RULE 14: FALSE ALARMS

No student shall, either directly or through another person, cause a false report or false public alarm, including, but not limited to fire, bomb, etc., at any school, on any school bus, or at any school function or event. This includes false alerts created by the student through the Centegix alarm system as well as unnecessary deployments of the KIST locking system.

RULE 15: ASSAULT AND/OR BATTERY

No student shall cause, threaten to cause, or attempt to cause physical injury to another person, including, but not limited to, another student, a teacher, an administrator, or other school employee or official. This rule also prohibits such conduct against a visitor while the visitor is on school grounds, or while attending a school-related activity, function, or event off school grounds, or while the student

is under school supervision. Students must make a good faith effort to peacefully settle all disputes without resorting to fighting or violent behavior; instead, disputes should be promptly reported to teachers, counselors, administrators, school bus drivers, or other school personnel who are in positions of authority. Students shall immediately cease fighting and separate when ordered to do so by a teacher, counselor, administrator, school bus driver, or other school personnel. If a student is charged with any act of physical violence (that is to say, any intentional physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature or which causes physical harm) against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee, the student shall be immediately suspended and referred to a student disciplinary hearing.

Students digitally capturing, transmitting, or posting pictures or audio/video recordings of altercations at school is prohibited. Students may be assigned In School Suspension for three days.

RULE 16: FIGHTING, AGGRESSIVE OR CONFRONTATIONAL BEHAVIOR (FIGHTING WORDS, POSTURING TO FIGHT)

Students are prohibited from fighting. Any student who uses disgraceful, shameful or abusive words which incite or could incite a breach of the peace, that is to say, words which would provoke a violent response from another individual, will be considered guilty of using fighting words, which is also prohibited. Any student who uses body language that could reasonably be considered to intimidate or provoke another person or who takes a posture that is representative of someone attempting to fight, shall be considered guilty of posturing to fight, which is prohibited as well. In addition, any student who uses his or her body to intentionally block another person's passage, to intimidate another person, or to grab, push, or touch another person is guilty of posturing to fight. Students shall immediately stop fighting, using fighting words, or posturing to fight when ordered to do so by a teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school personnel.

Students digitally capturing, transmitting, or posting pictures or audio/video recordings of altercations at school is prohibited. Students may be assigned In School Suspension for three days.

RULE 17: BULLYING

No student shall engage in bullying. Under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4, "bullying" means an act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

- Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
- Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
- Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
 - Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in O.C.G.A. §

16-5-23.1;

- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

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

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process. Such consequences shall include, at a minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling, as appropriate under the circumstances.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying, or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which may be done electronically. Any report of retaliation for reporting bullying will also be investigated and addressed in accordance with school procedures. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

RULE 18: THREATS AND INTIMIDATION

No student shall threaten, intimidate, or attempt to threaten or intimidate others with statements, gestures, and/or drawings, or communicate or attempt to communicate these threats with language that is spoken, written, body, electronic, or any means that could reasonably create fear or intimidation for any student, employee, official of the school system or any other person while on school grounds or in connection with school related functions and activities. This includes spreading rumors, regardless of their origin, that are threatening or create fear and intimidation.

RULE 19: TERRORISTIC THREATS

No student shall engage in terroristic threats. A student commits a terroristic threat when he or she threatens to commit any crime of violence, to release any hazardous substance, as such term is defined in O.C.G.A. § 12-8-92, or to burn or damage property with the purpose of terrorizing another or of causing the evacuation of a building, place of assembly, or facility of public transportation or otherwise causing serious public inconvenience or in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience. Violation of this rule may also result in reimbursing appropriate agencies for any costs related to such action.

RULE 20: ARTICLES UNRELATED TO SCHOOL INSTRUCTION

No student shall bring electronics, large sums of money, or any items not related to instruction. The use of cell phones or personal digital devices during instructional time is authorized only under the direction of the classroom teacher to support student instruction. Digital devices that have listening feature should be disabled during the school day (from arrival to departure from the school property). The school assumes no responsibility or liability for lost or damaged cell phones or personal digital devices if brought to school.

Elementary School

All digital devices must be stowed away in student's book bag or purse. Unauthorized use of a cell phone, smartwatch, or other digital device during the school day or on a school bus may result in the following:

1. **First offense** – staff member confiscates device and submits behavior referral; staff member gives device to administration; administration contacts parents and returns device to student at the end of the school day.
2. **Second offense** – staff member confiscates device and submits behavior referral; student receives loss of privilege; staff member gives device to administration; administration contacts parents and returns device to student at the end of the school day.
3. **Third offense** – staff member confiscates device and submits behavior referral; staff member gives device to administration; administration contacts parents; student will serve one day of OSS; parent picks up the device at the end of the school day.
4. **Fourth offense** – staff member confiscates device and submits behavior referral; staff member gives device to administration; administration contacts parents; student will serve three days of OSS and be placed on a probation contract; parent picks up the device at the end of the school day.
5. **Fifth offense** – staff member confiscates device and submits behavior referral; staff member gives device to administration; administration contacts parents; student will serve five days of OSS and is referred to the Superintendent's Designee for Discipline. Parent picks up the device at the end of the school day.

Middle School/High School

Unauthorized use of a cell phone, smartwatch, or other digital device during school day or on a school bus may result in the following:

1. **First offense** – staff member confiscates device and submits behavior referral; staff member gives device to administration; administration contacts parents; returns device to student at the end of the school day.
2. **Second offense** – staff member confiscates the device and submits a behavior referral; staff member gives device to administration; administration contacts parents; student will serve one day of OSS and parent picks up the device from the school at the end of the school day.
3. **Third offense** – staff member confiscates the device and submits a behavior referral; staff member gives the device to administration; administration contacts parents; student will serve three days of OSS and parent picks up the device at the end of the school day.
4. **Fourth offense** – staff member confiscates the device and submits a behavioral referral; staff member gives the device to administration; administration contacts parents; student will serve

five days of OSS and be placed on probation. Parent picks up the device at the end of the school day.

- Fifth offense** – staff member confiscates the device and submits a behavioral referral; staff member gives the device to administration; administration contacts parents; student will serve ten days of OSS and is referred to the Superintendent’s Designee for Discipline. Parent picks up the device at the end of the school day.

Taking pictures or the recording of audio/video with cell phones or other digital devices at school is prohibited unless under the express direction of a teacher as a component of instruction or a project. Students utilizing a cell phone or digital device for the capture of photographs or audio/video may be subject to additional punishment under this progressive discipline code.

RULE 21: TOBACCO AND NICOTINE PRODUCTS

No student shall use, possess, or distribute tobacco and nicotine products. This includes possession and/or use of a lighter, matches, any tobacco paraphernalia, e-cigarettes, vaporizer (vape pens), or similar paraphernalia.

RULE 22: UNLAWFUL USE OR POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL, DRUGS, OR OTHER INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES

No student shall possess, sell, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any legal or illegal drug in any form whatsoever, including, but not limited to alcohol, narcotics, cocaine, marijuana, depressants, stimulants, inhalants, hallucinogens, amphetamines, ecstasy, barbiturates, anabolic steroids, any additive or controlled substances, and intoxicants of all kinds, or any substance represented to be or reasonably appearing to be any type of drug. Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule provided it is handled properly through the school nurse office. (Note: Students who need to have prescription drugs at school shall follow the procedures as specified under Effingham County Board of Education Policy JGCD (Medication). Students who are in possession of such prescription drugs who have not followed these “Medication” procedures shall be treated the same as one who possesses illegal drugs. Students must also comply with “Medication Administration at School” guidelines in the Student Health portion of this handbook.

RULE 23: WEAPONS/DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS

No student shall possess, use, handle, or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

- Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun, or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.
- Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka,

nunchuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, any stun gun or Taser, and any chemical sprays. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

Any instrument which is designed for other purposes, but can easily be used to inflict injury (for example: a pencil, hair pick, compass, etc.) shall be considered a weapon/dangerous instrument if said instrument is used or intended to be used, in an aggressive, belligerent, threatening manner, or to defend against such behavior.

Each Effingham County School is considered a “school safety zone” as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-127.1. A “school safety zone” means in or on any real property or building owned by or leased to: (A) Any public or private elementary school, secondary school, or local board of education and used for elementary or secondary education; and (B) Any public or private technical school, vocational school, college, university, or other institution of postsecondary education.

Elementary School

- Any student, in elementary school, who has in his or her possession a weapon, or uses or threatens to use, any object to inflict injury on another person shall be disciplined by the school principal in the appropriate manner, and may be referred to a disciplinary hearing.

Middle School/High School

- Any student in middle and high school, who has in his/her possession a weapon, shall be automatically suspended from school for a minimum of five school days. During the suspension, a complete investigation of the incident shall be conducted by the school administration.
- Should the investigation conclude that there was no threat or intent involved then the student and his/her parents must have a conference with the superintendent or his designee to determine if the student shall be allowed to return to school after the five (5) day suspension. A student who has in his/her possession a weapon with intent will be suspended from school for a minimum of ten days and referred to the Superintendent’s Designee for Discipline.
- Students who possess any weapon with threat or intent in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. The Superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a disciplinary hearing to reduce the mandated one year expulsion under circumstances where the one year expulsion appears excessive to the superintendent. The hearing officer shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirements on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment. Finally, in any decision appealed to the board of education, the board may reduce the mandated punishment but shall consider whether the superintendent and/or hearing officer considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction.

Reporting Requirements

- Any employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a student (1) possesses a weapon as defined in paragraph one, (2) is involved in an assault using a

weapon as defined in paragraph two, or (3) is involved in a second offense with a weapon on campus, must report such violations to the principal or assistant principal of the school. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that such report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney.

- The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any activity involving weapons.

RULE 24: GANG OR GANG-LIKE ACTIVITY

Gang and gang-like activity is strictly prohibited in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 16-15-4. No student shall use, employ, or rely upon gang membership or affiliation to threaten, intimidate, or to harass verbally or physically other students or employees of the Effingham County Board of Education.

RULE 25: CRIMINAL LAW VIOLATORS/OFF-CAMPUS MISCONDUCT

In addition to the prohibition against cyberbullying, as defined in this code of conduct and local policy, a student may be subject to disciplinary action for any off-campus behavior which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process.

RULE 26: CUMULATIVE OFFENSES

Willful and persistent violations of the Student Code of Conduct may result in a referral to the Superintendent's Designee for Discipline for appropriate action to include a disciplinary hearing for possible expulsion.

RULE 27: ACCEPTABLE USE OF INTERNET

No student shall violate the Acceptable Use Agreement (AUA) found in the Appendix of this handbook.

RULE 28: ENCOURAGING OR COUNSELING ANOTHER TO VIOLATE THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Any student who incites, advises, or counsels another person to engage in prohibited actions shall be considered guilty of violating the Student Code of Conduct and may be punished accordingly.

RULE 29: STUDENT REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Any student who has knowledge that another student has committed a violation (i.e. – alcohol, drugs, intoxicating substances, weapons, false alarms, bomb threats, etc.) of the Student Code of Conduct, and that violation significantly impacts the safe and orderly environment of the school, is bound to report such violation to the appropriate school officials. Violators of this rule will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Students are encouraged to use the school district's Tip411 App to report any information related to violations of the Student Code of Conduct. Furthermore, any student who knowingly makes a false report to school officials is subject to disciplinary action.

RULE 30: FALSIFYING REPORTS

No student shall falsify, misrepresent, omit, or erroneously report information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student. Such reporting

shall result in disciplinary action.

Referral To Law Enforcement Authorities

The Effingham County Board of Education and its employees will adhere to all federal and state laws, which require reporting certain violations to law enforcement agencies. These violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Aggravated assault if a firearm is involved;
- Aggravated battery;
- Sexual offenses;
- Carrying deadly weapons at public gatherings;
- Carrying deadly weapons at school functions or on school property or within school safety zones;
- Illegal possession of a pistol or revolver by a person under the age of 18;
- Possession and other activities regarding marijuana and controlled substances;
- False alarms.

Other violations may be reported to law enforcement authorities based upon administrative prerogative.

tip 411

What is tip411?

We know that people may sometimes be afraid to reach out with information, but when using tip411, the system removes all your identifying information and officers don't receive any identifying information about you - not your name, not your phone number, not your address, nothing.

How to submit a 100% anonymous tip?

There are 2 ways to submit your anonymous tip:

1 **web form:**
effinghamschools.com/ecsd-tip411

2 Send a text message to **847411**

- then type the keyword for your location
- add a space
- type your tip info
- hit send

location keywords can be found at
effinghamschools.com/ecsd-tip411





ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT DRESS CODE

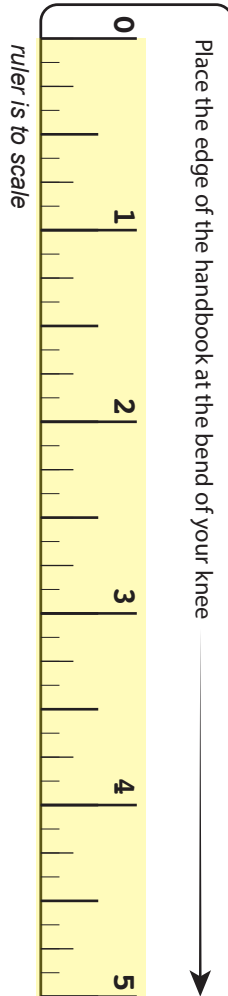
All students in grades K-12 are expected to comply with the following Administrative Procedures for Student Dress Code. The K-12 dress code as pertaining to uniforms does not apply to Pre-K; however Pre-K students must adhere to general dress standards, including wearing fully closed-back shoes.

Students are expected to dress appropriately while in attendance at school. This includes wearing the adopted school uniform. This dress code addresses requirements for uniform dress days and dress down days. General appearance of students should be reasonable and not distracting to others. Students are expected and required to show proper attention to personal cleanliness, neatness, and conservative standards of dress and appearance. Student clothing, hair styles, accessories, make-up, etc. must not be distracting, immodest, inflammatory, offensive, or hazardous. When questionable, the school principal will make the final determination of whether a student's attire or appearance is in conflict with the system policy. Students will observe the following dress code both at school and on the school bus:

Uniforms

The following mandatory uniform standards for student attire have been developed and are applicable to all elementary, middle, and high schools.

 Tops	 Bottoms	 Jumpers /Dresses	 Uniform Accessories
<p>Colors white, black (or additional color designated by the school)</p> <p>Styles a long or short-sleeved collared, polo shirt; no pockets; insignias or emblems no larger than a standard credit card</p> <p>Fit Must be buttoned properly</p> <p>Under the school uniform solid color (navy, white, ash, or black) undershirt, camisole, or turtleneck</p> <p>In addition to the shirts described above: each school may include in its uniform dress code the option of allowing students to wear a school sponsored T-shirt (which may have a crew neck rather than a collar.)</p>	<p>Colors khaki, navy, or black</p> <p>Styles skirt, shorts, slacks, capri pants, skorts; no form fitting fabric or styles; no ornamentation or insignia larger than a standard credit card, no more than one insignia/ emblem per clothing article</p> <p>Fit Skirts, shorts, and skorts may be no more than five inches above the bend of the back of the knee (garments with slits will be measured from the top of the slit); pants and shorts must be worn and belted at the natural waist; pant legs must not drag the floor; correct size is to be worn to avoid sagging or overly snug fit.</p>	<p>Colors khaki, navy, or black</p> <p>Styles no ornamentation and no insignia larger than a standard credit card, no more than one insignia/ emblem per clothing article</p> <p>Fit no more than five inches above the bend of the back of the knee (garments with slits will be measured from the top of the slit)</p>	<p>Shoes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed-toe and fully closed-back are required • Matched pair • Properly fastened <p>Socks & Tights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socks – matched set of no more than two solid colors; • Tights, leggings, and hose (must be worn under jumpers/ dresses) – solid, neutral, black, white, navy, or chosen school color; no pattern or designs <p>Belts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colors – solid color • Fit – worn inside the belt loops • Oversized buckles and studded belts are prohibited <p>PPE Masks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must follow General Standards for accessories



All Schools: white, black, or official school color polo, or spirit shirt.

OFFICIAL SCHOOL SHIRT COLORS

Royal Blue	Hunter Green	Kelly Green	Maroon/Burgundy	Red	Navy Blue
Blandford Elementary Rincon Elementary	Ebenezer Elementary Ebenezer Middle	Guyton Elementary	Marlow Elementary Sand Hill Elementary South Effingham Elementary South Effingham Middle South Effingham High	Springfield Elementary	Effingham County Middle Effingham County High

Supplemental Wear

The uniform dress code shall not prohibit students from wearing coats, jackets, and sweaters or layered garments when necessary due to weather conditions. Trench coats and dusters are not permitted. Garments which do not meet the description below under "Indoor Layering Garments" must be removed upon entering the building.

Indoor Layering Garments

If while in the building a student needs to wear a wrap for warmth, it must be worn over an approved uniform top. If the extra garment has a hood, the hood cannot be worn in the building.



Colors

Majority solid with no more than two color combinations of solid navy, white, ash, black, or school designated color; prints, plaids, camouflage, and other patterns or designs are prohibited

Styles

Cannot bear a logo or name brand symbol or other insignia or message larger than the size of a standard credit card, no more than two insignia/emblems per clothing article

The uniform dress code prohibits students from wearing or displaying expressive items on the uniform that may contribute to disruption by substantially interfering with discipline or with the rights of others. It also prohibits items that undermine the integrity of the uniform, notwithstanding their expressive nature, such as a sweatshirt or other over-shirt that bears a message and/or covers or replaces the type of shirt required by the uniform dress code.

On special occasions schools will be allowed to have dress down days. The principal at each school will determine the dress down days for that site. Acceptable dress for dress down days will be consistent with the dress code as published in this policy and in the Effingham County Student and Parent Handbook.

High School students who participate in pathway or specialty programs that have prescribed uniform requirements may wear those uniforms throughout the school day provided that the uniforms meet the individual program requirements.

General Standards

The following provisions apply to both uniform and dress down days:

- Students are expected to wear clothing in a normal fashion. For example, shorts/pants must be worn with the waistband around the waist. Pant legs must not drag the floor. Clothing such as belts, flaps, shoes, etc., must be fastened.
- Shirts may be unbuttoned three buttons down for polo shirts and only two buttons down for all other. No skin may be shown between the button line and the belt line.
- Any shirt or top that cannot be tucked in and remain tucked in cannot be worn. Shirt tails may be no longer than fingertip length. (Exceptions may be made for seasonal jackets, coats, sweaters, and sweatshirts of appropriate size that are in accordance with the policy).
- Clinging, revealing, immodest, or overly form-fitting garments are not allowed. Cleavage must not show. Sundresses that are cut low in the front or lower than the shoulder blades in the back are not allowed.
- No clothing or accessories which through language or graphics display, exploit, sanction, or promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gangs, sex, violence, discrimination, vulgarity, or unlawful activity are allowed. This would include political messages of any kind.
- Dresses, skirts, and other similar garments shall be no more than five inches above the bend in the back of the knee (measurement will be taken from top of the slit). Shorts, culottes, and other similar garments shall be no more than five inches above the bend of the back of the knee (Shorts and other garments with slits will be measured from the top of the slit.) The wearing of leggings, tights or similar attire (under jumpers/dresses) does not provide for an exception to the length requirement for dresses, skirts, or other similar garments. Acceptable legging colors include (worn under jumpers/dresses): white, tan, black, brown, navy, or gray, in solid colors only.
- Proper and acceptable undergarments will be worn at all times. Undergarments should not be visible to others.
- While indoors, students may not wear the hood portion

of a hooded jacket.

- Hair should be fixed in an appropriate and acceptable manner with no extreme styles such as mohawks.
- Matched-pair, fastened, closed-toe, and closed-back shoes are required. Students are required to wear safe and appropriate shoes at all times.
- No clothing, jewelry, or accessory which is deemed a safety risk is permitted. Any clothing, jewelry, hair, make-up, fingernails, or any other item which causes a disruption of the school environment may be banned at the discretion of the principal.
- The following are prohibited:
 - Hats, visors, head scarves, rollers, bandanas, caps sweatbands, do-rags, extreme headbands (such as “character” or “athletic” headbands)
 - Sunglasses
 - Visible tattoos (all tattoos must be covered)
 - Contact lenses that create an unnatural eye effect (such as “Halloween” contact lenses)
 - Visible body piercing (except ears and limited to three per ear in the lobe area)
 - Clear or covered body piercing(s)
 - Chained wallets, spiked jewelry, mouth grills or fronts
 - See-through garments; sheer see-through, or mesh see-through garments
 - Tank, halter, tube, strapless or crop, or midriff tops
 - Knit or spandex pants, leggings, jogging, exercise/ yoga, cargo pants or shorts, skinny jeans, pajamas or loungewear
 - Torn, ripped, frayed or cut clothing
 - Flip flops, soccer sandals, bedroom shoes, Heelys or similar type shoes
 - Extreme hair color, such as blue, orange, pink, green, unnatural red, etc. – hair must be a natural shade or tone

Certain school environments or classes may require more restrictive dress due to safety issues, i.e., Career/Technical Agricultural Education (CTAE) classes, Science labs, Physical Education. Students are expected to comply with safety guidelines.

The principal shall have the authority to interpret dress code and make case by case determinations for the appropriateness of dress which is questionable or which is not covered in this policy. The principal may also make exceptions to this uniform and dress code for special events such as spirit week and approved school organization or team affiliated garments. **The principal will ultimately decide if the clothing is appropriate.**

K-2 Exceptions

The length rule for skirts and shorts will be relaxed; tank tops and sundresses will be allowed.

K-5 Exceptions

The rule regarding tucking in shirts and tops may be relaxed.

Compliance

Schools should strive for full compliance using positive reinforcement. Corrective action should only be used when all positive measures have been exhausted.

The correction plan below has been established to address incidents of noncompliance to the Uniform and Dress Code.

Incident #1

Warning, parental contact, and remedy uniform. Should the remedy require the student to sign out of school, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

Incident #2

Loss of privileges, after-school detention, or ISS.

Incident #3

Violation will be addressed in accordance with the Code of Conduct which provides for various consequences depending on a student’s discipline record and the severity of the offense. Students not adhering to the dress code will be considered non-compliant except under the following conditions:

1. Students transferring from out of district during the first ten calendar days after registration;
2. Students on campus outside of school hours;
3. Principals authorize dress down days or give special permission;
4. Instructors/advisors obtain permission through the principal and require students to dress in uniforms such as band, ROTC, sports teams, etc.

Book Bags

Book bags made entirely out of clear plastic or nylon mesh are the only type allowed in Effingham County schools. Book bags made of other materials will be confiscated, including athletic bags and other such accessory bags and cases.



