

Student Academic Plan
&
Statement of Responsibilities



A Handbook for
Parents & Students
2025-2026

WELCOME TO THE RUSSELL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT



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RUSSELL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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SCHOOLS

School Location	Principal	Phone Number
Dixie Elementary	Mr. Derrick Lane	(334) 468 – 5323
Ladonia Elementary	Dr. Sherry Huckaby	(334) 468 – 5805
Mount Olive Primary	Ms. Lisa Rushing	(334) 468 – 5100
Mount Olive Intermediate	Dr. Vanita Pharrams	(334) 468 – 5002
Oliver Elementary	Mrs. Nancy Kennedy	(334) 468 – 5400
Russell County Middle School	Dr. April Parker	(334) 468 – 5604
Russell County High School	Ms. Tonya Keene	(334) 468 – 5701

DEPARTMENTS

Department	Director	Phone Number
Superintendent	Dr. Brenda Coley	(334) 468-5540
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Child Nutrition	Mr. Vantreise Davis	334-408-4933
Community Education	Mrs. Paula Thompson	334-408-4970
Curriculum/Instruction K-5	Mrs. Marceda Lewis	334-408-4957
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Finance	Mr. Robert Oliver	334-468-5540
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Maintenance	Mr. Jerome Battle	334-408-4986
Prevention and Support	Mr. Jacob Johnson	334-408-4986
Safety Director	Lt. Billy Jones	334-408-4972
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INTRODUCTION AND CORE VALUES

The Russell County Board of Education provides a comprehensive instructional program for students in grades K – 12. This program includes content that all students should master in order to be successful at the next level, as well as additional skills needed for grade level achievement and acceleration at the secondary level. Parents or legal guardians should read this booklet, review its contents with their child(ren), and sign the Handbook Agreement form together. The completed form, found at the back of this booklet, should be returned to the child(ren)'s teacher.

Russell County Schools believe that:

Each person is responsible for his/her actions.

Each person has intrinsic values.

Lifelong learning is vital to shaping one's future.

Honesty and integrity are the foundation of mutual respect.

A commitment to individual excellence is essential to personal success.

Each person has something to contribute.

A safe and secure environment is essential to learning.

PHILOSOPHY

The Russell County Board of Education believes that all children can learn and shall be provided daily opportunities to accommodate the learning styles of each individual child. The Russell County Board of Education also believes each individual should have an equal opportunity to pursue education in a supportive and nurturing environment.

The Russell County Board of Education seeks to provide an education that is both challenging and rigorous, recognizing each child should be provided the opportunity to reach his/her optimum potential. It is the district's intent to provide a solid educational foundation, as well as, positive learning experiences to enhance, broaden, and advance the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical abilities of each individual to become a contributing and productive member of society. The district recognizes no one philosophy of education can express the sentiment or beliefs of all teaching personnel and perceives education as a process of growth. Each child is seen as a unique person who possesses certain potential, needs, aspirations, and interests.

The Russell County Board of Education assumes the premise that the education of children is a comprehensive program, which must be undertaken in cooperation with other institutions of society and will seek to establish and maintain open communication with parents and community programs.

VISION

Inspire, Empower, and Educate with Excellence

MISSION

Our mission is to engage students in quality learning experiences that will prepare them for success in college, career, and life.

GOALS AND BELIEFS

The goal of the Russell County Board of Education shall be to provide a solid educational foundation, as well as, positive learning experiences that enhance, broaden, and advance the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical abilities of each individual to become a contributing and productive member of society.

The district's instructional program is based on the following beliefs:

- All students can learn and are to be actively engaged in the learning process through a variety of teaching techniques to accommodate diverse learning styles.
- Students will be engaged in highly challenging academic work which develops their abilities to think, reason, solve problems, and prepares them to manage issues they will face in the future. A safe and physically engaging environment promotes student learning.
- The school environment should increase student understanding of different peoples and cultures, thus enriching the teaching and learning environment. Teachers, parents, and the community, including businesses, industries, and government, share in the responsibility for the support of the schools within the district.
- The building principal is responsible for providing an environment where teachers can teach and students can learn.
- Evaluation of student performance is crucial to learning; therefore, immediate feedback from and for all stakeholders provides motivation to move toward new areas of achievement.
- Special services and resources shall be provided for identified students.
- Teachers must stay abreast of new and innovative ideas to motivate and engage students' learning throughout the curriculum.
- The system exists to provide an environment and learning experiences that assist all students in becoming responsible members of society in the 21st century.

Strong communication among all district levels is critical to the implementation of the total educational program. A collaborative approach will be followed when making instructional decisions. The educational policy of the school district is set by the Board of Education, in this and other sections of its policies. Policies should be carried out by all employees. Teachers should be granted latitude in trying new approaches, provided the instruction is sound and based on best practices.

ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

Age Requirements (6.2.1)

Children entering KINDERGARTEN must be FIVE YEARS OLD ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1st. Children entering FIRST GRADE must be SIX YEARS OLD ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31st.

- (a) A child who is six years of age on or before December 31st or the date on which school begins in the enrolling district shall be entitled to admission to the public elementary schools at the opening of such schools for that school year or as soon as practicable thereafter. A child who is under six years of age on December 31st or the date on which school begins in the enrolling district shall not be entitled to admission to the first grade in the public elementary schools during that school year; except, that an underage child who transfers from the first grade of a school in another state may be admitted to school upon approval of the board of education in authority, and an underage child who has moved into this state having completed or graduated from a mandated kindergarten program in another state shall be entitled to admission to the public elementary schools regardless of age. A child who becomes six years of age on or before February 1st may, on approval of the board of education in authority, be admitted at the beginning of the second semester of that school year to schools in school systems having semiannual promotions of pupils.

- (b) A child who is five years of age on or before September 1st or the date on which school begins in the enrolling district shall be entitled to admission to-kindergarten at the opening of the school year or as soon as practicable thereafter; a child who is under five years of age on September 1st or the date on which school begins in the enrolling district shall not be entitled to admission to such schools during that school year; except that, an underage child who transfers from the public school kindergarten in another state may be admitted to local public kindergarten on the prior approval of the local board of education on a space available basis. The aforementioned underage children transferring from the public-school kindergarten program of another state, upon successful completion of kindergarten in the local public schools, will then be allowed admission to the first grade of the local public schools.

Registration Requirements

A student who is entering the Russell County School District must be registered at the school to which he/she is zoned according to their residence. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are required to present proof of age (birth certificate), residency (mortgage/lease agreement, utility bill), and an immunization record. The RCSD will not be a barrier to the enrollment of English Learners/Migrant/ Homeless students seeking enrollment. More information about Homeless students can be found under Appendix D: McKinney Vento. Students enrolling from a private school, private tutor, or home school may be required to take a placement exam for grade placement.

The residence shall mean the true, fixed, and permanent home and principal establishment to which whenever absent, the parent, custodian, or court-appointed legal guardian of the student intends to

return and reside in each evening. The residence is distinguished from a temporary or secondary place of residence established for some specific purpose but is not the fixed permanent residence of the parent, custodian, the court appointed legal permanent guardian.

In certain cases, students who live with their parents/guardians within the school zone of Russell County may not be able to provide the necessary proof of residency, especially in cases where they live in the residence of another person who owns or rents the home. In these cases, the parent/guardian of the student must legally verify their residence within the school zone. To do this, both the guardian and the renter/mortgagee/owner must visit the Chief Probate Clerk at the Russell County Probate Office to present identification and proof of residency (mortgage, lease agreement, and/or utility statement) along with a completed residency assessment form (this form can be found at each school's office). Once the form is completed and residency is verified, the Chief Probate Clerk will sign the form, and it should be returned to the school by the parent. Parents/guardians will be responsible for setting up the appointment to meet the Chief Probate Clerk.

Due to state law, the school system is required to have every student reidentify every year in order to keep the student and parent data up to date and accurate. Russell County Schools uses an online system to complete this called PowerSchool Enrollment. For more information, please visit our website or call your school office for assistance.

Out of Zone/District Enrollment Waivers

Parents whose residence is outside of the Russell County Schools zones may submit a transfer request form if the parent desires for their student to attend a school in Russell County they are not zoned to attend. Requests must be approved at the school level and the district level. The district will not provide transportation for any student(s) attending a school other than the one for which they are zoned. This process must be completed and approved annually for each student who resides outside of the school's zone.

For those students who are 17 years or older and therefore seeking special admission into the RCSD, such special admission and any related program/school offerings (tradition, virtual, alternative, or blended) will be approved or denied at the discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee. The Superintendent's (or designee's) decision will be determined on an individual basis upon evaluation of factors including, but not limited to, residency requirements, attendance record, discipline history, availability of coursework, availability of space, appropriate progress towards graduation, earned credits, grades and/or grade point average and any other matter deemed relevant by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY

Home Language Survey and Identification of English Language Learner (ELL) Students

Every child enrolled in Alabama schools must complete a Home Language Survey (HLS). If a language other than English is provided on the survey, students in Grades K-12 are assessed for English proficiency using the WIDA Screener or the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) for kindergarten. This screening tool is used to determine whether a child is eligible for English language instructional services.

How Do I Waive English Language Learner (ELL) Services?

Parents may refuse supplemental ELL services. Contact your ELL teacher for the waiver request. The school district is still required to make accommodations for instruction and monitor the student's academic performance. Although the parent has denied ELL services for the student, the student must continue to participate in the annual English Language Proficiency testing (ACCESS 2.0) until attaining proficiency on the assessment.

Legal Obligations to Serve English Language Learner (ELL) Students

The legal obligation to serve English Language Learners (ELL) can be found in the Equal Education Opportunities Act, Lau v. Nichols, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Plyler v. Doe, Casteneda v. Pickard, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and many others. ELL students have the same rights to Advanced Placement college preparation courses, Gifted and Talented programs, Special Education services, extracurricular activities, etc. as all other learners.

SPECIAL SERVICES – CHILD FIND GIFTED, HOMEBOUND & SECTION 504

What Is Child Find?

Child Find is an effort by the Russell County School District to locate, identify, and evaluate all children within its jurisdiction, 3 to 21 years of age, suspected of having a disability, to determine if he/she qualifies for special education services. If you have questions or require additional information, please contact the Special Services Department at (334) 408-4970.

Why Is Child Find Important?

Child Find helps the child, the family, and the provider to plan appropriate services and link families to services for students meeting eligibility requirements in the following disability areas:

- Autism
- Deafness-Blindness
- Developmental Delay
- Emotional Disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disabilities
- Speech Learning Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment

What Is Second Grade Gifted Child Find?

Gifted students are those who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. These students require services not typically provided by the regular school program. Students possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human potential.

Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, guardians, peers, or any other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities may refer a student. Additionally, all second-grade students will be observed as potential gifted referrals using the Child Find process.

For each student referred, information is gathered in the areas of aptitude, characteristics, and performance. The information is entered on a matrix which is provided by the state department where points are assigned according to established criteria. The total number of points earned determines if the student qualifies for gifted services. To make a referral, contact the counselor at your child's school.

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact the special services department at (334) 408-4970.

What Is Section 504?

Section 504 is a federal law that protects the civil rights of persons with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits any organization that receives federal funds from discriminating against otherwise qualified individuals because of a disability. The Russell County School District (RCSD) elementary and secondary programs and activities are subject to the provisions of Sections Qualifying Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This Act describes the RCSD procedures for implementing Section 504 for students. Copies are available online and at all schools.

Who Is Eligible?

A student with a disability should be considered for eligibility and accommodations under Section 504 if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The Section 504 regulatory provision defines a physical or mental impairment as any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitourinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or any mental or psychological disorder, such as intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. The regulatory provision does not set forth an exhaustive list of specific diseases and conditions that may constitute physical or mental impairments because of the difficulty of ensuring the comprehensiveness of such a list.

Major life activities, as defined in the Section 504 regulations include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. This list is not exhaustive. Other functions can be major life activities for purposes of Section 504. In the Amendments Act Congress provided additional examples of general activities that are major life activities, including eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. Congress also provided a non-exhaustive list of examples of "major bodily functions" that are major life activities, such as the functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. Section 504 regulatory provision's list of examples of major life activities is not exclusive, and an activity or function not specifically listed in the Section 504 regulatory provision can nonetheless be considered a major life activity.

A diagnosis of a disability does not automatically qualify a student for accommodations under Section 504. Teachers or parents who feel a student may meet the criteria for Section 504 eligibility may contact the school's Section 504 Chairperson or the Collaborative Problem-Solving Team. The team includes school staff and other specialists and will review various sources of information (e.g. report cards, observations, medical reports, and other data necessary to determine whether a student is eligible for accommodations under Section 504).

Please contact the Special Services Department at (334) 408-4970 with questions or if additional information is needed.

Notification of Transfer of Special Education Records

If you are transferring to another public education agency in the State of Alabama, your child's special education records (IEP, etc.) will be electronically sent to that district through the statewide student database coordinated by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). Once you enroll your child in another school district and they are placed in the student database, that district will receive a notice that the student's records are available to the new district through ALSDE.

If you are transferring to an out-of-state school, special education records do not transfer electronically. The parent will be responsible for sharing any important information with the receiving school. The determination of your child's placement and evaluation of his/her records will be determined based on the policies and procedures of the state in which you will be residing. We will forward the student records to the new school when we receive a request for records from the school district. The confidentiality of the records will be maintained according to federal regulations, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34 CFR Part 99 and state regulations, the Alabama Administrative Code 290-8-9(2)(e).

Homebound Instruction

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for appointing a qualified person(s) to provide homebound instruction for eligible general and special education students. Any student diagnosed as having a disability as defined by Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 290, Special Education Services, who cannot attend school because of a medical/health condition or for a disability-related reason must be scheduled to receive instruction according to his/her individualized education program (IEP) within the home or if necessary at an otherwise mutually agreeable, neutral location. The Superintendent may approve homebound instructional services for regular, non-special, education students of the Russell County School District. Procedures, forms, and regulations for implementing the homebound instruction program of the Russell County School District shall be disseminated to appropriate employees, parents, students, and agencies as needed.

A homebound placement is a least restrictive environment (LRE) option, not a disabling condition. Eligibility determination for this type of LRE shall be made by the student's IEP Team. Placement of a special education student in a homebound setting may not take place until approval is granted by the student's IEP committee. An IEP meeting will be called to consider placement for medical/health/disability-related reasons when the following criteria and guidelines are met:

1. The parent/guardian/custodian of the special education student or another IEP Team member requests homebound services by requesting an IEP meeting through the student's case manager or the director of special education. For medical reasons, a physician's statement requesting homebound services and noting the reasons for such services must be submitted to the special ed. director. Note: If the request is medical in nature, the parent's/guardian's/custodian's request and the physician's stated reasons for homebound services must be based on the personal illness or injury of student (i.e., homebound services cannot be provided to permit students to care for others - family members, etc.)

2. The anticipated absence from school must be at least six (6) weeks as attested to in the physician's request statement.
3. The student must be currently enrolled in a Russell County school and/or special education program.

DISTRICT/SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

Parents are expected to take an active role in their student's education. This is accomplished by ensuring your child is engaged in learning by completing all school assignments via traditional face-to-face or virtual school venues. Additional suggestions may include but not be limited to: proactively scheduling parent/teacher conferences, attending school meetings and functions, and monitoring the PowerSchool Parent Portal. While visiting the school, parents are to follow the same rules of decorum expected of employees and students. The expected decorum for parents at school is no tobacco, no loud talking, no profanity, appropriate use of cell phones and clothes for school.

Act 93-672 states that parents who fail to require their children to attend school regularly or fail to require that their children properly conduct themselves as students shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. A parent may receive a fine of not more than \$100.00 or 90-day sentence to hard labor for the county for such a misdemeanor. The act also states that school officials who intentionally fail to report suspected violations to the district attorney shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

Students Charged with Non-School-Related Crimes

If a student is charged with a non-school related felony or a delinquent act that occurs off campus, based upon an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult, or is charged with an offense involving a firearm, a meeting with a tribunal committee must be held to discuss the details of the offense and the potential impact of that offense on school safety before the student is allowed on any RCSD property. The committee may determine that placing the student in an alternative educational or virtual/remote setting until all legal charges have been resolved is warranted.

Parent Visitation to the Classroom

Parents are welcome at Russell County Schools. However, unannounced visits to classrooms are discouraged, because they disrupt the flow of instruction and distract the teacher and students from the task at hand. This includes before and after school, as teachers are frequently in meetings or planning for instruction. Schools may limit visits under unusual circumstances.

If a parent desires to observe one of their child's classes, parents must:

Contact the teacher at least twenty-four (24) hours before the date of proposed visit and ask for permission to visit the class. If the teacher agrees, the teacher will set up a seating area for the visitor (many of our classrooms are small, and often do not have an empty seat available for a visitor). If the teacher denies the request, the parent may appeal the denial to the principal.

On the date of your visit, please be aware of the following guidelines:

- Follow normal visitor check-in procedures through the front office.
- Adhere to the student code of conduct for dress.
- Enter the classroom prior to the class/lesson starting (or at the time designated by the teacher). Remain in the classroom until the lesson is completed, so that students are not diverted from their work.

- Refrain from asking questions of the teachers/paraprofessional, making comments, interacting with students (including your child), unless specifically invited to do so by the teacher.
- Discuss observations or recommendations with the teacher at a time when students are not present.
- In order to maintain privacy and limit distractions while in the classroom, cell phones should be silenced, and photos and videos are prohibited.

PARENTS' RIGHT-TO-KNOW

(Teacher Qualifications)

ESSA, Section 1112(C)(6)

(6) PARENTS RIGHT-TO-KNOW-

(A) **QUALIFICATIONS-** At the beginning of each school year, a local educational agency that receives funds under this part shall notify the parents of each student attending any school receiving funds under this part that the parents may request, and the agency will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

(i) Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.

(ii) Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.

(iii) The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.

(iv) Whether the child is provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, his/her qualifications.

(B) **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION-** In addition to the information that parents may request under subparagraph (A), a school that receives funds under this part shall provide to each individual parent—

- i information on the level of achievement and academic growth of the student, if applicable and available, on each of the State academic assessments required under this part; and
- ii timely notice that the student has been assigned, or has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

(C) **FORMAT-** The notice and information provided to parents under this paragraph shall be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand.



RUSSELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Kenneth Barnes
Meghan Catrett
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Patricia Ann Smith

Dr. Brenda Coley
Superintendent

We are pleased to notify you that in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, you have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teacher. Specifically, you may request the following:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive this information, please contact your child's school. Should you have any questions, feel free to also contact Mrs. Jina Rudolph, Federal Programs Director, at rudolphj@russellcsd.net or (334) 408-4947 and she will be happy to assist you.

Respectfully,

Brenda Coley, Ed. D.
Superintendent

UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTION

1. Definitions: A transfer option school (TOS) in the state of Alabama is one in which for three (3) consecutive school years the school has expelled one percent (1%) of the student population or five (5) students (whichever is greater) for violent criminal violations committed on school property during school hours or committed at school-sponsored activities.
2. The words “transfer option school”, “TOS” or “TOS School” shall mean a “persistently dangerous school” as those words are used in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. Public Law 107-110, Title XI, §9532(a) and (b). For the purpose of this definition a “violent criminal violation” shall mean homicide, robbery, assault in the first and/or second degree; sexual battery (including rape) as these violations are defined in the Criminal Code of Alabama (see § 13A-6-1, et. Seq., Ala. Code 1975); and use of a handgun, firearm component, explosive, knife, and other “unknown weapons” as defined by the Student Incident Report (SIR).
3. A student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal violation committed on school property during school hours or at school-sponsored activities shall be given an opportunity to transfer to a safe public school within the LEA. The LEA shall notify the student’s parents/guardian of the right to transfer as soon as practicable, not to exceed ten (10) calendar days from the date of a final determination by the school board or its designee that a violent criminal violation has occurred. All LEA transfer procedures will be observed. It shall be the policy of the Alabama State Department of Education (SDE) to notify the LEA annually when one or more of its schools have been identified as a transfer option school. Each superintendent or his/her designee shall orally notify the prevention and support services section of the State Department of Education within twenty-four (24) hours of the decision that a violent criminal violation has occurred, followed by written confirmation. The State Department of Education will assist the LEA in resolving all safety issues. At a minimum, an LEA that has one or more schools identified as persistently dangerous must:
 - Step 1. Notify the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of each student attending the school within ten (10) working days that it has been identified as a transfer option school and offer students the opportunity to transfer to a safe public school within the LEA, if another school is available.
 - Step 2. Complete the transfer for those students who opt to do so within twenty (20) working days.
 - Step 3. Develop a corrective action plan to be submitted to the SDE for approval within twenty working days of the LEAs receipt of status.
 - Step 4. Implement the corrective action plan.

