

2025-2026

STUDENT–PARENT HANDBOOK

GRADES 6-12

EMPOWERING ALL STUDENTS FOR LIFELONG SUCCESS

Revised and Approved July 10, 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
Superintendent Message
Athens City Board of Education 5
Schools and Principals 6
Equal Educational Opportunities Statement 6
Mission Statement 7
Belief Statements 7
GENERAL INFORMATION
Deliveries 8
Change of Address 8
Custody of Students 8
Student Publicity/ Information OPT-OUT 8
Lost and Found 8
Personal Property 8
School Hours 8
School Visitors 8
Telephone 8
ACADEMICS
Exams and Exam Exemptions 9
Field Trips and Excursions 10
Homework 10
Honor Graduates 10
Media Center 10
Parent Conferences 10
Report Cards 10
Response to Instruction (RtI) and Problem Solving Teams 10
Student Promotion and Retention 11
Subject Fees 11
Textbooks 13
PROGRAMS FOR EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION SERVICES
Gifted Services
Programs for Exceptional Children 14
Child Find Notice 14
ATTENDANCE 14
Attendance
Absences 15
Tardiness 15
E-LearningDay 16
Truancy 16
Attendance Award 17
College Visits 17
Make-up Work for Excused Absences 17
Make-up Work for Unexcused Absences 17
Religious Absences 18
School Participation Absences 18
Students Being Checked Out of School 18
Withdrawals 18
CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM
Lunch Numbers and Accounts 19
Free and Reduced Price Application 20

Wellness Policy and School Parties 20
CALENDARS
School Calendar 22
School Progress Report/Report Card Calendar 21
HEALTH SERVICES
Allergy Guidelines 22
Head Lice 22
Health Screenings 22
Illness Guideline 22
Immunizations 23
Medication Protocol 24
Meningococcal Disease and Vaccine 25
SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
Asbestos Management Plan 26
Fire and Severe Weather Drills 26
Tornado Watch – Required Procedure 26
Tornado Warning – Required Procedure 26
School Closings 26
School Safety Plans 26
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
Eligibility Requirements 27
Prohibited Substance Screening 27
Student Clubs and Organizations 27
Student Publications 27
Golden Guidelines 28
STUDENT CONDUCT
Alcohol/Drug Abuse 29
Anti-Bullying Policy 30
Form for reporting a Complaint of Bullying, Violence, Threats of Violence, Intimidation, or Cyberbullying 32
Corporal Punishment 34
Detention 34
Dress Code (Grades 6-12) 34
Firearms and Weapons 35
In-School Suspension 35
No Fight Policy 35
Out-of-School Suspension 36
Long-Term Suspension, Long Term Alternative School Placement and Expulsion 36
Smoking/Use of Tobacco Products 37
Refusal To Identify Self 37
Sexual Harassment of Students 37
Wireless Communication Devices 39
Student Code of Conduct 40
Procedures for the Administration of Formal Disciplinary Action 40
Student Searches 43
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 1974 44
Notice for Disclosure of School Directory Information 44
Parental Responsibility 44
Curriculum Transparency Act (Act 2024-35) 44
Divisive Concepts and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Law (Act 2024-409) 45
Student Due Process 45
Student Grievances 45
Summary of Civil and Criminal Liabilities 45

Students of Active Military Parents 46
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Protections for Students 46
Teachers' Bill of Rights 46
Fentanyl Education (Act 2024-221) 46
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION
Student Parking/Driving 48
School Bus Transportation 49
TECHNOLOGY 51
Cell Phones/Wireless Communication Devices 51
Internet Safety & Acceptable Use of Computer Technology 53
PowerUp Handbook 59
STUDENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
ACT National Testing Schedule 63
State Testing Schedule 63
Use of Digital Device during Administration of Secure Tests 63
Eagle Apps 64

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Students and Parents:

Welcome to Athens City Schools! The Student-Parent Handbook for Grades 6-12 is intended to provide consistency throughout the school experience in Athens under the guidance of the Board of Education.

We are constantly striving to improve, so you will find procedural changes for the upcoming school year. We encourage you to read through the entire handbook carefully in order to ensure a great school experience.

Parents are encouraged to visit the Athens City Schools website often at acs-k12.org for updates and important information.

We look forward to a great school year.

Sincerely,

Beth Patton

Beth Patton, Superintendent

ATHENS CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Beth Patton, Superintendent
Mrs. Beverly Malone, President
Mrs. Shannon Hutton, Vice President
Mrs. Karen Clem
Mr. Toby Harrison
Mr. Anthony Townsend

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

455 US Hwy 31 North
Athens, Alabama 35611
(256) 233-6600

SCHOOLS AND PRINCIPALS

GRADES 6-8

Athens Middle School
100 US Hwy. 31 N.
Athens, Alabama 35611
(256) 233-6620 | acs-k12.org
Kim Moore, Principal
kim.moore@acs-k12.org

GRADES 9-12

Athens High School
655 US Hwy. 31 N.
Athens, Alabama 35611
(256) 233-6613 | acs-k12.org
Willie Moore, Executive Principal
Willie.Moore@acs-k12.org
Gia Russell, 9th Grade Principal
gia.russell@acs-k12..org

GRADES 6-12

Athens Renaissance School
601 South Clinton Street
Athens, AL 35611
(256) 771-7147
Mrs. Catherine Preston, Principal
catherine.preston@acs-k12.org

GRADES 6-12

Renaissance Virtual School
405 South Street East
Athens, AL 35611
(256) 771-0752
Dr. Nelson Brown, Principal
nelson.brown@acs-k12.org

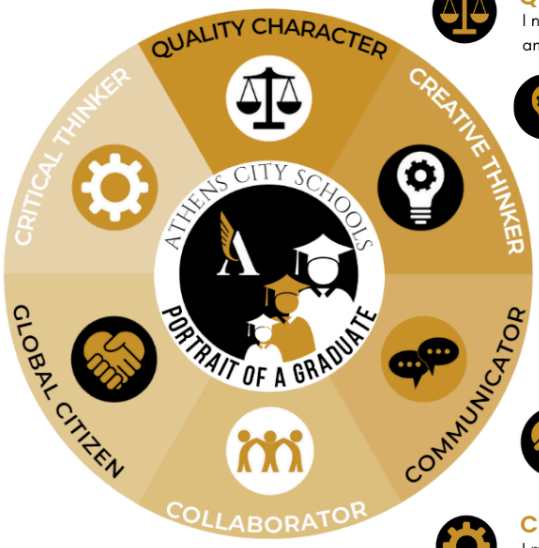
EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is the policy of the Athens City Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, or marital status in the education programs, activities or employment, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been appointed to coordinate compliance efforts: Title IX/ Section 504/ADA –Mrs. Dimika Cummings (256) 233-6600.

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

EMPOWERING ALL STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS MEANS MORE THAN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.

For students to be prepared for life beyond graduation, our community believes we must focus on the whole individual. Our Athens City Portrait of a Graduate describes the characteristics and skills that will empower all students for success now and in the future.



QUALITY CHARACTER I inspire the trust of others and believe in myself.
I nurture overall physical and mental well-being and act honestly, responsibly and ethically. I manage and monitor myself, use sound judgment, and persevere in the face of challenges.

CREATIVE THINKER I generate new ideas and build on existing ones.
I pursue imaginative approaches and solve problems by asking questions, being flexible in my thinking, and taking the initiative to turn my ideas into action.

COMMUNICATOR I explore and exchange ideas with others.
I actively listen to and honor the voices of others, and I communicate clearly through the three fluencies of writing, speaking, and digital depending on my audience.

COLLABORATOR I form partnerships with others.
I work with others to accomplish goals and tasks by building relationships, managing team dynamics, making shared decisions, and learning from and contributing to the learning of others.