If a student or parent/guardian becomes concerned with the weight of a book bag or backpack, the first step should be to review the backpack safety information distributed by the school system to determine if the book bag is the correct type and is being used correctly.

See the Back Pack Guidelines in the Student Parent/Handbook Section.
www.effinghamschools.com/ecsd-handbook

If it is determined that the student is wearing the backpack correctly and carrying only the necessary items and the book bag still weighs more than 20% of the child’s body weight, make an appointment to meet with the student’s teacher(s).

(Note: middle and high school students may wish to consult directly with the principal.) If, after meeting with the teacher, it is determined that the student is following the correct guidelines for carrying the book bag properly and safely and it still weighs more than 20% of the child’s body weight, make an appointment with the principal to discuss the use of an acceptable rolling backpack. If the principal approves the use of a rolling book bag, the rolling book bag must be inspected and approved by the principal prior to using it.

If the school principal does not approve the use of a rolling book bag, students and parents may request a hearing with the school system’s hardship committee. Parents may also request to purchase home sets of textbooks so their child does not have to carry textbooks back and forth to school.

A request form for purchasing textbooks is available at each school. As a safety issue, parents are asked to keep children from hanging items, such as stuffed animals or long ribbons, from their book bags. Parents are also asked to adjust the length (cutting off excess, if necessary) of straps and drawstrings so that there are no long, dangling pieces. These items are prone to get caught in the doors and seats of buses and could cause injury.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY



Please see Effingham County Board of Education Policy JB (Student Attendance) which can be accessed via the link provided in the Appendix or by visiting: <http://www.effinghamschools.com/attendance-policy>.

Administrative Procedures For Absences And Excuses

ATTENDANCE, GRADE, AND DISCIPLINE ENHANCEMENT (MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS)

The Effingham County Board of Education recognizes that student attendance, grades, and discipline are of primary importance. Students with excessive absences, poor grades, and discipline problems are forfeiting a valuable degree of their total education experiences. In an attempt to improve attendance, academic achievement, and overall discipline at the middle and high schools, the following procedures shall be followed for students in grades six through twelve:

Students shall have the privilege of driving automobiles to school and shall be issued a parking permit if they qualify under existing procedures (i.e. parental consent, licensed, and properly insured).

To be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities (i.e., clubs, pageants, field trips, "10-Day" activities), a student must:

- Earn a 70% or higher in five classes at the end of each nine-weeks' grading period;
- Have less than six unexcused school day absences in a nine-weeks' grading period. For the purposes of eligibility, a student is considered present at school for a full day if they are present four of seven periods;
- Have four or less discipline referrals in a nine-weeks' grading period;

Students who do not meet the above criteria shall lose their opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities, and "10-Day" activities during the following nine weeks' grading period. Middle school athletics will follow high school guidance of eligibility changing at the semester.

Students with good attendance, good grades, and good discipline shall be allowed to regain their privileges to participate in extracurricular activities and to participate in "10-Day" activities.

To regain eligibility to participate in extra-curricular activities (i.e., clubs, pageants, field trips, "10-Day" activities), a student must:

- Earn 70% or higher in five classes at the end of a nine-weeks' grading period;
- Have less than six unexcused school day absences in a nine-weeks' grading period. For the purposes of eligibility, a student is considered present at school for a full day if they are present four of seven periods;
- Have four or less discipline referrals in a nine-weeks' grading period.

For students attending school for only a portion of the year, absences, grade point averages, and discipline referrals will be appropriately prorated for the time enrolled in school when making an eligibility determination.

General Middle School & High School Athletics (GHS) Eligibility Requirements

Students gain eligibility to practice or compete for the middle school or high school in Effingham County in which they are enrolled after they have been certified by the principal of that school, after the eligibility forms have been processed by the GHS office (if applicable), and after the students have met the standards of:

1. Academic requirements
2. Age
3. Semester in high school
4. Residence in the school's service area
5. Georgia High School Association transfer rules (if applicable)
6. Annual physical examination

Specific Academic Requirements Middle or High School Athletics

To be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities, a student must be academically eligible. First year students (entering 6th or 9th grade) are eligible academically. To be considered eligible for athletics, a student must:

- Earn a 70% or higher in five classes at the end of 1st Semester
- Yearlong final grades will be used for 2nd Semester reporting
- Have less than six unexcused school day absences in a nine-weeks' grading period. For the purposes of eligibility, a student is considered present at school for a full day if they are present four of seven periods.
- Have four or less discipline referrals in a nine-weeks' grading period

The grade reported to GHS (high school) for the spring semester will be the yearlong grade.

Athletic academic eligibility lasts for one semester and must be reviewed after each and every semester. The Athletic Director at each high school will submit eligibility reports each semester to the Georgia High School Association. Each school principal is required to provide and monitor the school's ineligibility list for attendance and discipline each nine-weeks' grading period.



GHS Eligibility Requirements High School Credits

- Five (5) high school credits after 1st year
- Eleven (11) high school credits after 2nd year
- Seventeen (17) high school credits after 3rd year

Administrative Procedures

Senior Privilege Period

Rising seniors who have met the eligibility requirements at the end of the second semester of their previous school term may be eligible to be exempted from either the first or the last period of their seven period schedule during their senior year (Senior Privilege Period). Students will not be allowed to remain on campus during the Senior Privilege Period; therefore, personal transportation is required. This privilege is earned during the second semester of the junior year and may be lost if the student fails to follow school rules and Senior Privilege Period guidelines. To be considered for this exemption, a student must:

- Earn a 70% or higher in five classes at the end of the previous semester
- Have less than six unexcused school day absences in a nine-weeks' grading period. For the purposes of eligibility, a student is considered present at school for a full day if they are present four of seven periods.
- Have four or less discipline referrals in the previous nine-weeks' grading period
- Have earned the minimum credits for promotion to grade 12 as required by the local system's policy.

Seniors may have their Senior Privilege Period revoked at the principal's discretion for violation of rules within the Effingham County School System Code of Conduct. Parent permission is required for student to participate.

Additional Guidelines

Students, and their custodial parent(s) or guardians, are ultimately responsible for attendance and absences; however, school officials may attempt to contact, notify and inform custodial parent(s) or guardians of students who have unusual patterns of absences in any class, for any reason, during a nine-weeks' grading period.

Under no circumstances is it acceptable for a student to falsify their attendance records.

Pre-K and Preschool Intervention Program (PSI) students will follow the attendance guidelines provided by Bright from the Start. According to Bright from the Start guidelines, Pre-K students that are absent for ten consecutive days may be dropped from the program.

Late Arrival/Early Departure Procedures

For unexcused late arrivals to school and unexcused early departures from school, the following procedures will apply:

- Students who have a total of five yearly cumulative unexcused late arrivals and/or early departures from school will be considered in violation of the Compulsory School Attendance Law and notice will be sent home regarding violation of this law.
- Excuses for tardies/early departures shall be accepted for the following reasons:
 - Personal illness and whose attendance may be detrimental to the health of themselves or others;
 - Illness or death in the immediate family;
 - Special and recognized religious holidays;
 - Mandated by the order of a government agency (such as jury duty or physical exam for armed services);
 - Serving as Page to the Georgia General Assembly.
 - A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard and such parent has been called to active

duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted excused late arrivals or early departures to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the leave.

Indication of an excused early departure or late arrival specified on a school sign in/out sheet by a parent/guardian shall be accepted as a substitute for a written excuse.

Unless a student is signed out of school at least ten minutes prior to the regular school dismissal time, the student will need to remain in class until the regular dismissal time.

Students who accumulate excessive unexcused late arrivals or early departures from school during a nine-weeks' grading period shall receive the following consequences:

Elementary School

Grades

Upon the third (3rd) and any subsequent unexcused late arrival or early departure per nine-weeks' grading period, the student may receive a zero for class participation in the first (for late arrival) or last (for early departure) academic subject of the day for each and every violation during the nine-weeks' grading period. This is a site-based decision at the authority of the principal.

Make-up Work

Teachers may not be required to provide make-up work for unexcused late arrivals/early departures unless the school principal determines that circumstances warrant the granting of such make-up work. If the student needs to complete make-up work due to unexcused late arrivals and/or unexcused early departures, the student shall make up the work during P.E., music, or recess on the same or following day.

Pre-K Bright from the Start policy States

"Children who do not attend class, are late, or leave early for ten consecutive days without a medical excuse or other reasonable explanation, must be removed from the roster, and Bright from the Start must be immediately notified in writing that such action has been taken."

Middle School

Discipline

Students who accumulate more than two unexcused late arrivals and/or more than two unexcused early departures from school during a nine-weeks' grading period shall be subject to the appropriate consequences according to progressive discipline measures which may include detention, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension. *Days suspended will increase accordingly after eight unexcused tardies/early departures during a nine-weeks' grading period

High School

Discipline

High school students missing more than 10 minutes from any class are considered absent for that class. Missing less than 10 minutes from any class is considered to be a tardy/early departure. Students who accumulate more than two unexcused late arrivals and/or more than two unexcused early departures from any class during a nine-weeks' grading period shall be subject to the appropriate consequences according to progressive discipline measures which may include detention, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension. *Days suspended will increase accordingly after six (6) unexcused tardies/early departures during a nine-weeks' grading period.

Teen-Age & Adult Driver – Responsibility Act

Georgia's Teen-age and Adult Driver Responsibility Act of 1997 requires that local school systems certify whether or not a student's attendance pattern and discipline record allow him or her to have a Georgia Driver's permit or license. This section of the law became effective on January 1, 1998. O.C.G.A. § 40-5-22 stipulates that the issuance of a driver's license and driver's permit to minors will be based on student enrollment.

Driving curfews also apply to any Class D license holders prohibited from driving between 12 and 5 AM. During the first six months an individual holds a Class D driver's license, they may not drive with any non-family passengers under the age of 21.

Certificate of School Enrollment

Students must present a Certificate of School Enrollment when applying for a driver's license or permit. This certificate may be obtained from the counselors' office for a \$5 fee. Allow at least 48 hours (two working days) for the certificate to be prepared. This certificate is good for 30 days. If a driver's license or permit is applied for after the certificate has expired, then the student must obtain another certificate for \$5 and allow at least two working days for processing.

Students who plan to obtain a permit or license during the summer months must obtain a Certificate of School Enrollment prior to summer break. Certificates issued prior to summer break are valid for 90 days.



INSTRUCTION, GRADING, & ASSESSMENT

Textbooks & Technology

Textbooks issued to students are the property of the Effingham County School System. There is no charge for the use of these books. If a book is lost or damaged, however, students are expected to pay for a replacement copy. Textbooks are expensive – some as much as \$150 to \$200 each.

If there is an outstanding debt for lost or damaged books at the end of the school year, the school may file the debt with the small claims court.

Technology issued to students is the property of the Effingham County School System. There is no charge for the use of technology such as Chromebooks and/or other technology items. If the Chromebook is lost, stolen, or damaged beyond repair, students may be charged a fine for lost and/or damaged Chromebooks.

Field Trips

Field trip experiences are designed to enhance the instructional program of the school. Students in Pre-K through eighth grade are generally allowed one field trip per year. Additional trips may be provided through grants or businesses. Many trips are a result of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, such as clubs, athletics, and the arts, and as such, are handled by each supervising instructor and school administrator.

All overnight trips must receive approval from the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee prior to planning.

Parent permission must be received for students to travel away from the school campus. Students will also wear temporary identification bracelets when on field trips. Students may be photographed or videotaped during field trips.

Parent involvement may be sought by teachers and supervising instructors. Parents who accept chaperone responsibilities or choose to accompany the class on the field trip are required to complete the Mandated Reporter training prior and provide evidence of completion prior to the field trip. Parents are not allowed to bring the student's siblings or other non-school children. The field trip is designed for the child and his or her classmates.

Homework

Homework reinforces concepts presented at school and is an integral component of each student's educational experience. It allows students the opportunity to practice skills on their own and become confident in their skills.



Media Center

The media center at each campus is open daily and provides students with materials to help with classwork and projects and to encourage reading for enjoyment. Individuals, small groups, and classes may visit the media center. Students may borrow books to take home and read. Lost or damaged books from the media center must be paid for before the student will be allowed to check out any other books. If there is an outstanding media debt at the end of the school year, the school may file the debt with the small claims court.

Effingham College & Career Academy

The Effingham College and Career Academy (ECCA) is a charter school of the Effingham County School System and provides technical and career instruction to prepare students for post secondary employment or advanced education. Visit the ECCA website at <http://ecca.effinghamschools.com> for more detailed information about programs of study. The ECCA is an adjunct facility of the district's two high schools. All district policies applying to high school students apply to students attending the Effingham College & Career Academy unless otherwise directed by the academy's chief executive officer or principal.

ECCA STEM Academy Program

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) is a national education movement designed to create critical thinking skills across disciplines, prepare students for Science and Math courses in college, and help communities stay competitive in a global economy. Evidence shows these schools and programs produce graduates with a deeper knowledge and a stronger passion for learning, particularly in Science and Mathematics. That knowledge and passion translate into much higher rates of college attendance and more students majoring in scientific and technical fields. The STEM Academy program at ECCA is designed to prepare students for success in post-secondary education, career, and citizenship. It is designed to appeal to students who seek a small-school approach to learning, where academic subjects are connected, and where students are engaged in rigorous Science and Mathematics content integrated with a STEM-themed pathway.

Criteria For Admission

Only students who are enrolled in Effingham County School District will be eligible for the application process. Current eighth grade students who meet the established criteria can apply into a lottery drawing for enrollment into the STEM Academy program. There are two rounds of lottery drawings prior to the start of school in August each year. Due to possible changes in assessment requirements each year, the criteria for eligible STEM Academy program students is reviewed yearly and will be posted on the ECCA website by January 15th for the following school year. Students who are enrolled in any alternative school for discipline during eighth grade are not eligible to apply to the STEM Academy program. Any student who fails a course their eighth grade year will lose eligibility and/or forfeit their spot to attend the STEM Program. Course grades will be reviewed once posted to their transcript.

First Lottery

Students will be eligible for possible enrollment if they meet the criteria set for the given year by the Effingham County School District's Office of Curriculum and Instruction. Eligible students who meet all areas of the eligibility requirements can apply for the first lottery.

Second Lottery

Siblings: A student with a twin or sibling who has been accepted into the STEM Academy program in the same grade level who is eligible for the first lottery and does not get selected for the program is eligible to be entered into the second lottery. If the eligible twin/sibling does not get selected for the program in the second lottery, then the STEM Academy Academic Review Team will review the student's academic achievement and accept or deny the student into the program. A sibling of a current ninth, tenth, or eleventh grade STEM Academy student that was eligible for the first lottery and was not selected for the program can go into the second lottery. If the eligible sibling does not get selected for the program in the second lottery, then the STEM Academy Academic Review Team will review the student's academic achievement and accept or deny the student into the program.

Employee: A student of a full time Effingham County School District staff member who is eligible for the first lottery and did not get selected for the program can go into the second lottery. If the Effingham County School District staff member's eligible student does not get selected for the program in the second lottery, then the STEM Academy Academic Review Team can review the student's academic achievement for acceptance/denial into the program.

Transfer Student: Students who transfer into the Effingham County School District during their seventh or eighth grade year may become eligible for the second lottery based on assessment scores identified in the criteria that are obtained by the end of the school year. A transfer student who enrolls with the district as a rising ninth grade student after the second lottery without necessary, required, and completed assessment scores can have their academic history reviewed by the STEM Academic Review Team to determine eligibility for the program. The parent is responsible for initiating the review and supplying all of the score data. If a waitlist exists after the second lottery, the transfer student who is found to be eligible will be placed at the end of the waitlist.

ECCA STEM Academy Program Enrollment Process

- Eligible students will receive a notification, by email, mid-January of eligibility.
- Eligible students will receive an email and a postcard mailed to their home address within one week prior to the STEM Academy Program Information Night. The STEM Academy Program Information Night will be held to share the expectations of the STEM Academy program including transportation, the application process, schedule, course sequence, expectations, etc.
- The first lottery will be held at ECCA with a live feed of the event for parents to view. A link to the event will be emailed to the parents. There will be no waitlist created.
- An email will be sent to parents to accept their student's spot for the next school year.
- Spots must be accepted by the deadline.

- If a student's lottery number is not selected in the first lottery, they will be automatically placed into the second lottery.
- Students who are eligible for the STEM Academy program, but do not complete their application by the deadline of the first lottery can apply for the second lottery by the second lottery deadline.
- Students who do not confirm their spot through the Second Lottery Acceptance form by the closing of the deadline will automatically go to the bottom of the waiting list.

Maintaining Enrollment at STEM

- Students who are sent to an alternative school for discipline while in the STEM Academy program may return to their base school at the completion of their time in the alternative school.
- Students may not apply to have their data reviewed for enrollment by the STEM Academic Review Team after the start of the school year UNLESS they are transferring from another STEM high school.
- After the first nine-weeks' grading period, any student failing two or more classes will go before the STEM Academic Review Team to discuss the potential of returning to the base school.
- Students not on track to graduate (with the required number of credits) will go before the STEM Academic Review Team to discuss potential of returning to base school.
- Freshman students may choose to return to the base high school within the first ten days of the school year. Sophomores through Seniors may choose to return to the base high school within the first five days of the school year. Students returning to the base high school will be responsible for any assignments that were missed in his or her new classes.
- Students who unenroll from Effingham County School District for any reason will forfeit their spot and will not be able to re-enroll at the STEM Academy program.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment refers to several enrollment programs through which a high school student takes one or more courses from a state public or private postsecondary institution and receives credit at the high school and at the postsecondary institution. Dual enrollment guidelines vary according to the option the student pursues. Depending on the dual enrollment option chosen, eligible students may enroll either part-time or full-time in approved credit-bearing courses. Students typically begin dual enrollment coursework in their junior or senior year. Any student who wishes to be dually enrolled should schedule a conference with a counselor, at least one semester prior to interest, who can provide details regarding the requirements and benefits of various options for dual enrollment. Student and parent participation in an advisement session with a school official is a requirement for any dual enrollment program.

If the post-secondary institution awards a numerical grade, that grade will be recorded on the transcript. If the postsecondary institution awards letter grades, the letter grades will be correlated and recorded on the transcript as follows:

A = 99 B = 89 C = 79 D = 70 F = 69

Credit will only be given if the post secondary institution awards credit.

Courses For Areas Of Study

Courses for areas of study that shall earn unit credit are listed in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.20 List of State-Funded K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Course.

English/Language Arts: Four units of credit in English Language Arts shall be required of all students. A full unit of credit in American Literature/Composition and a full unit of credit in Ninth Grade Literature and Composition shall be required.

Mathematics: Four units of credit in Mathematics shall be required of all students. Three of the four units of credits must be in Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra II or Advanced Algebra. Additional core courses needed to complete four credits in Mathematics must be chosen from the list of High School Fourth Course Options approved by the Georgia Department of Education.

High School Mathematics Decision Rubric for Eligible Students with Disabilities:

The purpose of this **High School Mathematics Decision Rubric** is to assist Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams as they engage in the discussion around eligible students with disabilities completing an alternate course sequence, aligned with their transition plan for post-secondary options, to meet the Mathematics course requirements of State Board of Education (State Board) Rule 160-4-2-.48. This rubric has been revised to align with the new course expectations included within Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Standards that were adopted August 2021. According to the Awarding Units of Credit and Acceptance of Transfer Credit and/or Grades State Board Rule (160-5-1-.15), this rubric should only be used for students who (1) have a disability documented prior to high school that has precluded the student from achieving grade-level proficiency in Mathematics; AND (2) have earned credit in Algebra: Concepts and Connections AND Geometry: Concepts and Connections; AND (3) the preponderance of data indicates the student would not be able to successfully progress in the Advanced Algebra: Concepts and Connections course. Once this rubric is initiated, it should be revisited and signed annually. The IEP team's decision should be based on the unique needs of the student, individual student data, and post-secondary goals. Local boards of education shall award units of math credit only for courses approved by the State Board that include concepts and skills based on the state-adopted curriculum for grades 9-12. Students with disabilities, who were identified prior to enrollment in high school and have a disability affecting Mathematics achievement, may follow an alternate course sequence to meet the Mathematics course requirements of the graduation rule (State Board Rule 160-4-2-.48). Alternate course sequences would allow a student with disabilities earning core credit in Algebra: Concepts and Connections AND Geometry: Concepts and Connections along with two other Mathematics courses to satisfy the minimum Mathematics requirements for high school graduation. Special Note: Parents/guardians and students must be informed that Advanced Algebra: Concepts and Connections is required for many post-secondary opportunities and students who do not complete Advanced Algebra: Concepts and Connections in high school will have limited college and career options after high school.

Science: Four units of credit in Science shall be required of all students including one unit of credit in Biology, one unit of credit in either Physical Science or Physics, one unit of credit in either Chemistry, Earth Systems, Environmental Science, or an AP/IB course, and one additional Science unit of credit. Any AP/IB Science course may be substituted for the appropriate courses above.

Social Studies: Three units of credit shall be required in Social Studies including one unit of credit in United States History, one unit of credit in World History, one-half unit of credit in Personal Finance and Economics and one-half unit of credit in American Government/Civics.

CTAE or Modern Foreign Languages or Fine Arts: A total of three units of credit shall be required from one of the following focused areas: CTAE or Modern Foreign Language or Fine Arts.

Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) Pathways: Students must earn three units of credit in a coherent sequence of CTAE courses through a self-selected pathway leading to college readiness and a career readiness certificate endorsed by related industries.

Modern Foreign Language: Students who select this pathway must earn three units of the same modern language. Students planning to enter or transfer into a University System of Georgia institution or other post-secondary institution must take two units of the same modern language.

Students whose native language is not English may be considered to have met the foreign language requirement by exercising the credit in lieu of enrollment option to determine if the student is proficient in their native language. A formal examination shall be administered and criteria met as evidence of proficiency. American Sign Language may be taken to fulfill the modern language requirements.

Fine Arts: Students who select this pathway must earn three units from one of the following Fine Arts areas: Band, Chorus, Visual Arts, or Theater Arts.

Health and Personal Fitness: One unit of credit in Health and Personal Fitness is required. Students shall combine one-half credit of Health (17.011) and Personal Fitness (36.051) to satisfy this requirement. Three units of JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) may be used to satisfy this requirement when the courses include Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Rule requirements in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.12.

Embedded Courses

The State Board of Education recognizes that the course standards in the CTAE course, Essentials of Healthcare, has embedded core academic standards for Human Anatomy and Physiology. Students who earn one unit of credit for Essentials of Healthcare will also receive one unit of credit for Human Anatomy and Physiology.