Once a school has been identified as a transfer option school, it can return to safe status by (1) completing steps one through four above and (2) completing two consecutive years with less than one percent (1%) of the population or five (5) students (whichever is greater) expelled for violent criminal violations as defined in its policy. (Alabama Code 290-3-1-02)

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

Disclosures Under the Directory Information Exception

A Parent Guide to The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) provides certain rights for parents regarding their children’s education records. FERPA gives these rights to custodial and noncustodial parents alike, unless there is a court order, legally binding document, or State law that specifically provides to the contrary. When a student reaches 18 years of age or attends an institution of postsecondary education at any age, he or she becomes an “eligible student,” and all rights under FERPA transfer from the parent to the student. Given the target audience for this document is parents, this guide is intended to discuss parents’ rights under FERPA. “Directory Information” is information in a student’s education records that is not generally considered harmful, and its release is not considered an invasion of the student’s privacy. A critical distinction exists between directory information and all other information present in school files. School districts can choose how much directory information from education records they will disclose. For Russell County Schools, the information listed below is considered to be “Directory Information”: student name, parent name, address, email address, telephone, grade level, student ID number, gender, and graduation year. The U.S. Department of Education considers these items to be directory information. Parents can, however, retain the right to consent to the disclosure of directory information. Parents who wish to retain this right must advise the school.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Russell County Child Nutrition Program’s first priority is to provide nutritious meals to all students of Russell County. By providing nutritious meals and emphasizing good eating habits, we are providing an important means of improving the health of students of Russell County. We further believe children learn best when their minds are not preoccupied with hunger or when they are experiencing health problems. Therefore, we are committed to providing nutritious meals for all students of Russell County. Information on how to qualify for the Nutrition Program will be distributed to all students on the first day of school. Lunch will be served to students beginning the first day of school. Breakfast will be served in all elementary schools and secondary schools. Breakfast service will begin on the first day of school. Free and reduced-price meals will be available for qualifying students in accordance with the policy adopted by the Board of Education and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Limited a la carte items also are available during the lunch period. Cashiers will be using computers to maintain lunch accounts. This will enable them to accept payment by the day, week, month or semester. Parents may select the method of payment that best suits their needs.

School Food Service Meal Prices

Meal	STUDENT Reduced-Price	STUDENT Paid	ADULTS Employees	ADULTS Visitors
Breakfast	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 3.20	\$ 3.30
Lunch (Elementary)	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	1 Entrée \$4.75 2 Entrées \$6.50	\$ 5.25
Lunch (Secondary)	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	3 Entrée \$4.75 1 Entrées \$6.50	\$ 5.25
Juice			\$ 0.75	\$ 0.75
Tea				
Extra Milk	\$ 0.75	\$ 0.75		
Chef or Fruit Salads: Elementary and Middle/High	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$4.75	\$ 5.25

Prices may change as determined by bids received at a later date. Beverages are not included with adult lunch prices. Lunch forms are available if needed at your child’s school and will be distributed at the beginning of each school year.

MEDIA RELEASE

It is often the case that our students and/or schools are recognized for various positive reasons. If parent(s)/legal guardian(s) do not want a student to be photographed for media publicity use, they must indicate their objection during the online registration process. If there is no objection during enrollment it will be considered as an indication of your permission to publicly recognize your students on various media.

HEALTH SERVICES

Student Illness

At Russell County School District, the health and well-being of our students, staff, and families are our top priorities. To maintain a safe and healthy learning environment, we kindly ask families to follow the guidelines provided when determining whether a student is too ill to attend school and when they can return. If a student becomes ill during the school day and the parent/guardian is contacted by school personnel, the parent/guardian is responsible for picking the student up from school in a reasonable amount of time. By working together, we can reduce the spread of illnesses and ensure our schools remain a supportive place for learning. Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to keeping our community healthy.

Guidance for Ill Students

Symptom(s)	Comments	Return to School
Diarrhea	2 or more episodes or 1 episode with other symptoms	May return 24 hours after symptom(s) resolve
Fever	100.4 or greater	May return if fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication
Vomiting	2 or more witnessed episodes or 1 witnessed episode with other symptoms	May return when vomiting has stopped for 24 hours and free of fever without the use of fever reducing medication.
Rash	Unidentified rash with fever	May return 24 hours after fever resolves without fever-reducing medication AND medical clearance from provider
Condition	Symptom(s)	Return to School
Conjunctivitis "Pink Eye"	Red/pink itchy, swollen eyes; eye discharge; possible light sensitivity; and/or eye pain	May return 24 hours after first dose of provider prescribed medication is given
Flu, COVID-19	Fever with one or more of these symptoms (or two or more of these symptoms without fever), chills, body aches, cough, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, headache	May return if fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications & well enough for routine activities
Impetigo	Rash most often on the face, lips, arms, or legs; itchy blisters filled with yellow or honey colored fluid that oozes then dries and crusts	May return after 24 hours of initial prescribed medical treatment. Lesions should be covered with watertight dressing.
Ringworm	Ring-shaped, itchy, red, scaly, rash	May return after treatment begins. Cover skin lesions.
Strep Throat	Fever, sore or painful throat, white throat patches, skin rash	May return after 24 hours of initial medical treatment and no fever.

Medication Guidelines and Procedures

The Russell County School District is dedicated to promoting a safe, healthy environment for its students and staff. To help achieve this goal, we have developed guidelines for administering medications and providing medical treatments while at school or at a school-sponsored event. This document will serve as guidance for medication administration and details treatments that are available at school.

Student Health Conditions

If your child has a health condition, it is essential for you to discuss this with the school nurse. Some conditions, such as diabetes, asthma, and food/insect allergies, require the development of a school health care plan and emergency action plan. These plans are written by the school nurse and/or the healthcare provider, based on your child's health care needs, and serve as a guideline for school personnel.

A. Injury

First aid will be handled by the school nurse or other appropriate school staff. If necessary, the injured student will be sent to a designated area until parents arrive or the school day ends.

B. Medication Administration and Medical Treatments

To ensure safe and consistent treatment of children who must use prescription and non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications at school, the following guidelines have been established. Medications will only be administered by the school nurse (including a substitute nurse) or a trained medication assistant. Medication assistant training will be completed in accordance with ALSDE guidelines.

If you wish for your child to take medication while at school, there are two options available: The parent/guardian may come to the school and administer the medication to the student. The student will be administered medication according to the RCSD Medication Guidelines and Procedures.

If your child must have medication of any type given during school hours you have the following choices:

Prescription Medications

Any prescription medication that is to be administered at school will need to be accompanied by a signed and completed Provider/Parent Authorization form. This form can be accessed on the Health Services website at www.myrcsd.org/departments/health-services or can be picked up from the school nurse. The provider and parent must sign for this form to be valid. All prescription medication must come in the original pharmacy container with the appropriate and current label still attached. Medications must be received by the school nurse or medication assistant and signed into possession. A parent or guardian must bring medication to the school.

Over-the-Counter Medications

Any over-the-counter medication that is to be administered at school will need to be accompanied by a signed and completed Provider/Parent Authorization form. This form can be accessed on the Health Services website at www.myrbsd.org/departments/health-services or can be picked up from the school nurse. The provider and parent must sign for this form to be valid. The medication must be in the original, unopened container that has clear dosing instructions. The student's name must be clearly visible, but not covering the label. Medications must be received by the school nurse or medication assistant and signed into possession. A parent or guardian must bring medication to the school.

Temporary Medications

If a medication is short-term (less than 14 days), only a parent signature is required on the Provider/Parent Authorization form (PPA). These medications must come in the original container with current, clear, written orders from a healthcare provider (Urgent Care, ER, dentist, etc.) or manufacturer dosing instructions. A parent or guardian must bring medication to the school and once medication timeframe has concluded, it will be the parent or guardian's responsibility to retrieve any remaining medication. Otherwise it will be discarded by the nurse.

Emergency Medications

Students may be allowed to self-carry and/or self-administer emergency medications. Inhalers, epi pens, and glucagon may be carried on the student with Provider/Parent Authorization form (PPA). In the event it is determined that it is not in the best interest of the child to self-carry, the school will determine an appropriate location for the medication.

Each clinic will stock a variety of first aid supplies in addition to certain treatment medications. Please contact your school nurse if your child has a known allergy or sensitivity to any of the medications or treatment items listed below or if you would like to decline use of any products:

- Calamine
- Caladryl
- Antibiotic ointment (Neosporin, Triple Antibiotic, etc)
- Aloe Vera
- Petroleum Jelly
- Eye wash (sterile water)
- Antiseptic Spray (may contain – "caine" drugs)
- Isopropyl alcohol
- Saline
- Adhesives
- Throat lozenges/peppermints
- Epinephrine (adult and pediatric doses)
- Automated external defibrillator (AED)

Medical Procedures/Supplies

Any student requiring a medical procedure, medication, and or treatment while at school must provide a completed Provider/Parent Authorization (PPA) form AND an action plan signed by the medical provider and parent/guardian. Clear and complete orders must be received from the healthcare provider, and all necessary medication, equipment, or supplies must be provided by the parent/guardian. It will be the parent or guardian's responsibility to retrieve any remaining medication, equipment or supplies that were furnished. Otherwise, the items will be discarded by the nurse.

The following are examples for chronic conditions that may be managed at school.

Asthma

The parent or guardian must bring an appropriately labeled inhaler (and spacer, if needed) to school. Documentation from the healthcare provider must specify the storage location of the device. An Asthma Action Plan should be completed by the healthcare provider and submitted to the school nurse.

Diabetes

The parent or guardian must bring appropriately labeled medication devices (including insulin pens and glucagon) to school. Documentation from the healthcare provider must specify the storage location of the devices. Diabetic supplies, snacks and water for the management of diabetes must be provided by the parent or guardian for the nurse.

Seizure Disorders

The parent or guardian must bring appropriately labeled medication to school. Documentation from the provider must specify the storage location of the emergency medication. The emergency device, if applicable, must be provided by the parent or guardian. A Seizure Action Plan should be completed by the healthcare provider and submitted to the school nurse.

Allergies Causing Anaphylaxis

The parent or guardian must bring appropriately labeled epinephrine to school. Documentation from the healthcare provider must specify the storage location of the medication. A complete list of allergies and an Allergy Action Plan should be completed by the healthcare provider and submitted to the school nurse. *epi pens are stocked in case of first-time allergies.

School personnel will not administer medication to a student unless they have received a medication form properly completed and signed by the healthcare provider and parent, and the medication has been received in an appropriately labeled container. In fairness to those giving the medication and to protect the safety of your child, there will be no exception to this policy.

Any student that has life-threatening allergies to food, medication, stings/bites, must have the following:

1. School medication authorization form and Emergency Action on file in the nurse's office. You may obtain a copy of these forms from the school nurse or secretary.
2. The student's emergency medication (Epi-Pen and/or Benadryl) must be brought to school by his/her parent in the prescription labeled container and documented by the school nurse or other appropriate staff member.
3. The school nurse or other trained employee may administer auto-injectable epinephrine to a student who is exhibiting signs and/or symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction.

* Self-administration of asthma or anaphylaxis medications shall be permitted on school property, school provided transportation, or school-related events if the School Medication Provider/Parent Authorization form reflects those orders. It must be in a properly labeled prescription container along with an authorization form on file in the nurse's office.

Students will be subject to disciplinary action if found in possession of medication without authorization. Students will be subject to disciplinary action if found to be sharing medication.

Each student taking medication will need their own documentation and medication supply. This applies to siblings, as well.

C. Communicable Diseases

This school board has the power, authority and duty to exclude from its schools' students with what appear to be infectious or contagious diseases; provided, however, such students may be allowed to return to school upon presenting a certificate from a public health officer, duly licensed physician or nurse practitioner that the student is free from such disease. Any student showing signs or symptoms of illness including vomiting, fever, and diarrhea should not be sent to school. Parents are expected to pick up students showing signs of illness during the school day. If the student's condition is thought to be a health threat to others, a health letter will be sent home with the student.

D. Head Lice

The school nurse is the most knowledgeable professional in the school setting and ideally suited to provide education and guidance regarding "best practices" for head lice/nit management. The goal of any actions by the school nurse is to contain infestation, provide appropriate health information for treatment and prevention, prevent overexposure to potentially hazardous chemicals, and minimize school absences. The following protocol is suggested as "best practice" for managing head lice in the school setting:

If a student is suspected of having head lice, the school nurse will be notified and will verify by visual examination with a positive or negative finding.

1. The parent will be contacted (verbal communication is preferred) of positive findings and proper instructions will be provided.
2. However, cases of severe infestation may require prompt removal by the school nurse.
3. The school nurse will make a determination as to whether a child can return to class based on a visual inspection.
4. The decision for the student to be sent home will be made on a case-by-case basis by the school nurse.
5. Most students with live lice may remain in school until the end of the school day.
6. Immediate removal of the student is usually unnecessary and could lead to embarrassment and ridicule.
7. Transmission via school bus seats is not likely because of the biology of head lice. In most cases the student should be allowed to ride the school bus home unless there is a severe infestation, as documented by the school nurse.
8. Immediate treatment at home, for active infestations, is advised.
9. The student will return to school the next day after treatment to be examined by the school nurse who, at that time, will determine if the student will return to class with close monitoring or be sent back home for further treatment.

This approach to head lice management in the school setting will significantly reduce unnecessary school absences, limit embarrassment of students, and decrease unnecessary exposure to potentially toxic chemicals.

TRANSPORTATION

The Russell County Board of Education recognizes the fact that a safe and efficient school bus service for those students who qualify is vital to the educational operation of the system and that this service must be provided at a cost that taxpayers can afford. While school bus transportation is offered to all students, this service is considered a privilege and not a right. This privilege may be suspended at any time through due process based on a student's behavior or extenuating circumstances. When a student accumulates ten (10) days of bus suspensions, the student may lose his/her bus riding privileges for the remainder of the semester. The first violation after returning to the bus may result in loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

NOTE: The bus driver is authorized to assign seats.

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are responsible for their child's daily preparation and conduct at the bus stop and behavior on the bus. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) should ensure their child:

1. Is dressed properly for the season or weather.
2. Arrives at the bus stop on time, ideally five minutes before bus loading time.
(Buses will not wait for students to come out of the house or leisurely walk to the stop.)
3. Is supervised while waiting at the stop.
4. Cooperates with the school bus driver.

School bus routes operate on a timely schedule over a predetermined course. However, traffic, weather or other considerations may alter a route's schedule. In congested communities or for next door neighbors it is not practical or safe to stop at everyone's driveway. Pickup points (stops) must be consolidated. Students must be at their assigned stop on time.

The Russell County School Board endeavors to make the trip to school and back home as safe and comfortable as possible. The Russell County Code of Conduct applies to students from the time a student enters the bus, until the student exits the bus. Progressive discipline will be used in regard to disciplinary issues on the bus. Parents and/or guardians are responsible for supervision at the stop. From the time a student boards the bus and until the student exits the bus, students are expected to follow these rules:

1. Obey and cooperate with the bus driver (at all times).
2. After boarding the bus, take your seat immediately.
3. Do not talk to or disturb the bus driver (except in emergencies).
4. Do not harass other students.
5. Do not fight.
6. Do not argue or yell.
7. Do not use profanity.
8. Sit erect with your feet on the floor and keep your belongings out of the aisle.
9. Keep your hands, head, and objects inside of the bus.
10. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus.
11. Do not smoke or strike matches/cigarette lighters on the bus.
12. Do not bring fireworks, weapons (including toys), or anything that may endanger the lives of others on the bus.

13. Do not commit careless or willful acts that may cause injury to others.
14. Keep the bus clean by picking up any trash that is dropped.
15. Do not commit careless or willful acts that may cause damage to the bus (may result in a monetary charge).
16. Acceptable use of cell phone: music and games (Photo and video, calling and texting are prohibited.)

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or unauthorized individuals are prohibited from boarding the bus.

The Transportation Department has assigned each student to a specific bus for transportation to and from school. Students are not to board an unassigned bus. Once aboard the bus, students shall not be allowed to get off until the home destination has been reached. Any change in transportation requires a 24-hour notice.

Riding the bus is a privilege. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are responsible for any acts of destruction or vandalism by their student (i.e. cut or damaged seats, broken window, etc.). Bus riding privileges may be suspended until the Russell County Board of Education is reimbursed for the cost of the repair.

School Bus Suspension

Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Misconduct on the bus may result in the student losing that privilege. Principals are authorized to suspend bus privileges depending on the severity of the child's misbehavior. When a child loses his/her bus privileges, the parents assume the responsibility for transportation to and from the school. Truancy laws still apply. Violations committed while on a school bus will be classified according to the provisions of the Code of Student Conduct. When a student accumulates ten (10) days of bus suspension, that student will lose bus privileges for the remainder of the semester or a specified number of days. The principal has the right to consider mitigating/aggravating circumstances and will adjust the punishment, accordingly. If a student loses privileges for the remainder of a semester, the parent may request a meeting with the principal that may include the Director of Transportation and the Director of Safety.

Bus Supervision of Kindergarten Students

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or person of legal age must be present before kindergarten students board the bus and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or person of legal age must be present to receive kindergarten students upon arriving at their designated stop. Bus privileges may be revoked if this procedure is violated repetitively.

Car Riders

Each school will inform the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the school procedure for car riders.

Field Trips and Excursions

Field trips and excursions are extensions of classroom instruction and provide worthwhile learning opportunities for students to participate in unique and enriching educational experiences. School administrators and teachers shall develop systematic procedures for ensuring that all trips away from the school provide optimal learning opportunities for students. The following minimal procedures shall be adhered to when conducting field trips and excursions away from school:

- Students shall be expected to exhibit good behavior and shall be subject to the same Code of Student Conduct applicable to regular classroom activities.
- Students must have a Field Trip Parent Permission Form signed by their parent(s) or guardian(s) on file with school officials to be able to participate in any field trips. Students not submitting a signed permission form SHALL NOT be permitted to participate in such activities.
- The privilege of participating in field trips or other extracurricular activities may be denied based on repeated classroom and/or other school-related misbehavior.

Surveillance/Video Recordings

In order to secure the identity and privacy of students, viewing surveillance/video recordings will not be an option for parents. All video recordings will be for school personnel/administrators/law enforcement only.

Temporary Bus Passes

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) may request a temporary bus pass at least 24 hours in advance from the principal/designee. The principal/designee must coordinate temporary bus passes with the Transportation Department. There will be no temporary passes granted unless the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are present to complete the form as required. Same day passes will not be granted except in cases of extreme emergency and approved by the principal/designee and the Transportation Department. Multiple passes for a single student will not be granted unless approved by the principal and the Transportation Department. The primary function of the Transportation Department is to provide transportation from home to school and school to home. All other additional stops must have prior approval.

The Charles Poland, Jr. Act (Act 2013-347)

Under the law, the crime of trespass in the first degree includes intentionally stopping, impeding, delaying, or detaining any school bus from being operated for public school purposes “with the intent to commit a crime.” Perpetrators will also be prosecuted in the first degree if they are found guilty of:

- Entering a public-school bus while the door is open to load or unload students without lawful purpose while at a railroad grade crossing or after being forbidden from doing so by the bus driver or other authorized school official;
- Refusing to depart the school bus after the bus driver in charge or other school official demands this of said occupant; or
- Intentionally destroying, defacing, burning, or damaging any public-school bus.

Transportation to The Warrior Inspirational Academy (WIA)

If a student is assigned to the Warrior Inspirational Academy, the tribunal panel will determine during the due process hearing whether or not the student will be allowed to ride their normal school bus to the WIA.

Riding the bus is a privilege. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are responsible for any acts of destruction or vandalism by their student (i.e. cut or damaged seats, broken window, etc.). Bus riding privileges will be suspended until the Russell County Board of Education is reimbursed for the cost of the repair.

Student Driving and School Parking Rules and Regulations

Driving a personal vehicle to school and parking on school property is a privilege and not a right. The student and the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must realize that student driving comes under school discipline policies.