GLOBAL CITIZEN I serve as an active participant in a larger society.
I contribute to solutions that benefit the global community by examining issues from multiple perspectives and demonstrate empathy, compassion, and respect for others.

CRITICAL THINKER I analyze and synthesize ideas.
I make decisions by evaluating information and arguments, seeing patterns and connections, constructing meaningful knowledge, and applying it in the real world.

ATHENS CITY SCHOOLS

VISION

The Athens City Schools Portrait of a Graduate is a collective vision reflecting our community's hopes, dreams, and aspirations for its students. Not only is it designed to prepare students for academic achievement, but also to prepare them for success in their personal and professional lives beyond the classroom.

MISSION

Empowering all students for lifelong success in a rapidly changing world.

VALUES

- **STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING** We prioritize students' needs and interests in decision-making.
- **RELATIONSHIPS** We foster genuine and trusting connections within a secure and inclusive environment.
- **PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY** We create an environment where everyone feels valued and heard.
- **COLLABORATION** We work together towards a common goal.
- **GROWTH MINDSET** We emphasize continuous learning and improvement.
- **EMPOWERMENT** We inspire staff and students to take ownership of their learning and professional growth.
- **CELEBRATIONS** We encourage and recognize each other's strengths and efforts.

GENERAL INFORMATION

DELIVERIES
Athens City Schools does not accept vendor or parental deliveries for any commercial items (i.e. – food from restaurants, flowers, balloons, gifts) to students during school hours. The principal shall have the discretion to determine exceptions to each scenario.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
Changes in your home address or phone number should be reported to the school office immediately. Any change in place of employment or employment, home or cell phone number should also be reported to the school office. This is necessary in case we need to reach you in the event of an emergency or should your child become ill.

CUSTODY OF STUDENTS
School personnel release students to either of their natural parents or their representatives unless there is a copy of an Alabama court order on file which grants custody to one of the parents or a third person. If a guardian needs to be deleted, please take the new custody papers to the school. This can only be done at the school.

STUDENT PUBLICITY/ INFORMATION OPT-OUT
Athens City Schools takes great pride in sharing the accomplishments of our students. ACS uses school-related images and/or videos of students and student work to showcase educational activities and programs, as well as to inform our students, parents and community of ACS activities and experiences. Photographs, videos and/or the name of your child may be included in publications (print or digital), news releases, news district/school websites,social media, and news media. If you would like to "opt out" of any public recognition of your child, please notify your school principal in writing within ten (10) days from your receipt of this notice. If no documentation is on file, it will be assumed that permission for release of information has been granted.

LOST AND FOUND
All lost and found items should be reported to the office or designated area. Unclaimed items will be collected periodically and given to charity at the end of each semester.

PERSONAL PROPERTY
Personal property (i.e. – money, clothing, jewelry, cell phones, airpods, etc.) is the responsibility of each individual student. These articles should be kept in the student's possession at all times. Students should not bring large sums of money or valuable personal property to school.

SCHOOL HOURS

School	*Breakfast Served*	*Classes Begin*	*Classes End*
Athens Middle	7:30 a.m.	7:55 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Athens High	7:45 a.m.	8:15 a.m.	3:20 p.m.

SCHOOL VISITORS
All school visitors are required to report to the main office upon arrival at a school campus. All visitors will be required to sign in and secure a visitor's pass. Students enrolled in the school system are not permitted to bring student visitors to school during regular school hours without prior approval by the principal. Visitors may be asked to provide a photo I.D.

TELEPHONE
Students will be called to the phone only in extreme emergencies; only messages of an urgent nature from parents will be delivered to students. Students will not use the office phones except when conducting school business, and then only with permission from the office staff.

ACADEMICS

EXAMS AND EXAM EXEMPTIONS
Athens Middle School - Examinations
Students may be exempted from their mid-term and end-of-year exams under the following conditions:

Students who have the following grade at the end of the second grading period (1st semester) and fourth grading period (2nd semester) may be exempt for that class:

- 92 with no more than three excused absences (parent excused absences = PE)
- 85 with no more than two excused absences (parent excused absences = PE)
- 80 with no more than one excused absence (parent excused absences = PE)

Students who receive an unexcused tardy twice in any class will void exemptions for that class. An unexcused absence to any class voids examination exemptions for that class. Doctor excused absences (DE) do NOT count toward exam exemption absence totals.

In addition to grades/absence totals, students must also pass individualized lessons from the "My Path" i-Ready lessons: 9 individualized iReady math lessons and 9 individualized iReady reading lessons (18 lessons total) per nine weeks (36 lessons total for semester).

Students receiving an In-School Suspension and/or Out of School Suspension assignment void all exemptions.

Athens High School – Final Examinations
Students may be exempted from their end of course exam under the following conditions:
Students are required to take at least one exam each semester:

- 9th grade: Science
- 10th grade: Math
- 11th grade: English Language Arts
- 12th grade: History (Civics Exam)

Students may be exempted from their end of course exam under the following conditions:

- 92 with no more than three excused absences
- 85 with no more than two excused absences
- 80 with no more than one excused absence

Doctor excused absences (DE) do NOT count toward exam exemption absence totals.

- Exams will constitute 20% of the final grade.
- Students may opt to take the examination with no penalty.
- Two or more unexcused tardies to class will void exam exemptions for that class.
- One or more unexcused absence voids exam exemptions for that class.
- ISS (In School Suspension) or OSS (Out of School Suspension) voids all exemptions.

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS
Field trips and excursions are extensions of classroom instruction and provide quality – learning opportunities for students to participate in unique and enriching educational experiences. Principals will ensure that all out of class experiences are maximized for student learning.

School administrators and teachers utilize systematic procedures to ensure that student safety is a priority on all trips away from school.

The following minimal procedures shall be adhered to for all field trips and excursions away from school:
- Students are expected to exhibit their best behavior, and the Student Code of Conduct is fully applicable for all activities.
- Students who are failing a class will not be permitted to go on Field Trips. The principal of the school maintains administrative discretion on requested exceptions.
- Students must have a Field Trip Parental Permission Form completed and signed by their parent(s) or guardian(s) on file with school officials prior to departing on each school-sponsored field trip. Students not submitting a signed permission form are not permitted to participate in activities.

HOMEWORK
Homework should be meaningful and reasonable. It is not a substitute for quality instruction but should be used to reinforce student outcomes, provide real-world application, or enrich what has been taught. Consideration is given to the time involved in completing the assignment.

HONOR GRADUATES
Athens High School recognizes Honor Graduates in compliance with the stated selection and determination criteria as listed in the official **Athens High School Course Catalog**.

MEDIA CENTER
Library Media Center programs support the school's instructional program for student learning and achievement. Students are provided access to quality print and digital collections.
Students are responsible for the care and safe return of all books or materials they borrow. The student or parent must pay for lost or damaged books and/or materials.

PARENT CONFERENCES
Parent conferences with administrators, teachers, and staff are encouraged and should be arranged through the school office. Conferences with classroom teachers are held only during non-instructional time.

REPORT CARDS
Report cards are available every nine weeks to provide a measurement of the student's mastery of the course of study standards. Progress reports are available in the middle of the nine weeks to show if students are progressing towards mastery. All schools provide access for parents to check student progress through the on-line grade book (I-Now) at any time.
Issued report cards are not to be altered and any corrections needed should be reported promptly to the applicable teacher(s).

RESPONSE to INSTRUCTION (RtI) AND STUDENT SUPPORT TEAMS
Response to Instruction (RtI) integrates classroom instruction, assessment, and interventions to promote student achievement and reduce behavior problems. The RtI process is used to identify and monitor students who are at-risk of falling behind academically. Problem-Solving Teams monitor student progress frequently and adjust the intervention based on student results. These teams make high quality decisions to support all students, especially those at-risk of failing to achieve state performance standards. Parents that have concerns about their child needing support should contact a school administrator.