This Essentials of Healthcare course satisfies the fourth Science requirement for high school graduation and meets the fourth Science requirement for admission to the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia. The Essentials of Healthcare course will be counted as the CTAE course for the Health Science pathways and Human Anatomy and Physiology course will be counted as a Science course. The final course grade assigned to the Essentials of Healthcare will be assigned to the Human Anatomy and Physiology course.

The State Board of Education recognizes that the course standards in the Fine Arts course, Dramatic Writing, has embedded core academic standards for the English Language Arts course, Advanced Composition. Students who earn one unit of credit for Dramatic Writing will also receive one unit of credit for Advanced Composition.

The Dramatic Writing course meets the fourth English

Language Arts requirement for high school graduation and meets the fourth English Language Arts requirement for admission to the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia. The Dramatic Writing course is a Fine Arts course in the Theatre/Film Pathway and the Advanced Composition course is the fourth English Language Arts course. The final course grade assigned to the Dramatic Writing course will be assigned to the Advanced Composition course.

If a parent wants to deny an embedded credit, the student and parent must meet with the high school counselor to sign the Option to Decline Credit Form to deny the credit. This form must be signed and completed within five days after the last day of the school year for which the credit was earned. If the student and parent elects to have this credit removed from his/her high school transcript, they must understand that the student will not have the opportunity to have the credit reinstated after the credit has been removed from the official transcript. If the embedded course credit is denied, the student may take the course to receive course credit.

Under NCAA requirements, units of credit earned through embedded credits will not count as a core course credit for athletic aid for any student seeking NCAA Division I or II athletic scholarships.

Course Credit

Please see Effingham County Board of Education Policy JBC(4), (Awarding Units of Credit and Acceptance of Transfer Credit and/or Grades), which can be accessed via the link provided in the Appendix.

Unit credit shall be awarded only for courses that include concepts and skills based on the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE), or Georgia K-12 Mathematics Standards for grades 9-12 or those approved by the State Board of Education. High school unit credits may be awarded in middle school for courses in which instruction is based on the GPS, GSE, or Georgia K-12 Mathematics Standards for grades 9-12.

High School Credits in the Middle School

Only eighth grade students enrolled in Effingham County Schools have the opportunity to earn credits in Honors Physical Science, Enhanced Algebra, Basic Agricultural Science, and/or Spanish I. These credits count toward high school graduation. Credits for each completed high school course are posted on the high school transcript. Students may earn a maximum of three high school credits while in middle school. Units of credit awarded at the middle school level are included in the high school grade point average (GPA). Five honors points will be added to the students' grade for Honors Physical Science and Enhanced Algebra. Basic Agricultural Science and Spanish will not earn additional points.

Students wishing to enroll in Honors Physical Science, Enhanced Algebra, and Spanish I must meet the eligibility requirements established by the Effingham County School District Office of Curriculum and Instruction. Due to possible changes in assessment requirements each year, the criteria for eligible enrollment in these courses is reviewed yearly and will be posted on the middle school websites April 15th for enrollment for the following school year.

Parents may decline high school course credits taken during middle school. To decline a credit, the student and parent must meet with the high school counselor to sign the **Option to Decline Credit Form**. The form must be signed and completed within five days after the last

day of the school year for which the credit was earned. If the student and parent elect to have this credit removed from his/her high school transcript, they must understand that the student will not have the opportunity to have the credit reinstated after the credit has been removed from the official transcript. The student may retake the course at high school to receive credit.

High school credits earned in middle school will satisfy graduation requirements, but the credits do not count towards HOPE GPA.

Support Services

The Effingham County Board of Education shall provide instructional support and delivery services. These services include, but are not limited, to the following:

- A continuous guidance component beginning in middle school. The purposes of the guidance component are to familiarize students and parents with graduation requirements, to help them identify the likely impact of individual career objectives on the program of work studies they plan to follow, and to provide annual advisement sessions to report progress and offer alternatives in meeting graduation requirements and career objectives.
- Record keeping and reporting services that measure individual student progress toward graduation and include information for the school, parents, and students.
- Diagnostic and continuous evaluation services that measure individual student progress in meeting competency expectations for graduation.
- Instructional programs, curriculum and course guides, and remedial opportunities to assist each student in meeting graduation requirements.
- Appropriate curriculum and assessment procedures for students who have been identified as having disabilities that prevent them from meeting the prescribed competency performance requirements.
- State course titles and numbers utilized as established by the State Department of Education.

Grading System

Teacher and/or department grading policies will be provided to students and will be on file in the principal's office. The grading system will not be changed during the year. If the parent feels there is a discrepancy in the grade that the child receives, he/she may request a conference with the teacher and principal.

The following criteria will be used in establishing the grading system:

Range: zero to 100;

A = 90-100	C = 70-79
B = 80-89	F = 0-69

Passing: 70 or above. Any grade below 70 is failing.

Semesters: A semester consists of two nine-weeks' grading period.

Credit for High School: Units of credit shall be granted for courses that meet state-adopted curriculum for grades 9-12 based on a passing grade of 70 or above.

Make-Up Work Due To Absenteeism: Students who are absent must take responsibility for missed work the first day back at school following the absence. Teachers will work with students to provide the needed information and

opportunities for students to make up work. Teachers will determine dates for make-up work.

Make-Up Work Due To Approved Activity Days At High School: Make-up work must be arranged with teachers the day prior to the missed day.

Extra Credit: Teachers may plan special reports or projects to improve a student's failing grades. Any work assigned after school concludes must be approved by the principal.

If a student cannot finish a course due to illness, emergency, or a prearrangement, or if the student has not been able to complete his/her assignments and the **teacher is allowing** the student to finish a course "after" the term is over, at the grading period the student will receive the current grade they are due. **Incompletes will not be issued for end of term grades.** Make-up work is the complete responsibility of the student. When all coursework is completed to the teacher's satisfaction and their final grade changes, the grade will be changed by the teacher using the grade change/add form.

Teachers are expected to enter grades within one week of assignment completion. Comprehensive projects and extended writing assignments may take longer to score. Parents and students are asked to be reasonable in their expectations of teachers.

Progress Reports

In order for parents to monitor their child's progress, a progress report for grades 1-12 will be published to Infinite Campus Portal in the middle of each nine-weeks' grading period

Parents desiring to check on a student's progress at other times may utilize Infinite Campus Portal or contact the student's teacher or the counselor's office.

Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTC)

Parents are encouraged to contact the school any time a conference is desired about a student's schoolwork. In order to keep the campus secure and safe for all children, and to limit interruptions in instruction, parents must call in advance to plan a conference. In most cases, conferences are scheduled before or after school, or during a teacher's planning period. Conferences are planned to ensure that student information may be kept confidential, and to provide parents with all the necessary information relating to the child's progress. Parents may request a virtual PTC.

Two formal parent-teacher conference dates are planned each year, one in the fall and one in the winter. Pre-K guidelines require that teachers meet with parents at the end of each semester to review their child's progress and portfolio. Schools notify parents of these conferences.

Report Cards

Students and parents of students in grades K-12 should request a login from the school data clerk to the district's web-based student information system via Infinite Campus Portal. Portal accounts allow parents and students the ability to track assignments, grades, and attendance on an on-going basis throughout the school year.

Portal accounts are automatically generated for students and can be accessed using the student's ID number. At the time of registration, parents of new students will be given an account authorization code and directions for generating a Parent Portal account. Parents of currently enrolled students who have not already obtained a Portal account and wish to do so must present themselves with a

picture ID at an Effingham County school attended by one of their children. Once identity is verified by a staff member, Portal access will be given to all students for whom the parent is a guardian beneath a single login. Concerns regarding information displayed on Infinite Campus Portal should be first addressed with the teacher and referred to a school level administrator if a resolution cannot be reached.

Effingham County Schools no longer mass print student report cards and progress reports. PDF versions of report cards for students in grades K-12 will be available to parents and students within Infinite Campus Portal. Parents who do not have internet access may request a printed copy be provided by the school.

Final Report Card

The last report card will be released on Infinite Campus Portal for students in grades K-12. Parents of students in grades K-12 may pick up final report cards from the school **within five days** of the last day of school **or submit a postage-paid, self-addressed envelope and request the report card be mailed to the student's home address.**

If the parent did not make arrangements to access their child's final report card by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to the school or by downloading it from Parent Portal, the parent may pick up the child's final report card when schools reopen in July, two weeks before the first day of school. **Please note that report cards will not be available at the Board of Education.**

Kindergarten students receive a standards-based report card, where students are assessed as Mastered or Not Yet Mastered for their academic performance levels towards standards mastery. In grades 1-5, students will receive an assessment of Satisfactory, Needs Improvement, or Unsatisfactory in Music, Art, Technology, STEM/AG, P.E. and Penmanship. All other elementary content will receive numerical grades. Students in grades 6-12 receive numerical grades. There are no grades issued for Pre-K students; assessments are shared with parents throughout the year.

Administrative Procedures For Promotion & Retention

The district recognizes that each student is an individual with unique needs and seeks to provide an education program, which matches the level and pace of instruction to the ability, readiness, and motivation of each individual student. Promotion and grade-level advancement are based on mastering the state-mandated standards and district proficiency requirements for Kindergarten through eighth grade.

Students may satisfy the district's promotion policy and the student is recommended for the next grade level; however, parents or guardians with students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade have the flexibility to retain their student in the current grade level for the upcoming school year. The opportunity to retain the student allows parents or guardians to address the individual needs of their student. Parents or guardians are required to meet with the curriculum office staff for a meeting to review the student's data, such as course grades, assessment scores, etc. The meeting must occur within 10 days after the last day of school. The request to retain a student that has met the promotion requirements is only applicable for students who have completed the academic year with the district. If the student is in middle school, the parents or guardian shall consult with the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) eligibility rules.

Kindergarten Proficiency Requirements

Promotion from Kindergarten is dependent upon meeting the Effingham County Attendance Policy and mastering the state mandated standards, as indicated on the Kindergarten report card.

If the proficiency requirements are not satisfied, the Placement Committee or IEP Committee will convene to review the student achievement data and to determine placement. A Student Success Learning Plan (SSLP) will be developed for each student that requires an additional year of Kindergarten. Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are not required to have an SSLP.

Retention decisions may be appealed to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, whose decision shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

Grades One Through Five Proficiency Requirements

Promotion from grades one through five is dependent upon meeting the Effingham County Attendance Policy and mastering the state mandated standards. These standards are incorporated into the curriculum for the subjects listed on the report card. Mastery of these standards is indicated by a yearly average of 70 or above. Students must pass both English/Language Arts AND Mathematics to be promoted to the next higher grade. If a student fails English/Language Arts OR Mathematics, the student will be retained.

In addition, no third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not achieve grade level expectations for reading on the Georgia Milestones Assessment.

In addition, no fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not achieve grade level expectations for Language Arts AND Mathematics on the Georgia Milestones Assessment.

If the proficiency requirements are not satisfied, the Placement Committee or IEP Committee will convene to review student achievement data and to determine placement. A Student Success Learning Plan (SSLP) will be developed for each student that did not meet proficiency requirements. Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are not required to have an SSLP.

Retention decisions may be appealed to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, whose decision shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

Grades Six Through Eight Proficiency Requirements

Promotion from grades six through eight is dependent upon meeting the Effingham County Attendance Policy and mastering the state mandated standards. These standards are incorporated into the curriculum for the subjects listed on the report card. Mastery of these standards is indicated by a yearly average of 70 or above. To be promoted, the student must pass a minimum of three of the four academic classes (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies). In addition to passing three of the four academic classes, the student shall not fail two or more Connections classes.

In addition, no eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not achieve grade level expectations for reading AND Mathematics on the Georgia Milestones Assessment.

If the proficiency requirements are not satisfied, the Placement Committee or IEP Committee will convene to review student achievement data and to determine placement. A Student Success Learning plan will be developed for each student that did not meet proficiency requirements.

Retention decisions may be appealed to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, whose decision shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

General Promotion Guidelines for Grades Three, Five, and Eight – Georgia Milestones Assessment

When a student does not achieve grade level expectations in grades three, five, or eight on the Georgia Milestones Assessment, a school administrator shall notify the parent of possible retention and retest opportunities. A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia Milestones in English Language Arts and/or Mathematics on the first administration shall take the Georgia Milestones in English Language Arts and/or Mathematics on the second administration day(s). Placement or promotion of these students shall follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.

A student's failure to take the Georgia Milestones in grades three, five, or eight in English Language Arts and/or Mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s) shall result in the student being retained. Prior to the student's retention, the student's parents must be notified and given the opportunity to attend a Placement Committee meeting to discuss student placement.

Promotion (High School)

ECHS & SEHS students must earn the following units to be promoted to the next grade level:

	9th to 10th Grade	10th to 11th Grade	11th to 12th Grade	Graduation
Minimum Credit Requirements	6	12	18	24

Effingham STEM students must earn the following credits to be promoted to the next grade level:

Minimum Credit Requirements	9th to 10th Grade	10th to 11th Grade	11th to 12th Grade
Entering freshman between Fall 2019 and Fall 2020	9	17	23
Entering Freshman beginning Fall 2021 and Thereafter	8	15	21

Students With Disabilities

Promotion standards for students with disabilities will be established by the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) with consideration given to student performance on Georgia Milestones or the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) and as determined by the student's IEP committee. The student's IEP committee shall act as the student's placement committee.

Student Achievement/Interventions

The Pyramid of Interventions is in place in Effingham County to help educators determine if students are progressing as expected or if students need additional help to be successful in school. It is a proactive approach that does not wait for students to fail before intervening. It focuses on identifying students who are struggling and then provides layers of intensive interventions and progress monitoring.

Tier 1: provides effective instruction in every classroom for every student based on the Georgia state-adopted curriculum. It includes academic content areas, speech, behavior, and social development.

Tier 2: supports provide pre-planned interventions for students who are not successful in Tier 1.

Tier 3: supports are guided by a Student Support Team. When students continue to make inadequate progress with Tier 1 & 2 supports, educators and parents meet to determine more individual and intensive interventions. Students who are still unsuccessful may be referred for special education and related services.

Honor Points

Five points will be added to students' grades each nine-weeks grading period for the Enhanced, Honors, and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. No honor points are added to local or state end of course tests. Students enrolled in AP courses on Georgia Virtual School will have five points added to the student's final course grade.

To take full advantage of participation in the Advanced Placement courses, students should take the Advanced Placement Exams. A score of three or higher may earn the student credit for the course at most colleges and universities.

Note: Honors Points (for enhanced, honors and AP courses) are subtracted from final grades for HOPE calculation purposes. AP courses are re-weighted by the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Consult the GAFutures website for more information at www.GAFutures.org.

Honor Roll

Honor roll recognizes those students who have consistently performed in an outstanding manner. The honor roll for all schools is published at the end of each grading period. The Effingham County Board of Education has established the following guidelines for making the honor roll:

Grades 1-12: Any student who has an Incomplete for a course may not be recognized as making Honor Roll until the Incomplete is resolved.

Grades 1-5: Students must achieve a combined overall average of 89.5 or higher in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies, with no individual grade lower than an 85.

Grades 6-8: Students must achieve a combined overall average of 89.5 or higher for all courses, with no individual grade lower than an 85.

Grades 9-12: Students must achieve a combined overall average of 89.5 or higher for all courses. Courses taken through Dual Enrollment are not calculated to determine Honor Roll.

Dual Enrollment and online courses are not included in honor roll calculations. If a student is enrolled all day in these types of classes, they will not be included in honor roll announcements.

Awarding Units And Transferring Credit

The Effingham County Board of Education shall award units of credit for middle school courses that are based on state-adopted curriculum for grades 9-12. Credits for each successfully completed high school course are posted on the high school transcript. Units of high school credit are awarded at the middle school level for specific courses and included in the high school grade point average (GPA). Credits earned in middle school will satisfy graduation requirements, but the credits do not count towards HOPE GPA. If the parent declines the credit, the student must retake the course or the equivalent. The Option to Decline Credit Form is available for parents in the high school counselors' office. This form must be signed and completed within five days after the last day of the school year for which the credit was earned. If the student and parent elect to have this credit removed from his/her high school transcript, they must understand that the student will not have the opportunity to have the credit reinstated after the credit has been removed from the official transcript. The student may retake the course at high school to receive credit.

Students withdrawing from an Effingham County school, especially those who plan to return to a high school in our school system, should carefully review the system policy in order to determine how credits will be reviewed for acceptance in the awarding of credits upon re-enrollment. Only courses accepted for transfer credit will count towards the system's graduation requirements.

High School Credits are awarded at the completion of a course. Students who transfer from the Effingham County School System prior to the completion of the course will not receive credit for the course as credits are not prorated at the high schools.

Earning Units of Credit by Testing-Out

Students may earn course credit by scoring a performance level of "Distinguished" on a Georgia Milestones End-of-Course (EOC) assessment prior to taking the course. To earn credit by testing-out of any course with an associated EOC, students cannot be currently or previously enrolled in the course and must have: earned a "B" in a course in the same content area as the EOC course the students is attempting; received a recommendation from a teacher in the same content area as the EOC course; and, obtain parent/guardian permission. Eligible students are allowed only one opportunity per course to test out, and those who pass the EOC with a score lower than the "Distinguished" level will be required to take the associated course and retake the EOC. Students may earn no more than three units of credit by testing out. Students and their parents are required to meet with a school official and complete an application in each instance that a student wishes to exercise the testing out option. The application process requires the payment of the testing fee prior to participation in the EOC administration. A student who scores at the "Distinguished" level will be refunded the testing fee.

The grade equivalent scores will be included in the student's local GPA. Under NCAA requirements, units of credit earned through testing-out using the EOC will not count as a core course credit for athletic aid for any student seeking NCAA Division I or II athletic scholarships. Course credit earned will be reported for HOPE and other state required purposes.

Earning Units Of Credit In Lieu Of Enrollment For Foreign Language Courses

Students whose native language is not English may be considered to have met the foreign language requirement by exercising the credit in lieu of enrollment option to determine if the student is proficient in their native language. A formal examination shall be administered and criteria met as evidence of proficiency.

Middle And High School Online Courses

Online education is a flexible instructional delivery system encompassing any kind of learning that takes place via the Internet. Online learning is not appropriate for all students. Students should not be placed in an online course for logistical reasons only. Extensive consideration and guidance are required prior to registering for online courses. Georgia Virtual School (GAVS) is the pre-approved provider for online courses.

Effingham County School District and Georgia Virtual School are accredited by COGNIA, a non-profit international accrediting agency. Courses offered by GAVS are aligned with the Georgia Department of Education standards. Courses offered by other online course providers may or may not be aligned with the state standards. Other online course providers may or may not be accredited. Other providers of online courses must be evaluated on an individual basis and must be approved by the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction before enrolling in the online coursework. Students must consult with their counselor to obtain approval prior to registering for any online course, including GAVS. Effingham County School District will only award credit for pre-approved online providers and courses.

Parents and guardians are required to participate in the discussion with the student's counselor prior to student enrollment in an online program or course. The counselor will need to verify that the course(s) satisfies the graduation requirements for the student. Students should be aware of schedules and deadlines for the courses selected. Students who wish to enroll in online education classes via GAVS, or any other online course provider, must follow the Effingham County School District's academic calendar even when GAVS or other online course provider's calendar is different.

Students must complete the **Request for Online Course Approval** Form from the school's counselor's office and return it to the student's counselor. After the counselor has received the **Request for Online Course Approval** Form, and the instructional supervisor has approved the registration, the student may register for the desired online course.

All online courses must be taken at the middle or high school during the regular school day.

Effingham County School District middle and high school students must enroll with a full schedule each semester, which may include one or two GAVS courses unless the student is participating in senior privilege or dual enrollment. Students can only enroll in two online courses per semester. If a student needs additional courses, it must be approved by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction.

Once a student has selected, been approved, and enrolled in an online course, the student must complete the online course. If during the completion of the first semester of an online course, the student determines they would be more successful in a traditional classroom, they should discuss this with their counselor. Arrangements may be made for a student to complete the second semester of a year-long

course in a traditional classroom.

GAVS courses taken as part of the regular school day schedule are eligible for district funding. Any course(s) taken in addition to a regular schedule will be ineligible for district funding and all costs associated with this course must be paid by the parent or guardian. If a student drops a course after the approved drop date, the parent or guardian is responsible for the cost of the course. If approved to take an online course by a provider other than GAVS, the parent or guardian assumes responsibility for all costs associated with said course.

The school district will receive a grade from the online course provider after a student completes the online course. Students enrolled in a course through GAVS, or any other online course provider, are responsible for taking any standardized tests associated with that course. These tests may include Advanced Placement (AP) exams or End-of-Course assessments (EOC). The school testing coordinator is responsible for scheduling standardized testing for students taking online courses. Students in a course that requires an EOC will receive a final grade from the online provider reflecting 90% of the course score. The other 10% shall be from the EOC score and added to their grade. School administrators shall transcribe and award credit to students who successfully complete work through pre-approved online courses only. Students taking Advanced Placement courses will receive five points added to the students' final course grade. The district's grading scale is as follows: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; F= Below 70 (Failing). Students' transcripts will indicate courses taken as online courses. If the online course provider only provides letter grades, the letter grades will be correlated to numerical grades and recorded on the high school transcript and be calculated in the GPA as follows: A = 99, B = 89, C = 79, D = 70, F = 69, WF = 69.

In order to ensure accurate information about eligibility and requirements for high school sports and NCAA with regard to online courses, it is highly recommended that the student and parent be in close contact with the online provider, the NCAA, and the school's athletic director. Eligibility for post-secondary athletics is the responsibility of the student and parent as the district takes no responsibility in determining if online courses meet or do not meet NCAA requirements which may be above entrance requirements for college admission.

Work-Based Learning

This program of study provides a junior or senior with an opportunity to learn a highly skilled occupation at a work site while earning high school credit. The student will follow a structured plan including on-the-job training and classroom instruction. On-the-job training affords the participating student the opportunity to master skills and competencies of a given trade. Applications and guidelines are available from the Work-Based Learning Coordinator or the CTAE Supervisor at each high school. For more information, please visit: www.effinghamschools.com/WBL.

Transcripts

Active students and those who have graduated or withdrawn within the prior six months may request free copies of their academic transcripts by contacting the schools' counseling office. In addition, unofficial transcripts for high school students are posted to Infinite Campus Portal and may be accessed by active students or their parents. Students who have graduated or been out of school more than six months may request an official transcript from the Effingham County Board of Education, 405 North Ash Street, Springfield, GA 31329. The cost for processing archived transcripts is \$6.00 per copy. A

“Request for Transcript” must be completed by either 1) the parent/guardian or 2) the student, if 18 years of age or older. A “Request for Transcript” may be completed electronically at www.effinghamschools.com. This request must be dated no more than ten days prior to the request being received by the Effingham County Board of Education. Alternative forms requesting the Effingham County Board of Education to provide such information shall be verified by the guardian and/or student before transcripts will be released to the third party.