The following rules and regulations apply:

1. Students sixteen years and older may drive a vehicle or motorcycle to school if they have a valid Alabama Class D and/or Class M license. Students fourteen years and older may drive a motorcycle to school if they have a valid Alabama Class M license.
2. Students must have vehicle insurance as per state law.
3. Students sixteen years and older are discouraged from transporting other students to and from school. State Law #02-408 Amendments 2010 states the following: Restrictions on the license of a person who is 16 years of age or age 17 with a license less than 6 months: 1. May not have more than one non-family passenger other than the parent, guardian or supervising licensed driver at least 21 years of age. (New for 2010, reduced from four.) Students 14 or 15 years of age are not allowed to transport passengers.
4. Students must register the vehicle with the school and display the resulting parking permit as instructed. The permit must be displayed on the front of the windshield and/or be visible at all times. There will be a registration fee of thirty-five dollars (\$35.00).
5. Students are to leave their vehicles immediately upon arrival at school.
6. The parking lot is off limits to students during the school day unless a pass is received from the office.
7. There is to be a strict adherence to the 5 mph and 15 mph speed limit in all areas of the school property.
8. All school buses are to be given the right-of-way.
9. Drivers are encouraged to keep their vehicles locked at all times.
10. Careless and reckless driving on school grounds is not permitted.
11. The student shall have no expectation of privacy in any vehicle or in the contents of any vehicle operated or parked on school property.
12. Any vehicle found to be illegally parked, not properly registered, or not displaying the parking permit, will be assessed a fine of five dollars (\$5.00). This fine must be paid within ten (10) school days from the date of issue or driving privileges will be revoked.
13. Students may only park in the designated "student parking" areas.

14. The car may be towed at the owner's expense if the student does not have a parking permit or if he/she receives the fourth violation.
15. Any violation may result in loss of driving privileges.
16. Student driving privileges could be revoked if a student receives a second suspension or second truancy notice.

Requirements for obtaining a valid parking permit:

- The student must have a valid driver's license.
- Permits for motorcycles and motor vehicles will be issued to students at their respective schools on a first come - first served, space available basis.
- If, for any reason, a student loses his/her driving privileges, his/her permit and parking space will be issued to the next person on the waiting list.
- If the driving permit is revoked for any reason, the student must have written permission from the Principal or Assistant Principal to be placed on the waiting list at the end of the nine weeks.

Parking permits are vehicle specific and need to be updated with the new information, if the student changes vehicles.

Reasons for losing a parking permit may include but not be limited to:

- Failing more than one class
- Excessive tardies (three (3) unexcused tardies per quarter)
- Excessive discipline referrals (three (3) discipline referrals per quarter)
- Excessive absenteeism (three (3) unexcused absences per quarter)
- Failing a drug test
- Reckless driving and not following speed limits to include public roads

TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

Introduction

The Russell County School District (RCSD) relies on its computer network to enhance education outcomes. To ensure that the RCSD's computer resources are used properly by its employees, students, independent contractors, agents, vendors, and other computer users, the Russell County Board of Education has drafted and approved the following Responsible Use Policy.

The rules and obligations described in this policy apply to all users of the RCSD's computer network or computer resources. Specific policies against discrimination and harassment (sexual or otherwise) apply fully to the RCSD's computer resources, and any violation of these policies serves as grounds for discipline up to and including termination. Students who violate these policies are subject to disciplinary action consistent with Board policy and the Student Handbook. Vendors, consultants, and all other third-party guest users must adhere to these policies and are subject to losing their right to access the RCSD's computer resources for violations of these policies.

By complying with the provisions in this Responsible Use Policy, users consent to monitoring as a condition of access under the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (1986). All users should be aware that the RCSD's computer resource uses are subject to monitoring in order to comply with the Alabama Supercomputer Authority and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as well as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Employees, students, and other users should not have any expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the RCSD's computer resources. The main goal of this aspect of the Responsible Use Policy is to ensure our children's safety and protection while using technology for educational purposes.

All activities performed on any District-owned computer, related equipment, network, or electronic communication device, including Student Google Accounts, that are owned, leased or otherwise maintained by the RCSD and their related content, including all files and data, (herein collectively referred as "technology resources") will be continuously monitored, inspected, searched, examined, and accessed by the RCSD school authorities, for the safe and efficient operation or administration of the RCSD and in connection with its policies and procedures. Users of the RCSD's technology resources have no personal right of privacy or confidentiality with respect to the use or content of such technology resources. The RCSD makes a good faith effort to monitor the potential for self-harm; however, the school only receives alerts during normally scheduled school days and hours (8:00am - 4:00pm).

All technology resource use will be governed by the requirement that it must add to the standards-based educational experience and growth of the user and not disrupt the educational process in any way.

Definitions

- The term "computer resources" as used herein refers to the RCSD's entire computer, electronic and communications network. Specifically, the term "computer resources" includes, but is not limited to computers, host computers, file servers, application servers, communication servers, mail servers,

fax servers, web servers, workstations, stand-alone computers, laptops, tablets such as iPads, telephones, facsimile machines, scanners, software, data files, peripherals such as printers, and all internal and external computer and communication networks (for example, internet, commercial online services, value-added networks, email systems) that may be accessed directly or indirectly via remote access (including access by students, vendors, consultants and other third party guests using personally owned computer hardware as authorized by the RCSD) from our computer network or that are owned or have been purchased by the RCSD.

- “Users” include employees, substitutes, students, and guests, using technology, including, but not limited to computers, networks, internet, email, chat rooms, and other forms of technology services and products.
- “Network” is wired and wireless technology networks, including school and district networks, cellular networks, commercial, community or home-based wireless networks accessible to students.
- “Equipment” includes cellular phones, smartphones, PDAs, MP3 players, iPod-type devices, and portable computers such as laptops, iPads, Nooks, Chromebooks, desktops, tablets, and netbooks, as well as portable storage devices.

Policy Statements

Protection of Users

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law that addresses concerns about internet access in schools and libraries. Under CIPA, schools and libraries receiving federal funding must certify that they have certain internet safety measures in place. These measures include blocking or filtering images that:

- (a) are obscene,
- (b) contain child pornography, or
- (c) are harmful to minors when accessed by children.

Schools subject to CIPA must also adopt policies to monitor minors' online activities, including:

- (a) preventing access to inappropriate content,
- (b) ensuring the safety and security of minors when using email, chat rooms, and social networking sites,
- (c) preventing unauthorized access, including hacking and other unlawful online activities,
- (d) protecting minors from unauthorized disclosure or misuse of personal information, and
- (e) restricting access to materials that may be harmful to minors.

By enforcing these requirements, CIPA helps create a safer online environment for students in schools and libraries.

Schools will annually provide for the educating of minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, cyberbullying awareness, and acceptable engagement.

Social Media

The Russell County School District recognizes the value of social media, both for personal and professional use. However, there are some guidelines that should be addressed when educators use social media. The guidelines and reminders below have been developed to better protect (and inform) RCSD employees from charges of inappropriate use. Teachers should not “friend” students on personal social media. Teachers should also be judicious about "friending" students' parents on social media.

Unacceptable Social Media Use Includes

- Updating social media or posting non-instructional content or recording during school hours. Stakeholders expect RCSD’s employees to be working during the school day; posting on social media during this time gives the impression that teachers are not fulfilling their responsibilities to students.
- Posting pictures with students in them without permission of parents or guardians.
- Using social media as the sole means of classroom communication.
- Posting disruptive content that harms the goodwill and reputation of the students, teachers, school, and district.
- Using devices to record students, faculty, or others during the school day for purposes other than those occasions designated for parents or school officials to recognize and celebrate students.

Communication between teachers, parents, and students should be of an educational/extracurricular nature and support the vision, mission, and beliefs of the RCSD. Other types of personal communication between teachers and students must be avoided.

Technology Acceptable Use

Adult-supervised, technology-enhanced activities that are standards-based and educationally driven and that follow all Russell County Board of Education policies should be deemed as acceptable use by students and adults. Some examples of acceptable and/or responsible use may include, but are not limited to the following: visiting approved educational websites, research, online practice quizzes, educational games, reading/writing website programs, student-learning (Edmodo, Blackboard, Moodle, etc.), using video-enhanced learning (Khan Academy, Ted, YouTube, etc.) for educational purposes, educational surveys or student response websites, achievement or performance tracking websites, as well as other educational uses.

Technology Unacceptable Use - Prohibited Activities

The following activities, materials, or items are strictly prohibited: fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, or any unlawful or inappropriate content. This includes materials that may not be viewed, sent, posted, or shared through any form of electronic communication (such as bulletin board systems, newsgroups, or chat groups), downloaded from the internet, or displayed or stored on RCSD’s resources. This prohibition also extends to spam and other non-educational or non-business-related activities. Any user who encounters or receives materials violating the Russell County School District’s Responsible Use Policy should immediately report the incident to their teacher or supervisor.

Computer resources may not be used for distribution or storage of commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, political material, promotions, religious content, or any other unauthorized significant personal use. Additionally, users should not attempt to bypass network security measures or internet access restrictions (such as using proxy websites), engage in torrenting/P2P, or use destructive programs like viruses/self-replicating codes. Users are prohibited from intentionally damaging computers, peripherals, or the network in any way.

Violation of License Agreements, Copyrights, Laws or Misuse of Computer Resources

Users must not intentionally waste computer resources or monopolize them to the exclusion of others. This includes, but is not limited to, sending mass emails or chain letters, using resources for non-educational purposes, playing games, participating in online chat groups, or generating unnecessary network traffic.

Violation Consequences

Any user who violates this policy may have computer/internet privileges revoked at any time and without prior notice. Employee violations of this policy may also result in administrative leave, suspension, and possible termination. Student users are also subject to discipline according to the Russell County Student Code of Conduct. Any illegal use will also result in civil and/or criminal liability.

Cellular Phone Use

The Russell County School District recognizes the value of allowing parents and students the ability to communicate before and after school hours. Cellular phones, while convenient to meet this need, can be used in an abusive way that can interrupt the learning process, and is therefore unacceptable.

Therefore, the Russell County Board of Education extends to students the privilege to possess cellular phones at school under the following conditions: Cellular phones may be used for instructional purposes only with the expressed permission of the teacher/sponsor and at the conclusion of an extracurricular or curricular activity or with expressed permission of the sponsor, teacher, or coach. Cell phone use to include cameras and videos is prohibited in changing areas and restrooms.

Rationale: We do not want cell phones ringing during cheerleader practice, Beta Club meeting, etc.

Cellular phones with cameras capable of transmitting or receiving images may never be used for such purposes. In other words, phones that are capable of taking photos or video may be brought to school but must be turned off and never used for such purposes. It is in violation of policy to take an unauthorized picture or video to transmit them to other devices (i.e. texting/emailing pictures or video) or post to the Internet (posting picture or video on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.). Violation of this policy may be considered a Class III violation and may be punished accordingly.

Cellular phones used to photograph or video tests, school work, teachers, or other students may be considered a Class III violation and may be punished accordingly.

When a cell phone or other electronic device becomes a distraction to the learning environment, it will immediately be confiscated and must be picked up by the parent or guardian from the main office.

“Forgetting” to turn-off the cell phone is not an excuse. If a student violates any part of the above policy, the privilege of having and using the cell phone or electronic device at school may be permanently prohibited.

Neither the local administration nor the Board of Education assumes responsibility under any circumstances whatsoever for the loss, theft, or destruction of any cellular phones that are brought to school at any time before, during, or after school hours.

If a Violation Occurs:

Cell phones or other devices may be taken up. Parents must pick up cell phones or other electronic devices from administration. Consequences will be at the discretion of the administration.

Cell Phone/Digital Device in a Testing Setting

The possession of digital devices (including but not limited to cell phones, Smart Watches, MP3 players, cameras, mobile entertainment, social connections, navigation devices, or other telecommunication devices) is strictly prohibited in the testing setting. Russell County school employees will collect such devices before students can enter the testing room.

If a device is in the possession of a student in the testing setting, testing for the student will cease, the device will be confiscated, the student will be dismissed from the testing, and the student’s test may be invalidated. Students in violation of the digital device testing policy may be refused the right to test in future administrations of tests and may be subject to disciplinary action.

In order to maintain test security and validity, test administrators and/or proctors have been instructed to confiscate prohibited items and to report incidents of violations to the system coordinator.

Once all tests, answer documents, and any irregularity reports are delivered to the State Department of Education, confiscated items may be returned to the student’s parent or guardian. Confiscated cell phones may be sent to the State Department of Education for review.

STUDENT ACADEMIC PLAN

Guidelines for Study and Homework

Homework is an important component of every student's instructional program. Students, teachers, and parents should understand homework objectives and their role in the total learning experience. Homework reflects practices that have been taught in the classroom and provides reinforcement and/or remediation for students. Homework should be student-managed, and the amount should be age-appropriate. Homework should encourage learning through problem solving and practice. Parental support and supervision reinforce the quality of practice or product as well as skill development. (Source: Alabama State Courses of Study). Parents will be informed of homework procedures at the beginning of each school year.

GRADING/PROMOTION/RETENTION

(General Overview)

Promotion Philosophy and Purpose

The Russell County Board of Education is committed to the development of all students enrolled in Russell County Schools. The instructional program is designed to be developmental and continuous. It is based on systematic, sequential teaching and learning whereby the instructional needs of students are assessed and mastery levels are clearly defined to ensure progression of learning and maximum academic proficiency. The primary goal is to teach students in order for them to attain mastery of skills needed to function successfully in the core academic areas as they progress from one grade level to the next.

These procedures will guide the professional staff of the Russell County School District in the proper placement of each student in an instructional program where academic success can be achieved and each student is allowed to develop socially, emotionally, and physically. The procedures and regulations for grading, promotion, and retention are congruent with existing State Board of Education policies and District administrative guidelines.

Decisions related to grading, promotion and retention of students in the Russell County School District are derived from consideration of a variety of factors. These factors include, but are not limited to the student's age, academic history, grade level placement, socialization and capacity for learning. Students will not be penalized academically for behavior that is addressed by the Student Code of Conduct. Placement, promotion, or retention will be made in the best interests of the student after careful evaluation of all factors relating to the student's total development with special emphasis on academic competence.

Russell County School District procedures require that all parents be informed of the progress of their child(ren). Teachers will periodically share with parents and students an evaluation of each student's individual progress. Regular written reports, student conferences and parent conferences are encouraged to report on-going progress and achievement. Methods of evaluating and reporting the progress of students will facilitate each student's learning, encourage the growth of self-confidence and intrinsic motivation, and illustrate student competence in prescribed competencies and skills.

Progress Reports

Student progress reports will be issued at the midpoint of each nine-week grading period. Parent-teacher conferences may be scheduled upon request.

Report Card Grade Determination

All teachers are required to give a minimum of five (5) tests, five (5) classwork assignments, and five (5) homework assignments (may include projects) per grading period. Remember parents can access a student's grades and should see an accurate representation of how their student is performing/achieving in class.

Grades will be determined for the Russell County School District based on the following percentages:

Grade Bands	1-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
Test and Projects	50%	60%	60%	60%
Class Work	40%	30%	30%	30%
Homework	10%	10%	10%	10%

Grades in Physical Education and/or Career-Tech Classes in Grades 6 – 12 will be based on the following percentages:

- Projects and Tests = 20 %
- Hands-on Labs/Class Work = 80 %

ELEMENTARY GRADES (K-5)

Promotion/Retention Guidelines

Promotion decisions are to be made at the building level with consideration to the guidelines detailed herein. Such decisions are to be validated as necessary by the school-based Promotion/Retention Committee composed of all teachers who directly teach and/or provide instructional-related services to the student, the school counselor, the school principal, and the grade-level leader or another teacher at the school. The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may be asked to attend meetings at which the academic progress and/or placement of their child will be discussed. At the discretion of the school principal, and in all cases that may be contested by the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s), the Director of Instruction and/or the Special Education Director may participate in the decision making process. A special education teacher may be on the retention/promotion team.

Report Cards

Student report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period. Progress will be reported in the following areas: Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Physical Education.

Grade Books

All Grade Books should be completed using PowerSchool. Ideally, grades should be posted weekly. Students in 1st – 5th grades receive a numerical grade in Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

1st – 5th grade students receive an S, N, or U in Physical Education.

Kindergarten students receive an S, N, or U to notate mastery of grade level standards.

All teachers are required to give a minimum of five (5) tests, five (5) classwork assignments, and five (5) homework assignments (may include projects) per grading period. Remember that parents can access a student's grades and should see current and accurate representations of how their student is performing/ achieving in your class. Remember that you will need to turn in printed copies of your PowerSchool grade book at the end of the year. An Honor Roll list should also be maintained and accessible for each quarter of the year.

Kindergarten

The Kindergarten program provides activity-based instruction to promote student success. A nine-week report to the parent or guardian will reflect the developmental stages of early childhood education. Ongoing communication between the school and home enhances the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of the child.

The following codes will be used to report progress of Kindergarten students:

S - SATISFACTORY Student is achieving according to expectations for the designated grading period.

N - NEEDS IMPROVEMENT Student is not progressing as expected for the designated grading period.

U - UNSATISFACTORY Student is not achieving according to expectations for the designated grading period. No mark indicates this area has not yet been evaluated.

Kindergarten students are evaluated based on skill mastery; therefore, grading percentages are not applicable to these students. A student may, upon recommendation of the Promotion/Retention Committee and with parental input, be retained in kindergarten. In such a case, retention should be based on the belief that an additional year of kindergarten educational experiences and maturation will increase the likelihood of future academic success for the student. For each student who is retained in grade, an action plan will be developed for the ensuing year. Retention will be considered only in severe cases of delayed development.

Grades One and Two (1-2)

Student report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period and will report progress in the following areas: Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education. Progress reports will be issued at the midpoint of each grading period (or more frequently if necessary). On both report cards and progress reports, comments may be made to reflect academic achievement, attendance, and behavior.

The following codes will be used to report the progress of students in grades one (1) and two (2) in Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies:

Alpha	Numeric	Description	Level of Understanding
A	(90-100)	Excellent	Consistently exceeds grade-level requirements
B	(80-89)	Above Average	Consistently produces quality grade-level work
C	(70-79)	Average	Satisfactorily meets minimal grade-level requirements
D	(60-69)	Below Average	Has difficulty meeting minimal grade-level requirements
F	(Below 60)	Failing	Fails to meet minimal grade-level requirements

The following codes will be used to report the progress of students in grades one (1) and two (2) in the Physical Education Course *ONLY*:

S - SATISFACTORY Student is achieving according to expectations for designated grading period.

N -NEEDS IMPROVEMENT Student not progressing as expected for designated grading period.

U -UNSATISFACTORY Student is not achieving according to expectations for designated grading period.

No mark indicates this area has not yet been evaluated.

Grades will include tests, class work, projects, and homework with the main emphasis placed on tests and class work.

Students who receive a final grade of "F" in Reading, Language Arts, or Mathematics will be considered for retention by the school's Promotion/Retention Committee. If the committee determines that the student's likelihood of future academic success can be increased by repeating the grade, the student will be retained at the current grade level. If the committee determines repeating the grade will not be beneficial, the student will be placed in the next grade. In either case, an action plan will be developed and implemented for the ensuing year.

Grades Three Through Five (3-5)

Student report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period and will report progress in the following areas: Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education. Progress reports will be issued at the midpoint of each grading period (or more frequently if necessary). On both report cards and progress reports, comments may be made to reflect academic achievement, attendance and behavior.

The following codes will be used to report the progress of students in grades three (3) through five (5) in Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies:

Alpha	Numeric	Description	Level of Understanding
A	(90-100)	Excellent	Consistently exceeds grade-level requirements
B	(80-89)	Above Average	Consistently produces quality grade-level work
C	(70-79)	Average	Satisfactorily meets minimal grade-level requirements
D	(60-69)	Below Average	Has difficulty meeting minimal grade-level requirements
F	(Below 60)	Failing	Fails to meet minimal grade-level requirements

The following codes will be used to report the progress of students in grades three (3) through five (5) students in the Physical Education Course *ONLY*:

S - SATISFACTORY Student is achieving according to expectations for designated grading period.

N - NEEDS IMPROVEMENT Student is not progressing as expected for designated grading period.

U - UNSATISFACTORY Student is not achieving according to expectations for designated grading period.

No mark indicates this area has not yet been evaluated.

Grades will include tests, class work, projects, and homework with the main emphasis placed on tests and class work.

In order to be considered for promotion, students must earn a grade of “D” or above in four (4) of the five (5) core subjects: Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students who receive a final grade of “F” in two or more of the following subjects - Reading, Language Arts, and Mathematics - will be referred to the Promotion/Retention Committee to determine whether the child will be retained and must repeat the grade. If the Promotion/Retention Committee determines that the student's likelihood of future academic success can be increased by repeating the grade, the student may be retained at the current grade level. If the committee determines that repeating the grade will not be beneficial, the student will be placed in the next grade.