STUDENT PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Grades 6-8

Students who are capable of doing average school work evidenced by previous grades, standardized tests, and teacher evaluation will be promoted or retained according to the following criteria:

- Students will be promoted to the next grade level if they have passed four (4) of the six (6) courses including all core courses.
- The principal will have the final decision making authority in the promotion/retention of students.

Grades 9-12

For students to be permitted to move to the next higher grade level, the following standards must be met:

- **9th Grade** – Students who have passed the 8th grade will be promoted and classified as 9th graders.
- **10th Grade** – Students who have passed at least seven (7) credits including the four required core courses will be classified as 10th graders.
- **11th Grade** – Students who have earned at least fourteen (14) credits including the four required core courses will be classified as 11th graders.
- **12th Grade** – Students who have earned at least twenty (20) credits including the four required core courses will be classified as 12th graders.

English Requirement – Grades 9-12

Athens High School students in grades 9-12 must make satisfactory progress by passing courses in a logical and sequential fashion (i.e. - ninth (9th) grade English before taking tenth (10th) grade English). A student will not be enrolled in more than one English course in any given semester.

SCHOOL FEES

Subject Fees for Middle School

Fees are collected each semester for certain Middle School elective courses offered within Athens City Schools. Fees will be due at the beginning of each semester of each school year. The following courses require fees:

PLTW – Design and Modeling 7	10.00	Weight Lifting PE (Sports)	20.00
PLTW – Automation & Robotics 8	10.00	PLTW Computer Science	10.00
MS Band 7	25.00	Multimedia Design	10.00
MS Band 8	25.00	Vocal Choral	15.00
Visual Arts	10.00		

Subject Fees for High School

Fees are collected each semester for certain elective courses offered within Athens City Schools. Fees will be due at the beginning of each semester of each school year. The following courses require fees:

Career/Tech Co-op Education	35.00	Forensics	20.00
Workforce Readiness	20.00	Practices of Education	20.00
Intro to Engineering Design	20.00	Teaching Internship	20.00
Visual Art, I-IV, 2D Design	20.00	Anatomy & Physiology	20.00
Personal Finance	20.00	Chemistry/Honors	20.00
Engineering Development and	20.00	Foundations of Health Science	20.00
Business Software Applications	20.00	Sports Medicine I & II	20.00
Sports Marketing	20.00	Therapeutic Services	20.00
Marketing Principles	20.00	Patient Care Technician	20.00
Theater I, II, III, IV,	20.00	CTE Lab in Health Science	20.00
Hospitality and Tourism	20.00	Health Science I/II Internship	20.00
Principles Event Planning	20.00		
Culinary I	40.00		
Aircraft Theory of Flight	20.00		
Aerospace	20.00		

Miscellaneous Fees

Fees are collected for board-approved activities offered within the Athens City Schools. Fees will be due prior to the activity or participation by the student. Fundraising opportunities may be offered to students to offset/cover out-of-pocket expenses for parents/guardians. The following fees have been approved for collection of fees:

- Athens High School Parking Permit: $30
- AHS Marching Band Fee: Band Camp/Quota
- AHS Student Cohort Fee: $120.00 (4-year plan - $30 per year or $120 Senior year)
- AMS Student Service Fee*: $15.00

*Cohort and Student Support Fee includes class awards, prom, senior breakfast, graduation, publications, etc

Technology Fees

Usage Fees:

- $25 Regular
- $15 Free/Reduced Lunch (must be currently qualified for FRL)
- $20 Multiple Children Enrolled in ACS

Payment plans may be established, if needed, prior to the receipt of the device. Parents should contact the school office regarding this process.
Fees are required per academic year.

Claims: In addition to the non-refundable technology usage fee, if a device is damaged or lost, the student/parent/guardian owes an additional fee per claim.

	Claim 1	Claim 2	Claim 3+
MacBook	$50	$100	Subject to disciplinary action, cost of device repair or replacement. Restricted to classroom use only.
Chromebook/iPad	$30	$ 60	

Please view the PowerUp Handbook for more information.

Summer Sessions

- Athens High School
  - Summer School: $200 per (1) credit course and $150 each additional course
  - Credit Recovery: $200 per (1) credit course and $150 each additional course
  - Credit Advancement: $300 per course
- Athens Middle School
  - AMS Summer School: $100 per course

Fee Waiver Options

- Fee Waiver Standards: Parents or guardians of students in grades 7 through 12 may apply for waivers from payment of Board approved school fees on the basis of financial inability to pay.
- Procedure to be followed in applying for Fee Exemption:
- Parents or guardians desiring student fee waivers are to apply in writing to the principal of the school where their children attend. The written application must explain circumstances necessitating such waivers and must be made for each respective fee waiver; no blanket fee waiver shall apply.
- Each case will be considered on an individual basis.
- If denied, the parent(s) or guardian(s) may seek relief through the following appeals process:
  - Meet and discuss with the Principal.
  - Meet and discuss with the Student Services Coordinator.
  - Meet and discuss with the Superintendent.
  - Meet and discuss with the Board of Education.

Other Fees
Damaged/lost textbook payments, lost/damaged library books and/or materials, damage fees for neglect of technology, and co- curricular/extra-curricular activities that students participate in cannot be waived.

Students that have a financial obligation to an individual school or the school system may not register for the next school year until fees are paid or payment arrangements are made with the school bookkeeper.

Fees are not collected from students who take a science course to fulfill the state requirements of four science courses for graduation.

Internet Safety & Acceptable Use of Computer Technology – Misuse of the school system's technology will subject students to revoked computer usage, monetary charges to repair damaged equipment, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

TEXTBOOKS
General
The digital age and Power Up program have changed the future of learning for 21st-century students within Athens City Schools. Curriculum that has generally been offered via a single-subject textbook does not meet student needs as they prepare for their future college and/or career path. Parents should know the following about working with 21st century students:

Students may or may not be issued a textbook in grades 6 – 12 for use at home.

Every student in grades 6-12 has access to our Learning Management System (LMS) Schoology curriculum materials and/or a textbook that may be downloaded for each student to use away from their school building.

The LMS embedded curriculum and textbooks are furnished free of charge to students and remain the property of Athens City Schools.
Students will sign a receipt when issued printed textbooks by school officials.

Parents/guardians are responsible for textbooks and other materials issued to their children and shall be held liable for any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from normal use.

PROGRAMS FOR EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION SERVICES

GIFTED SERVICES
Intellectually gifted students are those who perform or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. These students require services not ordinarily 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 endeavor. Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities may refer a student for consideration for gifted services. The parents must be informed when their child has been referred. For more information regarding gifted services and the referral and eligibility process, contact the Office of Exceptional Education at 256-233-6600.

PROGRAMS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS
Special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services are provided to students who meet the eligibility criteria. Information regarding services, supports, or referral procedures may be obtained from the school principal. All referrals, evaluations, and educational support are provided in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 and the Alabama Administrative Code Chapter 290-8-9 Special Education Services SUPP. NO. 11-2.

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION CHILD FIND NOTICE
The Athens City Schools ensure that all children residing in the jurisdiction of the local education agency, birth to twenty-one, regardless of the severity of their exceptionality, and who need exceptional education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. Child Find also applies to children with exceptionalities who attend private schools, including children attending religious schools within the Athens City Schools jurisdiction, highly mobile children with exceptionalities (e.g. migrant children), and homeless children, or children who are wards of the state and children who are suspected of having an exceptionality and are in need of exceptional education services even though they have not failed, been retained in a course/grade, or are advancing from grade to grade.

If you know of a child who may be in need of special education services or would like to receive additional information regarding services for students with disabilities contact the Office of Exceptional Education by phone at 256-233-6600.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination/harassment on the basis of a disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." For questions regarding Athens City 504 procedures, contact the Office of Exceptional Education at 256-233-6600.

ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE

One of the most important things a parent or guardian can do for their child is ensure they are in school every day and on time. It is key to their learning, success in school, and ultimately success in life. Athens City Schools maintains an attendance and truancy policy, which were written in accordance with Alabama State Board of Education Administrative Code, and §16-28-1 et seq., Code of Alabama (1975). Below are the details of those policies. If you have any other questions, please contact the principal or student services supervisor.

General Provisions

A school day is defined as:

School	Classes Begin	Classes End
Athens Middle	7:55 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Athens High	8:15 a.m.	3:20 p.m.

Attendance is recorded for each block or period daily, and <u>more than 15 minutes missed is considered an absence.</u>

- Late arrivals should report to the Attendance Office to check-in.
- Checkouts shall be conducted through the Attendance Office.
- Any missed school will be categorized as an excused absence, excused tardy, unexcused absence, or unexcused tardy.
- Excessive absences will subject a student to truancy policies and procedures.
- The administration will adopt an in-house procedure to address students' attendance.

ABSENCES

Excused Absences

Absences are excused for the following:

- Illness
- Death in immediate family
- Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child as determined by the principal
- Legal quarantine
- Emergency conditions as determined by the principal
- Administrative Approval – Prior permission of the principal upon request of the parent or legal guardian
- Suspension

Athens City Schools allows a student to be absent from school for any of the above reasons for five days per semester provided the parent has verified this in writing upon the student's return to school. Any absence for illness beyond five days during a semester must be confirmed by a physician's document in order for the absence to be excused. Otherwise, absences beyond five will be considered unexcused.

Note: Students that check-in and check-out must provide a written note with the reasons stated above to be considered excused.

Unexcused Absences
Absences that do not fall under one of the "excused absences" categories are deemed unexcused.

- The following are also deemed unexcused:
- **Failure to send a note within three (3) days of the absence upon returning to school.**
- Failure to secure prior approval from the principal for Administrative Approved absences.
- Educational opportunities and the safety and security of minors are the primary reasons for administratively excused absences.
- Five consecutive days absent without medical or legal documentation may be considered as unexcused.
- Failure to provide a medical excuse after a student has accumulated 5 parent notes for illness in a semester.
- **Notes must also be submitted for check-ins and checkouts**.

TARDINESS
Being late to school or checking out of school are excused or unexcused for the same reasons as absences. Habitual tardiness greatly affects a child's progress in school. The administration will adopt an in-house procedure to address students' tardies to school and tardies to class.

E-LEARNING DAYS
Athens City Schools has embarked upon state of the art teaching and learning opportunities with the implementation of the Power UP initiative. By providing students in grades 6-12 with IPADS to use outside the regular school day, teaching can be extended in new, exciting ways. As a part of our commitment to prepare students for their transformation to college, we will be offering students, with parent/guardian request, the opportunity of up to five (5) days per semester as E-Learning Days. These days will allow students to meet their class requirements through on-line engagement of class material and assignments while they are away from the building. These brief opportunities will equip students with the personal responsibility and self-discipline that will be needed to succeed in their future college experiences. Few students share these possibilities across the country, but because of the commitment of our school board and city council, our students have these cutting edge opportunities.

The following are criteria for E-Learning Days:

- E-Learning Days are open for students with 1:1 devices that can be taken home.
- Trips of educational value, safety or security of a student when parents are traveling and the student cannot be left alone, non-school related athletic competitions for future opportunities, extra college and/or career visits are some examples, but are not the only occasions that may be approved.
- Parents must request these opportunities ten (10) calendar days prior to the 1st day of on-line learning.
- Students cannot have any unexcused absences, for the entire school year, excessive absences (5 or more in a school year), or excessive tardiness (5 or more in a semester).
- Students may not take E-Learning days during the first days of the school year, during the first days of the semester, and during the last 10 days of either semester.
- Students must have a minimum of an 80 average in each class prior to the request. Students cannot have any Class II or III write-ups during the semester the request is made.

TRUANCY
Truancy is the habitual and unlawful absence from school. Section 16-28-1, et seq. of the Code of Alabama governs truancy. If a child is truant, the parent or guardian can be charged under Alabama law with a criminal action in Juvenile Court. Truancy is determined by unexcused absences.

Unexcused absences shall be addressed as follows:
- 1 unexcused absence = parental notification by letter from the School.
- 2 unexcused absences = parental notification by letter from the School.
- 5 unexcused absences = mandatory attendance at the school's Early Warning Meeting.
- 7 unexcused absences = a Petition is filed against the parent or guardian in the Limestone County Juvenile Court.

The Early Warning Meeting shall be set by the school attendance officer and is a mandatory meeting. This meeting is also an opportunity for the parent or guardian to discuss the attendance of their child with school officials and to ask any questions regarding attendance. Failure to attend this meeting will result in an immediate petition being filed against the parent or guardian.

If a petition is filed in the Limestone County Juvenile Court against a parent or guardian for truancy, he/she will be required to appear before the Juvenile Court Judge. If found guilty of the charge, he/she shall receive a misdemeanor conviction, and may be fined up to $6000, and sentenced up to 1 year in the county jail. The parent or guardian and the student may also be ordered to participate in programs that address the issues relating to the truancy of the student.

All unexcused absences will be counted as individual absences and not as an occurrence.

ATTENDANCE AWARDS
A perfect attendance award shall be awarded to students who have attended school every day based on documentation of the attendance record. Students who are tardy or have checked in/out one (1) or more times will not be eligible for the Perfect Attendance Award.

COLLEGE VISITS
Senior students will be allowed two (2) college days with stipulations that one-day is taken first semester. Juniors can receive one (1) official college visit with proper documentation presented to school administration. No college visits can be taken the 1st and last 10 days of each semester.

MAKE-UP WORK FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES
If a student is absent for any excused reason as defined above, the student will be allowed to make up work through the following guidelines:
- Students are allowed to make up all major assignments and other work missed.
- Make-up times must be agreeable to the teacher(s).
- Teachers are not required to reteach lessons, but students will be given a reasonable opportunity to learn the lesson(s) missed.
- The student shall be responsible for contacting the teacher(s) to arrange make up work within 3 days of returning to school.

MAKE-UP WORK FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES
If a student is absent for any unexcused reason as defined above, the student will be allowed to make-up work for half credit through the following guidelines:
- Students are allowed to make up **only** major assignments missed and for half credit.
- Make-up times must be agreeable to the teacher(s).
- Teachers will not reteach lessons.
- The student shall be responsible for contacting the teacher(s) to arrange make-up work within 3 days of returning to school.

RELIGIOUS ABSENCES
A student will be excused for official religious holidays when the student's parent or guardian notifies the principal or assistant principal in writing in advance for the student to be absent for this purpose. Students shall be allowed to make-up work missed during such absences.

SCHOOL PARTICIPATION ABSENCES
Students who are away from school because of participation in official school-sponsored activities shall be marked present and allowed to make-up missed work. Students who are absent from school more than half the day must have permission from the principal to participate in any school extracurricular or co-curricular activities that day (athletic contest, cheerleading, scholars' bowl, etc.).

STUDENTS BEING CHECKED OUT OF SCHOOL
All parents/guardians or other authorized persons coming to school to check a student out of school must do so through the main office via the school's approved checkout plan. Such persons are not to go directly to classrooms for this purpose.

WITHDRAWALS
Parents should contact the school office regarding withdrawal procedures. A student leaving school or transferring to another school should return all school property, and pay for any outstanding debts. An official transcript of credits will not be sent to the school to which the student is transferring until all records are cleared.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM
Our mission is to provide nutritious meals to the students of Athens City Schools.