High School Required Assessments

The Georgia Milestones End-of-Course (EOC) shall be used as the final exam in the course assessed by the Georgia Milestone EOC.

Students earning credit for a course assessed by a Georgia Milestones EOC will have their final grade calculated by the following formula: 90% final numerical score for the course plus 10% numerical score on the EOC. All students enrolled in Algebra, Biology, American Literature, and United States History will be required to take the EOC. Middle school students enrolled in Honors Physical Science are required to take the HS Physical Science EOG in lieu of the Grade 8 Science End-of-Grade (EOG). Middle school students enrolled in Enhanced Algebra will take both the Algebra EOC and the Grade 8 Mathematics EOG. The Algebra Georgia Milestones EOC numerical score will count as 10% of the Enhanced Algebra course grade.

All students enrolled in Algebra, American Literature, and Biology must take the EOC regardless of pursuing Advanced Placement (AP) or dual enrollment.

Students enrolled in AP United States History or United States History through dual enrollment are exempt from the United States History EOC. Students who fail AP United States History or the United States History dual enrollment United States History course will be required to take the United States History EOC when the student repeats the course.

Local End-of-Course Tests (LEOCTs) shall carry the same weighted calculation as Georgia Milestones End-of-Course (EOC) assessments; therefore, the final grade calculation is 90% of the final numerical score for the course plus 10% of the numerical score on the LEOCT.

Assessments

State Assessments

Georgia Milestones Assessment System

The Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) is a comprehensive assessment system spanning from grade three to high school. It assesses students’ proficiency in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, aligning with state-adopted content standards.

Students in grades three through eight take the GMAS End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments. The chart below shows the GMAS EOG assessments given in each grade level.

Grade Level	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
3	✓	✓		
4	✓	✓		
5	✓	✓	✓	
6	✓	✓		
7	✓	✓*		
8	✓	✓	✓*	✓

**Grade Eight students enrolled in Enhanced Algebra Concepts and Connections will take the Grade 8 Mathematics EOG and the Algebra Concepts and Connections EOC (see below). Grade Eight students enrolled in High School Physical Science will take the High School Physical Science EOG in lieu of the Grade Eight Physical Science EOG.*

In grades three, five, and eight the Georgia Milestones EOG results are one piece of evidence which informs promotion and retention decisions in the areas of reading (grades three, five, and eight) and Mathematics (grades five and eight). If needed, students who do not meet state proficiency in reading and Mathematics in the above mentioned grades are afforded a retest opportunity.

Eighth grade students enrolled in Enhanced Algebra Concepts and Connections and high school students enrolled in Algebra Concepts and Connections, American Literature, Biology, or United States History take the GMAS End-of-Course (EOC) assessments. Students earning credit for a course assessed by a GMAS EOC assessment will have their final grade calculated by the following formula:

90% of the numerical score for the course plus 10% of the numerical score on the GMAS EOC. All students enrolled in Enhanced Algebra Concepts and Connections, Algebra Concepts and Connections, Biology, American Literature, or United States History, regardless of pursuing Advanced Placement (AP) or dual enrollment*, will be required to take the GMAS EOC. If a student is enrolled in one of these courses and does not take the GMAS EOC, the score will be recorded as a zero.

*Students enrolled in AP United States History or United States History through dual enrollment are exempt from the United States History EOC. Students who fail AP United States History or the United States History dual enrollment course will be required to take the United States History EOC when the student repeats the course.

Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills

The Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS 2.0) serves as a formative assessment system integrated into classroom activities, designed to align



with Georgia’s state content standards. It follows a progression-based approach, focusing on big ideas and learning progressions. This tool offers teachers real-time insights into students’ understanding, pinpointing their current knowledge, identifying areas for further growth, and facilitating ongoing monitoring of progress.

Georgia Alternate Assessment

The Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA 2.0) is an individually administered assessment designed to gauge the proficiency of students with significant cognitive disabilities in mastering alternate achievement standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies in grades three through eight and high school. The chart below shows the GAA 2.0 assessments given in each grade level.

Grade Level	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
3	X	X		
4	X	X		
5	X	X	X	
6	X	X		
7	X	X		
8	X	X	X	X
High School (Typically 11th Grade)	X	X	X	X

WIDA Screener

The WIDA Screener is an English language proficiency assessment given to students that are new to the United States. The WIDA Screener score helps determine if a student meets the criteria of an English Learner (EL).

WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS

WIDA ACCESS is administered to all English Learners (Grade K-12) every year. The assessment is a standards-based, criterion-referenced English language proficiency test which assesses proficiency for both social and academic contexts. The WIDA Alternate ACCESS is an individually administered assessment for English Learners (Grade K-12) with significant cognitive disabilities.

There is not an “opt out” option for state testing, as the above mentioned state assessments are mandatory. Should there be concerns about state testing, a parent/guardian should contact the school’s Test Coordinator to discuss these concerns.

LOCAL ASSESSMENTS

Common Interim Assessments

Common Interim Assessments (CIAs) are locally designed assessments which are based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Language. CIAs are mandatory assessments given district-wide. CIAs are administered in English Language Arts and Mathematics in Grades 1-12, Science and Social Studies in Grades 4-12, and in Foreign Language in Grades 8-12 using the Performance Matters Platform. The CIA scores are placed in a teacher’s gradebook as a summative assessment.

End-of-Year Progress Check

The End-of-Year Progress Checks (EOYPC) are locally designed assessments given at the end of the school year

for grades 1-2 to determine growth in English Language Arts and Mathematics. EOYPC scores are specifically used to determine student growth in one year’s time. These scores do not go in a teacher’s gradebook.

Local End-of-Course Tests

Local End-of-Course Tests (LEOCTs) are locally designed assessments that are administered in most high school courses that do not have a GMAS EOC or CIA assessment. The LEOCT scores shall carry the same weighted calculation as the GMAS EOC assessments; therefore, the final grade calculation is as follows:

90% of the final numerical score of the course plus 10% of the numerical score on the LEOCT.

Performance-Based Assessments

Performance-Based Assessments (PBAs) are locally designed assessments that are administered in most high school CTAE and Visual Arts second level pathway courses. PBA scores are placed in a teacher’s gradebook as a summative assessment.

MAP Growth

The MAP Growth assessment measures student progress and proficiency in Reading and Mathematics over time. Administered three times annually, MAP Growth ensures an accurate assessment of student knowledge, regardless of grade level. MAP Growth is given in grades K-8.

MAP Reading Fluency

The MAP Reading Fluency is an adaptive universal screening and progress monitoring assessment designed to track foundational reading skills, with an emphasis on oral fluency. Administered in grades K-3, it serves as a tool to monitor students’ reading development over time.

Optional Tests

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) is offered to middle and high school students. It is given once each October. Tenth graders seeking a regular education diploma take the test free of charge. Middle school, ninth and eleventh grade students may take the test for a small fee. Eleventh graders who take the test participate in the National Merit Scholarship competition.

The Pre-ACT may be taken during a student’s sophomore year. Results from the Pre-ACT provide an estimated ACT score, identify skills and knowledge required to succeed in college, identify areas where extra help is needed, and provide career areas that match student’s interests.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is offered for a fee to any high school student. It is offered several times a year at various locations; check with the counselor’s office for more information. The SAT is not required for admission to Georgia two-year colleges or technical colleges.

The American College Test (ACT) is administered by the American College Testing Program, and measures educational development in the four subject areas of English, Mathematics, reading, and natural Sciences. The ACT is one of the two standard college entrance exams given at specified test centers throughout the year.

Advanced Placement Exams are offered as a part of the AP Program. Students enrolled in AP classes may take the tests in May of each year. Students scoring a three or above on the five-point scale may receive college credit for that class.

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is a group of 12 tests that measures aptitude in five separate career areas and is an indicator of the students’ qualifications for military occupations. Juniors and seniors may take the test.

The Accuplacer is an on-line assessment available to measure students' Mathematics, reading, and writing skills and then report results immediately. Accuplacer is used as a placement test and is accepted by technical colleges throughout the state. Once the student has started taking each test and a low score is determined, the adaptive system can automatically reroute the student to the diagnostic section of the test and determine the specific areas in which the student is proficient or needs additional work. Students taking the test in their sophomore or junior year of school can use the Accuplacer results to revise their schedules to take the courses necessary to improve any deficiencies.

GRADUATION AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Graduation Requirements

Please see Effingham County Board of Education Policy IHF(6), (Graduation Requirements - Entering Fall 2008-09 and thereafter), accessed via the link provided in the Appendix.

The issuance of a high school diploma to any student will be contingent upon the fulfillment of Board of Education and Georgia State Department of Education requirements. Any local system may require more than 23 units for graduation.

Effingham County School District High School Graduation Rule for freshman class entering fall 2017 and thereafter (class of 2021 & thereafter).

The Effingham County Board of Education recognizes the importance of assuring an adequate educational opportunity for each student. This goal is to be supported by quality secondary school programs which promote personal development, academic growth, and career preparation. Such programs are to be based on a broad, flexible curriculum, which addresses each student's needs, interests, and abilities.

The board defines as a major role of the high school the responsibility for providing the youth of Effingham County with opportunities to acquire and to apply basic skills necessary for a contemporary adult life. Such skills are defined as those which enable one to address effectively and efficiently the decisions and opportunities presented in a technological and free society.

Secondary school instructional delivery and support services shall reflect the high school graduation requirements and assist all students to develop their unique potential to function in contemporary society.

Purpose: This rule specifies high school programs of study that shall be offered by the Effingham County Board of Education and lists specific courses that meet core, required, or elective credits for students.

Definitions

Pathways

Three elective units in a coherent sequence in Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE), Modern Foreign Language, or Fine Arts.

Cohort

A student's cohort is defined by the year the student first becomes a freshman and the student should graduate within four years.

Core Courses

Courses identified as "c" or "r" in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.20 List of State-Funded K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses for the specified program of study.

Elective Courses

Any courses identified as "e" in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.20 List of State-Funded K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses that a student may select beyond the core requirements to fulfill the unit requirements for graduation.

Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA)

An alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards. The GAA is a standardized, task-based assessment, with multiple access points designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) team has determined they are unable to meaningfully access the regular assessment program, even with maximum appropriate accommodations. The purpose of the GAA is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities are provided access to the state academic content standards and given the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the knowledge, concepts, and skills inherent in the standards.

Required courses

Specific courses identified as "r" in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.20 List of State-Funded K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses that each student in a program of study shall pass to graduate from high school.

High School Diploma

The document awarded to students certifying that they have satisfied attendance requirements, unit requirements and the state assessment requirements as referenced in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs - Student Assessment.

State Defined Alternate Diploma

The State-defined Alternate Diploma is awarded to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who were assessed using the alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards. This diploma is standards-based and aligned with the state requirements for the Regular High School Diploma; however, it is not a Regular High School Diploma. A State-defined Alternative Diploma does not terminate a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who enroll in high school for the first time in Fall 2020 will be eligible for this diploma. Only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who take the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) are eligible to receive the Alternate Diploma. These are the students who, due to their significant cognitive disabilities, are unlikely to access the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) even with the best instruction.

Special Education Diploma

All students with a disability assigned to a special education program are eligible. It is awarded to students with a disability when the requirements for a High School Diploma or State Defined Alternate Diploma are not met, yet the student has completed their IEP goals.

High School Certificate of Attendance

All students with a disability are eligible to receive a Certificate of Attendance. This certificate is only issued in cases where a student has not met the requirements for one of the three diploma types.

Unit

Credit awarded for mastery of standards in an approved program of instruction.

Requirements

The Effingham County Board of Education shall provide secondary school curriculum, instructional and support services that reflect the high school graduation and state assessment requirements and assist all students in developing their unique potential to function in society.

The Effingham County Board of Education requires that:

- Students who enroll from another state must meet the graduation requirements for the graduating cohort they enter and the state assessment requirements as referenced in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 (Testing Programs - Student Assessment).
- The awarding of unit credit for courses on the transcript of a transfer student shall be determined following a thorough review of the transcript and the student's date of entry into school. (Reference Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.15 and local board policy JBC (4) - Acceptance of Transfer Credit and/or Grades.)
- Students who enroll in the ninth grade for the first time in the 2018-2019 school year or thereafter shall meet the graduation requirements specified in this rule and the assessments specified in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 (Testing Programs - Student Assessments). If a student withdraws and re-enrolls, the student will be required to satisfy the graduation requirements for his or her cohort year.

Units of Credits Required for Graduation

The Effingham County Board of Education offers all courses required for graduation. A course shall count only once for satisfying any requirement for graduation.

	Units Required Entered Ninth Grade 2019-Present
English/ Language Arts*	4
Mathematics*	4
Science*	4
Social Studies*	3
CTAE or Modern Foreign Language or Fine Arts	3
Health and Personal Fitness**	1
State required elective units***	4
Locally required elective units	1
TOTAL UNITS (minimum)	24

* Required and/or Core Courses

** Three units of JROTC may be used to satisfy this requirement.

*** All students are encouraged to earn two units of credit in the same modern language. Students planning to enter or transfer into a University System of Georgia institution or other post-secondary institution must take two units of the same modern language/Latin or two units of American Sign Language or two units of computer Science.

Students With Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Students with significant cognitive disabilities who entered the ninth grade for the first time on or after the 2020-2021 school year may graduate and receive an alternate diploma when the student's IEP team determines that the student has:

- Completed an integrated curriculum based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) that includes instruction in Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies as well as career preparation, self-determination, independent living, and personal care to equal a minimum of 23 units of instruction; and
- Participated in the GAA during middle school and high school; and
- Has transitioned to an employment/education/training setting in which supports needed are provided by an entity other than the local school system.

Dual Enrollment Accelerated Career Diploma (ACD)

Dual Enrollment Accelerated Career Diploma is designed as an alternative path to graduation. Students will complete nine specific high school courses and will earn a career-oriented postsecondary credential.

Complete 9 High School Courses

- 2 English (American Lit w/EOC)
- 2 Math (Algebra w/EOC)
- 2 Science (Biology w/EOC)
- 2 Social Studies*
- 0.5 Health
- 0.5 Personal Fitness

Earn a Postsecondary credential

- Any Associate Degree, or
- Any Technical College Diploma, or
- 2 Technical College Certificates (TCCs) in an approved field of study

**Students entering the ninth grade in the 2022-2023 school year and beyond who pursue an ACD must successfully complete and pass American Government and Personal Finance & Economics.*

Students identified as Accelerated Career Diploma (ACD) dual enrollment students may graduate with their cohort or may request to graduate in fewer than four years. Students must fulfill graduation requirements and obtain consent from their parent or guardian in order to participate in this program.

After successfully completing the first semester of dual enrollment credits, ACD dual enrollment students and parents must submit the Request to Graduate Early Form to the student's high school counselor who will submit the application to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction for approval. Successful completion of dual enrollment credits is defined as the student passed all dual enrollment courses with a "C" or better.

If the student successfully completes the first semester of ACD dual enrollment during...

- Fall semester: the Request to Graduate Early Form must

be submitted to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction by January 15th.

- Spring semester: the Request to Graduate Early Form must be submitted to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction by June 15th.
- Summer semester: the Request to Graduate Early Form must be submitted to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction by August 15th.

Honor Graduate

Graduating seniors with 89.5 or above cumulative grade point averages will be considered Honor Graduates.

Class Rank

Only students pursuing a program of study leading to a regular high school diploma shall be included in calculations for the purpose of determining class rank.



Scholar Endorsement Requirements

The Scholar Endorsement recognizes students who have completed rigorous coursework requiring advanced content, challenging intellectual engagement, daily homework, extensive critical reading and out-of-class research and/or projects. These courses are designed to prepare students for subsequent Advanced Placement coursework as well as enhanced admissions consideration at competitive post-secondary institutions. Students are recognized at Class Night for earning the Scholar Endorsement. To be recognized as Scholar Endorsed, students may not have failing course grades recorded on the high school transcript nor credit removed from a course due to attendance. As part of satisfying the high school graduation requirements, students are eligible for the Scholar Endorsement by completing the minimum course requirements as outlined below.

Graduation Requirements for Scholar Endorsement	Units Required
<p>English/Language Arts (Minimum of four units from the following):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors 9th grade Literature • Honors 10th grade Literature • AP English Language • AP English Literature • Any AP or Dual Enrollment English course 	4
<p>Mathematics (Minimum of four units from the following):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors Algebra or Enhanced Algebra • Honors Geometry • Honors Algebra II or Honors Advanced Algebra • Accelerated Pre-calculus or AP Pre-calculus • Calculus • AP Calculus • AP Statistics • Any AP or Dual Enrollment Mathematics course <p>Science (Minimum of four units from the following):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors Biology I • Honors Physical Science • Chemistry, Honors Chemistry, or AP Chemistry • Physics or AP Physics • AP Biology • AP Environmental Science • Any AP or Dual Enrollment Science course 	4
<p>Social Studies (Minimum of three units from the following):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors World History • AP Government • AP European History • AP US History • AP Economics • AP Human Geography • Any AP or Dual Enrollment Social Studies course <p>Modern Foreign Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequential foreign language courses 	3
<p>Electives in one of the following areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 additional academic credits not including the required foreign languages • 3 courses in one CTAE Pathway • 3 courses in a Fine Arts Pathway 	3

**Core classes taken at the middle school level for high school credit do not have to be designated as honors to count for Scholar Endorsement.*



STEM Endorsement Requirements

The STEM Endorsement recognizes students who attend the Effingham STEM Academy and who have completed rigorous, STEM-focused coursework requiring advanced content, challenging intellectual engagement, daily homework, extensive critical reading, and out-of-class research and/or projects. Students may not have any failing course grades recorded on the high school transcript or credit removed from a course due to attendance. Students are recognized at Class Night for earning the STEM Endorsement. As part of satisfying the high school graduation requirements, students are eligible for the STEM Endorsement by completing the minimum course requirements as outlined below.

Graduation Requirements for STEM Endorsement	Graduating Class of 2025 Units Required	Graduating Class of 2026 and thereafter Units Required
<p>Mathematics (any of the following)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II or Advanced Algebra, Advanced Mathematical Decision Making • Pre-Calculus Enhanced or Honors Algebra • Honors Geometry • Honors Algebra II or Honors Advanced Algebra • Accelerated or AP Pre-Calculus • Calculus • AP Calculus A/B • AP Calculus B/C • AP Statistics • Any AP or Dual Enrollment Mathematics course 	4	5
<p>Science (any of the following)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biology I, Physical Science, Chemistry, Physics, Honors Biology I • Honors Physical Science • Honors Chemistry • Honors Biology II • Honors Physics • AP Biology • AP Environmental Science • AP Chemistry • AP Physics • Any AP or Dual Enrollment Science course 	4	5
<p>English/Language Arts (any of the following)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th Grade Literature • 10th Grade Literature • American Literature • British Literature • Honors 9th grade Literature • Honors 10th grade Literature • AP English Language • AP English Literature • Any AP or Dual Enrollment English course 	4	4
<p>Social Studies (any of the following)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World History • Government; US History • Personal Finance and Economics • Honors World History • AP World History • AP Government • AP US History • AP European History • AP Economics • AP Human Geography • Any AP or Dual Enrollment Social Studies course 	4	4
<p>Modern Foreign Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequential foreign language courses 	2	2
<p>STEM Pathway Area of Concentration</p> <p>Scientific Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific Research I • Scientific Research II • Scientific Research III • AP Seminar (can be taken in place of Scientific Research III) 	3	3
<p>Health (.5 unit)/Personal Fitness (.5 unit)</p> <p>Successful Completion of a Virtual STEM Portfolio</p>	1 3 years	1 3 years

Graduation Ceremonies

If all course work has been successfully completed, with grades of 70 or better, the student may participate in the graduation ceremonies. If any coursework has not been completed, the student will not be allowed to participate.

All students who attend Crossroads Academy and finish their high school program of study at Crossroads Academy must graduate through a Crossroads Academy Ceremony. Students will not be eligible to return to their base school to participate in Senior Week, Class Night, or the school's graduation ceremony. Crossroads Academy will offer two formal graduations each year (one in January and one in May).

If a student completes his/her graduation requirements in December, students will be awarded their diploma at the January Crossroads Academy graduation. If a student completes his/her graduation requirements in May, diplomas will be awarded at the Crossroads Academy graduation ceremony at the end of May.

Crossroads Academy students must agree to the following:

- Students must repay any student outstanding fees owed to ECHS and/or SEHS.
- Students must be on time, stay at school, and work on Edgenuity, the credit recovery program used by the Effingham County School District. Note this is a web-based program; therefore, students will have the opportunity to work on their coursework when they are at home.
- Students cannot be absent more than five days each nine weeks' grading period. If students accumulate tardies, the same consequences will be given to them as those that are tardy to a face-to-face class.
- Students will not be allowed to participate in any student activities (Prom, Class Night, Graduation, etc.) at their base schools.
- Students cannot attend Homecoming Dance, Prom, Class Night, or Grad Bash. Students may attend graduation and extracurricular events as spectators.

HOPE Scholarship

Funded through the state lottery, HOPE Scholarships assist with tuition at Georgia's post-secondary institutions which include the technical colleges. An online resource called GAfutures is a mentor system available to students and their families to help select a college, apply for admission, and plan to finance higher education. GAfutures offers access to comprehensive information about colleges, universities, and technical colleges in Georgia and the most current information about the changes to the HOPE scholarship. The site also enables students to apply for admission to each school listed. Note: Although the mentor site (www.GAfutures.org) is free, students are responsible for whatever fees are charged by a college upon submitting an application for admission. Counselors can assist students and parents with related questions about the HOPE scholarship.

HOPE Scholarship GPA is not the same as a students' high school GPA. The major difference in the two calculations is that the HOPE Scholarship GPA includes only grades earned in the core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and foreign language.

Georgia Department of Education's (GaDOE) high school core and foreign language course numbers that begin with the following prefixes will be included in the HOPE GPA calculation: 23 (English), 26 (Life Sciences),

27 (Mathematics), 40 (Physical Sciences), 45 (Social Sciences), 60-64 and/or 66 (Foreign Language). There are some specific courses, as indicated on GaDOE's Fourth Science List, that may also be included in the HOPE GPA calculation. Effingham County offers the following courses that may count towards satisfying the fourth Science requirement and may be included in the HOPE GPA calculation: Applications of Biotechnology; Essentials of Biotechnology; Essentials of Healthcare; Sports Medicine; Forest Science; General Horticulture and Plant Science; Animal Science Technology/Biotechnology; Aerospace Science: Science of Flight; Scientific Research III; Advanced Placement Computer Science A; Advanced Placement Computer Science Principles; Computer Science Principles Programming, Games, Apps, and Society.