Note: The promotion/retention of 3rd grade students will also be subject to the guidelines of the Alabama Literacy Act (2019). According to the AL Literacy Act, “Commencing with the 2021-2022 school year, third grade students shall demonstrate sufficient reading skills for promotion to fourth grade.

Testing

Any student found to have cheated on a test (including state mandated) may receive a voided score for that test and/or discipline consequence as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct. A cheating violation involving a state mandated test will be subject to the requirements of the State Assessment Guidelines

SECONDARY – MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADES (6 – 8)

Report Cards

The following regulations apply to secondary (6-8) grade reporting:

Student report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period and will report progress in the following areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, and Electives. Progress reports will be issued at the midpoint of each grading period (or more frequently if necessary). On both report cards and progress reports, comments may be made to reflect academic achievement, attendance and behavior.

The following codes will be used to report progress of students in grades six (6), seven (7), and eight (8) English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, and Electives:

Alpha	Numeric	Description	Level of Understanding
A	(90-100)	Excellent	Consistently exceeds grade-level requirements
B	(80-89)	Above Average	Consistently produces quality grade-level work
C	(70-79)	Average	Satisfactorily meets minimal grade-level requirements
D	(60-69)	Below Average	Has difficulty meeting minimal grade-level requirements
F	(Below 60)	Failing	Fails to meet minimal grade-level requirements

Promotion/Retention Guidelines

Grades will include tests, class work, projects and homework with the main emphasis placed on tests and class work. The minimum number of graded assignments in each category can be found in the RCMS handbook. Russell County Middle School students take four (4) academic core courses per school year. These core courses include English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students will be promoted to the next grade upon satisfactory completion (no less than 60%) of English Language Arts and Mathematics, AND satisfactory completion of one other core course (either Science or Social Studies). If a student fails two (2) subjects during the regular school year, he/she can attend summer school to retake one (1) of the failed courses. Successful completion of the course will grant the student promotion status to the next grade. Additional grade recovery opportunities (such as Spring School) may also be available to students (if offered by the school). Students must pass three (3) of the four (4) core courses where English Language Arts and Mathematics are required to be promoted.

Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) may appeal the decision regarding promotion/retention of a student in the middle grades to the Secondary Curriculum Director. Each case shall be considered individually and a decision made that, in the professional opinion of the committee, is in the best interest of the student.

The Promotion/Retention Committee may consist of:

- a. School Level Administrator
- b. Current Teacher(s)
- c. Counselor
- d. Special Education Teacher (if appropriate)

The following factors should be considered when grade retention of a student is considered:

- a. Teacher assessments
- b. Progress in subjects
- c. Data from formal achievement and ability assessments
- d. Progress in alternative placements
- e. Attendance
- f. Previous retention
- g. Maturity: chronological age, physical and emotional maturity, behavior and other factors that might affect the student or classmates
- h. Achieving below designated grade level as indicated on report card

The Russell County School District adheres to the guidelines outlined by the No Pass No Play Policy (see below) that conforms to the State Board of Education and the Alabama High School Athletic Association. Questions regarding eligibility should be referred to the athletic director of the school the student is attending.

RCMS 7th and 8th grade

- Students must have passed at least five (5) new subjects during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school (if applicable).
- A minimum composite numerical average of 70 is required across all subjects.
- Students must have been promoted to the next grade in order to participate in middle school sports.

RCHS 9th-12th grades

- Students must have passed at least four core classes plus two electives during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school (if applicable).
- A minimum composite numerical average of 70 is required across all subjects.
- Students must have been promoted to the next grade in order to participate in high school sports.

Testing

Any student found to have cheated on a test (including state-mandated) may receive a voided score for that test and/or discipline consequence as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct. A cheating violation involving a state-mandated test will be subject to the requirements of the State Assessment Guidelines.

SECONDARY – HIGH SCHOOL GRADES (9 – 12)

Report Cards

The following regulations apply to secondary (9-12) grade reporting:

Student report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period. Progress reports will be issued at the midpoint of each grading period (or more frequently if necessary). On both report cards and progress reports, comments may be made to reflect academic achievement, attendance, and behavior.

The following codes will be used to report progress of Grades Nine (9) through Twelve (12):

Alpha	Numeric	Description	Level of Understanding
A	(90-100)	Excellent	Consistently exceeds grade-level requirements
B	(80-89)	Above Average	Consistently produces quality grade-level work
C	(70-79)	Average	Satisfactorily meets minimal grade-level requirements
D	(60-69)	Below Average	Has difficulty meeting minimal grade-level requirements
F	(Below 60)	Failing	Fails to meet minimal grade-level requirements

Grades will include tests, class work, projects, and homework with the main emphasis placed on tests and class work. The minimum number of graded assignments in each category can be found in the RCHS handbook. Students attending Russell County High School must receive a “D” (60 or above) or better in order to receive credit in the course. Any student found to have cheated on a test (including state mandated) may receive a voided score for that test and/or discipline consequence as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct. A cheating violation involving a state-mandated test will be subject to the requirements of the State Assessment Guidelines.

The Russell County School District adheres to the guidelines outlined by the No Pass No Play Policy that conforms to the State Board of Education and the Alabama High School Athletic Association

- Have a passing grade and earn the appropriate number of credits for the preceding year in each of six (6) subjects including English, science, social studies, and mathematics.
- Physical education may count as two (2) units per year
- Eligibility shall be determined on the first day of the school year and shall remain in effect for one (1) complete school year
- Each eligible student must have a minimum composited average of 70 from the preceding year, including summer school
- Each eligible student must meet the definition of a regular student as defined by the Alabama High School Athletic Association

- Any student who earns more than four (4) credits in the core curriculum each year may be exempt from earning the four credits in the succeeding year as long as that student remains on track for graduation with the cohort. Each student below Grade 9 shall pass five (5) subjects with a composite average of 70% with all other rules applying the same as to students in Grades 9-12.

Questions regarding eligibility should be referred to the athletic director of the school the student is attending.

POSSIBLE CREDITS EARNED BY STUDENTS ENTERING HIGH SCHOOL 2021 AND BEYOND (through Russell County High School's block schedule)

Grade Nine: 8 units (Must earn 7 units to promote)

Grade Ten: 8 units (Must earn 14 units to promote)

Grade Eleven: 8 units (Must earn 20 units to promote)

Grade Twelve: 8 units (Must earn 24 units to promote)

32 units possible, 24 units needed for graduation

(Students may not be considered Seniors or eligible for graduation until their fourth year of high school)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate a student must do the following:

1. Earn the required twenty-four (24) units of credit as required by the Alabama State Department of Education and the Russell County Board of Education
2. Pass all courses required for graduation by the Alabama State Department of Education and the Russell County Board of Education
3. Successfully pass any state required tests when applicable
4. Obtain College and Career Readiness status

Note: A student who fails English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, or other required courses should make arrangements to recover the failing grade immediately through grade or credit recovery. Pursuant to the Alabama State Board of Education Administrative Code 290-3-1. Credit Restriction: A student shall not earn credit toward graduation for a course that duplicates course content for which credit has already been awarded.

College and Career Ready

The Alabama State Department of Education defines a college and career ready student as a student that meets one of the following criteria:

- Achieving a benchmark score on the ACT w/Writing assessment
- Achieving silver status or higher on all three subtests of the ACT WorkKeys assessment
- Attaining collegiate credit while in high school through Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment classes
- Completing three courses within an approved Career Technical Education program/pathway with a “C” average or higher in each course
- Obtaining a Career Technical Education career readiness indicator
- Military enlistment

Class-Related Activities

Beginning with a student’s junior year, the student must be on track to graduate in order to attend class-related activities. If a student is not on track to graduate, then he or she may lose the privilege of attending certain class-related activities such as but not limited to prom, class-day picnics, etc. On track to graduate is defined as currently possessing the grade level appropriate number of credits toward graduation, or in the process of successfully obtaining such credits. Seniors must be 1) on track to graduate AND 2) on track to college and career ready status in order to participate in senior class-related activities. Seniors not meeting the above two criteria may lose their privilege of attending class-related activities.

Grade Recovery and Credit Recovery

Grade Recovery is required of students who fail a course with an overall average below 39/F. Grade Recovery does not replace the failed course on the transcript. Credit Recovery is only available to students who fail a course with an overall average of 40 - 59/F. Credit Recovery does not replace the failed course on the transcript. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) does not recognize Credit Recovery. Students participating in Credit Recovery are not able to earn a grade higher than a 70/C.

Credit Advancement

A student who pursues the Alabama High School Diploma option may have the option to participate in Credit Advancement opportunities through dual enrollment, Edgenuity, and/or summer school programs. In addition to meeting the minimum Alabama High School Graduation Requirements for graduation, the student wanting to qualify for early graduation must also:

- obtain at least one (1) College and Career Readiness (CCR) indicator (qualifying scores on ACT w/ Writing, ACT Work Keys, College Credit, Career Technical Education Credential, qualifying scores on AP exam, and/or military enlistment) prior to graduation
- have valid documentation of acceptance into a two-year or four-year post-secondary institution or a military enlistment letter from a recruiter

Any student who participates in Credit Advancement can continue to participate in coursework, school-sponsored activities, and participate in the cohort's graduation ceremony. Additionally, students participating in Credit Advancement will be included in class ranking and honors. Graduating students must always follow district and school board policies, rules, and procedures while on school property. A student may not use Credit Advancement and/or early graduation to work a job during the school day. The student who prefers to gain work-based experience may apply for the Work-Based Learning (WBL) program at Russell County High School. Students interested in Credit Advancement should contact a Russell County High School counselor or administrator.

Early Graduation within Cohort or Senior Year

Students interested in early graduation must complete all required coursework, earn their College and Career Readiness Indicator (CCRI) status, and apply for early graduation. Applications are accepted from July 1 to September 1. Students may not be considered seniors or eligible for graduation (early or traditional) until their fourth year of high school. For additional information or to obtain an application, please contact one of the Russell County High School senior counselors.

Valedictorian/Salutatorian Selection Procedures

- Valedictorian – The student in the senior class with the highest numerical grade average.
- Salutatorian – The student in the senior class with the second-highest numerical grade average.

Students enrolled in Russell County High School for a minimum of two years prior to graduation who have successfully completed all requirements to earn the Alabama High School Diploma with Academic Honors and Distinction Endorsement will be considered for valedictorian or salutatorian. A Class III or cheating violation in grades nine through twelve (9-12) will prevent a student from being considered. Only grades earned at an accredited high school may be used when a student transfers into Russell County High School. All student candidates' exact numerical averages for core classes will be computed from ninth grade through the end of the third nine weeks of the senior year. Only credits earned and recorded on transcripts will be included in the calculation. Honors-level courses, including dual enrollment courses, will receive ten bonus points. The actual grade earned in each core class (i.e. English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and foreign language) will be reported on the official school transcript. However, students enrolled in these courses will receive an additional quality point on the standard (4.0) scale weighted GPA that will be used on applicable college admissions and scholarship applications. Classes designated as "Advanced" do not qualify for weighted grades. Honors courses transferred from another school are only given weight if the same course is taught at Russell County High School. If there is a tie between two or more students for valedictorian and/or salutatorian, the Numerical Grade Average for the core courses for each candidate will be calculated to three (3) decimal places to determine the Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

Diploma Options:

Beginning with the graduating Class of 2026, the Alabama State Department of Education will offer two diploma pathways for students in Russell County Schools:

- Option A: Traditional Diploma – This diploma follows the standard academic requirements and coursework necessary for students pursuing college, career, or military pathways.
- Option B: Workforce Diploma – This diploma is designed for students seeking to enter the workforce directly after high school, emphasizing career and technical education, industry credentials, and workforce readiness.

It is the expectation of Russell County Schools that all students graduate college and career ready. To aid our students in obtaining this status, the Russell County High School administration is authorized to change a student's schedule as deemed necessary.

Please review the descriptions for each diploma option along with the specific requirements needed to earn each credential.

Alabama High School Diploma Requirements: Option A (Traditional Diploma)

AREAS OF STUDY	REQUIREMENTS	CREDITS
English Language Arts	English 9 English 10 English 11 English 12	4
Mathematics	Geometry w/ Data Analysis Algebra 1 w/ Probability Algebra 2 w/ Statistics Other Specialized Course	4
Science	Biology A physical Science (Physical Science, Chemistry, or Physics) 2 additional science courses	4
Social Studies	World History 9 U.S. History 10 U.S. History 114 Government (½)/Economics (½)	4
Physical Education	LIFE (Personal Fitness) May be waived for students who successfully complete JROTC	1
Health Education	Health Education	0.5
Career Preparedness	Career Preparedness Course (Career & Academic Planning, Computer Applications, Financial Literacy)	1
CTE and/or Foreign Language and/or Arts	Students may declare enrollment in a specific Career Technical Education program with two or more courses in the same program (i.e. Automotive, CPU Science, Education & Training, Finance, Government, Industrial Maintenance, JROTC, Marketing, Restaurant services, etc.)	3
Electives	Any state or locally approved elective course. Note: The majority of students will graduate with more than the required 24 credits and will have the opportunity to take additional elective courses.	2.5
Total Credits Required for Graduation		24

Alabama High School Diploma Requirements: Option B (Workforce Diploma)

AREAS OF STUDY	REQUIREMENTS	CREDITS
English Language Arts	English 9 English 10 English 11 English 12	4
Mathematics	Geometry w/ Data Analysis Algebra 1 w/ Probability Algebra 2 w/ Statistics Other Specialized Course	2
Science	Biology A physical Science (Physical Science, Chemistry, or Physics) 2 additional science courses.	2
Social Studies	World History 9 U. S. History 10 U. S. History 11 Government (½ Credit) Economics (½ Credit)	4
Physical Education	Beginning Kinesiology	1
Health Education	Health Education (½ Credit)	0.5
Career Preparedness	Career Preparedness Course (Career & Academic Planning, Computer Applications, Financial Literacy)	1
CTE	Students may declare enrollment in a specific Career Technical Education program with three or more courses in the same program (i.e. Automotive, CPU Science, Education & Training, Finance, Government, Industrial Maintenance, JROTC, Marketing, Restaurant services, etc.)	3
Electives	Any state or locally approved elective course. Note: The majority of students will graduate with more than the required 24 credits and will have the opportunity to take additional elective courses.	6.5
Total Credits Required for Graduation	*To include a College and Career Readiness Indicator	24

The Alabama High School Graduation requirements provide the opportunity for students to pursue multiple pathways to earn a diploma. Students will have options to pursue areas of interest through expansion of elective credits. Flexibility in course offerings allows for personalized education plans for all students. Though these options allow increased flexibility, high expectations for Alabama students remain the standard. Only students who complete the requirements for the General Education Pathway will count in the United States Department of Education (USDOE) Four-Year Graduation Rate.

The ALSDE recognizes students who will graduate with an Alabama High School Diploma (AHSD) but will not count in the graduation rate for the USDOE. These students will be considered non-graduates, but will not count in the district's drop-out rate.

Students will have an opportunity to earn an additional district-level endorsement (Academic Honors with Distinction Endorsement and Career Technical Endorsement), that will be indicated on the diploma with a sticker/seal.

Students have the option of earning the following endorsement to their Alabama High School Diploma.

Russell County Schools Academic Honors with Distinction Endorsement:

Seven (7) honors level core classes and two (2) foreign language classes in grades 9-12 to include:

- at least four (4) credits at an Advanced level (i.e. Dual Enrollment, AP, or Honors)
- at least two (2) credits of science in Chemistry, Physics, or an approved Integrated Chemistry/Physics or AP course
- at least one (1) credit in math at the Precalculus level above Algebra II with Statistics
- at least two (2) credits of a foreign language in the same language

Students must also maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher.

Promotion in Special Education

Promotion and certificates of completion or graduation for special education students will be determined by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed by the IEP Committee. Satisfactory completion of units specified in the IEP will determine promotion. Participation in the Alabama Student Assessment Program will also be determined by the IEP Committee. Special Education students must meet state and district credit requirements to receive an Alabama High School Graduation Diploma.

Students with learning disabilities who are assigned to general education classes are expected to meet the same requirements for promotion as students in general education classes.

Essentials Pathway

Only students with disabilities will be allowed to enroll in Essentials courses. Careful consideration should be given before a student is allowed to enroll in one of the Essentials Pathway courses. If a student takes four or more core courses on the Essentials Pathway, he/she is required to complete the work component requirements of this pathway. It is important for each student to pursue the coursework that is appropriate for his/her desired post-school outcome. These courses may or may not be accepted by four-year colleges, and will not be accepted by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Students who plan to attend a postsecondary institution must meet the admission requirements of the selected institution. Only students who completed the course requirements for the General Education Pathway which is fully aligned with the state's academic standards will count in the United States Department of Education (USDOE) Graduation Rate for Alabama. Students who followed the Essentials Pathway and/or the Alternate Achievement Standards Pathway will not count as graduates in the USDOE Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate. These students, however, receive an Alabama High School Graduation Diploma.

Alternate Diploma Pathway

A student who has met the criteria for a student with a significant cognitive disability receives instruction from alternate standards aligned to the State content standards. Decisions regarding a student completing this diploma pathway are made by the IEP Committee. Students following the Alternate Achievement Standards Pathway will not count as graduates in the USDOE Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate. They will however receive an Alabama High School Diploma.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Introduction

Schools function best when students attend school regularly and arrive on time, respect other persons and their property, observe rules and regulations, respect the right to learn, exercise free speech, and take part in school programs and activities. No student has a right to be unruly in his or her classroom to the extent that such disruption denies fellow students of their right to learn. Students have the right to learn, the right to exercise free speech at appropriate times and places, the right to work on school-sponsored or approved publications, the right to assemble peacefully at appropriate times and places, and the right to have their student records maintained in a confidential manner.

Although the rules contained in the *Code of Student Conduct* apply to all ages, school officials expect students to assume greater responsibility for their actions as they progress through the Russell County School District. Differences in age and maturity levels require diverse and appropriate disciplinary action within the framework of the *Code of Student Conduct*; however, the procedures identified herein shall apply to all students in grades K-12.

Responsibilities of Parents

The parent(s) or guardian(s) of a child is (are) responsible for all aspects of a student's conduct. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of each child has (have) many school-related responsibilities under the law of Alabama. Examples: The parent(s) must enroll the child in school. The parent(s) must get the child to school regularly and on time. The parent(s) must ensure the child behaves appropriately in school. The parent must have a valid reason for a child's absence from school in accordance with Appendix IV of this handbook. Documentation for the absence must be submitted, in writing, within three (3) school days after the child returns to school.

The parent(s) is (are) financially responsible for the child's destructive acts against persons or against school property (to include replacement cost of textbooks). We do ask parents to pay a replacement cost for lost or damaged textbooks; however, students will be issued a textbook. They may or may not be permitted to take it home if they have damaged resources previously. (A summary of the principle education-related laws are found at the end of the Code of Student Conduct. The laws are contained in the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, Sections 16-36-69, 16- 1-24.1, Section 1-16-28-1 to Section 16-28-16.)

Russell County School District is one resource available to parent(s) or guardian(s) to help the parent(s) in educating the child. The school system exists to support the parent's responsibility of educating the child. The parent(s) must in turn support the school system by taking education-related responsibilities seriously. Parent(s) are expected to enroll their child(ren) in the school(s) serving their zone or obtain an approved transfer to another school. Parent(s) are expected to maintain regular communication with school officials and provide the local school with up-to-date addresses and home, work and emergency telephone numbers. Parent(s) are expected to bring to the attention of school officials any problem or condition that affects their child or other children in the school and ask for help from those officials in dealing with the problem.

Act 93-672 states that parents who fail to require their children to attend school regularly or fail to require their children to appropriately conduct themselves as students shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. A parent may receive a fine of not more than \$100.00 or a 90-day sentence for hard labor for the county for such a misdemeanor. The act also states that school officials who intentionally fail to report suspected violations to the district attorney shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

If a student is charged with a crime, his/her parent/guardian should contact the Safety Director to determine appropriate school placement while the charges are pending.

Surveillance/Video Recordings

In order to secure the identity of students, viewing of surveillance/video recordings by non-employees will only be an option in certain cases where district-level due process hearings are required and student anonymity can be guaranteed. All other video recordings will be for school personnel/administrators/law enforcement only.

Responsibilities of Students

Students enrolled in the Russell County School District must arrive at their schools at the designated time; report to all classes promptly; bring appropriate work materials to class; prepare work and take part in the learning activities as required by teachers; respect individuals and their property; refrain from the use of profanity in verbal or written form; refrain from lying, cheating and stealing; abide by the rules of good citizenship; obey the laws of the county, state and federal governments; and comply with the provisions contained in the School Attendance, Student Drug and Alcohol and Sexual Harassment Policies.