LUNCH NUMBERS AND LUNCH ACCOUNT
Athens City Schools uses a computerized system in the lunchrooms. This helps to expedite lunchroom lines and helps to lengthen the time your child has to eat breakfast and lunch. We utilize offer versus serve, which allow students to have different choices for each meal. Each student has an account with an assigned 4-digit number they enter or scan each time they go through the lunchroom line. Please make sure your child knows his/her 3, 4, 5-digit lunchroom number. Please make sure your child knows his/her lunch-number.The following are specific details that you will need to know:

Deposits
- Make directly into the student's account at the serving line.
- Make deposits on-line through the automated payment system (please refer to the Athens City Schools website for specific details).
- Send sibling's money separately if your child is participating
- If a student participates in our Free and Reduced Breakfast and Lunch Program, he/she may deposit funds into his/her account by entering his/her lunch number or online.
- Send ala carte money in an envelope marked with your child's name, homeroom teacher, and lunch number or pay online. See the Athens City School's website for specific details.
- If you are sending a check, please write your child's name and lunch number on the check.
- Checks must have a phone number on them. Please do not write a check for other purchases such as field trip money, fundraisers, etc. while paying for anything in the lunchroom.
- Only food eaten in the lunchroom can be purchased with the money you send to the lunchroom.
- Parents may put restrictions on what and when extra food items may be purchased.
- Any lunch balance can be requested for a refund or transfer to another lunch account in the district by the parent and/or guardian during the school year by contacting the lunchroom or central office.
- Any unclaimed balance remaining in a lunch account 30 days after the last day of school by a student who withdrew from the district during the school year or graduated will be moved to a CNP account and used to pay for any student lunch debt within the district. This shall not apply to unclaimed balances in CNP accounts for households that are approved for reduced price benefits, as Athens City Schools will make reasonable attempts to refund those balances.

Negative Balances
- We will notify you or your child when your child's account balance is depleted.
- Please send money the next school day to correct deficiencies or pay online anytime.
- The Board of Education strongly discourages the charging of foods and beverages to meal accounts **with negative balances.**
- Uncollected cafeteria charges constitute a bad debt and are not allowed.
- Extra servings and a la carte purchases are not allowed when a meal account has a negative balance.
- It is understood that the parent or guardian of any student who purchases foods and beverages from the Child Nutrition Program will provide funds through the meal account and is responsible for resolving all negative balances immediately.

Our primary goal is to feed our children the most nutritious meal with enough time to enjoy the meal. Students and parents are encouraged to take advantage of pre-payment and online payment options by depositing weekly or monthly amounts. The online payment option is available on your school website or www.acs-k12.org.

Important Information Related to Negative Balances

- On the last day of school, any money left in your child's account will automatically roll over to the next school year and any negative balances MUST be resolved.
- Seniors will need to deplete their lunch accounts before the last day of school or resolve any debts. Any negative balances MUST be resolved.

FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEAL APPLICATION

Athens City Schools makes available the online application for Free and Reduced Price Meals. The process is SAFE, SECURE, PRIVATE, and AVAILABLE anytime, anywhere! Visit your school website for a direct link.

Application Process for Free and Reduced Meals

- Athens City Schools encourages each family to complete an application.
- Applications located at each school office and Central Office or you can complete one online.
- Only one completed application per household is needed.
- List every child enrolled in the Athens City Schools System on the same application.
- You are responsible for paying full price for all meals until the Child Nutrition Program has processed your application.
- The application is processed as quickly as possible; however, it can take several days.
- Please complete your application as soon as possible and turn in immediately.
- If your child received free or reduced meals last year, you have to complete a new application each year.
- You have up to thirty- days (30) from the first day of school if you received free or reduced priced meal benefits in the previous school year to complete and submit another application. After the thirtieth (30^{th}) day, you no longer qualify for free or reduced benefits.
- Athens City Schools is an equal-opportunity employer and provider.

WELLNESS POLICY AND SCHOOL PARTIES

In an effort to decrease the rate of childhood obesity in the United States, the USDA made changes to the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program and to the amount and types of foods and drinks allowed during the school day. These foods will be replaced with more fruits and vegetables. A lunch must include a fruit and/or vegetable along with at least two to three other items with a total of at least three food components to count as a meal. Breakfast must include a fruit or juice plus 2 components to count as a meal. Fried foods will be limited.

Parties are not permitted during meal times. Contact your child's teacher and/or principal if you would like to bring a treat for a special occasion. We are requesting parties to include some healthy alternatives along with the usual cookies, cupcakes, etc. We ask for your support as we try to develop a healthy school environment for our children. If you would like a detailed explanation of the changes mandated from the USDA, please see our web site at www.acs-k12.org.

CALENDARS

2025-2026 Progress Report and Report Card Distribution Schedule

Grades 6-12	1st Nine Wks.	2nd Nine Wks.	3rd Nine Wks.	4th Nine Wks.
No. of days in 9 week grading period:	43	45	46	44
Grading period begins:	8-05-2025	10-13-2025	1-7-2026	3-23-2026
1st progress reports will be issued on:	8-27-2025	11-5-2025	1-28-2026	4-15-2026
2nd progress reports will be issued on:	9-17-2025	12-03-2025	2-25-2026	5-6-2026
End of 9 week grading period:	10-3-2025	12-19-2025	3-13-2026	5-21-2026
Report cards will be issued on:	10-15-2025	1-14-2026	3-25-2026	*Varies

*Athens Middle School – Report cards will be mailed as soon as they are available.
*Athens High School – Report cards may be picked up on Wednesday, May 28, 2025.

2025-2026 District Calendar

Teacher Workday, Professional Learning and Institute (no school for students)	July 29-August 4
Student Start Date (first day of school)	August 5
Labor Day Holiday	September 1
Fall Break	October 6-10
Veterans Day Holiday	November 11
eLearning for students (no in-person classes)	November 24
Teacher Workday (no school for students)	November 25
Thanksgiving Holidays	November 26-28
First Semester Ends/Early Dismissal	December 19
Christmas Holidays Begin	December 22
Teacher Workday	January 5
School PD Day	January 6
Students Return to School/2nd Semester Begins	January 7
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	January 19
Early Dismissal/Parent Conference Day	February 4
Presidents' Day	February 16
eLearning (AHS ONLY)	March 10
Spring Break	March 16-20
Early Dismissal/Parent Conference Day	April 15
ARS Graduation	May 19
AHS Graduation	May 21
Last Day of School for Students	May 21
Teacher Workday	May 22
Memorial Day	May 25
Juneteenth	June 19

Potential weather makeup days are included in the 2025- 2026 school calendar. The complete calendar is available on the district site at www.acs-k12.org/calenda

HEALTH SERVICES

The Health Services section of the student handbook is a basic overview and not intended to address all questions and concerns parents and/or students may have. Please refer to the Athens City Schools web site or school nurse for detailed plans for all health questions.

ALLERGY GUIDELINES
If a student has a SEVERE allergy, the student is required to have a signed health care provider statement indicating their allergy or intolerance and the type of reaction.

HEAD LICE
Pediculosis, more commonly known as head lice, is routinely found in elementary and middle school aged children. Head lice can affect children across all races and socioeconomic backgrounds. The following interventions are important to help control the spread of head lice in our school community:

- Students who are identified as having live lice: The school nurse will make all attempts to notify parents to pick their child up from school to treat and return to school following treatment, with either an over the counter or prescription lice killing product. The school nurse will recheck the student before being allowed to return to the classroom. They will not be permitted to re-enter the classroom until lice free.
- Students that have been cleared of lice will be re-examined in 14 calendar days by the school nurse. Students found to have head lice will once again be excluded from the classroom until lice free.
- Please examine your child's head regularly, especially behind his/her ears and at the nape of his/her neck for crawling lice and/or nits (eggs).
- Crawling lice and/or nits found within ¼ inch from the scalp are signs of a positive head lice infestation, which requires treatment with an over-the-counter or prescription lice-killing product. Students with active lice are not allowed to attend school and will be sent home. All infested family members must be treated, being careful to follow the product's direction carefully and completely.
- Please contact your child's school nurse if you have had to treat your child for head lice. She is available to serve as a resource to you and will need to check your child's head to ensure there are no remaining live lice prior to your child returning to his/her classroom.
- Head lice are a nuisance, but do NOT carry or transmit disease or infection. Mass screenings are no longer recommended and not found to be effective in the control of head lice.
- "No-nit" policies are no longer recommended. Therefore, students who have been treated and have no evidence of live lice when checked by the school nurse are able to return to their classroom. Students with nits and no evidence of live head lice will not be excluded from school.