All grades earned for attempted coursework in the core subjects during the student's 9th through 12th grade years that could be used to satisfy a core curriculum graduation requirement, according to the GaDOE, is equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, where an "A" equals 4.0, "B" equals 3.0, "C" equals 2.0, "D" equals 1.0, and "F" equals 0.

The high school HOPE GPA calculation will count all attempts of the same course, if taken more than once.

From the eligible core courses, any weighting (honor points) added by the high school is removed, then half a point (0.5) is added back to grades of "B", "C", "D", and "F" for Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Dual Enrollment (DE) degree-level core courses.

The grade of "A" does not receive the additional weight due to the traditional 4.0 scale (maximum of four points per grade).

High school credits earned in middle school will satisfy graduation requirements, but the credits do not count towards HOPE GPA.

A student's final HOPE Scholarship GPA will only be calculated if he or she has first met the Academic Rigor Requirements applicable to his or her high school graduating class.

Students may review rigor courses and check their HOPE Scholarship GPA at www.gafutures.org.

Completion of diploma requirements does not necessarily qualify students for the HOPE Scholarship Program.

Georgia Special Needs Scholarship

The Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program may provide eligible special education or 504 students the opportunity to attend an approved private school or another public school. Please go to the Georgia Department of Education more information regarding Special Needs Scholarship, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program-Resources.aspx>.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Gifted Program

Effingham County Schools offer gifted programs for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade, in accordance with state law. Students may receive services through one or more state approved delivery model. Anyone familiar with a student's academic performance and ability may make a referral for consideration of testing into the gifted program.

To be considered eligible for GT placement, a student must meet the following criteria set forth by the state of Georgia:

- **Psychometrically:** Score at the 99th percentile (K-2) or the 96th percentile (3-12) on the composite or full scale score of a standardized test of mental ability OR
- **Multiple Criteria Approach:** Qualify through a multiple-criteria assessment process by meeting the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability (intelligence), achievement, creativity, and motivation.
 - **Mental Ability:** minimum score of the 96th percentile on the composite or component score;
 - **Achievement:** a minimum score of the 90th percentile on the total battery, total reading, or total math;
 - **Creativity:** a minimum score of the 90th percentile on a standardized test of creativity;
 - **Motivation:** Grades K-8- A minimum score of the 90th on a standardized gifted evaluation scale. Grades 9-12 - a minimum grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale where 4.0="A" and a 3.0="B" using an average of grades from the regular school program over the previous two school years. Grades from the following subjects will be used: Math, Science, English / Language Arts, Social Studies, and foreign language. (GA regulations state that the GPA should be at that level which is achieved by no more than 10% of the students in each grade level.)

Parents may schedule conferences with the school's gifted resource teacher or gifted program facilitator to discuss the program, referral procedures, and eligibility requirements, as well as the student's eligibility status after an evaluation. Students will not be evaluated more than once within two calendar years.

Credit Recovery

Each high school provides students an opportunity for credit recovery for courses where a course was taken and no credit was earned. Interested students should contact the counselor's office or instructional supervisor for additional information. Opportunities for credit recovery during the summer months may be made available depending upon state funding.

Dyslexia

The district is required to screen students in kindergarten through grade three for characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders. The district utilizes Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Reading Fluency—an online, adaptive benchmark and progress monitoring assessment. The online assessment measures foundational skills and comprehension. The universal and dyslexia screener will assist the district with identifying students with possible risk factors for reading difficulty, including characteristics

of dyslexia. If a parent/guardian prefers that their child **NOT** participate in the dyslexia screening process, please notify your child's principal in writing. Otherwise, consent is implied.

English Speakers Of Other Languages (ESOL)

The district offers English language support services to qualified students in grades K-12 who have a home language other than English. At the time of enrollment, these students are administered an English language proficiency assessment to determine eligibility for additional language support. Identified English Learners are evaluated annually to determine progress towards English language proficiency.

School Counseling & Services

Each Effingham County school employs a minimum of one counselor. School counselors design and deliver comprehensive school counseling programs that promote student achievement and student social and emotional health. These programs are comprehensive in scope, preventive in design, and developmental in nature. A comprehensive school counseling program is standards-based and data driven, and an integral component of the school's academic mission. It focuses on academic, career, and social/emotional curriculum that is delivered through classroom lessons, small group, and individual consultation.

Animal-Assisted Intervention Therapy Dogs

The therapy dogs will periodically visit students, faculty, and staff during school days and special events to provide comfort and affection. The therapy dog teams will partner with school-based therapists upon request to provide care for students. The teams will visit classrooms and partner in the activities and work of counselors, social workers, and school psychologists. We will honor all known fears, boundaries, and allergies with the greatest respect. All therapy dog teams must be individually approved through the Central Office each year prior to visiting any ECSD campuses.

Suicide/Self Harm Ideations - Parental Notification & Involvement

Parents or guardians should be contacted as soon as possible after a student has been identified as being at risk for suicide or self-harm. The person who contacts the family is typically the principal, designee, or staff member with a relationship with the student or family. This procedure is put in place for the safety of the student. Please note that a re-entry meeting after the emergency conference is part of the process. If the student is under the age of 18 and the parent/guardian refuses to contact a mental health provider or come to the school for a meeting when notified of the situation, the school shall contact and file a negligent report with the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS).

Mental Health Emergency Response Team (MHERT)

When a student is exhibiting an apparent mental health

crisis, a team of school-based professionals will respond to support the student. Each MHERT is led by a school-based administrator. Other team members may include a counselor, school psychologist, school nurse, special education teacher, and School Resource Deputy (SRO). Please note that a re-entry meeting after the emergency conference is part of the process.

Content Monitoring

All content accessed through Effingham County School District student accounts and technology is reviewed to ensure that students are academically appropriate and safe during the hours of 7am - 4pm on school days. Parents/Guardians will be contacted should concerns arise. Disciplinary action may be taken if appropriate. We encourage students to only use their accounts and devices for scholarly purposes.

Protecting Student Safety Online:

Effingham County School District (ECSD) is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment, both in and outside of the classroom. This includes monitoring student activity on ECSD-issued devices and accounts to identify potential risks such as:

- Cyberbullying
- Threats of violence
- Self-harm
- Exposure to inappropriate content
- Unauthorized access or disclosure of personal information

Monitoring Procedures:

ECSD utilizes technology tools that scan student activity for keywords and phrases associated with these risks. Human review may also occur to ensure context is understood. Monitoring only occurs during standard school hours - not evenings, weekends, and holidays.

Communication and Collaboration:

ECSD prioritizes open communication with parents and guardians. If concerns arise regarding a student's online activity, a school official will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the situation and develop a plan to ensure student safety and well-being. Disciplinary action will only be considered as a last resort and in accordance with the ECSD Student Code of Conduct.

Promoting Responsible Digital Citizenship:

ECSD encourages students to practice responsible digital citizenship by:

- Using school-issued devices and accounts for educational purposes only;
- Reporting any suspicious activity or concerns to a trusted adult;
- Maintaining appropriate online behavior.

Student Privacy & Data Handling

Protecting Student Privacy:

ECSD understands the importance of student privacy. The data collected through content monitoring is used solely for the purpose of ensuring student safety and well-being. This data will be:

- **Accessed only by authorized personnel** with a legitimate educational interest.
- **Stored securely** in accordance with district data security policies.
- **Deleted** when it is no longer needed.

Please note: While ECSD utilizes content monitoring tools, it is important to remember that these tools are not foolproof. We encourage parents/guardians to monitor their child's online activity at home and to discuss online safety with their children regularly.

Mindset/Crisis Prevention And Response

In compliance with State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.35 SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT FOR ALL STUDENTS, Effingham County School District utilizes MindSet protocol when responding to students in crisis. Through the implementation of MindSet, our system responds to students in crisis with an emphasis on counseling and de-escalation in an effort to eliminate the need for therapeutic/physical restraint. In accordance with State Board Rule 160-5-1-.35, therapeutic restraint is only used as a last resort when there is harm to self, harm to others, or harm is imminent. Each school has a team of trained staff members who have successfully completed the MindSet curriculum training, to include a written assessment and demonstration of skills. Please contact the Director of Exceptional Students for more information.

Section 504 Procedural Safeguards And Notice Of Rights

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

For more information regarding Section 504, please contact Ms. Misty Duncan at 912.754.5508 or visit our system website, <https://www.effinghamschools.com/Section504>.

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

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and

achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.

9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

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

Special Education/Exceptional Students

Special education is specially designed instruction provided at no cost to parents that meets the unique needs of a student with a disability. Children are identified and served from age three through 22 in accordance with state and federal law.

1. The law ensures that all eligible children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living; [34

CFR 300.1 (a)]

2. Ensures that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected; [34 CFR 300.1 (b)]
3. Assists educational agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities; and [34 CFR 300.1 (c)]
4. Assesses and ensures the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities; [34 CFR 300.1 (d)]
5. According to IDEA, students are entitled to Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) until he or she reaches their 22nd birthday. When a student turns 22, FAPE ends. Students will not return to school after his or her 22nd birthday. Parents will receive prior written notice related to graduation or 'age out' the semester before the student turns 22.

For more information about the referral, assessment, eligibility, placement and/or the IEP process, please contact the Department of Exceptional Students at 912.754.5623 or visit our system website, <https://www.effinghamschools.com/ExceptionalStudents>.

Parent Request For Student Observation By Self Or Other

A parent is required to complete a Request for Observing a Student and Effingham County School District Confidentiality Agreement. The parent will contact the school administrator to obtain these forms. Virtual observations will not be permitted.

Parent Request For Observation By Private Therapist

All requests must be initiated by the parent or guardian. The parent will complete the Request for Observing a Student and the private therapist/private observer will complete additional documentation. The parent will contact the school administrator to obtain these forms. Virtual observations will not be permitted.

Private Therapy During School Day

Therapy provided by a private therapist is not permitted on school campuses; however, Georgia APEX and Building Blocks Family Counseling are approved school-based mental health providers. In addition, enCompass Academy students may receive private therapy approved through the Department of Exceptional Students.



TRANSPORTATION

Riding A School Bus

Although we are committed to the safety of students on the bus and at the bus stop, there are situations that require your assistance and participation in order to ensure the safety of your children when walking to and from the bus stop. Sometimes, children can be exposed to a dangerous situation because of their own or others behavior.

Riding the school bus is a privilege for students, and maintaining proper behavior while on the bus is expected in order to protect the safety of all students. Riding the bus also ensures that students will arrive to school on time each day. All pupils being transported are under the authority of the bus driver and must obey his/her requests. Students must be at the bus stop five minutes before the time for the bus to arrive. The bus will not wait on students who are not at the stop when it arrives. This is necessary in order to complete routes in the time allotted and have students arrive at school on time. Students should remain 12 feet away from the road in a safe area while waiting on the bus. Students must not eat or drink on the bus for their safety and the safety of others. Students may not transport anything on the school bus that will not safely sit on their laps while in their seated position. Students must sit in the seat assigned by the driver or school administrator. School rules apply on the bus just as on campus or at other school events, and bus behavior is specifically covered in the **Code of Conduct**. Bus drivers will make disciplinary referrals to the school administration that may result in a conference and warning, or the denial of a student's right to ride the bus for a given number of days and/or the remainder of the school year. The administration reserves the right to exercise administrative prerogative as necessary. Parents, guardians, and others should not attempt to board a school bus during the bus route. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1181: It shall be unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop as designated by local school boards of education. Any person violating this code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.



School Bus Stop Safety/Behavior

There are serious safety issues for students while waiting at the school bus stop. Students are responsible for their actions and behavior while waiting at the school bus stop. School bus transportation can be denied if students do not conduct themselves properly.

The following are essential behaviors for student safety while at the school bus stop. Students should:

1. Get up and get ready on time. Arrive at the bus stop five minutes before the bus is scheduled to come.
 - Students have been struck by their school bus when they arrived late in the boarding process and the bus driver was unaware of their presence. The five minute target ensures the loading of the bus takes place in a routine manner, even if the student is running a couple of minutes late or the bus is running a couple of minutes early. Any break in the normal safety routine places the student in grave danger.
2. Go back home and get help or phone for assistance if you miss the bus. Get someone you know to take you to school. **NEVER CHASE AFTER THE BUS, NEVER WALK TO ANOTHER BUS STOP, AND TELL YOUR PARENTS TO NEVER DRIVE YOU TO ANOTHER BUS STOP.** Your bus driver will not be expecting you and you will be in grave danger when approaching the unsuspecting school bus driver. It is better to be late for school and be safe!
 - Students have been struck by vehicles or by their school bus when they missed their bus and tried to board a school bus at an unscheduled stop. Any break in the normal safety routine places the student in grave danger.
3. Have all items in your book bag before you leave home so you don't drop anything.
 - Students have been struck by other vehicles when they dropped something and went after it at the bus stop or struck by their school bus when they dropped something and tried to retrieve it when getting onto the bus.
4. Wait in a safe place, 12 feet away from traffic.
 - Students have been struck by passing vehicles at the bus stop when they got too close to traffic.
5. Never speak to strangers at the bus stop and never get into the car with a stranger. Tell your bus driver, your teacher, or your parents if a stranger tries to talk to you or pick you up.
6. Respect the property of homeowners at the bus stop and also keep the noise down.
7. Respect the rights and safety of other students.
8. Wait in a "single file" line or in an orderly group.
9. Avoid horseplay.
10. Refrain from pushing or shoving.
11. Form an orderly line as the bus approaches, with the first student in line standing 12 feet away from the road.
12. Keep electronic equipment packed away when preparing to board. Never use an electronic device or wear ear buds/headphones when boarding. You **MUST** be able to hear!
13. Wait before moving to the school bus.

Lack Of Supervision

Per Georgia Department of Human Resources guidelines, children eight years or younger should not be left alone.

Children between the ages of nine years and twelve years, based on level of maturity, may be left alone for brief periods of time (less than two hours); and children thirteen years and older, who are at an adequate level of maturity, may be left alone and may perform the role of babysitter, as authorized by the parent, for up to twelve hours.

Any child eight years or younger that rides the school bus home in the afternoon will need a parent or babysitter that is visible to the bus driver, not in a vehicle or in the house. The babysitter or other designated adult must be registered with the school on the child's emergency contact list. If the parent or babysitter is not at the designated stop when the bus arrives, the bus driver will radio the school so a parent can be contacted and the incident will be documented. The parent and/or babysitter will be allowed three incidents before action is taken. After three documented incidents from the driver to the school the following protocol will occur:

Incident #3	a letter is sent home to the parent from the school with the documented days
Incident #4	all riding privileges shall be suspended until the parent has a parent conference with a school administrator and an administrator from the Transportation Office
Incident #5	Loss of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year

Alterations To Regular Transportation

When students make a change to their daily transportation pattern, a written notice from the parent/guardian with a phone number at which the parents can be reached is required. For example, if a student routinely rides the bus but will be picked up by a parent or someone else for a single day or several days, then a note would be required.

RIDING ANOTHER BUS/GOING HOME WITH A FRIEND

Students are expected to ride the bus to which they have been assigned. Students wishing to ride another bus, such as to a friend's or babysitter's house, must follow these procedures:

1. Bring a written request from the parent/ guardian with a phone number at which a parent can be reached to verify the request. If the parent cannot be reached to verify the note, the principal may choose to deny the request and the student will be sent home in the usual manner. Any student bringing a note that is not written by the parent/ guardian will be subject to the disciplinary action associated with the policy on forgery. The physical address of where the student is to be dropped off must be included in the note.
2. Report to homeroom or class and present a note from their parent/guardian to the teacher. Notes will be verified and a Boarding Pass will be returned to the student.
3. Give the Boarding Pass to the bus driver as you board the bus. Students who fail to follow this procedure and whose notes cannot be verified with a call to the parents will not be allowed to leave school on other than their assigned bus.

Note: Students who are attending school under School Choice Privilege are not allowed to utilize school transportation.

NEW



ECSD Transportation is excited to announce the deployment of

My Ride K-12 App

The "My Ride K-12" mobile app allows parents and students to

- easily find your student's bus route
- receive real-time updates
- get push notifications about changes or delays
- etc.

To learn more visit:
effinghamschools.com/transportation



GEORGIA STATE LAW



Effective May 2024, Georgia's "Addy's law" creates a minimum **\$1,000** fine for motorists who **illegally** pass school buses.

KNOW WHEN TO STOP



2-Lane
Vehicles traveling in **BOTH** directions **MUST STOP**



Multi-Lane (Paved Across)
Vehicles traveling in **BOTH** directions **MUST STOP**



Divided Highway
(dirt, grass, or barrier median)
• Vehicles behind **MUST STOP**.
• Vehicles traveling in opposite direction **MUST** use caution.

NOTE: School buses in Effingham County are equipped with stop-arm cameras to detect the license plates of motorists who fail to stop.

STUDENTS' RECORDS & DIRECTORY INFORMATION



Please see Effingham County Board of Education Policy JR (Student Records) accessed via the link provided in the Appendix or by visiting: <https://www.effinghamschools.com/studentRecords-policy>

Military Recruitment

Federal law requires that secondary student information (names, addresses, and telephone listings) be released to armed forces recruiters. As a part of this law, parents have the right to notify the school in writing to not release the name, address, and telephone number to recruiters of the armed forces of the United States or institutions of higher education.

Publicity Releases

In addition to the honor roll, Effingham County Schools publicize students' outstanding achievements and the activities of the students through various media.

We welcome the myriad of media coverage of our students, staff, and programs and provide access to all public information through cooperative efforts among representatives of the media and district personnel, giving due consideration to the responsibilities and operating guidelines of both the schools and the media.

Effingham County Schools will not knowingly allow reporters to interview students under 18 years of age without parental consent. Site principals will determine the best time for any interviews, minimizing class time missed.

Media representatives may be present at school events, and students occasionally participate in live, public programs. College students completing internships and practicums compile portfolios of their experiences, which sometimes contain photos of students. Schools also publish yearbooks that contain photographs and names of students as well as honor roll, awards, and student work.

- Specifically, regarding publishing of student work and information on school-sponsored websites, the following guidelines apply:
 - Publishing student photographs and exceptional work is permitted except for students whose parents have declined permission by submitting a written statement to the school;
 - All published material and external links must clearly support and/or augment the curricular objectives.

Information about school related activities may be found on the internet as well as on school-sponsored publications. Accordingly, the district reserves the right to exercise editorial control over such publications.

Updating Student Information

Any changes in a student's residence, family circumstance, and phone numbers should be immediately reported to the school office or the district's Central Registration Center to maintain accurate student data.

Parent / Student Notification System

The district utilizes a notification system to send parents and students general and targeted notifications via voice, text, and e-mail messaging. Parents and students are encouraged to update their preferences for receipt of such notifications via the Contact Preferences link on Infinite Campus Portal. Special education records will be destroyed per 34 CFR 300.624. Public notice will be provided on the District website. Please contact Dr. Ashly Hunter for more information.



HEALTH SERVICES

Chronic Health Conditions

Any student with a chronic health condition (such as asthma, diabetes, severe allergies, seizure disorders, etc.) must provide an Action Plan (care plan), signed by the parent and physician. The Action Plan details specific care and management of the condition at school. In addition, all supplies, equipment, and medication needed for the chronic condition are to be provided by the parent. In order to provide safe and appropriate care for your child at school, the Action Plan with doctor's orders, medications, and/or equipment must be provided within two weeks of starting school. Failure to provide these items will result in the parent providing the care at school or the student will be excluded from school until all necessary items are received by the school nurse. Action Plan forms are available from the school nurse or on the system website at <https://www.effinghamschools.com/HealthServices> > Forms .

Illness At School

Any student who becomes ill at school should immediately notify his or her teacher, or if between classes, the teacher of the next class, receiving a pass to the nurse's office. In the case of a medical emergency, or if a student is too ill to remain in class, every effort will be made to contact the parents/guardians or the emergency contact person listed on the student's registration form. **Sick students who are contagious with active symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, congestion, cough, shortness of breath, rashes, and/or fever must not be sent to school. Students with a fever of 100.2 or above must be excluded from school and should not return until they are fever free or active symptom free for 24 hours without Tylenol or other fever reducing medications. Students returning too early may be sent home.**

Please alert the school about any medical condition and/or allergy a student has that may require attention at any time during the school day. Students who demonstrate symptoms of severe allergic reaction and/or anaphylactic shock, may be given emergency epinephrine injection.

Immunizations

The state law of Georgia requires that all students enrolled in a public school must have an up to date immunization record provided by the parents / guardians, unless an affidavit of religious objection to immunization is submitted in accordance with the provisions of Georgia Department of Public Health rule 511-2-2-.07. Minimum immunization requirements for the issuance of Georgia School Immunization Certificate (Form 3231) & attendance in Georgia schools are determined by the Georgia Department of Public Health and are available, upon request, at the local health department. Students who do not have a current complete immunization form 3231 will be withdrawn from school.

Head Lice Management

Schools will recognize a maximum of three days of excused absences for the treatment of head lice per school year. Days in excess of three will be considered as unexcused. Schools will take an active role in educating parents and children about head lice and its prevention. Teachers, counselors, nurses, and administrators will seek to find the best means to communicate effectively with these groups. The following procedures have been developed for dealing with the head lice problem.

1. If a child is suspected of having head lice, the school clinic/nurse will be notified. Parents who find and treat head lice at home should immediately notify the school nurse. The child must be brought to school by the parent/guardian for clearance before attending school and riding the bus.
2. Children showing active symptoms will be checked by the school nurse, or his/her designee.
3. The parent will be asked to pick up the infested student immediately. An information sheet will be provided to inform parents about how to get rid of the infestation. The child having head lice will be excluded from class until he or she is picked up, treated, and lice free.
4. When the students have left at the end of the school day, the school classroom where an incidence of head lice has been found will be cleaned to help prevent the spread of the condition. Parents should follow the instructions for home environment cleaning to prevent re-infestation. No toxic chemical sprays should be used.
5. The school principal will communicate with the parents in the classroom informing them of the presence of head lice and the precautions that should be taken.
6. When the hair has been properly treated and the nits/lice removed, parents must bring the child to school with evidence of treatment used to be rechecked by the school nurse. Please note that students cannot ride the bus until they have been checked and cleared for return to class. If no head lice are found, the child will be readmitted to class. If the school nurse determines that an infestation remains, the parent must continue treatment at home until the nurse clears the child to return to class.
7. Chronic or recurring cases will be referred to the local Department of Family and Children Services for assistance in dealing with the problem. Chronic or recurring cases that result in excessive absences will result in referral to the attendance officer and may cause failure to progress to the next grade or to receive credit for the course.