All students are subject to these and other policies of the Russell County Board of Education, the *Code of Student Conduct*, and all the rules and regulations of their respective schools. This authority applies during the school day and also during regular school activities while being transported on school buses, or at public expense to and from school or other educational activities; at such times and places including, but not necessarily limited to, night and summer programs, school-sponsored events, field trips, athletic functions, and other activities where appropriate school personnel have jurisdiction over students. All school rules and regulations apply to automobiles driven or parked on school property.

The *Code of Student Conduct* may be applied to students involved in any extension of school day misconduct or activity, that threatens to interfere with the provision of educational or instructional services, disrupts the school environment, or has a negative effect on the school's legitimate interests.

Students do not lose their constitutional rights by attending school. The constitutional rights of free speech and assembly, for example, are applicable at school, but even these activities are subject to reasonable regulation at school. "Free speech" does not mean the right to disrupt the educational activities in a classroom or during a program. It does mean students can freely share ideas, beliefs, and opinions without fear of retribution. Students can participate in student publications, but the school can exercise reasonable regulation of the content of school-sponsored or approved publications. The school cannot prohibit a student from contributing to a non-school approved publication, but the school can regulate the distribution of non-school approved publications on school grounds. Student

participation in school programs and activities, including school publications and athletics, is a privilege, not a right. Such privileges can be lost by violations of the *Code of Student Conduct*.

Responsibilities of Russell County School District

The Russell County School District exists to educate school-age children whose parent(s)/legal guardian(s) live in Russell County. Officials of Russell County School District are responsible for notifying parents of their obligation to enroll their child in school and compel the student to attend school regularly and to conduct himself or herself properly as a student. Local schools are responsible for making available techniques and suggestions to parents to enable them to better supervise the school work and educational activities of their children. The Russell County School District is responsible for providing students with educational enhancement programs. (Refer to Appendix VI for a suggested listing of resources within the Russell County Public School District to aid parents in fulfilling their school-related responsibilities.)

The school system must have a written policy for standards of school behavior and must provide a copy of each to the parent or guardian. The purpose of this handbook is to fulfill this obligation. School officials obtain the parent(s)/legal guardian(s)' signature as receipt of having received these written policies.

Classification of Code of Student Conduct Violations

Violations of the *Code of Student Conduct* are grouped into three classes:

- Class I - Minor
- Class II - Intermediate
- Class III - Major

Each classification is followed by a list of violations and appropriate disciplinary actions that are to be carried out by principals and their designees. In each class of violations, it is understood, when possible, the principal/designee shall hear the student's explanation regarding the alleged violation prior to deciding the classification of a violation. The principal/designee may consult further with school personnel and others, if necessary, before deciding the classification of the violation.

NO STUDENT SHALL BE PUNISHED FOR ANY SUSPECTED VIOLATIONS UNTIL THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPOSING DISCIPLINE HAS HEARD THE STUDENT'S EXPLANATION OR MADE REASONABLE EFFORTS TO PROVIDE THE STUDENT WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT HIS/HER EXPLANATION.

Each classroom teacher should seek to correct general classroom disruption by taking in-class disciplinary action, by making a personal call to the student's parent(s)/legal guardian when possible, and by scheduling conferences with other school staff, parent(s) or guardian. Only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective or the disruption is sufficiently severe should the student be referred to the principal/designee. Failure to bring notebook, pencil, books, or required materials and equipment to class is not cause for disciplinary referrals. When a student consistently exhibits such work habits, the student's parent(s) legal guardian should be notified by the school.

Under no circumstances should academic grades be used for maintaining order in a classroom nor should student behavior be included in calculating academic grades. An academic grade should reflect the teacher's most objective assessment of the student's academic achievement.

Class I Minor Violations

District Code	Description of Violation
1.01	Excessive distraction of other students-any conduct and/or behavior that is disruptive to the orderly educational process in the classroom or any similar grouping for instruction (i.e. physical education, cafeteria, restroom, etc.) (State Law 13A-11-7)
1.02	Minor Disruption
1.03	Inappropriate public displays of affection.
1.05	Nonconformance with the dress code
1.06	Any violation that the principal/designee may reasonably deem to fall within this category (Act 93-672)
1.08	Minor disruption on bus
1.10	Minor harassment

Disciplinary Actions for Class I Violations

The privilege of participating in field trips or other extracurricular activities may be denied based on repeated classroom and/or other school-related misbehavior.

Initial Violation: at the discretion of the administrator that may include in-school conference, parental contact, Saturday School, or other appropriate punishment when warranted

Subsequent Violations: may result in a Class II offense (2.58a) - Repetitive Class I Violation

Special Education Students

The principal/designee may consult with the special education teacher regarding effective discipline procedures when a Special Education student commits a Class I violation. If these actions are not effective, the principal/designee should initiate procedures to have the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee address the behavior problem. The IEP committee will document any revisions to the current IEP. Only the IEP committee may change a Special Education student's placement and only after proper notice to the parent(s) or guardian.

Consideration must also be given to the protections and rights afforded to 504 students under both federal and state law.

Class I Violations May Not Be Appealed Beyond the Local School Level

Class II Intermediate Violations

District Code	State Code	Description of Violation
2.07	17	Fighting (any physical conflict between two or more individuals) on the school bus
2.08	8	Vandalism (any malicious destruction of private or public property; including Computer Related Incidents) (State Law 13A-7-21, 13A-7-22, 13A-7-23)
2.09	9	Defiance of Authority (any verbal or nonverbal refusal to comply with a lawful and reasonable direction or order of a School Board employee)
2.10	10	Disobedience - Persistent, Willful
2.11	11	Disorderly Conduct – Other
2.12	12	Disruptive Demonstration
2.16a	16	Unauthorized Electronic Communication Device (the unauthorized use of any electronic communication device, such as a cellular phone) (16-1-27)
2.16b	16	Unauthorized use of internet for reasons other than educational purposes
2.16c	16	Unauthorized use of electronic equipment/toys/mp3 players/personal earpieces (headphones) etc.
2.17	17	Fighting (any physical conflict such as pushing and arguing between two or more individuals) (State Law 13A-1-2, 13A-6-22, 13A-11-7, 13A-11-8) Note: If assault is involved this constitutes a Class III violation.
2.19	19	Gambling (any participation in a game of chance for money and/or other things of value (State Law 13A-12-21))
2.20a	20	Harassment of a Student (pushing or striking another student against the will of the other student) (State Law 13A-11-8)
2.24	24	Stealing - Larceny - Petty Theft (the intentional unlawful taking and/or carrying away of property valued at less than \$100.00 belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another (State Law 13A-8-5) Possession of stolen property with the knowledge that it is stolen (State Law 13A-8-17, 13A-8-18, 13A-8-19)
2.26	26	Profanity or Vulgarity (use of profane or obscene language) (Act 93-672) (Including Visiting Inappropriate Internet Sites)
2.29	29	Sexual Harassment (Use of vulgar or sexually explicit comments, gestures or conduct, obscene or sexually explicit pictures; sexually oriented “kidding,” teasing or practical jokes directed toward another person or offensive to a third- party observer) (State Law 13A-11-8) (i.e. whether verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic)

District Code	State Code	Description of Violation
2.31	31	Threats, Intimidation, Extortion, or Bullying (verbally, nonverbally, or by a written or printed communication maliciously threatening an injury to the person, property, or reputation of another, with the intent to extort money or any pecuniary advantage at all, or with intent to compel the person so threatened, or any other person, to do any act or refrain from doing any act against his or her will (State Law 13A-6-25)) Note: Completion of the threat, either by the victim complying with the demands or the carrying out of the threat against the victim, constitutes a Class III violation.
2.32	32	Tobacco Possession
2.33	33	Tobacco Sale
2.34	34	Tobacco Use
2.35	35	Trespassing (willfully entering or remaining in any structure, conveyance, or property without being authorized, licensed, or invited; or having been authorized, licensed, or invited is warned by an authorized person to depart and refuses to do so) (State Law 13A-7-3, 13A- 7-4)
2.36	36	Truancy/Tardies/ Skipping (unauthorized absences, tardies, or skipping from class or school (Act 93-672))
2.58a	58	Repetitive Class I violations
2.58b	58	Leaving School Grounds without Permission (repetitive violation (twice) will constitute a Class III Violation)
2.58c	58	Providing False Information (intentionally providing false information to a School Board employee including, but not limited to, giving false student information, forgery of school notes, and concealment of information directly relating to school business) This could result in a Class III violation.
2.58d	58	Any violation that the principal/designee may reasonably deem to fall within this category
2.60	60	Vape/Vapor, Possession - possession of a device used to inhale or exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
2.61	61	Vape/Vapor, Usage - using a device used to inhale and exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
2.62	62	Vape/Vapor, Sale - selling of a device used to inhale and exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
2.63	63	E-Cigarettes, Possession - possession of a device used to produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance

District Code	State Code	Description of Violation
2.64	64	E-Cigarettes, Usage - using a device to produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that contains nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
2.65	65	E-Cigarettes, Sale - selling a device used to produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine and/or flavoring or other substances- IQOS – Heat stick cigarette - pen-/stick-like device (would be included under the E-Cigarette infractions)

Disciplinary Actions for Class II Violations

The privilege of participating in field trips or other extracurricular activities may be denied based on repeated classroom and/or other school-related misbehavior. Parental contact and in-school disciplinary actions such as (but not limited to) detention, the assignment of reports related to the violation, work assignments before or after school, supervised in-school suspension and or corporal punishment, suspension for one to five school days, Saturday School, or reverse suspension. If these disciplinary actions are not effective, the principal/ designee may recommend that further action may be taken by the Tribunal Panel.

Special Education Students

The principal/designee may consult with the special education teacher regarding effective discipline procedures when a special education student commits a Class II violation. If these actions are not effective, the principal/designee may initiate procedures to have the student’s IEP Committee address the behavior problem. Only the IEP Committee may change a Special Education student’s placement and only after proper notice to the parent(s) or guardian. Consideration must be given to the protections and rights afforded to IDEA and Section 504 students under both federal and state law.

Vape-Related Incidents

As outlined in Ala. Code § 28-11-14, any tobacco or tobacco product (including vapes) found in the possession of a minor is contraband and subject to seizure by law enforcement. Students in violation of vape-related incidents may be subject to a citation and be fined not less than ten dollars (\$10) nor more than fifty dollars (\$50) for each violation. Russell County Schools reserves the right to allow such a citation to serve as adequate punishment for vape-related incidents, or it may consider vape possession, especially in the case of vapes containing illegal substances, as a Class III violation and subject to further punishment.

The commission of the following violations may constitute violation of laws established by the State of Alabama.

Class III Major Violations

District Code	State Code	Description of Violation
3.01	1	Alcohol Possession
3.02	2	Alcohol Sale
3.03	3	Alcohol Use
3.04	4	Arson (the willful and malicious burning of any part of a building or its contents) (State Law 13A-7-41, 13A-7-42, 13A-7-43)
3.05	5	Assault (intentionally causing great bodily harm, disability or permanent disfigurement; use of a deadly weapon) (State Law 13A-6-21)
3.06	6	Bomb Threat (any such communication directed at any Russell County Public School facility that has the effect of interrupting the educational environment) (State Law 13A- 10-8, 13A-10-15)
3.07	7	Burglary/Breaking and Entry (breaking, entering, or remaining in a Russell County Public School structure or conveyance without jurisdiction or excuse during the hours the premises are closed to the public) (State Law 13A-7-7)
3.08	8	Criminal Mischief (Vandalism) (willful and malicious injury of damages at, or more than \$200.00 to public property, or to real or personal property belonging to another, including computer related incidents) (State Law 13A-7-21, 13A-7-22)
3.09	9	Defiance of Authority
3.10	10	Disobedience – Persistent, Willful
3.11	11	Disorderly Conduct – Other
3.11a	11	Disorderly conduct towards a school board employee/student (use of profane or obscene language toward an employee/student) Intentionally pushing, elbowing, or striking an employee/student against their will-Gestures
3.12	12	Major Disruption (any major disruption of the educational process caused by the wearing of apparel, possession of writings or drawings, or the performance of gestures or signals which indicate affiliation with a gang, secret organization, or other social group whose presence on school grounds poses a threat to the educational environment)
3.13	13	Drug Possession (Illegal and/or Over-The-Counter)
3.14	14	Drug Sale
3.15	15	Drug Use
3.17	17	Fighting (any physical conflict between two or more individuals, assault) (State Law 13A-1-2, 13A-6-22, 13A-11-7, 13A-11-8)

District Code	State Code	Description of Violation
3.18	18	Tampering with Fire Alarm (or unjustified activation) or other safety devices
3.20a	20	Harassment of a Student (AL Code Section 16-28B-3: a continuous pattern of intentional behavior that takes place on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to, written, electronic, verbal, or physical acts that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student, or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic, if the characteristic falls into one of the categories of personal characteristics contained in the model policy adopted by the department or by a local board) (State Law 13A-11-8)
3.20b	20	Harassment of a School Board Employee
3.22	22	Inciting or participating in a major student disorder (leading, encouraging or assisting in (major) disruptions that place students, staff, and the educational process at risk, or which result in destruction or damage of private or public property or personal injury to participants or others) (State Law 13A-11-3, 13A-11-4, 13A-11-5)] or false reports to 911
3.24	24	Larceny/Theft/Robbery/Possession of Stolen Property – (Stealing - Larceny – Grand Theft – the intentional unlawful taking and/or carrying away of property valued at \$100.00 or more belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another) (State Law 13A-8-3, 13A-8-4)
3.28	28	Sexual Battery (touching in a sexual manner)
3.29	29	Sexual Harassment (use of vulgar or sexually explicit comments, gestures or conduct, obscene or sexually explicit pictures; sexually oriented “kidding,” teasing or practical jokes directed toward another person or offensive to a third-party observer) (State Law 13A-11-8) (i.e. whether verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic)
3.30	30	Sexual Offenses
3.31	31	Threats, Intimidation, Extortion, or Bullying (verbally, nonverbally, or by a written or printed communication maliciously threatening an injury to the person, property, or reputation of another, with the intent to extort money or any pecuniary advantage at all, or with intent to compel the person so threatened, or any other person, to do any act or refrain from doing any act against his or her will (State Law 13A-6-25))
3.35	35	Trespassing (willfully entering or remaining in any structure, conveyance, or property without being authorized, licensed, or invited; or having been authorized, licensed, or invited is warned by an authorized person to depart and refuses to do so.) while the student is on suspension (State Law 13A-7-3, 13A-7-4)

District Code	State Code	Description of Violation
3.37	37	Handgun Possession Note: Possession of a firearm on school property violates both federal and state laws. Such laws apply to all persons while on school property. It is the School Board's policy to require the expulsion or suspension from school for a period of not less than one calendar year, or under certain circumstances, placement in the Warrior Inspirational Academy, for any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school. Ala. Code §16-1-24.3 (1975)
3.38	38	Handgun Sale
3.39	39	Handgun Use
3.43	43	Firearm Component Possession
3.44	44	Firearm Component Sale
3.45	45	Firearm Component Use
3.46	46	Explosive/Incendiary or Poison Gas Possession (explosives, ammunition (bullets), or firecrackers - preparing, possessing or igniting on School Board property explosives likely to cause injury or property damage) (State Law 13A-6-23, 13A-6-24, 13A-7-41, 13A-7-42, 13A-7-43, 13A-7-44)
3.47	47	Explosive/Incendiary or Poison Gas Sale
3.48	48	Explosive/Incendiary or Poison Gas Use
3.49	49	Other Weapon Possession
3.50	50	Other Weapon Sale
3.51	51	Other Weapon Use
3.52	52	Knife Possession
3.53	53	Knife Sale
3.54	54	Knife Use
3.55	55	Other/Unknown Weapon Possession (possession of metallic knuckles; tear gas gun; chemical weapon or device, including mace or pepper spray; or any other weapon, instrument, or object which is used in a threatening manner and is seen by the individual being threatened as capable of causing physical harm (includes toy firearm replicas)) (State Law 13A-11-50, 13A-6-27, 13A-6-23)
3.56	56	Other/Unknown Weapon Sale
3.57	57	Other/Unknown Weapon Use
3.58a	58	Repetitive Class II violations
3.58b	58	Any violation that the principal/designee may reasonably deem to fall within this category

District Code	State Code	Description of Violation
3.58c	58	Providing False Information that places the school district at legal risk (intentionally providing false information to a School Board employee including, but not limited to, giving false student information, forgery of school notes, and concealment of information directly relating to school business)
3.60	60	Vape/Vapor, Possession - possession of a device used to inhale or exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
3.61	61	Vape/Vapor, Usage - using a device used to inhale and exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
3.62	62	Vape/Vapor, Sale - selling of a device used to inhale and exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
3.63	63	E-Cigarettes, Possession - possession of a device used to produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
3.64	64	E-Cigarettes, Usage - using a device to produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that contains nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance
3.65	65	E-Cigarettes, Sale - selling a device used to produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine and/or flavoring or other substances- IQOS – Heat stick cigarette – pen-/stick-like device (would be included under the E-Cigarette infractions)

Disciplinary Actions for Class III Violations

Commission of a Class III violation shall be reported immediately by the principal/designee to the superintendent, the student’s parent(s) or guardian(s), the attendance officer, and law enforcement (if notification is required).

Students will not be allowed to participate in any school-related activities while placed in alternative school for disciplinary purposes.

If serious bodily injury, property damage, drugs and/or firearms are involved, or in other cases deemed sufficiently serious, contact the Russell County Sheriff’s Department (334-298-6535) for assistance. All drugs and/or firearms found or confiscated on school premises must be immediately turned over to law enforcement. Other unauthorized objects found in the possession of students may be returned to the parent(s) upon a written request to the principal by the parent(s).

Note: In an emergency or if immediate police assistance is needed, dial 911 before following normal notification procedures.

The principal/designee, after reviewing the allegations and evidence against a student and giving the student the opportunity to respond to the allegations, is initially responsible for deciding if a Class III

violation has been committed. Once a determination has been made, the principal/designee will give the student a suspension or mandatory remote learning placement, with a letter containing a written statement of the charges (and a statement of mitigating or extenuating circumstances, if any) and shall refer the student to the tribunal panel for a due process hearing. At the principal's discretion based on evidence, Class II disciplinary actions may take the place of Class III suspension or tribunal.

If the panel decides, based on facts presented at the tribunal, that the student committed a Class III violation, the student shall be subject to expulsion. The Superintendent can recommend to the Russell County School District that the student be expelled from all Russell County School District. If, however, there are mitigating or extenuating circumstances, the Tribunal panel shall separately state those circumstances and may consider them in deciding appropriate disciplinary action. Mitigating or extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to, the absence of severe personal injury, the absence of extensive property damage, handicapping conditions, interventions at the local school level and no prior record of a Class III violation. Violation of the Weapons, Drugs, and Bomb Policy may result in the expulsion of the student for one (1) calendar year.

One of the panel's options is to allow the student to attend an alternative school under the conditions set forth by the Board of Education in order to maintain enrollment in the local school. Should the parent(s) or guardian be offered this opportunity and decline it, the panel may recommend to the Superintendent that the student be expelled from all Russell County School District.

Circumstances may justify the Russell County School District placing students into the Russell County Warrior Inspirational Academy (WIA) upon further review of the case by the Superintendent.

Documentation of Class III Violations

The conclusions of the tribunal panel shall be based on the documented facts concerning the incident. The principal/designee is responsible for assembling appropriate documentation of the violation for use at the Tribunal. Documentation shall include all information available, including but not limited to the following categories:

- Specific definition of the violation(s) committed and supporting facts.
- Names of all persons involved in the incident; suspect(s), victim(s), witness(es).
- Signed and dated statement(s) of persons referred to above may be used instead of testimony presented at a tribunal. List of special program(s), if any, in which a student is enrolled or being considered for enrollment.
- Past disciplinary records of the student involved.
- Academic record of the student.
- Extenuating circumstances.
- Actions taken at the school level before suspending for repeated disruptive behavior.
- Current IEP or Section 504 plans, if appropriate.

The Tribunal panel shall include, or refer to, the documentation in their decision. If extenuating or mitigating circumstances exist, the Tribunal panel shall document the extenuating or mitigating circumstances and decide the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken. Tribunal decisions may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) days of the decision. Recommendations for expulsion are automatically referred to the Superintendent.