HEALTH SCREENING
Students in grades K-12 are screened for vision and hearing as needs arise. Students in grades 5–9 (i.e., age 11-14 years) are screened annually for scoliosis (curvature of the spine) with signed parent permission only.

ILLNESS GUIDELINES

Fever: A student with a fever of 100.0 or greater should not come to school. A student at school with a fever of 100.0 or greater will be isolated from the classroom. If no one can be reached to pick up the student, 911 may be called to transport the student for medical treatment. This will depend on the assessment by the school nurse based on the clinical symptoms of the student. A student MUST be fever free for at least 24 hours **WITHOUT** the use of fever reducing medications (Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) before returning to school.
Headache: Many things such as fever, stress, sinuses, viral illnesses, and dehydration can cause headaches. When a student has a headache during school hours and the headache does not go away after 20-30 minutes, the student may be sent home.
Strep Throat: student may return to school with evidence of physician diagnosis and a minimum of 24 hours of antibiotic treatment

Vomiting: Students should not return to school until they have NOT been vomiting for 24 hours. Note: Nurses will use their judgment when requesting students to be sent home from school for vomiting. Example: If a student gets too hot in P.E., they probably do not need to be sent home and do not need to stay out of school the next day.
Diarrhea: Certain forms of diarrhea can be contagious. Your child should stay home if he/she has had diarrhea (two times or more) prior to the start of the school day. Children with diarrhea at school will be sent home and should not return to school until no diarrhea for 24 hours.
Abdominal Pain: Any form of abdominal pain in a child should be taken seriously. Many things cause abdominal pain. A student who complains of abdominal pain should not come to school until the problem has been identified. Any student with abdominal pain that lasts longer than 15-30 minutes may be sent home and should be seen by a health care provider.
Cough: A cough that is chronic can spread germs and be disruptive in a classroom. Please take this into consideration when deciding to send a student to school. The school nurse may evaluate a student with a cough and if determined to be excessive may be sent home. If a student brings cough drops or cough medicine to school, the student must have a Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form (PPA) completed and signed by a parent or guardian. If this medicine is required longer than 2 weeks, a PPA must be signed by a physician or practitioner for the medicine to remain on campus.
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis): Pink eye can be very contagious. If the white of your child's eye is red and has a thick yellow or greenish-colored drainage, you should keep your child at home until treated. Students may return to school after a minimum of 24 hours of treatment.
Impetigo: Students may be returned to school with evidence of physician diagnosis and a minimum of 24 hours of antibiotic treatment. Lesions must be covered when the student returns to school.
Ringworm: Students must be treated with proper medication for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school and lesions must be covered when the student returns to school.
Hand, Foot And Mouth Disease*:* Students may return to school with a physician's diagnosis and excuse and must be fever free for 24 hours before returning.
Rash: There are all types of rashes. Some are nothing more than irritated skin, while others are very contagious. The guidelines include:

- Either clothing or a bandage MUST cover all rashes.
- A student with an undiagnosed rash lasting more than 2 days may be required to have a medical doctor's note in order to return to school.
- A student with a scalp rash may be required to have a medical doctor's note in order to return to school.
- A medical doctor should evaluate a student with a rash that is associated with a fever and/or cough.
- A medical doctor should evaluate a student with spotted rashes on the stomach, back, arms or legs.

IMMUNIZATIONS
Alabama law requires all students to have a current Immunization Card (Blue Card). The original Blue Card is kept on file by the student's school and must be updated per state guidelines.
Children enrolled in daycare, Head Start, and public or private school in Alabama must have a valid Alabama Certificate of Immunization on file at the facility that they attend. The certificate may be obtained from the physician or clinic that administers the vaccine or may be completed by any county health department in the state if the parent presents a vaccine record from the provider. For students who are moving to Alabama, out-of-state vaccine records must be transferred to the Alabama Certificate of Immunization prior to day care, Head Start, or school entry. This may be accomplished by taking a vaccine record from the provider to the local county health department, or, if the family has chosen a physician in Alabama, the physician may transpose the record. *There can be no handwriting on an immunization card for any reason.* These will not be accepted.

The state of Alabama does not recognize philosophical, moral, or ethical exemption from vaccination. A physician may issue a medical exemption or an Alabama Certificate of Religious Exemption may be obtained from the local county health department.

Please contact your health care provider if you have any questions.

MEDICATION PROTOCOL

All medications require parents to complete the Alabama State Department of Education School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization (PPA) forms. New forms must be renewed at the beginning of every school year and anytime the doctor makes a change to prescribed medication. Only the prescriber (MD, NP, PA) can change a medication order (dose, frequency, specific time, etc.). Changes to the medication orders by a parent/guardian will not be accepted. *Note: Only one medication per Prescriber/Parent Authorization (PPA) form is acceptable. If a student has multiple medications, a separate PPA must be completed and signed for each medication.*

Prescription Medications

All medications must be hand delivered by the parent or guardian to the nurse. This includes all students who "Self-Administer" and/or "Self Carry" medications. The nurse must verify all orders before students are allowed to carry and self-administer their medications. The nurse or certified medication assistant will count all controlled substances in the presence of the parent or guardian. Students are not allowed to carry medication on them while at school without proper physician orders giving permission to carry medication. The student is not allowed to "self-carry" a controlled substance. This medication will be kept in the nurse's office.

ALL prescription medications must:

- Be brought in by a parent or guardian to the nurse and they must sign a proper medication form that indicates the medications were received, counted and secured by the school.
- Be in the original container with a current pharmacy prescription label attached. Have the correct student's name on the prescription label and identical to the PPA. A valid date of expiration. Expired medications will not be accepted.
- Not be mixed with any other medications (unless indicated on the label).
- Have a completed Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form (PPA) signed by a doctor and parent/guardian per prescription.
- *"Use As Directed" is not acceptable per state guidelines.*

Over-The-Counter Medications

Over the counter medications will be administered as follows:

- Requires completion of the Prescriber/Parent Authorization form signed by the prescriber (MD, NP, PA). All OTC meds staying longer than 2 weeks in the nurse's office require the signature of a prescriber (MD, NP, PA) per Alabama guidelines.
- Must be provided by the parent in the original sealed container identifying the medication name, dosage, and manufacturer's labeling.
- Distributed according to manufacturer's recommendations only.
- If prescribed in excess of the manufacturer's recommended dosage, the parent/guardian will be
- required to complete a new Prescriber/Parent Authorization form and have it signed by their physician.
- No aspirin or aspirin containing medication (salicylate) will be given to children or teenagers under the age of **16** years of age, unless prescribed by a physician.
- Food supplements, natural substances and herbs are not without potential harm, including life-threatening conditions. Herbal products and dietary supplements have not been subject to the scrutiny of the Food and Drug administration (FDA) and in the United States, as in most countries, dosage and purity have not been regulated for these products. School personnel should not give any substance that could be construed as a drug or medication, including natural remedies, herbs, and nutritional supplements, without the explicit order of an authorized prescriber, and reasonable information regarding therapeutic and untoward effects.

Narcotics will NOT be allowed to be given at school.
CBD oil will NOT be allowed to be given at school.