Medication Administration At School



Please see Effingham County Board of Education Policy JGCD (Medication) which can be accessed via the link provided in the Appendix or by visiting: <http://www.effinghamschools.com/medication-policy>

ADDITIONAL MEDICATION GUIDELINES

- Cough drops are allowed under this policy.
- Herbal/Alternative/Complementary Medications or Dietary Supplements: Herbal medications/supplements are not to be given or self-administered at school. These products are not approved by the FDA; FDA regulates only product label information and often lacks data regarding safety, efficacy, and dosages in children. There may be side effects when mixing herbal medications/supplements with other medications the student may be taking. Use of these products should be managed at home. Students who carry these products to school will be violating the school drug policy.
- Experimental (or Off Label) medications: Children requiring treatment of a condition with these medications will require written documentation from the prescribing physician including the name, dose, condition prescribed for, and current information on side effects and precautions, as well as any specific directions for administration at school.

Unanticipated exposure to blood or body fluids:

Unanticipated exposure to blood or body fluids: If a staff member or student is exposed to blood or body fluids, the affected area is to be immediately washed with soap and water or the area flushed with water, and the following protocol followed and documented:

1. Report exposure to the school nurse immediately following washing the area. If there is a needle stick, the nurse will report to the Board of Education Director of Benefits/Worker Compensation immediately but not later than two to four hours after the exposure. Employees will follow the guidelines for Worker Compensation injuries. Students/visitors will be referred to the local ER for evaluation of needed treatment.
2. School nurse will contact the local Public Health Office.
3. The Board of Education may require permission of the person whose blood was exposed to be tested for any serious infectious disease such as Hepatitis B and/or HIV.

Any additional medication situations, not specifically addressed in this policy will follow the School Health Manual guidelines.

Georgia Student Health Survey

As part of the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Office of School Safety and Climate and other school/educational programs, students will participate in anonymous surveys periodically. If you prefer that your child NOT participate, please notify your child's principal in writing. Otherwise, consent is implied. Copies of all surveys are available upon request.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL

Personal Property

It is a good practice to mark coats, hats, and personal belongings with a student's name. Students are advised to bring with them to school only those items essential for their classwork. Other items frequently cause disruption, get misplaced, or stolen. Cosmetics, personal hygiene, and similar type items are unnecessary in the classroom. Items such as deodorants, perfumes, and sprays are not to be used on school buses at all, and should remain inside a student's bag while in transport.

Teachers are authorized to collect any items which may be unnecessary for class and pose an interruption or interfere with classroom instruction or good order. High school students' vehicles parked on school grounds are subject to searches by school administrators and law enforcement officers at the request of the school administration. Students are responsible and will be held accountable for the contents within their vehicle.

Deliveries (Flower/Balloons/Gifts/Food)

Students are not allowed to receive flowers, balloons, or gift deliveries at school. Students are not allowed to have food delivered (via DoorDash, Uber Eats, Grubhub, etc.) during the school day. Food will be confiscated and students will receive disciplinary action from school administration. Students are allowed to bring a lunch from home.

Parties/Socials

Parties are designed primarily for the benefit of students enrolled in the school. Parents should refrain from bringing siblings or other non-enrolled children to school parties. Schools will provide guidance regarding parties/socials procedures.

Distribution Of Materials

Effingham County school students, parents/guardians, and staff shall not distribute pamphlets, letters, brochures, petitions, or other such printed materials, to or through students or their immediate families during school, without written approval of the school administration. Please refer to the school system's advertising policy, which applies to employees as well as students, parents, and the community.

Student Clubs And Organizations

Per State law, the Effingham County School System is required to notify parents or legal guardians regarding the various school clubs and organizations offered at each school. If a parent or legal guardian does not want their child to participate in a particular club or organization, they must, within the first ten days of each school year, inform the school in writing.

"Clubs and organizations" means a group comprised of students who wish to organize and meet for common goals, objectives, or purposes and which is directly under the sponsorship, direction, and control of the school. This term shall include any activities reasonably related to such clubs and organizations, but shall not include competitive interscholastic activities or events.

List Of Current School Clubs And Organizations

Because school club and organization activity may change yearly, parents or legal guardians are advised to review this section of the Student and Parent Handbook every year in order to make informed decisions regarding their child's participation. **In the event that a club or organization not listed below is created after a school year starts, an information letter will be sent home requiring the parent or legal guardian to give permission for their child to participate.**

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

4-H: Effingham County's 4-H program, a Unit of Cooperative Extension, the University of Georgia and Georgia 4-H (a partner in Public Education), assists students in grades 4-6 in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will help them become self-directing, productive, and contributing citizens. 4-H provides events, classes, activities, and forums at local, state, and national levels. All events are planned to enhance positive youth development and education. **Advisor(s):** Elementary – Fourth and fifth grade teachers; ECMS – B. Morgan and K. Brophy.

Art Club: The Art Club is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential leadership, personal growth, and career success through hands-on art education. Meeting times vary by school. **Advisor(s):** BES – TBA; RES – M. Winzenrith; SEMS – L. Gerow; EMS – A. Newland.

Best Buddies Club: The Best Buddies Club is a group of regular education and exceptional students that buddy up throughout the year. They attend several special events and support the extra-curricular activities at their respective schools. **Advisor(s):** EES – M. Vandenhouten, K. White, S. Kieffer, and S. Seckinger; GES – L. Iatrou, S. Ankrom, and C. Mowery; SES – J. Williams and K. Griffith; SHES – T. Karr; SEMS – K. Warner and H. Ward; ECHS – T. Lamb and M. Stone.

Beta Club: National Beta Club is a national honor society and service organization for students that maintain exemplary grades and behavior. The purpose of the Beta Club shall be to promote the ideals of character, service, and leadership and to reward meritorious achievement. Members will participate in school and community service projects. Members in high school will have the opportunity to compete at the State Beta Club convention held in Atlanta. For National Beta Club at the elementary schools, please contact your school's National Beta Club advisor(s) to learn more about specific eligibility requirements. **Advisor(s):** BES – J. Sauerland and K. McGee; SES – J. Williams and K. Griffith; EES – H. Burgess and M. Vandenhouten; RES – B. Brown, L. Smith, and A. Lee; GES – S. Davis; MES – K. Warner; SHES – T. Davis; SEES – J. Allen and L. Bullock; EMS – B. Cave and C. Hayes; ECMS – B. Neal; SEMS – K. Sahr; ECHS – B. Negroni-Martinez and A. Liles; SEHS – K. Warren and K. Simmons; ECCA (STEM Only) – S. Straub and S. Martin.

Bobcat Aggies: Bobcat Aggies provides the opportunity for fourth and fifth grade students to learn about agriculture in partnership with the ECHS Ag program. They meet every other month after school. **Advisor(s):** RES – L. Anderson.

Book Club: The purpose of the Book Club is to read in an interactive, social experience. Students read independently and gather to discuss texts, establishing a reading community. The goal of the Book Club is dedicated to inspiring meaningful connections through reading and discussion that will enhance the reading experience, support lifelong learning, and build relationships between students. **Advisor(s):** SEES – M. Taylor; SEMS – J. Chevarie; ECCA (STEM Only) – D. Jones; SEHS – B. Alford.

Boys on the Field: Boys on the Field is for fourth and fifth grade boys who use flag and touch football to inspire character, leadership, resilience, and teamwork. With the help of senior high school football players as their coaches, the boys learn key life skills that transfer from the field to the classroom and beyond. Presently, Boys on the Field is a five week program that meets one day a week on Thursday afternoons from 4:00-5:00 PM. **Advisor(s):** GES – L. Jefferson and D. Manior.

Bulldog Aggies Club: Bulldog Aggies Club provides the opportunity for fourth and fifth grade students to learn about agriculture in partnership with the ECHS Ag program. They meet every other month after school. **Advisor(s):** SES – Y. Crick.

Calculus Club: Calculus Club is dedicated to enabling students to perform well on the AP Calculus exam and to participate in extra Math/Science activities. Members also have opportunities to participate in community service projects such as the Dimes for Down Syndrome campaign. Future activities may include peer tutoring and participating in Science Day at the elementary schools. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – M. Kessler and J. Baxter.



Chess Club: Chess Club offers students the opportunity to perfect chess skills and analytical thinking skills along with strategy. Playing chess is a critical thinking and problem solving activity that helps develop spatial reasoning, strategic inquiry, complex memory skills, evaluative processes, sequential patterning, logical thinking, and critical analysis. The chess club meeting times vary by school and clubs may choose to participate in intra-club chess tournaments with schools in other systems. Elementary Chess Club is for students in grades third, fourth, and fifth. **Advisor(s):** BES – K. McGee; EES – H. Burgess; GES – S. Davis; RES – L. Smith and A. Lee; SES – K. Griffith; SEES – A. Barefield; EMS – L. Watson; SEMS – K. Bethune; ECMS – TBA; ECHS – R. Long; ECCA (STEM Only) – A. Conner; SEHS – B. Harvey.

Chorus: Chorus enhances students' knowledge of music and provides students an opportunity to experience a diverse spectrum of quality choral music. Members will perform at least one concert a year. The elementary chorus is designed to allow students in fourth and/or fifth grade. High school choruses participate in all GMEA sponsored events throughout the year, including District Honor Choir, Solo, and Ensemble; All-State Chorus; and Large Group Performance Evaluation (formerly known as Festival).

Advisor(s): Elementary music teachers serve as the faculty advisors; EES – S. Dickerson; SEES – B. Cates; SES – S. Flue; SEMS – T. Woodard; ECMS – K. Kicklighter; EMS – J. Russell; ECHS – W. Perkins; SEHS – W. Perkins.

Creative Writing Club: This club meets every two weeks to read and critique original student works of poetry and short fiction. We engage as a group in a traditional workshop, and everyone has a chance to have their work read and discussed. Our goal is to grow as writers and to help others craft their best work. **Advisor(s):** SEHS – M. Hoffman.



Drama Club: Drama club provides students the opportunity to improve speaking and acting skills while working as a team on a production. Drama Club is dedicated to exploring all aspects of the theater arts. Members will develop personal skills through drama activities then apply those skills to their performances. Elementary and middle school programs will perform a one-act play for an audience. High school programs will produce two main stage productions and participate in the GHSA One-Act Competition. Every three years the SEHS drama club travels to New York City, exposing students to a variety of occupations in the dramatic arts. **Advisor(s):** EES – E. Pincofski and S. Lapollo; EMS – TBA; ECMS – V. Tinley; SEMS – T. Woodward; ECHS – R. Hilton and M. May; SEHS – Z. Elton.

Equality Club: The Equality Club promotes an accepting atmosphere for all students regardless of ethnicity, religion, sexuality, cultural background, or physical limitations. The club will meet once a month. These meetings will provide an opportunity for students to embrace who they are and to learn about other cultures one-on-one. The club will provide educational opportunities for students to learn how different and how alike they are. **Advisor(s):** ECCA (STEM Only) – R. Habersham.

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA): The mission of FBLA is to bring business and education together in a positive working relationship through innovative leadership and career development programs. Members participate in community service projects such as canned food drives and March of Dimes. They also compete in leadership conferences held at the region, state, and national levels. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – A. Lawson; SEHS – L. Mitchell; ECCA (STEM and CTAE) – N. Exley and J. Sinopoli.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA): Fellowship of Christian Athletes organization is a nationally recognized student-led club that focuses on the mission of making a positive influence in others' lives by being a Christian role model. Student's will discuss how to apply God's principles to everyday life, on and off the field or court. At ECHS, guest speakers are invited to meetings and student athletes also have the opportunity to meet with college coaches.

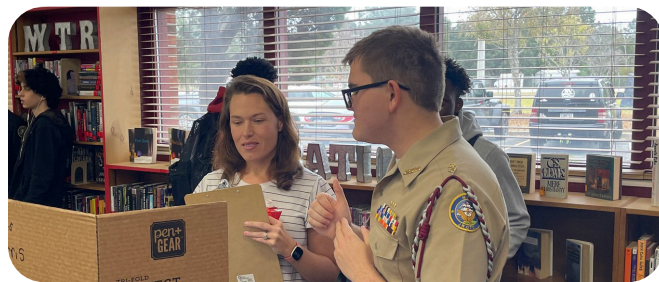
Advisor(s): SEMS – C. Klassen; ECMS – M. Dinkins; EMS – H. Darling and K. Kaeser; ECHS – J. Ford.

Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA): FCCLA is a nonprofit vocational student organization for young men and women through grade 12. FCCLA is the only vocational organization with the family as the central focus. The club's mission is to promote personal growth and leadership through family and consumer Sciences education. Dues paying members enjoy attending the Fall Leadership Conference at the Georgia National Fair. A student-led executive council plans and conducts monthly meetings that center on national programs, such as STOP the Violence and others. In the past, FCCLA has raised money to support the Savannah Care Center, a crisis pregnancy center, the National Parkinson Foundation, and other charitable causes. **Advisor(s):** SEHS – O. Osborne, N. Drayer, and J. Gerbasi; ECHS – M. Davis; ECCA (CTAE Only) – M. Almeida.

Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS): Fellowship of Christian Students meets on Friday mornings before school. FCS is affiliated with the national FCA organization and is a student-led group that allows students of all faiths to participate in Christian fellowship through worship and bible study. A praise band and inspirational speakers lead the meetings. Past community service projects included raising money for hurricane relief funds. **Advisor(s):** SEHS – N. Drayer; ECHS – TBA; ECCA (STEM Only) – B. Arrington.



FFA: National FFA organizations are dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. Members participate in leadership activities such as the Greenhand Jamboree, FFA Success Conference, and Summer Leadership Camp. Members have the opportunity to participate in Career Development Events, which are based on courses taught at each school. Some of these events include Ag Communications, Ag Sales, Electrical Wiring, Floriculture, Job Interview, Livestock Evaluation, Nursery/Landscape, and Tractor Operation and Maintenance. **Advisor(s):** ECMS – K. Brophy; EMS – A. Fulcher; SEMS – C. Pinson and A. Brookins; ECHS – A. Shearouse and T. Pittman; SEHS – B. Richardson, A. Richardson, and E. Frost; ECCA – M. Arrington.



Forensics/CSI Club: This club is offered to recognize and promote scientific thought and achievements in the field of forensic Science; to challenge our students to exceed expectations in the study and practice of forensic Science; to form partnerships with universities and businesses and offer students the opportunity to interact with real-life forensic experts; to help our students network with those who work in the field of forensic Science; to promote curiosity in a new generation of scientists and future leaders in the field; and to participate in community service and aid the civic community in its understanding of forensic Science. **Advisor(s):** SEHS – R. Imre; ECHS – J. Peny, C. Smith, and P. Crawford; ECCA – M. Foskey.

French Honor Society: French Honor Society meets to stimulate interest in the study of French, to promote and reward high standards of scholarship, to create enthusiasm for and understanding of Francophone cultures, and to further solidarity in the French-speaking world. Candidates must maintain an "A" in French and an overall "B" average in all courses. They are inducted into the honor society during their second semester of French. The group promotes French on campus with trivia questionnaires, surveys, food-tasting during French Week, and various cultural activities. The French Honor Society has plans to support community charities and introduce young children to the French language. **Advisor(s):** ECHS and SEHS – E. Lockhart.

Future Educators of America (FEA)/ Future Georgia Educators (FGE): Future Educators of America (FEA)/ Future Georgia Educators (FGE) – FGA is a club whose purpose is to introduce students to the field of education. Students participate in shadow days, which give them an opportunity to see firsthand the objectives in teaching. Membership is open but not limited to those who are considering opportunities in education. FEA also gives scholarship money to all of its senior members. The club has given over \$10,000 since 1998. Some of the club's past members have gone on to be teachers and principals in Effingham County. FEA members have participated in scholarship fundraisers, Teacher Appreciation Week, and Georgia Southern University's Introduction to Teaching Program. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – N. Cintron; SEHS – J. Gerbasi.

Girls on the Run: Girls on the Run is for third, fourth, and fifth grade girls. The organization inspires girls to be joyful, healthy, and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum that creatively integrates running. Practices at SEES will be held two days a week after school from 2:34-4:00 PM. Practices at RES will be held once a week. **Advisor(s):** BES – J. Morgan and J. McIntosh; GES – L. Reynolds; RES – S. Staver.

Good News Club: Kids love the Good News Club! Every club is packed with positive reinforcement in the lessons, games, mission stories, memory verses, and discussion time. Lessons teach personal responsibility, respect for authority, treating others like you want to be treated, who God is, how much He loves us, and much more. Each child

will experience being mentored in life lessons by trained leaders. **Advisor(s):** EES – A. Green; SES – C. Martin; MES – P. O’Toole.

Historical Miniatures Club: Effingham County Middle School sponsors the ECMS Historical Miniatures Club, an extra-curricular activity that uses Flames of War WWII miniatures and rules to learn about armed conflict during World War II. Students learn to assemble, paint, and fight with miniature armies of their choice. Battles fought on terrain tables with hills, forests, buildings, and plains similar to what the U.S. Army uses to train its officers. Not only do students develop a keen interest in history but also develop critical thinking and socialization skills. **Advisor(s):** A. Sheridan.

History Club: History Club is dedicated to developing students’ potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through civic educational opportunities and community projects. Club members aim to be an active part of the community by participating in various activities such as Adopt-a-Highway litter control projects, Adopt-an-Elderly (nursing home), and exposing students to various cultures through school sanctioned field trips. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – J. Hayes.



Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA): Health Occupations Students of America organization (HOSA) is a vocational club that is geared toward helping students get started on their careers in the medical field. Students have opportunities to compete at state and national levels. Students will participate in community service activities and fundraisers to pay for competition fees. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – V. Neurath; SEHS – T. Freeze; ECCA – A. Platt, C. Zeigler, and V. Renfroe.

Interact Club: Interact Club is Rotary International’s service club for young people ages 12-18. Past activities included assisting with Special Olympics events, raising money for the Hurricane Katrina Relief Effort, and raising funds for other charitable organizations. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – T. Aiken and A. Harden; SEHS – E. Roberts and S. Tant; SEMS – L. Cook.

Journalism: This club develops student publications for internal and external outlets. Featured works appear in the local newspaper. **Advisor(s):** SEHS – E. Douglas.

Lit Club: Ebenezer Elementary hosts a Literature club for third, fourth, and fifth graders on the first and third Thursday of every month from 3:15-4:15 PM. The club will read and discuss novels of different genres by a variety of authors. The club will have guest speakers, illustrators, and publishers to help enlighten the students on the process of creating literature.

Math Club/ Mathletes: The Math Club is dedicated to inspiring student interest, promoting achievement, and fostering a welcoming environment when learning Mathematics. Club members participate in competitive events such as the Georgia Mathematics League, Kennesaw State Mathematics tournament, and Pi Day. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – TBA; SEHS – D. Brandenburg and S. Tant; ECCA – A. Morrell and B. Crofts.

Mock Trial Team: Mock Trial Team gives students the opportunity to simulate a case in a real courtroom setting. This involves research, understanding of the law, and working with the Georgia Bar Association’s certified attorneys as they role play the witnesses, defendants, and attorneys. The team competes at the regional level. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – TBA; ECCA – M. McDonald.

Model United Nations (Model U.N.): Model U.N. is a team that researches various countries and writes resolutions that propose solutions for world problems such as war, famine, and disease. Members utilize diplomacy and public speaking skills. Students have the opportunity to participate in competitive events and conference.

Multicultural Appreciation Club: The mission of the ECMS Multicultural Appreciation Club is to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment that celebrates and promotes cultural diversity. We aim to cultivate an atmosphere of respect, understanding, and appreciation for different cultures, while fostering friendships and promoting cultural awareness among our members. Through various activities, events, and discussions, we strive to create a sense of unity and harmony among all students, embracing the richness that multiculturalism brings to our school community. **Advisor(s):** ECMS – A. Wesley Moore and M. Ellison.

Mustang Ambassadors: This SEHS club provides leadership development and volunteer opportunities for various campus activities throughout the year. **Advisor(s):** K. Stone.

Mustang Mentors: This leadership development club connects students in higher grade levels of SEHS, SHES, and SEES with students in lower grades of their respective schools. The SEHS club offers service opportunities for juniors and seniors that are selected through an application process. These students have the opportunity to mentor students at SEMS, SHES, and underclassmen at SEHS. At SEES and SHES the club connects fifth grade students with students in lower grades that benefit from peer mentorship in either academics or social emotional needs. These students perform the responsibilities of a true mentor. **Advisor(s):** SEES – P. Kutchey; SHES – H. Waring; SEHS – S. Hickox.

National Art Honor Society (NAHS): National Art Honor Society is affiliated with the National Art Education Association. NAHS membership is based upon outstanding artistic scholarship and service to the school and community through the development of artistic endeavors and a strong moral character. Past activities included regular meetings, art workshops, touring Savannah art galleries, and hosting art and fashion shows. **Advisor(s):** SEHS – D. Province and L. Gerow; ECHS – L. Nixon.

National Honor Society (NHS): National Honor Society recognizes students in the areas of scholarship, leadership, character, and service. Members must have and maintain a 93 average and submit documentation of at least 20

hours of community service each year. NHS has raised money for Habitat for Humanity, participated in Relay for Life, and awarded scholarships to outstanding senior members. **Advisor(s):** SEHS – J. Singleton; ECHS – A. Dilorenzo; ECCA (STEM Only) – R. Habersham.



Photography Club: The main objective of the photography club is to encourage its members to take photos while learning to love the craft more. There will be discussions, contests, and challenges while learning the basics of good photography. Members will get hands-on experience outside of school taking photographs to share with the club members and to submit for contests. **Advisor(s):** ECCA – S. McNeal; SEHS – D. Province and L. Gerow.

Rebel Ambassadors: This ECHS club provides leadership development and volunteer opportunities for various campus activities throughout the year. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – J. Mock.

Running Club: Running Club strives to promote integrity, teamwork, to have fun, and build self confidence through physical activity. This club is an opportunity for students in grades third, fourth, and fifth and meets once a week after school for one hour. **Advisor(s):** RES – T. Douberley and S. Staber; SEES – TBA.

Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD- combined with Interact Club): Students Against Driving Drunk is dedicated to making students, their friends, and their families aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse; to involving students in positive experiences in school and in the community; and to helping students make positive decisions in their lives. SADD sponsors the September birthday party at the Effingham Extended Care Facility, Red Ribbon Week in October, and Prom Promise in April/May. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – TBA.