Special Education Students

When a Special Education student is alleged to have committed a Class III violation, the student may be suspended from school for up to ten days. The IEP Committee shall conduct a Manifestation Determination Review to ascertain if the violation was a manifestation of the disability and will decide the appropriate action to be taken to address the consequences of the violation. Except violations involving a dangerous weapon, drugs and serious bodily injury, in no case may a special education student be excluded from school in excess of ten (10) days without the IEP Committee convening to address the behavioral issue. Any changes in the student's educational program or changes in placement must be decided by the IEP Committee.

Procedures for Formal Due Process Tribunals

A principal/designee may suspend a student for a Class III violation by complying with the procedures for suspension by a principal/designee. The principal/designee must also notify the parent(s) that the student is suspended pending the tribunal. Class III suspensions are to be immediately reported to the Safety and Security Office (334-408-4972, Ext. 89934). Upon receipt of the suspension notice, the Hearing Officer may comply with the following procedures in scheduling and conducting a tribunal.

1. Due Process Hearings are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week beginning at 9:00 a.m. or otherwise scheduled by the hearing officer. Parents or guardians may request reasonable time to make arrangements to attend the tribunal.
2. The tribunal shall give the student an opportunity to admit or deny the charge or charges. If the student denies the charge or charges, he/she will be given an explanation of the evidence on which they are based and an opportunity to explain his/her view of the facts.
3. Accusers or witnesses may be summoned to the tribunal and the decision to do so shall rest at the discretion of the Hearing Officer.
4. After following the above procedures, the tribunal, based on all the facts presented, shall decide whether the student did or did not commit a violation, what violation, if any, was committed and what the punishment, if any, should be. The panel shall prepare a written decision that shall include the charge against the student, the time, date and location of the tribunal, the conclusions drawn from the evidence and the consequences of the student.
5. On the day of the tribunal, a copy of all Due Process proceedings shall be sent by the Hearing Officer to the following:
 - The student's parent(s) or guardian
 - The principal/designee
 - The supervisor of the alternative school (providing student is referred)
 - The Superintendent

Appeal of Tribunal Decision

If the parent(s) or guardian is dissatisfied with the decision of the panel, the parent(s) or guardian may file an appeal with the Superintendent or designee. The appeal procedures are as follows:

1. The student's parent(s) or guardian must file a written request for an appeal to the Superintendent. (Standardized appeal form is available from the Hearing Officer.)
2. The written request must be postmarked no later than five (5) school days after the date of the tribunal decision or delivered to the Superintendent no more than five (5) school days after the date of the tribunal decision. If the written request for an appeal is not made on time, the tribunal decision will be final.
3. The Superintendent will arrange for and conduct an appeal hearing.
4. If the parent(s) or guardian(s) request an appeal meeting with the Superintendent, the Superintendent may request for the Hearing Officer to be present.
5. The Superintendent will review the Tribunal's recommended findings and conclusions. The Tribunal's findings and conclusions shall be supported by substantial evidence.
6. The Superintendent will make a written decision to adopt, modify, or disapprove all or any part of the recommended findings and conclusions.
7. Within five (5) days after the appeal, the Superintendent shall submit to the parents his/her written findings, conclusions, and recommendations made based on the evidence and matters presented at the Tribunal.
8. The Superintendent will provide a copy of his/her recommended findings and conclusions to the following persons: the student's parent(s) or guardian (by certified mail or hand delivery), the hearing officer.

All punitive decisions made by the Tribunal will be recorded in the student's Discipline Report.

School Bus Discipline Guide

Russell County Schools - Bus Discipline Model

***All bus discipline must be entered into power school at the time the referral is addressed.**

Bus discipline violations are reported by the student's bus driver to an administrator. Administrators handle the referral in accordance with the student code of conduct. This model that covers the most common code violations is intended to help guide school administrators when handling school bus referrals. The administrator ultimately has discretion as to what consequences a student may receive if violations occur on the bus.

Class I violations will typically be given a district violation code of 1.08 (Minor bus disruption). Class II or Class III violations will be coded according to the most accurate district code as determined by the code of conduct.

Students may be suspended from the bus for up to ten (10) days per semester. If a student surpasses ten (10) days per semester, their bus privileges may be revoked for the remainder of that semester. The first Class II or Class III violation after returning to the bus may result in loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year. Students committing Class III violations may also be subject to a due process disciplinary hearing.

Class I Violations

- Excessive noise and/or talking too loudly
- Chewing gum, eating, or drinking
- Kindergartener not attended at the school bus stop
- Leaving trash on the bus
- Bringing objects on the bus that cause a disturbance
- Horseplaying
- Not in assigned seat or sitting correctly

Class II Violations

- Not obeying the driver/defiance of authority
- Out of seat while bus is moving
- Distracting driver by yelling and making excessive noise, creating an unsafe situation
- Using profanity
- Unacceptable use of cell phone (calling, texting, music excessively loud, causing a distraction)
- Vandalism of the bus and/or safety equipment (students will be responsible for paying for damages)
- Throwing trash out window, having hands/head out of window
- Entering/exiting the bus at an unassigned stop
- Fighting, rough-housing with other students, harassing others, bullying
- Vaping, use/possession of vapes

- Use/possession of matches, or lighter
- Repetitive Class I violations

Class III Violations

- Use/possession of tobacco products, drugs, or other illegal substances
- Possession of weapons, fireworks, or other dangerous items
- Vandalism of the bus and/or safety equipment at a cost of more than \$200 (students will be responsible for paying for damages)
- Trespassing on the bus

WARRIOR INSPIRATIONAL ACADEMY

The Warrior Inspirational Academy (WIA) is an alternative placement for students who have not demonstrated their full potential academically and/or behaviorally. The program will provide students with the academic interventions and pro-social skills needed to improve their behavior by focusing on decision-making, resiliency, and positive behavior support. Students will also gain enhanced self-esteem and academic performance, in addition to an improved sense of home, school and community responsibility.

WIA Dress Code

The Warrior Inspirational Academy is permitted to designate uniform or apparel for students to wear. The school shall present its choice to the Board of Education for review. Students who have financial reasons and can demonstrate they cannot afford to purchase or acquire a uniform shall not be denied admission to school for that reason, but a parent conference will be held to discuss alternatives.

WIA Students Must Wear

- Single-colored collared shirts
- Khaki or black dress pants
- Close-toed shoes
- No oversized clothing
- Pants worn at or above the waist

WIA Students Must NOT Wear

- Hooded garments (i.e. hoodies)
- Hats or other head coverings such as caps, bandanas, do-rags, sweatbands, etc.
- Jewelry and other items (except for watches)
- Items with reference to gangs, alcohol, drugs, violence, weapons, or sex
- Items such as chains on a belt, wallet, and items with spikes

WIA Transportation

If a student is assigned to the Warrior Inspirational Academy, the tribunal panel will determine during the due process hearing whether or not the student will be allowed to ride their normal school bus to the WIA.

Students assigned to the Warrior Inspirational Academy must arrive between the time of 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Students must be picked up by 3:30 p.m. Delivery and pickup of students assigned to the WIA is at the Seale Campus. A petition with the court system may be filed on parent(s)/legal guardian(s) not picking their student up on time.

School Activities

When a student is placed in the Warrior Inspirational Academy or is on suspension from his/her base school, he/she cannot visit Russell County School District campuses or worksites during regular hours and extra-curricular activities. When a student returns to his/her home base school, all privileges are restored, unless otherwise directed by the tribunal panel.

In respect to a once-in-a-lifetime experience, twelfth-grade students on track to graduate, assigned to the WIA may participate in certain senior activities, such as Class Night practice, Class Night, Graduation practice, and Graduation. Specific information regarding dates and times of such events will be communicated to parents and students prior to these events occurring.

Descriptions of Formal Disciplinary Actions

Parental Conferences

Written summons by a school official to attend a discipline conference at the stated date and time.

Work Assignments

Supervised activities related to the upkeep and maintenance of school facilities. Work assignments are not intended to interfere with any student's regular class schedule.

Corporal Punishment

To maintain discipline or to enforce school rules, a principal/designee may administer corporal punishment through moderate use of physical force or physical contact. Corporal punishment should

be administered so as not to cause physical injury to the student. Such punishment shall be administered under conditions that do not hold the student up to ridicule or shame and never in the presence of other students. Parents shall be notified before the use of corporal punishment. Upon written request, the school shall provide the students, parent(s) or guardian(s) with a written explanation of the reason for the punishment. Corporal punishment is to be conducted in the presence of a witness (employee).

A parent or guardian may make a written request that a student be exempted from corporal punishment and that an alternate punishment be used.

Special Programs

Placement in an alternative program or school.

Extra-Curricular Activity Suspension

Denial of the privilege of participating in scheduled field trips or other extracurricular activity based on repeated classroom and/or other school related misbehavior.

Payment of Damages

The Russell County School District shall be entitled to recover actual damages, plus necessary court costs, from the parent and/or guardian of any minor who maliciously and willfully damages or destroys property belonging to the school district. This action shall be in addition to all other actions that the school district is entitled to maintain.

In-School Suspension

When available, the in-school suspension option provides for tutorial and guidance services in a restricted environment.

School Bus Suspension

Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Misconduct on the bus may result in the student losing that privilege. Principals are authorized to suspend bus privileges depending on the severity of the child's misbehavior. When a child loses his bus privileges, the parents assume the responsibility for transportation to and from the school. Truancy laws still apply, and students are still expected to attend school. Violations committed while on a school bus will be classified according to the provisions of the Code of Student Conduct. When a student accumulates ten (10) days of bus suspension, that student may lose bus privileges for the remainder of the semester or a specified number of days. The principal has the right to consider mitigating/aggravating circumstances and may adjust the punishment, accordingly. If a student loses privileges for the remainder of a semester, the parent may request a meeting with the principal that may include the Director of Transportation and the Director of Safety.

Suspension

Students may be removed from their regular school program for a period not to exceed five (5) consecutive school days. The names of all students suspended for three or more days from school may be reported to the District Attorney. Students who are required by law to attend school should be referred to the Attendance Officer instead of being suspended for unexcused absence or truancy. Students are not allowed on school property or to attend school sponsored events during the suspension period.

Remote/Home Assignment

For Class II or Class III infractions, students may be assigned to remote learning in lieu of out-of-school suspension at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee. When a student is assigned to a remote/home assignment, the student will be provided an opportunity to remain engaged in learning through a virtual platform offered by the school. Assignment and course completion is mandatory.

Saturday School

Students may be assigned to Saturday School as a form of punishment for code of conduct violations. Students assigned to Saturday School must arrive no later than 8:00 am to the assigned location and must be picked up between 12:00 pm and 12:15 pm. Parents will be responsible for arranging transportation to and from Saturday School. Students assigned to Saturday School who do not attend the assigned session will be subject to further punishment.

Special Purpose Educational and Academic Recovery (SPEAR) Program

The Special Purpose Educational and Academic and Recovery (SPEAR) Program is an alternative school placement at the Warrior Inspirational Academy campus, which is held in the evenings. Students who are assigned to the SPEAR Program typically receive their placement as the result of a due process disciplinary hearing. Rules and expectations are generally the same as for the Warrior Inspirational Academy, but differ in that the SPEAR Program is held between 4:30 pm and 7:30 pm on Mondays through Thursdays, with students and parents responsible for their own transportation.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend a public school under conditions set by the Board of Education for the remainder of the school year, or in appropriate circumstances, for a longer time. Expelled students may be offered placement in a school system alternative program in order to earn reinstatement in their home school. Those persons will be subject to denial or revocation of the privilege of a driver's license or learner's license to operate a motor vehicle. (Reference: Code of Alabama, Amended 1975, Sections 16-28-12 and 16-28-40).

A Special Education student may be expelled only after the IEP Committee has held a Manifestation Determination Review and reached a determination if the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. A Special Education student who has been expelled from school is still entitled to special education services in accordance with his/her IEP.

Students who have been expelled from other school systems will be denied admission to the Russell County School District. Students enrolled in an alternative school in another district will be enrolled in the Russell County Warrior Inspirational Academy. Exceptions may be made under conditions specified

by the Tribunal Panel after a conference with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s). All conferences can be scheduled through the Attendance Officer. Attendance at such a conference offers no assurance of admission to a Russell County school. Such students may be required to attend an alternative program prior to being admitted into their zoned school.

Procedures for Administration of Formal Disciplinary Action

Procedures for Administering Corporal Punishment

1. The student shall be advised why he/she is being paddled and be provided with the opportunity to present his/her explanation of the situation before the administration of corporal punishment.
2. Prior to the use of corporal punishment, the student's parent(s) or guardian shall be notified.
3. Corporal punishment shall be administered in the presence of another adult who has been informed beforehand of the reason for the punishment.
4. A written record shall be made in instances in which corporal punishment is administered and it should include the name of the person administering the punishment as well as the name of the other school official present as a witness.

Procedures for Suspensions by Principal/Designee

A principal/designee may suspend a student for a period not to exceed five (5) days.

1. The principal/designee shall give the student oral and written notice of the charge or charges against the student.
2. The principal/designee shall give the student the opportunity to admit or deny the charges.
3. If the student denies the charges, the principal/designee shall give the student an explanation of the evidence against the student and give the student the opportunity to explain his/her version of the facts.
4. The principal/designee may, but is not required to, call witnesses for additional clarification.
5. The parent must be notified of the suspension. If the principal/designee concludes the student committed the violation and that suspension is appropriate, the principal/designee shall upon suspending the student, give the student a suspension notice to take to the student's parent(s) or guardian, call the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and provide a written copy via the student or mail a copy of the suspension notice to the parent(s) or guardian.
6. The parent(s) or guardian may be given a conference date and time with the principal/designee to discuss the student's behavior and the punishment. The parent(s) or guardian may request a conference prior to the reinstatement date.

Readmission to School Following Criminal Charges

If a person is found to have violated the local board of education policies concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, physical harm to a person, or threatened physical harm to a person, the person may not be readmitted to the public schools until any criminal charges or offenses arising from the conduct have

been disposed of by appropriate authorities and the person has satisfied all other requirements imposed by the local school system as a condition for readmission. Authority: Ala. Code §16-1-24.1(c) (1975)

Student Searches and Seizure

Students are subject to reasonable searches and seizures. School officials are empowered to conduct reasonable searches of a particular student and school property when, in the opinion of school officials, there is reasonable cause to believe that student may be in possession of drugs, weapons, firearms, alcohol, or other materials in violation of school policy, state law or federal law. School property shall remain under the control of school officials and shall be subject to search.

School Property

Student lockers, desks, electronic equipment and other such property are owned by the school. The school exercises exclusive control over the school property and a student should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials.

According to the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, “a student may be searched if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated either the law or the rules of the school.” A particular student’s personal effects are subject to being searched by the Principal and his/her designee and are subject to the same rule.

If the principal and his/her designee conclude a more intrusive search (i.e., a strip search) is needed they shall call the parents of the students involved and report their suspicions to the Sheriff’s Department who shall be responsible for any such search. School employees will not conduct such strip searches.

Law Enforcement Drug Search

It is the policy of the Russell County Board of Education to allow law enforcement agencies to make periodic unannounced visits to any Russell County Schools’ property to detect the presence of and/or use of illegal drugs. Only the Superintendent, or his/her designee, and the building principal will be notified.

Athletic Conduct Rule/Ejection Penalties

Penalties for student-athletes ejected from one or more contests are as follows:

- First Ejection: A \$300 fine (An athlete’s fine can be reduced to \$100 if the athlete being ejected takes the Student Leadership: Becoming a Leader portion of the online National Federation High School Captain’s Course and payment is made within 10 days of the date of the ejection.)
- Second Ejection: A one-game suspension and a \$500 fine
- Third Ejection: Minimum penalty of a suspension for the remainder of the season plus a \$750 fine.

The student-athlete is responsible for paying the fine to AHSAA.

APPENDIX I: DRESS CODE PROCEDURES

The Board and administration recognize the effects that student dress and grooming have upon student behavior and commitment to learning. School is a learning environment and clothing worn to school should not be a distraction to others. Students attending school in the Russell County School District must wear clothing that is comfortable, clean, in good repair, and school-appropriate. Clothing, hair, and other items that students wear to school must not disrupt the educational process nor create any form of school disturbance.

The Board strongly believes it is the responsibility of students and parents or guardians to use reason, good judgment, and common decency in the choice of dress and physical grooming in the school setting.

In all instances, school administrators will determine the appropriateness or inappropriateness of school dress. Administrators may make exceptions to the dress code if students wear school-sponsored uniforms for school-related events. Students in violation of the dress code will be sent to the office and given the opportunity to change clothes or allowed to call a parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to bring a change of clothes that adheres to the dress code. If the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) cannot be contacted and the student does not wish to change clothes, the student will be removed from class and assigned to an alternative location until parent(s)/legal guardian(s) can be contacted. The student's discipline will be addressed according to the code of student conduct. Repeated violations of the dress code will result in disciplinary action being taken.

It is believed the following dress and appearance standards are essential to the orderly operation of the school based on health, sanitation, safety, and prevention of disruptive appearances at school:

- No student will be allowed to wear any type of clothing that, in the opinion of the administration, is too revealing, suggestive, provocative or otherwise inappropriate. Tops that expose undergarments, see-through apparel, clothing with low-cut necklines or spaghetti straps or clothing that exposes the midriff are not allowed.
- Appropriate undergarments for boys and girls must be worn at all times and may not be visible.
- Hats/caps, bandanas, scarves, and visors, are prohibited except for JROTC and band uniform hats when worn with the uniform during performances. Hats and other headgear will be taken from the student.
- Students are required to wear garments as they are intended to be worn and in such a manner that is appropriate for school. Pants must be worn at the normal waistline. Under no circumstances will excessively baggy pants, low-riding pants or oversized shirts or sweatshirts be allowed (an oversized shirt is defined as –bottom of shirt cannot hang below the wrist). No large belt buckles or chains will be allowed.
- All shorts, skirts, or dresses must fall within two inches of the knees. Excessively tight, short, or form-fitting clothing such as bodysuits, biker shorts or spandex clothing cannot be worn to school.

- Shoes must be worn at all times. Shower shoes and house shoes will not be allowed. If shoes are to be laced up with shoelaces, they must be laced at all times.
- Articles of clothing or accessories that show or allude to by slogan, picture or drawing, any inflammatory, suggestive, gun and ammunition, offensive or obscene behavior or alcoholic, drugs, or tobacco products will not be allowed.
- Bathrobes, pajamas, and boxer shorts worn as outer garments will not be allowed.
- Straps of overalls or suspenders must be worn over the shoulder.
- Sunglasses or dark glasses may not be worn inside the building unless authorized by doctor's prescription.
- For student safety, no body piercings with rings or dangling jewelry are permitted. All inappropriate tattoos must be covered.

APPENDIX II: STATEMENT OF DRUG, WEAPONS AND TOBACCO POLICY

Anti-Drug and Alcohol Policy

The goal of the Russell County Board of Education is to provide a quality education for all students. To further this goal and to protect and promote the health, safety, and welfare of its students and employees, the Russell County Board of Education is committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol-free public school district.

The use and possession of illicit drugs, alcohol, weapons, and tobacco is harmful and illegal. Any student violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Standards of Conduct

The unauthorized possession, use, transfer, sale, or distribution of drugs is a Class III - Major Violation of the Student Code of Conduct of the Russell County School District. The term "drugs" means any drug listed in 21 U.S.C. Section 812 and other federal regulations. Generally, these are drugs that have a high potential for abuse. Such drugs include, but are not limited to, marijuana, cocaine (including "crack"), methamphetamine (or "ice"), and PCP. They also include unauthorized possession or use of over-the-counter or prescription drugs on school premises.

The possession, use, transfer, sale, or distribution of alcoholic beverages is also a Class III – Major Violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

The principal will report each violation of the drug and alcohol policies to the Russell County Sheriff's Department for possible investigation and prosecution.

Vape-Related Incidents

As outlined in Ala. Code § 28-11-14, any tobacco or tobacco product (including vapes) found in the possession of a minor is contraband and subject to seizure by law enforcement. Students in violation of vape-related incidents may be subject to a citation and be fined not less than ten dollars (\$10) nor more than fifty dollars (\$50) for each violation. Russell County Schools reserves the right to allow such a citation to serve as adequate punishment for vape-related incidents, or it may consider vape-possession, especially in the case of vapes containing illegal substances, as a Class III violation and subject to further punishment.