ALL Non-Prescription medications must have:

- A new container that is unopened and sealed.
- No other medications mixed inside the container.
- A valid date of expiration. Expired medications will not be accepted.
- The student's name clearly marked on the original container.
- A completed Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form (PPA) on file.
- ***The following are procedures for medications that students may need to possess on them for self-medication:*** *Note: A parent must sign the "Self-Administration" area of the PPA and sign the "Parent Authorization" area of the PPA.*
- Cough drops are considered OTC meds and will require a PPA form.
- Inhalers - The school nurse must have a copy of the prescription label and box in her office. If the box is unavailable, the pharmacy can provide the inhalers prescription label.
- Epi-Pens (TwinJect, Epinephrine, Adrenalin) - All students with Epi-Pens, TwinJects, and
- Other pre-filled single-use epinephrine auto injectors must have a copy of the original pharmacy prescription label attached to the cartridge holder or the original box.
- Students may only carry medications indicated for a "chronic" health condition (asthma, diabetes, seizures, etc.). The doctor must indicate the "chronic" condition on the PPA and check the "kept on person" and/or "self-medication" box on the PPA.
- The parent or guardian will be notified when their child's medication is completed or becomes out of date. Expired medications will not be given at school.
- All student medications must be picked up by the last day of school, before summer break, or the
- medications will be destroyed per federal regulations (in the presence of a witness, as indicated). No medications will be kept at school over the summer.
- Some medications are not to be given during school hours. The school nurse reserves the right to
- refuse to administer certain medications unless a doctor has specifically written that the medication be given during school hours.
- When a student will be attending an alternative school, it is the parent's responsibility to
- transport his or her child's medicine to and from the student's home school and to and from the alternative school.
- The first dose of any new medicine should not be given at school. Athens City Schools follows the
- State of Alabama guidelines for the administration of medications to students. Only school nurses and certified medication assistants are legally allowed to administer medications to students in the State of Alabama.

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE AND VACCINE

Meningococcal disease is a serious illness, caused by bacteria. It is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children 2 – 18 years old in the United States. The bacteria that cause meningococcal disease are very common.

Meningococcal vaccine: Who should get the vaccine and when?

MCV4, or the meningococcal vaccine, is recommended for all children 11 – 12 years of age and for unvaccinated adolescents at high school entry (15 years of age). High school seniors should also consider obtaining the vaccine prior to entering college, especially if they are planning on living in a dormitory. Please consult your physician or local health department for more information. For more information concerning this or other vaccine recommendations visit www.adph.org/immunizations.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN
EPA Regulations require local schools to notify parents, teachers and employees that there is an Asbestos Management Plan on file in the school office. If you have any questions, please contact the school principal.

FIRE AND SEVERE WEATHER DRILLS
Fire and tornado drills are held throughout the school year. Students are requested to move in an orderly manner. Upon completion of the drill, the all-clear signal will be sounded, at which time all persons will return to their classrooms.

TORNADO WATCH – REQUIRED PROCEDURE
In the event a tornado watch is issued for areas in which a school is located, the principal or his or her designee of that school shall take all actions as specified in the approved Civil Defense plan. When a tornado watch is in effect at the conclusion of the normal school day, students may be released according to regular dismissal and transportation plans.

TORNADO WARNING – REQUIRED PROCEDURE
In the event a tornado warning is issued for areas in which a school is located, the principal or his or her designee at that school should take all actions specified in the approved Civil Defense Plan. If a tornado warning is in effect, students may not be released pursuant to regular transportation plans; however, students may be released during a tornado warning to students' parents/guardians, provided said parents/guardians come to the school and assume custody of their child.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS
The Superintendent will close schools when weather conditions are too hazardous for safe operations. Parents will be notified by an automated phone system as well as it being posted on the school website and announcements on television and/or radio.

SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS
All Athens City Schools have an updated Safety plan. The Safety plan addresses all hazards that may affect the school.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
The Board is committed to the belief that extracurricular activities are a part of the learning process and that participation in athletics, cheerleading, majorettes, flag corps, performing bands, co- curricular activities, and performing groups of the JROTC requires responsibility on the part of the student to maintain certain academic standards. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board that all students participating in the above noted extracurricular activities shall meet the eligibility requirements as set forth in the Handbook of the Alabama High School Athletic Association.

Parents /guardians of students participating in the above activities will be required to sign a release form and present a copy of proof of health insurance.

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE SCREENING PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – ACBOE POLICY JHBAB

General Policy
Practical experience and research have proven that even small quantities of narcotics, alcohol, or abused prescription drugs can impair judgment and reflexes, which can create unsafe conditions for students. Even when not readily apparent, this impairment can have serious results for students engaged in activities. Drug-using extracurricular activity students are a threat to co- participants, other students, and themselves, and may make injurious errors. The use of drugs, alcohol, and any prohibited substances by a student is illegal. For these reasons, the Athens City Board of Education has adopted a policy that all extracurricular activity students must remain substance free. The drug and alcohol screening procedures provided for herein will deter the use of drugs, alcohol, and other prohibited substances by students engaged in extracurricular activities. Furthermore, these procedures are intended (i) to create and maintain a safe, drug-free environment for all extracurricular activity students, (ii) to encourage any extracurricular activity students with a dependence on, or addiction to drugs to seek help in overcoming the problem, (iii) to reduce the likelihood of incidents of accidental personal injury and/or damage to students or property, (iv) to minimize the likelihood that school property will be used for illicit drug activities, (v) to protect the reputation of the school system and its students, and (vi) to deter drug use among students.

STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS
School-sponsored clubs and organizations shall be under the direct control of school officials. Such clubs and organizations shall not be affiliated or associated with any political or religious organization or any organization that denies membership on the basis of race, creed, color, or political beliefs. All school-sponsored clubs and organizations shall be sponsored by a member of the faculty approved by the school's principal and shall have a constitution approved by the Student Council or by the school's principal. New clubs can only gain approval per school principal in accordance with board policy. Each principal will provide a list of all school sponsored clubs, its constitution, and the selection/induction process to be posted on the school system website prior to the beginning of each school year.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS
Local schools may permit student publications, provided the school principal approves the publication and acts as the editor and chief. A certified staff member shall serve as advisor and consultant to all students in the participation of all student publications.



ACS ATHLETIC FACILITIES GOLDEN GUIDELINES

In an effort to make all Athens City Schools athletic event experiences GOLDEN for all spectators, fans and families, please take a moment to review the Golden Guidelines, implemented in 2022. Thank you for supporting Athens City Schools Athletics. It's great to be a Golden Eagle!

- All children in 8th grade and below and non-school age children must be accompanied and supervised by an adult.
- All students are expected to be seated and in the stands unless visiting the concessions or restrooms.
- Students are not permitted to loiter in groups outside of the seating area.
- Students who do not follow the ACS Athletic Facilities guidelines will be required to sit with the adult they arrived with or asked to leave the game.

Our goal is to always have a safe and enjoyable environment at our stadium, gymnasiums, fields and more. We appreciate your cooperation. Thank you for supporting Athens City Schools Athletics. It's great to be a Golden Eagle!

STUDENT CONDUCT

ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE
Principals and school officials are instructed to cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies and are to report to them any and all information that would be considered beneficial in their efforts to stem illegal drug use. Law enforcement agencies are permitted to make periodic visits to all schools to detect the presence of illegal drugs and may use any lawful means at their disposal to detect the presence of such substances. The visits will be unannounced to anyone except the Superintendent (or designee) and principal.

The Board may withdraw the privilege of attending public school from those students who have been found to violate Board policy and/or the law regarding illegal substances brought before them. Before the students can return to school they must produce a negative urinalysis test. The urinalysis test must be conducted by a school board approved agency and funded by the parent or guardian.