Science Club: Science Club is a group with diverse interests. Students have initiated a schoolwide recycling program for drink containers, performed water quality monitoring for the Ogeechee River, participated in the first marine debris survey on Wassaw Island, visited the UGA aquarium on Skidaway Island, made giant bubbles for the Buddy Walk, and the list continues to grow. Join the Science club, where your ideas can make a difference. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – TBA.

Science National Honor Society: Science National Honor Society is offered to recognize and promote scientific thoughts and achievements, to challenge our students to exceed expectations in Science, to form partnerships with universities and businesses throughout the country, to help our students network and achieve at the next academic level (and beyond), to promote curiosity in a new generation of scientists and future leaders in the field, and to participate in community service and aid the civic community in its understanding of Science. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – V. Smith; SEHS – TBA.

Science Olympiad: Science Olympiad is an international nonprofit organization devoted to improving the quality of Science education, increasing student interest in Science, and providing recognition for outstanding achievement in Science education by students and teachers. At the annual competition, members have the opportunity to participate in different events which test their knowledge in various Science disciplines. **Advisor(s):** BES – K. McGee and K. Wadley; GES – S. Davis; SHES – L. Osborne; SEES – L. Lancaster, S. Booth, and K. Martin; SEMS – C. Gregg; ECCA (STEM Only) – A. Conner and C. Durden

Shark Tank Club: Shark Tank is a club that revolves around the world of entrepreneurship, business, and the creativity within. This club would encompass all creative ideas and help with the flow of many business ideas. The students will share ideas and also combine business ideas to satisfy the expectations. Students will compete in entrepreneurship competitions. **Advisor(s):** ECCA – B. Arrington.

Show Choir: Ebenezer Middle School sponsors a student show choir for students in grades 6-8. Students must audition and be selected to participate. The choir rehearses after school two days a week. Membership dues are required to cover the cost of uniform cleanings, shoes, music, and practice CD's. The show choir performs various types of music including pop, jazz, theater, and more. Some songs include choreography. Past performances included the Winter and Spring Chorus Concerts, school assemblies, award ceremonies, and fifth grade orientation. **Advisor(s):** EMS – J. Russell.



SkillsUSA: SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers, and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA helps each student excel. Students have the opportunity to compete in Construction, Automotive, Graphic Arts, Broadcast/Video Production, Journalism, Criminal Justice, Cosmetology, Early Childhood Education, and many other competitive areas. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – H. Dickerson and A. Powell; ECCA – M. Turner and T. Grimball.

Sources of Strength: Sources of Strength is a youth prevention project designed to harness the power of peer social networks to change unhealthy norms and culture, ultimately preventing suicide, bullying, and substance abuse. The mission of Sources of Strength is to prevent suicide by increasing help seeking behaviors and

promoting connections between peers and caring adults. Sources of Strength moves beyond a singular focus on risk factors by utilizing an upstream approach for youth suicide prevention. This upstream model strengthens multiple sources of support and young individuals so that when times get hard they have strengths to rely on. The sources of support that Sources of Strength focuses on are: mental health, family support, positive friends, mentors, healthy activities, generosity, spirituality, and physical health.

Advisor(s): ECHS – H. Reynolds; ECCA – A. Nave and S. Abed.

Spanish National Honor Society: The SHH is an honor society for high school students enrolled in Spanish and/or Portuguese, sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP). The SHH was formally organized as the Spanish National Honor Society in 1953. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – C. Hutchinson and B. Negroni-Martinez.

STEAM Club: This SEMS club is open to all students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade at all ability levels. The goal is to increase critical thinking skills of students through hands-on projects and challenges. Students work as individuals/pairs/teams to identify a solution to problems presented to them. **Advisor(s):** SEMS – B. Bonorato.

STEM Ambassador : The STEM Ambassador program provides a framework for 10–12 grade STEM students to collaborate on service learning projects within the school. This program influences a positive school culture and provides effective risk prevention by promoting good citizenship. Some projects that the students embark upon are peer guidance of younger students, being a leader, supporting the STEM program, and assisting with other needs within our school. The program is facilitated by the STEM Facilitator to promote leadership skills, peer collaboration, and self-confidence. **Advisor(s):** ECCA – A. Conner.

STEM Club: The purpose of the STEM club is to give students the chance to explore aspects of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. **Advisor(s):** BES – K. Wadley; EES – L. Daughtry; RES – L. Anderson; SEES – S. Farmer; SES – J. Smith.

Student Ambassadors : Student Ambassadors are student leader representatives from each grade level that are selected through an application and interview process. The Student Ambassadors is a program that builds upon soft skills necessary to lead school tours, present to audiences, and support community events held at the school. The Student Ambassadors participate in monthly school-wide streaming lessons.

Student Council: Student Council members campaign to be elected by their peers and act as a link between the student body and the faculty and administration. The student council is dedicated to social and organizational activities of the entire student body and promotes the importance of leadership and organizational skills. **Advisor(s):** SEES – J. Allen and L. Lancaster; SEMS – G. James; ECHS – L. Griffin; SEHS – D. Brandenburgh, K. Doolittle, and S. Hickox; ECCA (STEM Only) – M. McDonald.



Technology Student Association (TSA): TSA is a national student organization devoted exclusively to the needs of students engaged in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). TSA is open to students enrolled in or who have completed engineering and/or technology education courses. TSA is supported by educators, parents and business leaders who believe in the need for a technologically literate society. Members learn through exciting competitive events at the local, state, and national level. **Advisor(s):** ECCA – A. Parker and D. Paradise; ECMS – B. Neal; EMS – TBD; SEMS – J. Sisk.

The Tabletop Gaming (TTG) Club: The Tabletop Gaming (TTG) Club – The TTG Club is dedicated to empowering students to make informed decisions, fostering leadership qualities, and promoting positivity within the community. Through creative expression and a supportive environment we encourage creativity, support each other, and build a strong community. **Advisor(s):** TBA.

Ukulele Club : Offered at Blandford Elementary. This is an auditioned group for fifth graders. In this club, students learn to play the ukulele. This club performs at least once a year during a PTO program. **Advisor(s):** BES – A. Gonzales.

World Cultures Club: World Cultures Club provides positive cultural experiences to all students so that they may develop an appreciation of a global society. **Advisor(s):** ECHS – C. Hutchinson and E. Lockhart.

World Language Honor Society: World Language Honor Society offers opportunities for selected students the opportunity to collegially enhance their knowledge, understanding, and immersion in Spanish and French languages and cultures. **Advisor(s):** SEHS – TBD.

Writing Club: Writing club meets so that students may expand on various genres of writing. Club members will share their work with other members, enter contests, and enjoy the company of other aspiring writers. **Advisor(s):** ECMS – A. Wilkins; SEMS – J. Ahouse.

APPENDIX

Effingham County Board Of Education Policies

The Effingham County Board of Education has developed board policies which may address some of the subject matter in this Student & Parent Handbook. All board policies apply in addition to the content of this Student & Parent Handbook and should be reviewed by parents and students. These board policies can be accessed at <http://www.effinghamschools.com/eBoard>.

Paper copies of these policies can be made available upon request at each school's front office. Information concerning translated versions of these board policies can also be obtained at each school's front office. For reference, the Board Policy Manual – Table of Contents is also set forth below.

- ABCB – Board Member Qualifications
- ABCC – Board Member Terms of Office
- ABCDA – Board Member Un-Expired Term Fulfillment
- AFC – Emergency Closings
- BBAA – Board Officer Method of Election
- BBBE – Board Member Compensation and Expenses
- BBFA – Local School Councils
- BCAB – Regular Board Meetings
- BCAC – Special Board Meetings
- BCBD – Board Meeting Agendas
- BCBI – Public Participation in Board Meetings
- BCBK – Executive Sessions
- BD – Policy Development
- BDG – Administration in Policy Absence
- BH – Board Code of Ethics
- BHA – Board Member Conflict of Interest
- BHB – Nepotism
- CC – Organization Charts
- CG – Administrative Personnel
- CGI – Administrative Personnel Evaluation
- CGPE – Administrative Personnel Non-School Employment
- CN – Administrative Records
- DCK – Level of Budgetary Control
- DCL – Fund Balance
- DFA – Local Tax Revenues
- DFC – Federal Funds
- DFK – Gifts and Bequests
- DH – Bonded Employees
- DIB – Financial Reports
- DID – Audits
- DIE – Fraud Prevention
- DJ – Expenditure of Funds
- DJCB – Salary Deductions
- DJEAC – Purchasing or Credit Card Use
- DJED – Bids and Quotations
- DK – Student Activities Funds Management
- DO – School Properties Disposal Procedures
- EDD – Bus Scheduling and Routing
- EDDA – Special Use of School Buses
- EEE – Wellness Program
- GAAA – Equal Opportunity Employment
- GAD – Professional Learning Opportunities
- GAE – Complaints and Grievances
- GAEB – Sexual Harassment of Employees
- GAK(1) – Criminal Background Check
- GAMA – Drug-Free Workplace
- GAN – Employee Tobacco Use
- GARH – Employee Leaves and Absences
- GBC – Professional Personnel Recruitment
- GBIA – Teacher Evaluation Appeals
- GBKA – Professional Personnel Lay-Off
- GBRB – Professional Personnel Time Schedules
- GBRIB(1) – Professional Personnel Sick Leave Bank
- GBRIG – Federal Family and Medical Leave Act
- GCRA(1) – Drug Screening of Bus Drivers
- IBB – Charter Schools
- IDB – Health and Physical Education
- IDCH-E(1) – Dual Enrollment – Traditional High School Diploma Dual Enrollment
- IDCH-E(2) – Dual Enrollment – Accelerated Career Diploma Dual Enrollment
- IDDD-E(1) – Gifted Student Programs – 2023-2024
- IDDN-E(2) – Work-Based Learning Programs – Handbook
- IDE(3) – Competitive Interscholastic Activities, Grades 6-12
- IDFA – Gender Equity in Sports
- IDFA-E(1) – Gender Equity in Sports – Grievance Form
- IEDA – Recess/Unstructured Break Time
- IFBD – Media Centers
- IFBD-E(1) – Media Centers – Procedures and Guidelines
- IFBGE – Internet Safety
- IHDA – Valedictorian/Salutatorian
- IHE – Promotion and Retention
- IHF(5)-E(1) – Graduation Requirements – Entering Fall 2002-03 through 2007-08 – Effective July 1, 2007
- IHF(5)-E(2) – Graduation Requirements – Entering Fall 2002-03 through 2007-08 – Effective July 1, 2007
- IHF(6) – Graduation Requirements – Entering Fall 2008-09 and thereafter
- IKBB – Divisive Concepts Complaint Resolution Process

- IKBC – Material Harmful to Minors Complaint Resolution Process
- IKD – School Ceremonies and Observances
- JAA – Equal Educational Opportunities
- JB – Student Attendance
- JBC – School Admissions
- JBC(1) – Homeless Students
- JBC(4) – Awarding Units and Transferring Credit
- JBC(4)-E(1) – Awarding Units and Transferring Credit – Grade Conversion JBC(4) E (1)
- JBC(4)-E(2) – Awarding Units and Transferring Credit – Through Testing-Out JBC(4) E(2)
- JBC(4)-E(3) – Awarding Units and Transferring Credit – Comprehensive Testing for Non-Accredited Schools
- JBC(4)-E(4) – Awarding Units and Transferring Credit – Students with Disabilities-High School Mathematics Decision Rubric
- JBCA – Resident Students
- JBCB – Nonresident Students
- JBCCA(2) – Unsafe School Choice Option
- JCAC – Sexual Harassment of Students
- JCDA – Student Code of Conduct
- JCDAE – Weapons
- JCDAG – Bullying
- JCDB-E(2) – Student Dress Code – Quick Reference Chart Exhibit A JCDB
- JCEB – Student Hearing Procedure
- JDA – Corporal Punishment
- JGCC – Infectious Diseases
- JGCD – Medication
- JGF – Student Safety
- JGF(2) – Seclusion or Restraint of Students
- JGF(2)-E(1) – Seclusion or Restraint of Students – Administrative Procedures
- JGFGA – First Aid
- JGFGB – Concussion Management
- JGI – Child Abuse or Neglect
- JGJA – Suicide Prevention
- JKA – Solicitations of Students
- JKB – Solicitations by Students
- JQK – Exchange Students
- JR – Student Records
- JRA – Student Data Privacy Complaints
- JRA-E(1) – Student Data Privacy Complaints – Grievance Form
- JRB – Parents’ Bill of Rights
- JRB-R(1) – Parents’ Bill of Rights
- KG – Use of School Facilities
- KG-R(1) – Use of School Facilities
- KG-R(2) – Use of School Facilities
- KJ – Advertising in the Schools
- LDAJA – Interrogations and Investigations

Internet Acceptable Use Agreement (AUA)

The Internet is available to students and school employees to increase the use of technology as a teaching and learning tool. Our goal is to promote student achievement and facilitate communication in order to share resources in education, business, government, and Science. Use of these resources is considered a privilege to which great responsibility is attached. To that end, the Board of Education has enacted a strict agreement governing acceptable use of the Internet and technology resources. Parents wishing to prohibit their child's ability to access the Internet should provide notice in writing to the school.

The Board of Education realizes the significant importance of access to the Internet and the wealth of information and educational resources that are made available through it. As such, staff and students shall be afforded equitable access to these resources to pursue the educational mission of the Effingham County School District. This access is provided contingent upon the following:

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Acceptable Use: The purpose of providing access to the Internet and any device(s) providing access to district network resources is to promote learning through research and collaboration. The use of the Internet must be consistent with this and with the instructional objectives of the Effingham County School System. Internet use for professional development purposes is acceptable, as well, so long as it does not interfere with instructional use.

Privileges: The use of the Internet and any device(s) providing access to district network resources is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in revocation of those privileges. Building administrators may determine what is inappropriate use within the framework of this policy. Administrators and staff may request that Internet privileges be denied, revoked, or suspended, if the AUA is violated.

Users must agree to abide by the following guidelines:

- Users may not give out personal information such as names, phone numbers, or addresses of themselves or others, over the Internet, with the exception that staff may do so in conducting the business of the school.
- Users may not access or send material that is obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors, and the Board of Education shall install and operate technology protection measures including commercial Internet blocking and filtering software that blocks or filters access to such material and any other materials that are determined to be inappropriate by school or system administrators. The terms "obscene", "child pornography" and "harmful to minors" have the meanings given such terms in section 1460 of Title 18, section 2256 of Title 18, and section 254 (h)(7)(G) of Title 47, United States Code, respectively.
- Users may not violate copyright laws of the United States or the established copyright policies of the local Board of Education.
- Users may not engage in any unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking", or other unlawful activities while using district computer resources.
- Users may not engage in non-educational games or waste valuable bandwidth (network capacity).
- Users may not download software (to include weather applications, browser toolbars, etc) from the Internet

without the permission of the Information Technology Department.

- Users may not engage in acts of vandalism, including harming or destroying data of another user. This includes uploading, downloading, or creating computer viruses.
- Users may not harass others by persistent annoyance or interference while others are online. This includes, but is not limited to, sending unsolicited e-mail (SPAM).
- Users must observe common rules of network etiquette such as politeness and allowing others ample online time.
- Users are not to bypass district protection measures via proxy or any other mechanism.

Security: Users are required to notify the classroom teacher or school administrator if they observe a security problem to include vandalism, theft, sharing of personal information, hacking, and any violation of the guidelines listed above. In turn, this individual will notify the Information Technology Coordinator of the problem. Use of the Internet, including e-mail, chat rooms, social networking, and other forms of direct electronic communications, are not private and for the safety and security of the users will be monitored. Inappropriate or unlawful messages will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Home Networking Equipment: Users are NOT to bring networked equipment to include WiFi access points, home assistants such as Amazon Alexa, Google Home, etc. Additionally, mobile "hot spots" or "jet packs" must not be used in the schools. All personal devices must use the GUEST INET network for access to the district's network resources.

Social Networking: Employees may participate in social networking services (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) or internet based applications for personal use. Any communication between student and employee on these sites should exhibit the proper student/employee relationship and maintain professional etiquette. The title of "student" – according to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Code of Ethics for Educators – is applicable until August 31 of the year the student has graduated.

Employees shall not create a webpage, website, blog, social networking site, or any other resources that represents a school-sponsored activity, club, team, organization, etc. without prior approval from the Information Technology Coordinator. Accepted Internet resources used to represent district programs, personnel, and organizations shall be provided and maintained by the district. Personnel should utilize these resources as opposed to other freely available resources on the Internet. In the event a district-funded resource does not provide specific functionality seen within a non-supported resource, staff members should consult with the Information Technology Coordinator before integrating it into their instruction plans.

Publishing on the Internet: Student work will be published only under the direction of the supervising teacher(s) who will be responsible for verifying permission via the handbook acknowledgment form submitted annually by the student's guardian(s).

Parents, legal guardians or eligible students may make a written request to the principal of the school where the student is enrolled, within 10 days of enrollment or the first 10 days of the academic school year, to request that such information (as indicated above) not be published or used on any school-sponsored websites.

**Note to Parents/Guardians:*

The Effingham County School District prioritizes student privacy and safety adhering to FERPA and COPPA guidelines. Parent/guardians understand that the school system will allow the use of multiple software programs and applications to assist with instruction. The district carefully reviews and/or negotiates with each vendor to limit and protect the information that is shared and to ensure that it is used to assist with the education of the student. In some cases, the school system may consent for students under the required age outlined in the applications Terms of Use/Service to use online application.

Administrative Procedures For Student Drug Abuse Prevention

Rationale: A top priority of the Effingham County School System is to provide a safe and secure environment for all students in order to protect the health and well-being of each individual. An appropriate learning climate must be maintained to ensure such an environment. Because alcohol and other drug use is illegal, hazardous to health, contagious, and interferes with effective learning and proper development of children and adolescents, the system has a legal and ethical obligation to prohibit drug possession or use and to maintain a safe and drug-free educational environment. Effingham County schools maintain a “zero-tolerance” policy in regard to alcohol, illegal drug use, and possession of illegal drugs or imitation illegal drugs.

Standards of Conduct: No student shall possess, sell, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any legal or illegal drug in any form whatsoever, including, but not limited to alcohol, narcotics, cocaine, marijuana, depressants, stimulants, inhalants, hallucinogens, amphetamines, ecstasy, barbiturates, anabolic steroids, any additive or controlled substances, and intoxicants of all kinds, or any substance represented to be or reasonably appearing to be any type of drug. Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule provided it is handled properly through the school nurse office.

Procedures in Reporting Drug-Related Activity:

- Report the incident to the school principal or his/her designated representative. (Students are encouraged to use the districts Tip411 App as a reporting tool).
- Notify student’s parents or guardians and request them to come to school.
- Notify police.
- Confer with parents or guardians to inform them of prescribed penalties.
- Inform parents or guardians of community resources offering treatment or other assistance for drug/alcohol related problems.
- Assist students who use drugs or abuse alcohol by providing school counseling and drug abuse education and work in cooperation with the county health department, and individual physicians in appropriate health education and health care, and by other appropriate means.

Requirement for Drug Curricula Teacher Training:

The Effingham County School System offers students instructionally sound drug education units that are progressively reinforcing from kindergarten through twelfth

grade. Developmentally age-appropriate based grade level curricula is measured by the following criteria:

- Is well integrated into the traditional curricula;
- Builds awareness of the harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, and other mind-altering drugs;
- Contains a strong no-use message;
- Sets positive standards of behavior for youth;
- Contains current, accurate information, and scientifically researched based prevention strategies;
- Reveals health consequences from latest research;
- Provides multiple opportunities to build decision making, and peer refusal skills;
- Projects parents, teachers, and other authority figures as reasonable and supportive allies in the decision to remain drug free, and
- Teaches students that most people do not illegally use drugs.

All teachers responsible for instruction in the drug education curriculum shall be given in-service training to include essential information about drugs and their effects on physical growth, development, and emotional maturation; and hands-on work with various exercises initially presented by a qualified resource person.

Search and Seizure: The school principal or his/her representative may institute a search if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the search will reveal evidence that the student is in violation of the law or the rules of the school.

Searches based upon reasonable grounds may proceed without hindrance or delay, but must be conducted in a manner that is not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student. If the search of the student’s person, or of his/her possessions, locker, or vehicle reveals that the student is concealing a substance prohibited by federal, state, or local law, school officials may notify law enforcement authorities in order that they may take appropriate action.

Procedures for Handling Drug Abuse Violations:

Any student who is under the influence of or has in his/her possession any legal or illegal drug in any form whatsoever, including, but not limited to alcohol, marijuana, or any other illegal drug, or imitation controlled substances on the school grounds before, during, and after school hours, and at any time when the school is being used by any school group; off the school grounds while attending a school activity, function, or any other school related event; off the school grounds and in any manner subject to the jurisdiction of school official; and, engaged in travel to and from school may be suspended from school for a minimum of five days and possibly referred to a Disciplinary Hearing.

The school administration shall conduct a complete investigation of the incident. Upon completion of the investigation, the school administration may report the incident to the Juvenile Court System.

The student shall be suspended from participating in any extra-curricular activities for one complete calendar year for drug related offenses. The student shall also be placed on probation for as long as he/she is a student in an Effingham County school. Drug-Related Emergency: School administrators shall use their discretion to determine whether an event such as severe intoxication or drug overdose constitutes an emergency.

In the event the administrator determines there is an emergency, the school staff should follow these steps:

- Call for medical assistance immediately (ambulance, rescue squad).
- Contact parents immediately.
- If parents cannot be reached, continue emergency medical assistance.
- Attempt to obtain information about the ingested drug from the student.
- Designate a faculty member to accompany the student to the medical facility.

Informing Faculty, Students, and Parents: All faculty members, students, and parents/guardians shall be informed of the contents of this administrative procedure through the receipt of the Student and Parent Handbook and the Employee Handbook and of their rights and responsibilities as set forth herein.

Administrative Procedures for Student Drug Testing

Purposes and Intent

The Effingham County Board of Education encourages students to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities but believes that the opportunity to participate is a privilege offered to eligible students on an equal opportunity basis. The use of alcohol or other drugs by students participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities presents a hazard to the health, safety, and welfare of the student participant. The Board recognizes that the unlawful use of alcohol and drugs seriously impairs the health, safety, education, and future success of students engaged in that use.