APPENDIX III: SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of the Russell County Board of Education to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for students or employees to harass other students or any district employee through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below. Violations of such a nature or discrimination based on sex may be subject to an investigation under Title IX.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a student to another student or district employee constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's education.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following:

- Social Media - verbal or written harassment
- Pressure for sexual activity
- Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications
- Unwelcome touching
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning grades or conditions of employment

Any person, employee, or student who alleges sexual harassment by a staff member or student in the School District may file a complaint with the principal. In addition, each school shall designate one male and one female employee to whom complaints may be made. The district shall publish policy in the student/faculty handbooks annually. Filing a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future employment, grades or job assignments.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the Board's legal obligations, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct. All allegations of sexual harassment shall be investigated fully and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated.

Appropriate documentation shall be maintained on all allegations of sexual harassment. A substantiated charge against an employee shall subject such person to disciplinary action, including discharge. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject that student to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

The Russell County Board of Education is committed to maintaining an educational environment free of sexual harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the Board will not tolerate harassment of employees or students by anyone, including supervisors, teachers, students, vendors, or other customers of the Board. Sexual harassment violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and is unlawful and contrary to Board policy. Any Board employee or student who engages in sexual harassment violates this policy and the law.

APPENDIX IV: ATTENDANCE

Absence Monitoring by Parents

Parents can routinely monitor absences by accessing their student's information on the Parent Portal on the RCSD website (www.myrcsd.org) for grades K-12. If a parent has a question or concern about an absence, the parent should contact the school as soon as possible. The mass notification system sends calls, texts, and emails to notify parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of a student's absence from school.

Written Excuse

Within three (3) days of the student's return to school, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the student must provide documentation for absence(s), which includes the following:

1. Written statement from the parent, doctor or legal representative stating the reason of the absence (this can be submitted online through the FormSite link)
2. The date of the absence(s)
3. The parent's official signature (or electronic signature)

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) may submit parent-written excuses when students are absent from school, with a limit of ten (10) days per year, and may be required to submit an excuse for late check-ins and early check-outs. A student is considered absent from class if thirty (30) minutes or more is missed. Parents may also submit doctor's notes or other forms of documentation.

Refer to the school's handbook for additional guidelines for submitting excuses. If a student fails to attend school without submitting a timely excuse from a parent, medical professional or legal authority, the student and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are subject to court intervention.

Excused Absences

Absences are excused for the following reasons:

- Illness of the student
- Death in the immediate family
- Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the student as determined by the Superintendent/designee
- Legal quarantine
- Emergency conditions or extenuating circumstances as determined by the principal/designee
- Religious holidays, upon receiving prior approval from the student's principal (the Superintendent's designee)
- Absences directly related to military events for parents (i.e. deployment)
- Religious instruction

Note: The state of Alabama does not recognize trips or vacation as excused absences.

Unexcused Absences

Any absence that does not fall under the category of excused absence is recorded as an unexcused absence. Any student with five (5) unexcused absences during the school year may be referred to Early Warning Court in the proper court of the jurisdiction. Absences are unexcused for the following reasons:

- The student and parent fail to provide the excused absence written statement with required information to the school officials within three (3) days (including the return date) of the student's return to school.
- Failure to meet requirements for excused absences (see Excused Absences).

Check-In Procedure

Students are expected to be in school every day on time. If students arrive late to school, students in grades Pre-kindergarten through eighth must be signed in by a parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or a previously designated adult. Students will not be allowed to check in other students. Students arriving late to school without a parent will not be allowed admission to the classroom. High school students may present approved documentation (i.e. doctor's note, legal note, etc.) in lieu of a parent(s)/legal guardian(s) being present at the time of arrival. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be called to verify their knowledge of the late arrival.

Check-Out Procedure

All students must remain on campus at all times until proper check-out procedures have been followed or disciplinary action will be taken. Students shall be released only to adult individuals who have been identified by the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) on an authorization for release form kept on file in the office. This form must be renewed each year. Identification will be requested for all check-ins and check-outs. In a situation where custodial and non-custodial parents are involved, official court documents, which may include a copy of the divorce decree, must be provided to the school to verify the legal rights of all parties.

Early Morning Drop Off/Extracurricular Events

For the safety and supervision of everyone, students are not allowed to be dropped off at school before 8:00 a.m. Faculty/Staff members are not on duty until 8:00 a.m. unless otherwise authorized by the local school principal. Students must be picked up no later than 30 minutes after the scheduled time of dismissal. Failure to comply may result in the RCSD or the Russell County Sheriff's Office being notified.

Personal Trips and Activities

Students are expected to schedule out-of-town trips and other activities during preset vacation periods and holidays on the RCSD academic calendar. Students may be required to attend school after hours to make up for school time missed due to trips and activities.

College Visits

High school seniors are allowed two (2) excused absences for college visits. Any exceptions to this policy must be cleared with the principal two (2) weeks prior to the trip. Students may be required to attend school after hours to make up for school time missed due to college visits.

Student Withdrawal

Withdrawal is official when one or more of the following occurs:

- The parent, guardian, or other person having care or control of the student notifies the school that he or she is leaving the school permanently.
- The school official determines the individual has moved or left school permanently.

The Department of Public Safety shall deny or revoke a driver's license or learner's permit for the operation of a motor vehicle to any person under the age of nineteen (19) who has obtained the withdrawn status.

Truancy Definition

Parents/legal guardians or other persons having charge of any virtual or traditional student officially enrolled in Alabama public schools (K-12) must provide the school, within three (3) school days of each and every absence (or consecutive absences), a written explanation of the reason(s) for each absence. Failure to furnish such explanation shall be evidence of the student being truant each day he/she is absent. The student shall be deemed truant for any absence determined by the principal to be unexcused based on the State Department of Education's School Attendance Manual.

Truancy Intervention Process

- STEP ONE - First truancy/unexcused absence (warning)
- Upon the first unexcused absence, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) shall be notified by the school principal or his/her designee that the student was truant and the date of the truancy.
- STEP TWO – Upon the third unexcused absence (conference)
- Upon the third unexcused absence, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) shall be notified by letter from the school principal or his/her designee on the student's truancy status.
- STEP THREE – Upon the fifth unexcused absence

- After the fifth unexcused absence, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are required to participate in the Early Warning Program provided by the Family Court of Russell County. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and student are informed of the Alabama State Compulsory Attendance Laws and consequences of further unexcused absences.
- Failure to appear at the Early Warning Program may result in the filing of a petition against the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) under Code of Alabama § 16-28-12 (failure to cooperate), and /or a truancy charge against the student, whichever is appropriate.
- STEP FOUR –Upon additional unexcused absences
- Additional unexcused absences within a school year constitute a student being truant for the purpose of filing a petition with the Court.

Any student ordered to court with a truancy petition could be adjudicated to CHINS (Children in Need of Supervision) by a court judge. A judge can order additional supervision and services through East Alabama Mental Health, Department of Human Resources, or alternate placements outside the home setting. Additional fees and community service may also be ordered by a judge.

Any custodial adult who is prosecuted for failing to require a student to attend school may be sentenced to hard labor for the county for up to 90 days or fined up to \$100.00 or both.

Student Tardiness

In order to promote the concept of timeliness and responsibility in students and to prevent disruption in the classroom, the following procedures will be followed in regard to tardiness:

- Students are expected to be in classes promptly. Students are not allowed to be out of class without the permission of the teacher.
- Students are allowed sufficient time to pass from one class to the next and should not be tardy except in cases of emergency. If an emergency should arise, the student must get an admittance slip from an administrator. In the event the student needs more than the specified time, the student should report to his/her class first and obtain the permission of the teacher.
- A tardy is defined as absence from the classroom when the tardy bell rings. An unexcused tardy may result in disciplinary action.
- Work missed due to an unexcused tardy may not be made up.
- A student is tardy to school if the student arrives any time after the tardy bell for first period or after the student's first class begins. Any student who is tardy to school must report to the Attendance Office for a pass before going to class.
- No student is permitted to enter class after the tardy bell has rung without an appropriate slip issued by an administrator or the attendance office. (Each school has its own local procedure regarding tardies.)
- Tardiness due to personal illness, illness in the family, death in the family, or other emergencies may be approved if a written note or telephone call from the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or the person responsible for bringing the student to school is presented at the time of arrival.

- Oversleeping, clock failure, missed rides, etc. will not be considered an excused tardy. In all cases, the person in charge of issuing the admittance slip may, in his/her absolute discretion, verify any such note or call.

School administrators are authorized to determine appropriate management and disciplinary techniques to be used when students are tardy to school or classes. Such discipline may include a mandatory parent-administrator conference, ISS, loss of parking permit, community service, out-of-school suspension, denial of credit, placement in the Warrior Inspirational Academy, and/or a petition filed with the Russell County Juvenile Court.

1. The parent will have the right to have a student's case heard by the Attendance Appeals Committee composed of the principal, the attendance clerk, and the district Attendance Director. Appeals will be heard only for severe or chronic medical problems which are well documented by a physician.
2. ISS (In-School Suspension) will not count as an absence since classroom teachers send assignments and because the student is present at school.
3. Out-of-school suspensions will count as excused absences. Make-up work for out-of-school suspensions is allowable and are the responsibility of the student.
4. Work missed during an excused absence may be made up within three (3) days of the student's return to school or the number of days equal to the number of consecutive absences (whichever is greater). Work missed during an unexcused absence may not be made up.

Early Warning Program

If a student accumulates a total of five (5) unexcused absences, the parents and student will be required to attend an Early Warning Meeting. In this meeting, parents will be officially notified that a complaint has been initiated against them and/or their student and of the Alabama Compulsory School Attendance Law. If a parent(s)/legal guardian(s) does not attend this meeting, a petition may be filed against the parent and/or student.

After a student has been placed in the Early Warning Program, he/she cannot have another absence without it being excused by a doctor or public agency (i.e. CHINS, DHR, and/or Court). Once a student is admitted to the Early Warning Program, he/she is in the program for the remainder of the current school year and all of the following school year.

If a student has another absence without it being excused by a doctor or a public agency, a warrant will be filed against the parent and/or student. Early Warning meetings for the 2025 - 2026 school year will be held upon timely notification.

E-learning Days, Remote Learning, And Virtual Learning

Russell County Schools may employ a variety of non-traditional instruction (such as Remote Learning) for a number of reasons, which may include severe weather, student illness, or other extenuating circumstances. Remote Learning occurs when students who have a regular school schedule work remotely from home through instruction and/or assignments given to them by their regular teachers. Virtual Learning differs in that it occurs when students are receiving instruction and/or assignments through a virtual platform (such as Edgenuity) that is typically not hosted or presented by in-person

teachers. For more information on Russell County High School's full-time virtual option, the Warrior Virtual Academy, please visit the RCSD website.

Each year, Russell County Schools builds a number of eLearning days into the yearly calendar. Students are expected to work as remote learners on these days and may be required to complete paper packets or work online. eLearning days may be added to the calendar as severe weather is predicted.

On days when students are working remotely or virtually, the students' attendance is considered as "present" as they reasonably complete the assigned work given to them.



RUSSELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

506 14TH STREET POST OFFICE BOX 400
PHENIX CITY, AL 36868-0400
TELEPHONE: (334) 468-5540 FAX: (334) 448-8314
<https://www.myrcsd.org>

Dr. Brenda Coley
Superintendent

Kenneth Barnes
Meghan Catrett
Barbara Clark
Keith Mitchell
Tim Simpson
Chelsea Smith
Patricia Ann Smith

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

The Russell County School District is proud to continue its partnership with the Russell County District Attorney's Office on the Helping Families Initiative of Russell County (*HFI*) program. We commend the District Attorney and his team for their dedication to reducing the number of students entering the juvenile justice system by providing essential support to our schools and families.

This program primarily focuses on addressing family-related challenges that may negatively impact student attendance. Enclosed, you will find a letter from the Russell County District Attorney's Office with more details about the HFI program. We believe this initiative will make a meaningful difference in improving student attendance and ensuring compliance with *Legislative Act 93-672*, which mandates that parents and guardians ensure their children attend school regularly.

We are excited to collaborate once again with the Russell County District Attorney's Office and look forward to positively impacting student success. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (334) 468-5540.

Respectfully,

Brenda Coley, Ed. D.
Superintendent



**RICHARD L. CHANCEY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
26TH Judicial Circuit
Russell County, Alabama
Post Office Box 939
Phenix City, AL 36868
Helping Families Initiative Phone: 334-384-9700
Of Russell County
Merry Mahone, Director**

Date:

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

The Russell County District Attorney's Office and The Russell County Schools are partners in the Helping Families Initiative of Russell County (HFIRC). Unexcused absences and misconduct at school may lead to juvenile delinquency or worse. Students are required to attend school and behave in school as required by law (Alabama Code 16-28-1 et seq.). Parents/guardians are responsible for their child's enrollment, attendance, and proper conduct at school. This is a serious matter. To assist parents/guardians, HFIRC will coordinate a wide range of agencies and community organizations so that students can attend school without further interruptions or barriers.

Brief Summary of HFIRC Intervention Process regarding Attendance

1. Upon the third unexcused absence, parents/guardians will receive a District Attorney (DA) warning letter.
2. Upon the fourth unexcused absence, parents/guardians will receive a DA assessment letter requesting that the parents/guardians contact HFIRC to schedule an intake assessment.
3. Upon the fifth unexcused absence, parents/guardians will be required by the appropriate authority to participate in the Early Warning Program.
4. If interventions fail, a petition for truancy may be filed by the appropriate authority in Juvenile Court against the parent/guardian or age appropriate student.

Brief Summary of HFIRC Intervention Process regarding Behavior Violation Infraction Referrals

1. HFIRC receives suspension violations reports.
2. HFIRC will mail a behavior alert warning letter to parents/guardians informing parents/guardians that the DA is concerned about the student's behavior. This behavior must change immediately.
3. If the inappropriate behavior(s) continue resulting in further suspension(s), the parents/guardians will receive a HFIRC behavior assessment letter advising the parents/guardians to contact HFIRC to schedule an intake assessment.
4. Failure to cooperate may result in legal consequences for the parent/guardian or age appropriate student.

The Russell County District Attorney's Office and the Russell County Schools want your child to be successful. The Helping Families Initiative of Russell County is a valuable resource to address school attendance and behavior issues and help your child overcome barriers to success in school and in life.

Sincerely,

Richard Chancey, District Attorney

Prepared by: Merry Mahone, Director and Florence W. Bellamy, HFIRC Consultant

APPENDIX V: BULLYING

6.18 BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, VIOLENCE, AND THREATS OF VIOLENCE

6.18.1 Prohibition

No student shall engage in nor should any be subjected to bullying, violence, threats of violence, or intimidation by any other student that is based on any of the specific characteristics set forth in this policy. Students who violate this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanctions as specified in the Student Code of Conduct, subject to the investigating school administrator's authority and decision.

6.18.2 Definitions

- a. The term "bullying" means a continuous pattern of intentional behavior that takes place on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to, cyberbullying or written, electronic, verbal, or physical actions that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student, or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic, if the characteristic falls into one, but not limited to, the categories of personal characteristics set forth below. To constitute bullying, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:
 1. Place a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
 2. Have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student.
 3. Have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of the school.
 4. Have the effect of creating a hostile environment in the school, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function.
 5. Have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.
- b. The term "hostile environment" as used in this policy means the perception by an affected student that the conduct of another student constitutes a threat of violence or bullying and that the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, would agree that the conduct constitutes bullying, threat of assault, or assault.
- c. The term "violence" as used in this policy means the infliction of physical force by a student with the intent to cause injury to another student or damage to the property of another student.
- d. The term "threat" as used in this policy means a statement of an intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action to cause fear of harm. The intention may be communicated through an electronic, written, verbal, or physical act to cause fear, mental distress, or interference in the school environment. The intention may be expressly stated or implied and the person communicating the threat has the ability to carry out the threat.
- e. The term "threat of violence" as used in this policy means an expression of intention to inflict injury or damage that is made by a student and directed to another student.

- f. The term “intimidation” as used in this policy means a threat or other action that is intended to cause fear or apprehension in a student, especially for the purpose of coercing or deterring the student from participating in or taking advantage of any school program, benefit, activity or opportunity for which the student is or would be eligible.
- g. The term “student” as used in this policy means a person who is enrolled in the Russell County school district.

6.18.3 Description of Behavior Expected of Students

- a. Students are expected to treat other students with courtesy, respect, and dignity as well as comply with the Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected and required (1) to comply with the requirements of law, policy, regulation, and rules prohibiting harassment, violence, or intimidation; (2) to refrain from inflicting or threatening to inflict violence, injury, or damage to the person or property of another student; and (3) to refrain from placing another student in fear of being subjected to violence, injury, or damage when such actions or threats are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any personal characteristic of the student that is identified in this policy.
- b. Violence, threats of violence, bullying, and intimidation are prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary consequences and sanctions if the perpetrator of such action is found to have based the prohibited action on one or more of the following personal characteristics of the victim of such conduct:
 - 1. the student’s race/color/ethnicity/culture
 - 2. the student’s gender/gender identity
 - 3. the student’s sexual preference/orientation
 - 4. the student’s religion
 - 5. the student’s socioeconomic status
 - 6. the student’s national origin
 - 7. the student’s disability

6.18.4 Consequences for Violations

A series of graduated consequences for any violation of this policy will be those outlined in the Code of Student Conduct or any rule or standard adopted under authority of this policy.

Reporting, Investigation, and Complaint Resolution Procedures – Complaints alleging violations of this policy may be made by completing the bullying report form found on each school counselor’s webpage and the RCSD Counseling Services page. Incidental or minor violations of the policy may be presented and resolved informally.

6.18.5 Reporting, Investigation, and Complaint Resolution Procedures

Complaints alleging violations of this policy may be made by completing the bullying report form found on the school district’s website under the counseling page. Parents may also complete and file a bullying report in person at the school. Incidental or minor violations of the policy may be presented and resolved informally.

The complaint form developed to report violations of this policy will include a provision for reporting a threat of suicide by a student. If a threat of suicide is reported, the principal or the principal's designee is authorized to inform the student's parent or guardian of the report unless at the discretion of the school principal or the principal's designee the apparent cause of the threat of suicide is child abuse or other significant harm from a parent or guardian.

Bullying complaints must be submitted in writing by the students or the student's parent/guardian. Upon receipt of the complaint, the principal or the principal's designee will, in their sole discretion, determine if the complaint alleges a serious violation of this policy. If the principal or the principal's designee determines that the complaint alleges a serious violation, the principal or the principal's designee will undertake an investigation of the complaint. The investigation will entail the gathering of relevant facts and evidence and will be conducted in a reasonably prompt time period taking into account the circumstances of the complaint.

If the investigation establishes a violation, appropriate disciplinary sanctions may be imposed on the offending student(s). Other measures that are reasonably calculated to prevent a recurrence of the violation(s) may also be imposed by the principal or the school district.

Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any student who has reported a violation of this policy or sought relief provided by this policy are prohibited and are themselves a violation of this policy. Any confirmed acts of reprisal or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary sanctions that may include any sanction, penalty, or consequence that is available to school officials under the Code of Student Conduct. A student who deliberately, recklessly, and falsely accuses another student of a violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

The complaint form developed to report violations of this policy will include a provision for reporting a threat of suicide by a student. If a threat of suicide is reported, the principal or the principal's designee will inform the student's parent or guardian of the report.

Confidentiality

In the Russell County School District, we prioritize the safety, well-being, and privacy of all our students. When incidents such as bullying occur, we follow strict confidentiality guidelines in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This federal law protects the privacy of student education records, which includes any disciplinary actions taken by the school.

Why We Cannot Disclose Specifics:

Right to Privacy: Every student has the right to privacy concerning their personal and educational records. Disclosing information about disciplinary actions taken against a student for bullying or other infractions would infringe upon that student's privacy rights.

FERPA Compliance: Under FERPA, schools are prohibited from disclosing personally identifiable information from students' education records without consent, except under specific conditions not typically applicable to routine disciplinary matters. This includes information about disciplinary actions.

Fostering a Safe Environment: Maintaining confidentiality helps to ensure that students feel safe reporting issues and that all students are treated fairly and equitably. It discourages retaliation and supports an environment where students can learn from their mistakes without public exposure.

While we cannot share details about individual student disciplinary matters, we assure parents and guardians that we take all reports of misconduct seriously and handle each situation with the utmost care to ensure a safe, respectful, and conducive learning environment for everyone. If you have concerns about your child's safety or well-being at school, please do not hesitate to contact us, and we will address these concerns within the bounds of privacy laws and school policy.