The Board further recognizes that while the unlawful use of alcohol and drugs is a potential problem for all students, students engaged in school-sponsored extracurricular activities are confronted by special risks which make them particularly vulnerable to the harms presented by that use. Finally, the Board also recognizes that students engaged in school-sponsored extracurricular activities are often viewed by fellow students as holding or enjoying positions of notoriety, such that the unlawful use of alcohol and drugs by students engaged in school-sponsored extracurricular activities may impact or influence the attitudes and actions of other members of the student body.

Thus, the Board believes that testing student participants in school-sponsored extracurricular activities serves the important purpose of detecting and preventing illegal drug and alcohol use among all students in the system.

This policy is intended to support the comprehensive educational policies and programs of the Effingham County School District in educating students and their parents or legal guardians as to the dangers inherent in the unlawful use of alcohol and drugs.

The policy is further intended to provide incentives to high school students engaged in school-sponsored extracurricular activities to avoid such use and to strive for effective rehabilitation when such use has occurred. The results of any drug test administered under this policy will be used only to determine eligibility for participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

The policy is not designed to be used in any manner, voluntarily or involuntarily, to provide a source of information for law enforcement agencies or for the prosecution of the student.

Applicability

This policy applies to all high school students (grades 9-12) who participate in a school-sponsored extracurricular activity within the Effingham County School District. To be eligible to participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activity, these students must agree to participate in a drug-testing program that includes random drug testing during the school year.

A "school-sponsored extracurricular activity" means, without limitation, all interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, band, drill team, academic clubs, special interest clubs, musical performances, dramatic productions, student government, Fine Arts organizations, industrial technology and agricultural organizations, and any other activity or group that participates in contests, competitions, or community service projects on behalf of or as a representative of the school system. "School-sponsored extracurricular activity" also specifically includes parking a vehicle on school property.

Consent

All students wishing to participate in a school-sponsored extracurricular activity and their parent or legal guardian shall sign a consent form agreeing to participate in the drug-testing program established by this policy. If the student or his or her parent or guardian declines to sign the consent form, the student will not be permitted to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities. Consent forms are valid for the current school year only and must be renewed annually in order for the student to continue to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

Testing Program

Testing pursuant to this policy shall be accomplished by the analysis of urine specimens obtained from the student participant. Any student who refuses to be tested as required under this policy, who alters, falsifies, attempts to alter, or falsify a test, shall be removed from all school-sponsored extracurricular activities. Collections and testing procedures shall be established, maintained, and administered to ensure (a) randomness of selection procedures, (b) proper student identification, (c) that each specimen is identified with the appropriate student participant, (d) maintenance of the unadulterated integrity of the specimen, and (e) the integrity of the collection and test process as well as the confidentiality of test results.

The urine specimens of participating students shall be tested for all substances which are illegal to buy, possess, use, sell, or distribute under state or federal law, including the following substances:

(a) amphetamines, (b) marijuana (THC), (c) cocaine and its derivatives, (d) opiates, (e) phencyclidine (PCP), (f) benzodiazepine, (g) barbiturates, (h) Methadone, (i) methaqualone, (j) LSD, (k) alcohol, and (l) performance enhancing substances, including anabolic steroids.

Sanctions

Any participating student whose drug test administered pursuant to this policy renders a positive test result as indicated by the testing facility shall be subject to the following consequences:

First Positive Drug Test Result: The participating student and his or her parent or legal guardian will be required to attend a conference with a representative of the Effingham County School District designated by the Superintendent. The student and his or her parent or legal guardian shall be required to attend a program of counseling regarding substance abuse for a period of at least forty-five days. The expense of said program of counseling shall be the responsibility of the student. The student will be subject to recurring drug tests, not random, at times not to be previously disclosed to the student to deter him or her from committing a subsequent violation of the policy for one (1) calendar year.

Second Positive Drug Test Result: The participating student will be suspended from participating in any school-sponsored extracurricular activity for one calendar year. The student will be subject to recurring drug tests, not random, at times not to be previously disclosed to the student to deter him or her from committing a subsequent violation of the policy for one calendar year.

Third Positive Drug Test Result: The participating student will be prohibited from participating in any school-sponsored extracurricular activities for the remainder of the student's eligibility.

Drug Testing Procedures

Prior to giving a urine specimen, each student participant shall complete a medical history form (which shall include disclosure of all prescription drugs currently taken). This form shall identify the student participant only by a confidential number and shall be placed in a sealed package, which shall be forwarded to the testing laboratory along with the urine specimen. All students participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities shall be subject to random drug testing at any time during the school year. Students eligible for testing will be determined by a roster which compiles the names of all students who have completed the required consent form and notification of drug testing policy.

The participating student's parent or legal guardian shall be notified on any day the student is selected for testing.

Collection procedures for urine specimens shall be developed, maintained, and administered by the testing laboratory in an effort to minimize any intrusion or embarrassment for each student, ensure the proper identification of student's and the student's specimen, minimize the likelihood of the adulteration of a urine specimen, and maintain complete confidentiality of test results. To that end, the procedures must require:

- The presence of a representative of the Effingham County School District immediately prior to the collection process to ensure proper student identification;
- The presence of one or more representatives of the testing laboratory when the specimen is taken;
- The testing laboratory shall provide each student present for the collection process a receptacle for the collection of urine. The student shall be provided absolute privacy during the collection process;
- Immediately prior to entering the secured room used for the collection process, the student shall be required

to leave all personal belongings (including jackets, purses, book bags, pocket contents, etc.) in the custody of the school representative present for student identification; and

- Prior to entering the secured room utilized for the collection process, the testing laboratory shall treat the water in the secured room with a coloring substance (frequently referred to by testing laboratories as "blueing the water") to prevent a student from attempting to dilute or otherwise adulterate the urine specimen.

The professional testing laboratory shall conduct all scientific analyses of the collected specimens. Each specimen shall initially be tested by using a highly accurate immunoassay technique known as "EMIT." Initial positive results must be confirmed by gas chromatography / mass spectrometry "GC/MS." If the initial presumptive positive result is not confirmed by the GC/MS technique, the test shall be deemed to be negative. Only after GC/MS confirmation shall a test result be reported as positive.

A portion of each urine specimen that tests positive for alcohol or drugs shall be preserved by the testing laboratory for at least six months.

Written confirmation of all test results shall be forwarded by the testing laboratory to a representative of the Effingham County School District designated by the Superintendent.

In the event that a participating student's urine specimen produces a positive result, a representative of the Effingham County School District designated by the Superintendent shall meet with the student and the student's parent or legal guardian to disclose and discuss the test results. At this meeting, the designated school representative shall advise the student and his or her parent or legal guardian of further rights under this policy.

Any student participant who has tested positive, or the student's parent or legal guardian, may contest the test result by informing the representative of the Effingham County School District designated by the Superintendent of their wish to have a hearing within 72 hours of receipt of notice of the positive test result. The student participant and his or her parent or guardian shall be entitled to present any evidence they desire to defend the charge of violating this policy prior to the implementation of sanctions. The designated school representative before whom the hearing is conducted may require written documentation (such as a doctor's statement) of any evidence the student or his or her parent or legal guardian may wish to present. Failure to present written documentation to support the student's defense of the case shall result in the student being subject to the sanctions provided in this policy for a positive test result. Any further laboratory analysis shall be conducted with the student's remaining urine specimen preserved by the testing laboratory and shall be conducted at the student's expense. A final decision of the designated school representative shall be made within five days of receiving notice to contest the test result.

If the student participant chooses to appeal the decision of the representative of the Effingham County School District designated by the Superintendent, the student may appeal it to the Effingham County Board of Education within three days after it is rendered. The Effingham County Board of Education shall issue a final decision on the appeal within five days after the next regularly scheduled meeting conducted after the notice of appeal is filed. The appealing student shall be ineligible to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities during the pendency of the appeal.

If a participating student is 18 years of age or turns 18 years of age during the school year, the student must agree to release all test results to the student's parent or legal guardian.

One year after the participating student turns 18 years old or one year after the student's graduation, whichever is later, all records in regard to this policy concerning each student shall be destroyed. At no time shall these results or records be placed in the student's academic file or be voluntarily turned over to any law enforcement agency, or used for any purpose other than those stated herein.

Confidentiality

The results of any drug test conducted pursuant to this policy will be kept confidential and disclosed only to the student, his or her parents or legal guardians, and school officials designated by the Superintendent. Said results shall be kept in a file separate from the student's other educational records and shall not be released to any person other than those described within this policy or as required by law or a lawfully issued subpoena or court order.

Notice

All students wishing to participate in a school-sponsored extracurricular activity and their parent or legal guardian shall also sign a statement indicating that the student and the student's parent or legal guardian have received, read, and understand this policy. If the student or his or her parent or guardian declines to sign the notification form, the student will not be permitted to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities. Notification forms are valid for the current school year only and must be renewed annually in order for the student to continue to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

Voluntary Participation

Any student who does not participate in a school-sponsored extracurricular activity may participate in the drug-testing program established by this policy on a purely voluntary basis. However, if such a student later seeks to participate in a school-sponsored extracurricular activity, these Voluntary Participation provisions will no longer apply.

Any student wishing to participate in the drug-testing program established by this policy on a purely voluntary basis and his or her parent or legal guardian shall sign a consent form agreeing to such participation. If the student or his or her parent or legal guardian declines to sign the consent form, the student will not be permitted to participate in the drug-testing program. These consent forms are valid for the current school year only and must be renewed annually in order for the student to continue to participate in the drug-testing program.

The Testing Program set forth herein shall be the same for students who participate in the drug-testing program established by this policy on a purely voluntary basis; however, any student participating in the drug-testing program on a purely voluntary basis who refuses to be tested, or who alters, falsifies, attempts to alter, or falsify a test, shall not be removed from any school-sponsored extracurricular activity or otherwise subjected to school discipline. The Sanctions for positive drug test results set forth herein shall not be applicable to a student participating in the drug-testing program on a purely voluntary basis, although the student and his or her parent or legal guardian will be notified of the positive test result. The Drug Testing Procedures set forth herein shall be the same for students who participate in the drug-testing program established by this policy on a purely voluntary

basis; however, the provisions relating to contesting the test results or appealing the matter to the Effingham County Board of Education shall not be applicable. The Confidentiality provisions set forth herein apply equally to students who participate in the drug-testing program established by this policy on a purely voluntary basis.

Any student wishing to participate in the drug-testing program established by this policy on a purely voluntary basis, and his or her parent or legal guardian, shall also sign a statement indicating that the student and the student's parent or legal guardian have received, read, and understand this policy. If the student or his or her parent or legal guardian declines to sign the notification form, the student will not be permitted to participate in the drug-testing program. Notification forms are valid for the current school year and must be renewed annually in order for the student to continue to participate in the drug testing program.

Amendment

This policy may be amended at any time by the Effingham County Board of Education.

Non-Discrimination Notice

State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Act, OCGA § 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that the Effingham County school system does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. The Title IX Gender Equity Coordinator for this school system is: Dr. Yancy J. Ford, Effingham County Board of Education, 405 N. Ash Street, Springfield, GA 31329; phone, 754-5630. Inquiries or complaints concerning the sports equity in this system may be submitted to the sports equity coordinator



The grievance procedures for addressing such discrimination can be found in policy IDFA which can be accessed via the link provided in the Appendix or by visiting: <http://www.effinghamschools.com/Grievance-policy>

Student Reporting Of Acts Of Sexual Abuse Or Sexual Misconduct

The following is the state-mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student.

- Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator, or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor, or administrator at his/her school.
- Any teacher, counselor, or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or misconduct, the oral and written report should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.
- Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel.

If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

“Sexual abuse”: means a person's employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing any minor who is not that person's spouse to engage in any sexual act as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5.

“Sexual misconduct”: includes behavior by an educator that is directed at a student and intended to sexually arouse or titillate the educator or the child. Sexual misconduct by an educator may include, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

1. Made sexual comments, jokes, or gestures.
2. Showed or displayed sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, or messages.
3. Wrote sexual messages/graffiti on notes or the internet.
4. Spread sexual rumors (i.e. said a student was gay or a lesbian)
5. Spied on students as they dressed, showered, or used the restroom at school.
6. Flashed or “mooned” students.
7. Touched, excessively hugged, or grabbed students in a sexual way.
8. Forced a student to kiss him/her or do something else of a sexual nature.
9. Talked or asked about a student's developing body, sexuality, dating habits, etc.
10. Talked repeatedly about sexual activities or sexual fantasies.
11. Made fun of body parts.
12. Called students sexual names.

Interrogations And Searches Of Students

Interrogations

The principal of each school in the Effingham County School System, or his/her authorized representative, possesses the authority to conduct reasonable interrogations of students in order to properly investigate and punish student misconduct.

Searches

The Effingham County School System endeavors to provide a safe and secure environment for all students. The Board authorizes reasonable searches of students directed to that end by authorized school officials. Searches based on reasonable suspicion may proceed without hindrance or delay, but they shall be conducted in a manner which ensures that students are not arbitrarily stripped of personal privacy.

The principal of each school in the Effingham County School System, or his/her authorized representative, possesses the authority to conduct inspection of students' lockers or articles carried upon their persons. Such search shall be based on a reasonable suspicion of the presence of deleterious items. Examples of deleterious items shall

include, but are not limited to, secreted noise-makers, water guns, contraband, drugs, handguns or other dangerous weapons.

Principals of each school where lockers are issued shall ensure that at the time lockers are made available to students, it is clearly specified in writing that lockers are subject to inspection and search by school officials. Each school shall maintain duplicate keys or records of all locker combinations, and avoid any practices which lead students to believe that lockers are under their exclusive control.

In the event a search of a student's person, his/her personal possessions, or his/her locker reveals that the student is concealing material(s), the possession of which is prohibited by federal, state or local law, local law enforcement authorities shall be notified so that they may take appropriate action.

GENERAL DIRECTORY OF SCHOOLS

Board of Education: Central Office

405 North Ash Street
Springfield, GA 31329
Phone: 912.754.6491
Fax: 912.330.3590
Hours: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
<http://www.effinghamschools.com>

Central Registration Center

306 N. Ash Street, Springfield, GA 31329
Phone: 912.754.2530
Fax: 912.330.4287
Hours: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
<http://www.effinghamschools.com/CRC>

Elementary Schools



Blandford Elementary

4650 McCall Road
Rincon, GA 31326
Phone: 912.826.4200
Fax: 912.295.4933
Hours: 7:35 AM - 2:25 PM
<http://BES.effinghamschools.com>



Ebenezer Elementary

1198 Ebenezer Road
Rincon, GA 31326
Phone: 912.754.5522
Fax: 912.330.1523
Hours: 8:20 AM - 3:20 PM
<http://EES.effinghamschools.com>



Guyton Elementary

Central Blvd Hwy 17 N.
Guyton, GA 31312
Phone: 912.772.3384
Fax: 226-1331
Hours: 8:15 AM - 3:15 PM
<http://GES.effinghamschools.com>



Marlow Elementary

5160 Highway 17 S.
Guyton, GA 31312
Phone: 912.728.3262
Fax: 912.226.1480
Hours: 7:45 AM - 2:35 PM
<http://MES.effinghamschools.com>



Rincon Elementary

1703 Ft. Howard Road
Rincon, GA 31326
Phone: 912.826.5523
Fax: 912.295.4756
Hours: 7:45 AM - 2:35 PM
<http://RES.effinghamschools.com>



Sand Hill Elementary

199 Stagecoach Avenue
Guyton, GA 31312
Phone: 912.728.511
Fax: 912.226.6180
Hours: 7:45 AM - 2:35 PM
<http://SHES.effinghamschools.com>



South Effingham Elementary

767 Kolic Helmey Road
Guyton, GA 31312
Phone: 912.728.3801
Fax: 226-2259
Hours: 7:45 AM - 2:35 PM
<http://SEES.effinghamschools.com>



Springfield Elementary

300 Old Dixie Highway S.
Springfield, GA 31329
Phone: 912.754.3326
Fax: 912.330.1557
Hours: 8:10 AM - 3:10 PM
<http://SES.effinghamschools.com>

Pre-K

cconnelly@effingham.k12.ga.us
Phone: 912.754.2503

Middle Schools



Ebenezer Middle

1100 Ebenezer Road
Rincon, GA 31326
Phone: 912.754.7757
Fax: 912.330.1526
Hours: 8:25 AM - 3:35 PM
<http://EMS.effinghamschools.com>



Effingham County Middle

1659 Highway 119 S.
Guyton, GA 31312
Phone: 912.772.7001
Fax: 912.330.2505
Hours: 8:25 AM - 3:40 PM
<http://ECMS.effinghamschools.com>



South Effingham Middle

1200 Noel C. Conaway Road
Guyton, GA 31312
Phone: 912.728.7500
Fax: 912.226.7385
Hours: 8:20 AM - 3:50 PM
<http://SEMS.effinghamschools.com>

High Schools



Effingham County High

1589 Highway 119 South
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Phone: 912.754.6404
Fax: 912.330.1617
Hours: 8:25 AM - 3:40 PM
<http://ECHS.effinghamschools.com>



South Effingham High

1220 Noel C. Conaway Road
Guyton, GA 31312
Phone: 912.728.7511
Fax: 912.348.0947
Hours: 8:20 AM - 3:50 PM
<http://SEHS.effinghamschools.com>

Academies



Crossroads Academy (Rincon Learning Center)

501 N. Richland Ave
Rincon, Ga 31326
Phone: 912.754.2511
Hours: 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM
Monday-Thursday, Closed Friday
<http://CROSSROADS.effinghamschools.com>



Effingham College & Career Academy

2940 Highway 21 South
Rincon, GA 31326
Phone: 754-5610
Fax 330-4296
Hours: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<http://ECCA.effinghamschools.com>



enCompass Academy (Rincon Learning Center)

501 Richland Ave
Rincon, GA 31326
Phone: 912.754.2522
Fax: 912.330.4290
Hours: 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
<http://ENCOMPASS.effinghamschools.com>

CENTRAL OFFICE DIRECTORY

Central Office

912.754.6491

A

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C

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912.754.5508

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912.754.5677

ESOL

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912.754.5508

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www.effinghamschools.com/specialEducation
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F

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912.754.2511

Honey Ridge Agricenter

www.effinghamschools.com/HRA
912.754.5610

Human Resources

hr@effingham.k12.ga.us
www.effinghamschools.com/hr
912.754.1119

I

Information Systems

www.effinghamschools.com/infosys
912.754.2507

Information & Instructional Technology

www.effinghamschools.com/technology
912.754.5533

N

Nutritional Program

www.effinghamschools.com/nutrition
912.754.5633

S

Social Emotional Learning

www.effinghamschools.com/sel
912.754.5508

Superintendent's Office

www.effinghamschools.com/superintendent
912.754.6491

T

Testing

www.effinghamschools.com/testing
912.754.5636

Transportation

www.effinghamschools.com/transportation
912.754.3574
912.754.2515

For a complete and up-to-date directory of all ECSD staff, please visit:
<https://www.effinghamschools.com/directory>

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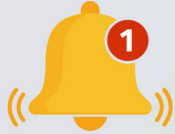
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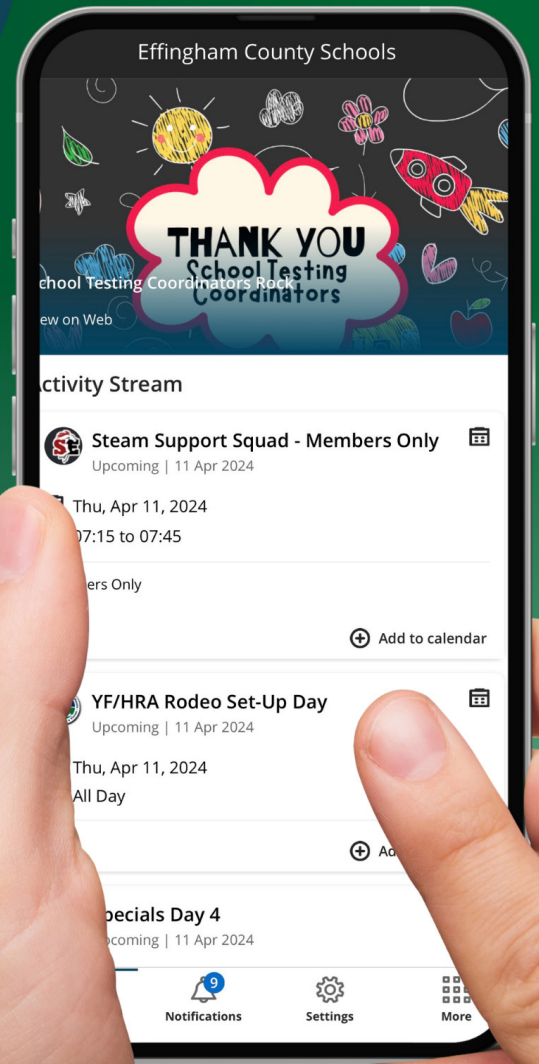
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7306 Hwy. 21, Ste 105



Springfield 912.754.2560
459 Hwy. 119 South



Rincon 912.826.3111
613 Towne Park Dr., W. Ste 303-4



Springfield 912.754.1080
459 Hwy. 119 South



Springfield 912.826.7337
520 W 3rd St.



Springfield 912.754.1035
1451 Hwy. 21



Rincon 912.826.5239
110 Goshen Rd.

Rincon/Goshen... 912.826.6000
100 Goshen Rd.

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Student Calendar

2024
2025

July 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

School Year

First Day: 08/08/24
Last Day: 05/23/25

Open Houses:

08/05 Elementary
08/06 Middle & High

Schools Closed

09/02 Labor Day
10/14 Fall Break
11/25-11/29 Thanksgiving
12/23-01/03 Christmas
01/20 MLK, Jr Holiday
02/17 Winter Break
03/17 St. Patrick's Day
04/14-04/18 Spring Break

Early Release Days

10/09/24
02/13/25

Student Holidays & Faculty/Staff Prof. Dev.

10/10/24
10/11/24
01/06/25
02/14/25
02/18/25

Quarter Begins

08/08/24 1st 9 weeks
10/17/24 2nd 9 weeks
01/07/25 3rd 9 weeks
03/18/25 4th 9 weeks

Progress Reports

09/13/24
11/21/24
02/12/25
04/29/25

Report Cards

10/24/24
01/10/25
03/26/25
05/29/25

Graduations

05/23/25 SEHS @ 7PM
05/24/25 ECHS @ 7PM

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October 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

November 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

January 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

The school system has identified four potential make-up days in the calendar. These dates are November 25, November 26, February 18, and March 18. These days could be used if the school system has to close due to weather or emergency events. The days will not be used automatically. After an event, the superintendent will decide whether or not to activate one or more of the make-up days.

To view all calendars, including the testing calendar, please visit: www.effinghamschools.com/ecsd-calendar

Effingham County School District
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