6.18.6 Suicide Prevention

To the extent that the legislature appropriates funds or the Board provides funds from other sources, the Superintendent is authorized to develop a program to implement the following statutory requirements of the Jason Flatt Act in an effort to prevent student suicide: foster individual, family, and group counseling services related to suicide prevention.

Make referral, crisis intervention, and other related information available for students, parents, and school personnel.

- a. Foster training for school personnel who are responsible for counseling and supervising students.
- b. Increase student awareness of the relationship between drug and alcohol use and suicide.
- c. Educate students in recognizing signs of suicidal tendencies and other facts and warning signs of suicide.
- d. Inform students of available community suicide prevention services.
- e. Promote cooperative efforts between school personnel and community suicide prevention program personnel.
- f. Foster school-based or community-based, or both, alternative programs outside of the classroom.
- g. Develop a strategy to assist survivors of attempted suicide, students, and school personnel in coping with the issues relating to attempted suicide, suicide, the death of a student, and healing.
- h. Engage in any other program or activity which the Board determines is appropriate and prudent in the efforts of the school district to prevent student suicide.
- i. Provide training for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students on the Board policies to prevent harassment, intimidation, and threats of violence.

- j. Develop a process for discussing with students local Board policies relating to the prevention of student suicide and to the prevention of harassment, intimidation, violence, and threats of violence.
- k. Provide annual training for all certificated school employees in suicide awareness and prevention. This training may be provided within the framework of existing in-service training programs or as a part of required professional development offered by the school district.
- l. Students may be required to participate in curricular activities developed to implement the statutory requirements of the Jason Flatt Act and are encouraged to participate in any other activities or strategies developed by the Board for that purpose.

6.18.7 PROMULGATION OF POLICY AND RELATED PROCEDURES, RULES AND FORMS

This policy and any procedures, rules, and forms developed and approved to implement the policy will be published on the website of each local board of education and school, shall be available at each school office, and shall be included in the handbook that is distributed to each student at the beginning of each school year.

APPENDIX VI: SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLE LAWS RELATING TO PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Act 93-672 states that parents who fail to require their children to attend school regularly, or fail to require that their children properly conduct themselves as students, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. A parent may receive a fine of not more than \$100.00 or a 90-day sentence to hard labor for the county for such a misdemeanor. The act states that school officials who intentionally fail to report suspected violations to the district attorney shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

The following is a summary of some education-related laws that apply to parents:

Section 16-28-2.2 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, provides as follows:

- (a) Local boards of education, pursuant to guidelines established by the State Board of Education, shall establish educational programs to inform parents of school children of their education-related responsibilities to their children. The programs shall include, but shall not be limited to, coverage of the following topics:
 - (1) The criminal liability and criminal sanctions parents may be subjected to under Section 16-28-12, for failing to compel their child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil, or for failing to ensure that their child attends school or enrolls in school.
 - (2) The necessity for a parent to monitor and supervise the school work and educational activities of the child.
 - (3) An explanation of the responsibilities of teachers and the school system to a child and an enumeration of those matters that are strictly the responsibility of the parent.
 - (4) Techniques and suggestions to enable a parent to best supervise the school work and educational activities of the child.

- (5) An explanation of the interrelationship of the family life of a child and the educational achievement of the child.
- (b) The State Board of Education and local boards of education shall develop strategies to ensure that parents of school children receive this information. These strategies may include provisions for weekend meetings, one-on-one conferences, telephone communications, and neighborhood meetings. (Refer to Appendix VI).

Local district attorneys and law enforcement officials shall, at the request of the local board of education, assist in the implementation and operation of this section.

Specific Education-Related Laws

Section 16-28-2 provides that the purposes of Chapter 28 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended are to secure the prompt and regular attendance of pupils and to secure their proper conduct, and to hold the parent, guardian, or other person in charge or control of a child responsible and liable for such child's nonattendance and improper conduct as a pupil, and to effect these purposes, the chapter shall be liberally construed and the courts and those charged with the enforcement of its provisions are vested with a wide discretion in its administration.

Section 16-28-12 provides that

(a) Each parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of any child required to attend school who fails to have such child enrolled in school or who fails to send such child to school during the time such child is required to attend public school or fails to require such child to regularly attend such school fails to compel such child to properly conduct himself as a pupil, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction shall be fined not more than \$100.00 and may also be sentenced to hard labor for the county for not more than 90 days. The absence of a child without the consent of the principal/teacher of the school he/she attends shall be prima facie evidence of the violation of this section.

(b) Any parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of any child enrolled in public school who fails to require the child to regularly attend the school or tutor, fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in accordance with a written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education and documented by the appropriate school official which conduct may result in the suspension of the pupil, shall be reported by the principal to the superintendent of education of the school system in which the suspected violation occurred. The superintendent of education or his or her designee shall report such suspected violations to the district attorney within 10 days. Any principal or superintendent of education or his or her designee intentionally failing to report such a suspected violation shall be guilty of a Class C Misdemeanor. The district attorney shall vigorously enforce this section to ensure proper conduct and required attendance by any child enrolled in public school.

Section 16-28-14 provides that, in case any child becomes a habitual truant, or because of irregular attendance or misconduct has become a menace to the best interest of the school that he is attending or should attend, and the parent, guardian or other person files a written statement in court as provided

in section 16-28-13 stating that he is unable to control such child, the attendance officer must file a complaint before the judge of the juvenile court of the county, alleging the facts, whereupon such child must be proceeded against in the juvenile court for the purpose of ascertaining whether such child is a dependent, neglected or delinquent child.

Section 16-28-15 provides that, every parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of any child required to attend public school shall as soon as possible explain the cause of any absence of the child under his control or charge that was without permission of the teacher, and a failure to furnish such explanation shall be admissible as evidence of such child being truant with the consent and connivance of the person in control or charge of said child, unless such person can show to the reasonable satisfaction of the court that he had no knowledge of such absence and that he has been diligent in his efforts to secure the attendance of such child.

Section 6-5-380 (a) provides that the parent or parents of any minor under the age of 18 years with whom such minor is living and who have custody of such minor shall be liable for the actual damages sustained to any school property for all damages proximately caused by the injury to, or destruction of, any property, real, personal or mixed, by the intentional, willful or malicious act or acts of such minor. In summary, there is no limit on liability of parents for damages caused by minor children to school property. As amended by Act No. 94-819-S.B. 73.

Section 2 (d) of Act No. 94-823 provides that it is the intent of the Legislature that it is the responsibility of the student, and the student's parent or guardian, to care for the textbooks and instructional supplies provided by the state in a manner so that the materials are not damaged to the point of being unusable. Section 16-1-24.1 (c), provides that discipline plans of school systems shall include, but not be limited to, the following provisions:

- A parent, guardian, or custodian of a minor child enrolled in a public school system is responsible financially for such child's destructive acts against school property or persons.
- A parent, guardian, or custodian of a minor child enrolled in the public school system may be requested to appear at school by an appropriate school official for a conference regarding acts of the child.
- A parent, guardian, or custodian of a minor child enrolled in a public school system, who has been summoned by proper notification by an appropriate school official shall be required to attend such a discipline conference.

Section 16-1-24.1 (c)(3), provides that any public school system shall be entitled to recover actual damages, plus necessary court costs, from the parent and/or guardian of any minor who maliciously and willfully damages or destroys property belonging to such school system. (This does not apply to parents whose parental control has been removed by court order or decree or to parents of exceptional children with specific mental and physical impairments if the damage is determined to result from such impairments.)

Parent Responsibilities for School Attendance and Behavior of Children, 1993 Legislative Session Act 93-672

Act 93-672 states that parents who fail to require their children to attend school regularly, or fail to require that their children properly conduct themselves as students, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. A parent may receive a fine of not more than \$100.00 or a 90-day sentence to hard labor for the county for such a misdemeanor. The act also states that school officials who intentionally fail to report suspected violations to the district attorney shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

APPENDIX VII: SCHOOL-BASED RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

The following are some resources with the Russell County School District to aid parents in fulfilling their education-related responsibilities to their children. Additional resources are available in the local schools.

Department	Phone Number	Description
Safety/Security	(334) 408-4972	Attendance/Behavior Concerns
Child Nutrition	(334) 408-4933	Free & Reduced Meals Program
Community Education Programs	(334) 408-4970	Family Involvement, Support Ed. & After School Programs
Dept. Of Human Resources	(334) 214-5780	Family & Child Resources
Federal Programs	(334) 408-4947	Title I Programs, Parental Involvement Programs
Attendance/Counseling Programs	(334) 408-4986	School Counselors, Evaluation and Placement Services, Mental Health
Special Services Programs	(334) 408-4970	Child Find, Gifted, Special Education Services
Specialized Health Professionals	(334) 486-5540	Vision, Hearing, and Other Health Problems

Where to Get Information and Help

1. Alcoholics Anonymous: (706) 327-6078. Alcoholism Council of Russell County: (334) 298-2651. Located at 1602 Broad Street, Phenix City, AL. Alcohol 24 hours Accredited Crisis Center: 1 (800) 333-2294
2. Cocaine Helpline: 1-800-COCAINE. Call for 24-hour-a- day information, guidance, and referral to local public and private treatment centers.
3. National Council on Alcoholism, Inc.: 1-800-NCA-CALL for referral service to help with alcoholism or other drug problems.
4. Pastoral Institute of Columbus: (706) 649-6500. Located at 15th Avenue, Columbus, GA.

- 5.
6. Bradley Center of Columbus Georgia: (706) 320-3627. Located at 2000 16th Avenue, Columbus, GA.
7. Safe Schools Hotline: 1 (888) 728-5437
8. Russell County Sheriff's Department: (334) 298-6535
9. Department of Human Services: (334) 214-5780
10. Russell County Juvenile Probation Office: (334) 297-5396
11. Helping Families Initiative: (334) 384-9700
12. IntegrEA: (334) 298-2405
13. Community Resources: Dial 211 for local community resources.

APPENDIX VIII: SCHOOL RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

The Russell County Board of Education recognizes the importance of athletic and extracurricular activities in the well-rounded development of students. Participation in such athletic and school related programs builds character, a sense of responsibility and discipline, and promotes proper conduct, all of which are central to the educational mission of the Russell County Schools and the Board of Education.

The Russell County Board of Education also acknowledges the valuable contributions and support that its athletic programs, extracurricular activities, and educational initiatives receive from parents and community members who have established booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, and other similar support groups. These procedures are put in place to define the relationship between the Board of Education and athletic booster clubs, PTO's, PTA's and similar groups whose purpose is to support the School District's athletic activities and educational programs.

Parent-Teacher Organizations

The Board of Education encourages the formation and operation of parent-teacher organizations at each school to provide financial support or volunteer assistance to the school. All parent-teacher organizations must be approved by the Russell County Board of Education and comply with its requirements in order to use the name of the individual school or School District, school or School District mascots or logos, and to have access to School District facilities as a school-related organization. Each parent-teacher organization shall prepare and submit to the School Board a copy of its organizational bylaws and/or constitution to the site administrator/Principal and the Superintendent prior to initiating such support or assistance. Upon formation and annually thereafter, each organization must provide the principal and the superintendent with the names, telephone numbers, and addresses of each officer of the organization, and position held.

Booster Clubs

Booster clubs for athletics, marching band, drill team, cheerleading, drama, choir, and other athletic, fine arts, or academic activities are encouraged to organize and provide support through financial contributions and volunteer assistance to enhance student programs and activities. All booster clubs must be approved by the Russell County Board of Education and comply with the requirements of these procedures in order to use the name of the individual school or School District, school or School District mascots or logos, and to have access to School District facilities as a school-related organization. A booster club must prepare and submit to the Board of Education a copy of its organizational bylaws and/or constitution by presenting the same to the superintendent prior to initiating such support or assistance. Upon formation and annually thereafter, each booster club shall provide the principal and superintendent with the names, telephone numbers and addresses of each officer of the booster club, and the position held.

Organizational Bylaws

All school-related organizations of parents or community leaders affiliated with a school must develop a constitution and/or bylaws. Those documents must be approved each year by the principal, in writing, and be filed in the principal's office. The Russell County Board of Education must approve the organization each year. The organization's bylaws must contain the following:

- A. The name of the organization.
- B. The objective of the organization including the statement, "This organization will abide by all school board and administrative policies and procedures."
- C. Eligibility for membership and membership enrollment procedures.
- D. Officer selection, election procedures, and duties of each officer.
- E. The principal/designee who will serve as an ex-officio officer of the organization.
- F. In the event that the organization dissolves or is dissolved by the principal, language indicating how the group will handle remaining funds must be included.

Accounting by School Related Organizations such as Booster Clubs and PTOs

- Due to regulations established by state and federal laws, Cognia accreditation standards, and Governmental Accounting Standards Boards (GASB) standards, certain rules must apply regarding the financial operation of such organizations.
- All school-related organizations must be under the control of the school with the school principal acting in a fiduciary capacity over the organization's funds.
- Exceptions can be made for parent organizations and booster organizations under the following conditions:
 - The organization maintains an Employer Identification Number from the Internal Revenue Service.
 - The organization provides a report of the annual audit of the organization to the school. The organization makes its financial records available to the school's auditors and authorized school employees upon request.
 - The organization provides required financial reports on a monthly basis.

- o The district also requires that the monthly bank statement and disbursements register accompany the monthly financial statement.
- o The organization provides proof of a current fidelity bond for the treasurer.
- o The organization will not raise funds on campus or at any school-related activity, including funds from sponsors or vendors.
- o The organization will not use school employees to lead fundraising or to maintain the accounting records or bank records for the organization.
- o The organization will not provide any payment or benefit to any officer or employee of the school system (or family member) in violation of the State Ethics Law.

This agreement must be renewed annually.

APPENDIX IX: PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Guidelines and Procedures for All Students

As a part of the policies and procedures of the Russell County School District, the use of chemical restraint, mechanical restraint, or seclusion is prohibited in the Russell County School District and its educational programs.

The use of physical restraint is prohibited in the Russell County School District and its educational programs except in those situations in which the student is an immediate danger to himself or others and the student is not responsive to less intensive behavioral interventions including verbal directives or other de-escalation techniques. Physical restraint is expressly prohibited when used as a form of discipline or punishment.

The use of restraint may occur along with other emergency actions such as the school seeking assistance from law enforcement and/or emergency medical personnel which could result in a removal of the student by such personnel. Significant violations of the law including assaults on students and staff will be reported to the police. As soon as possible after the restraint or removal of a student (and no longer than one school day following the occurrence), the parent or legal guardian will be provided written notification.

APPENDIX X: MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program is funded under the McKinney-Vento Homeless

Assistance Act to ensure that homeless children and youth have access to the same free, appropriate public education that is provided to all children. It also mandates that attendance laws cannot be used to prevent homeless children and youth from accessing education.

Who is Homeless?

The McKinney-Vento Act (Section 725) defines “Homeless Children and Youth” (school-age and younger) as:

1. Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (i.e. “doubled-up”).
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters (i.e., Salvation Army).
 - Abandoned in hospitals.
2. Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
3. Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
4. Migrant/EL children who qualify as homeless if they are living in circumstances described above.

The term unaccompanied youth includes a young person not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This would include runaways living in runaway shelters, abandoned buildings, cars, on the streets, or in other inadequate housing; children and youth denied housing by their families (sometimes referred to as “Throwaway Children and Youth”); and school-age unwed mothers living in homes for unwed mothers because they have no other housing available. Determinations of homelessness will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Homeless Education Staff.

Disputes

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act acknowledge that disputes may arise between the school district and homeless students/parents/ guardians when the student is denied enrollment in school or is placed in a school other than the one requested by students/parents/guardians. The purpose of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is to ensure that homeless students enroll in school immediately and continue their education with as little disruption as possible. The Russell County School District’s dispute resolution process follows the guidelines set forth in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This bulletin contains detailed procedures established for resolving complaints filed against the Department of Education or a local education agency pursuant to provisions from Every Student Succeeds Act and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The following process will be used in a case where a dispute occurs regarding the education of a homeless child or youth.

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the child/youth must be immediately enrolled in the school in which he/she is seeking enrollment, pending the resolution of the dispute (five days). The dispute process may be initiated by the parent/guardian, unaccompanied youth, principal or other school officials.

Forms for the dispute process can be accessed at the RCSD McKinney-Vento website.

The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth must also be:

1. referred to the Homeless Liaison;
2. provided a written explanation of the school's decision to deny enrollment or school selection (Form 1);
3. informed of their right to dispute the school decision (Form 2); and
4. provided with a copy of Russell County School District's McKinney-Vento Homeless Plan.

The child, parent, guardian, or other accompanying adult who wishes to appeal an adverse decision must start the appeal process by submitting a request for dispute resolution to the District Homeless Liaison (Form 2).

Upon submission of a request for dispute resolution, the Liaison will:

1. Confirm that the child has received the opportunity to immediately enroll in the district school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the appeal; and
2. Exeditiously resolve the appeal according to the following dispute resolution procedures:
 - a. The Liaison will set up an appointment with the person initiating the dispute within five (5) working days of receiving the notice of dispute. The Liaison will listen to the person's account of the problem, review information from the school, and consider the law and what factors impact the best interest of the child.
 - b. The Liaison will provide within five (5) working days:
 - i. A written explanation of the decision regarding school selection or enrollment (Form 3); and
 - ii. Notice of the right to appeal the Liaison's decision to the State Homeless Education Coordinator, and the form with which to initiate such appeal. (Form 4)

If the district's Homeless Liaison denies a school selection or enrollment request that is based upon the rights of the child under the McKinney-Vento Act, the Liaison will provide to the child, parent, guardian, or other accompanying adult, in writing, the reason for the decision and notice that the decision may be appealed. This notice will advise the child, parent, guardian, or other accompanying adult that the child will be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought and transportation will be provided, pending resolution of the appeal.

For further information on the McKinney-Vento Act and resources for implementation, call the NCHE Helpline at 800-308-2145 or e-mail homeless@serve.org

Local Contact Information

Jina Rudolph, Homeless Liaison rudolphj@russellcsd.net
Mary McBride, Homeless Liaison mcbriDEM@russellcsd.net
91 Poorhouse Road
Seale, AL 36875
(334) 408-4947



Dr. Brenda Coley
Superintendent

RUSSELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Kenneth Barnes
Meghan Catrett
Barbara Clark
Keith Mitchell
Tim Simpson
Chelsea Smith
Patricia Ann Smith

Your Check is Welcome

Your check is welcome at all Russell County Schools. We recognize that occasionally a parent may inadvertently overdraw a checking account and a check may be returned by your bank. In order to recover these funds in a private and professional manner, the Russell County School District has contracted with a private check Recovery Company, for collection of returned checks.

Each person writing a check to a school or the School District should write the check on a commercially printed check with your name, address, and one phone number. Counter or starter checks are NOT accepted. When a person writes a check to a school or the School District, he or she agrees that, if the check is returned, it may be represented electronically on the same account, and that the fee established by law, now \$30, may be debited from the same account.

If the check and fee are not collected electronically, then the check Recovery Company will contact the check writer by mail and by telephone to make payment arrangements.

Thank you,
Russell County Schools Finance Department

Russell County Schools District
Parents Right-To-Know • Request Teacher Qualifications

I am requesting the professional qualifications of _____

who teaches my child, _____ at _____
Child's Name (Please Print) School (Please Print)

My mailing address is _____
Street (Please Print) City, State Zip

My telephone number is _____

My name is _____
Name (Please Print)

Signature

Date

This Section to be Completed by School/Central Office

Date Form Received: Received by: _

Teacher's Name: Subject: _

Has the teacher met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which he/she teaches? Yes No

Is the teacher teaching under emergency or other provisional status? Yes No

Undergraduate Degree (University/College) _

Major Discipline _

Graduate Degree (University/College) _

Major Discipline _

Does a paraprofessional provide instructional services to the student? Yes No

If yes, what are the qualifications of the paraprofessional? _

High School Graduate _ (Year)

Undergraduate Degree (University/College) _

Major Discipline _

College/University Credit (Hours) _

Major Discipline _

Signature of Person Completing Form

Date Returned to Parent

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM

To Parents/Guardians:

This Parent and Student Handbook is provided as a guideline, policy, and procedural manual for Russell County Schools. All information is in accordance with the Russell County School District Parent and Student Handbook and other district-wide policies and procedures. Please detach, sign, and return this page only to your child's teacher tomorrow or the following school day verifying that you have reviewed this handbook.

Commitment Statement

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____, have received a copy of the 2025-2026 Russell County School District Parent and Student Handbook and agree to enforce/follow the guidelines, policies, and procedures within.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Student

Grade