Sale and Transfer
The sale, transfer, and/or attempt to sell and/or transfer of controlled substances, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, opiates, alcoholic beverages, or intoxicants of any kind is a Class III Major Offense.

Any person who sells, transfers, and/or attempts to sell and/or transfer controlled substances, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, opiates, alcoholic beverages, or intoxicant of any kind on school property or during a school related activity should be subjected to criminal prosecution.

The Superintendent or designee may recommend for expulsion from Athens City Schools any student who sells, transfers, or attempts to sell or transfer controlled substances, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, opiates, alcoholic beverages, or intoxicant of any kind.

Use and Possession
Use and/or possession of controlled substances, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, opiates, alcoholic beverages, or intoxicants of any kind is a Class III Major Offense.

Any person who uses and/or possesses, or attempts to use and/or possess controlled substances, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, opiates, alcoholic beverages, or intoxicant of any kind on school property or during a school related activity should be subjected to criminal prosecution.

The Superintendent or designee may recommend for expulsion from Athens City Schools any student who uses or possesses, or attempts to use or possess controlled substances, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, opiates, alcoholic beverages, or intoxicant of any kind.

This policy shall not be read to contradict federal and state laws/regulations concerning students with disabilities. When disciplinary measures involve students with disabilities, said law/regulations shall prevail in the case of any inconsistency with this policy.

Students will not be allowed to appear upon the campus, or at any school sponsored activity, function, or event not on campus, during the day or evening of that same day after having, on that said day, consumed or used or possessed any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Violators will be subjected to the penalties and punishments herein defined. For purposes of this policy, the phrase “alcoholic beverages” includes, but is not limited to, any drinks, beverages, powders, or substances that are or can be used to deliver intoxicating alcohol to a person consuming or using the same.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Section 1: Bullying, Intimidation, Violence, and Threats of Violence Prohibited.
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 will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanctions as specified in the Student Code of Conduct, subject to the investigating school administrator's authority and decision.

Section 2: Definitions
In this policy, these terms shall have the following meanings:
"Bullying" means a continuous pattern of intentional behavior on or off of 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 of the categories of personal characteristics contained in this policy. To constitute bullying, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:

- Place a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
- Have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student.
- Have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of the school.
- Have the effect of creating a hostile environment in the school, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function.
- Have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

Hostile environment 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.
Violence means the unjustified infliction of physical force by a student with the intent to cause injury to another student or damage to the property of another student.
Threat 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.
Threat of violence means an unjustified expression of intention to inflict injury or damage that is made by a student and directed to another student.
Intimidation means an unjustified threat or other action that is intended to cause fear or apprehension in a student.
Student as used in this policy means a person who is enrolled in Athens City public school system.

Section 3: Description of Behavior Expected of Students

Students are expected to treat other students with courtesy, respect, and dignity and comply with the Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected and required

- to comply with the requirements of law, policy, regulation, and rules prohibiting bullying, violence, or intimidation;
- to refrain from inflicting or threatening to inflict violence, injury, or damage to the person or property of another student, and
- 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.

Bullying, intimidation, violence, or threats of violence are prohibited and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary consequences and/or 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 student:

- Race
- Sex
- Religion
- National origin
- Disability

Section 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.

Section 5: Reporting, Investigation, and Complaint Resolution Procedures

- Complaints alleging violations of this policy may be made on a Board-approved complaint form available in the Student/Parent Handbook, on the website, or at the school's office. The complaint must be delivered to the principal or the principal's designee either by email, mail or personal delivery. 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.

- Upon receipt of the complaint, the principal or the principal's designee will 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 a reasonably prompt investigation of the complaint. The investigation will entail the gathering of relevant facts and evidence 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 violations(s) may also be imposed by the principal or the school system.

- 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.

Section 6: 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 student handbook that is distributed to each student at the beginning of each school year.

ATHENS CITY SCHOOLS

Form for Reporting a Complaint of Bullying, Violence, Threats of Violence, Intimidation, or Cyberbullying

This form may be used by a student or a student's parent (or guardian) to submit a complaint regarding Harassment, Violence, Threats of Violence, Intimidation, Bullying or Cyberbullying. This form should be submitted to the principal of the student's school via mail, email or delivered in person to the principal's office.

Student's Name:_____School:_____Grade: _____

Home Phone:_____Email address: _____

Home Address:_____

Preferred method of contact (provide address, e-mail, or phone number): _____

Describe the conduct/circumstances leading to the complaint, including all pertinent facts supporting the complaint (including but not limited to, the specific location(s) of the incident(s)).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Attach additional paper, if needed.)

When did this happen (over what time period if continuing or more than once) (include date(s) and time(s), if available):

_____

_____

_____

(Attach additional paper, if needed.)

Identify the person(s) whose actions led to the filing of the complaint, and all witnesses or other persons having information that is relevant to the complaint.

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Attach additional paper, if needed.)

OTHER INFORMATION:

- I believe the incident in question was motivated by the following characteristic(s) (Check All That Apply):
  _____Race
  _____Sex
  _____Religion
  _____National Origin
  _____Disability
  _____An imbalance of strength, power, or influence
  _____Other personal characteristics

- The incident resulted in a threat of suicide by the victim: ___Yes ___No

Attach copies of documents or other evidence that is relevant to the complaint.

I affirm that to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing information is true, accurate, and complete.

Student Signature:_____Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature:_____Date: _____

Persons may refer to the *Athens City Schools Jamari Terrell Williams Student Bullying Prevention Act Policy* (which can be found in the Student Handbook and online at *www.acs-k12.org*) for more information. Please note that the submission of a complaint does not automatically substantiate that misconduct has occurred, and the school administration has the prerogative to investigate any allegations of wrongdoing.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
In order to establish and maintain an educational climate conducive to learning, the Board permits reasonable corporal punishment of students in the schools. In all cases, corporal punishment shall be administered in accordance with Board Policy JDA.

DETENTION
The principal or designee has the authority to assign students to detention on campus before or after the regular school day for a specified period of time. After School Detention (ASD) will not exceed 60 minutes as a disciplinary action. Students will be given a one-day notice of their detention hall assignment. The parents or guardians are responsible for providing transportation in these cases. Work or lack of transportation will not excuse a student from detention

DRESS CODE (GRADES 6-12)
1. Shoes must be worn in school for student safety. Bare feet, heelys, house shoes, boots with chains, steel toes, or other metal reinforcements decorations are not allowed.
2. Except for religious or medical reasons, head coverings may not be worn on campus. (This includes, but is not limited to, hats, sweatbands, visors, hairnets, hair rollers, scarves, toboggans, hoods, bandannas, sunglasses, etc.).
3. All students are required to wear their hair in such a manner that it is not considered disruptive, unkempt, unclean, or impairing to the vision, or disruptive to the educational environment.
4. No attire with written or printed reference to any type of alcoholic beverage, illegal substance, lewd, vulgar, indecent, or sexually suggestive subjects may be worn.
5. Students are not to wear clothing that reveals the body in an inappropriate manner.
    a. NO transparent or see-through attire.
    b. Backless, one-shoulder, off-the-shoulder, midriff, crop-top, low-cut (front or back), or halter-type blouses will not be allowed.
    c. Sleeveless athletic jerseys are acceptable if a short sleeve t-shirt is worn under the jersey.
    d. No blouses with open backs/sides or low fronts will be allowed.
    e. Appropriate undergarments must be worn at all times and must not be visible.
    f. All tops must have 2-inch minimum width shoulder straps.
6. Garments that extend to within 3 inches of the top of the knee will be allowed.
7. All clothing should be neat, clean, and in good repair.
8. No clothing with holes higher than 3 inches above the knee will be allowed.
9. When tights, leggings or leotards are worn, the garment worn over them must fall below the hips and adequately cover the front and back private areas.
10. Pajamas are not allowed.
11. No jewelry or other items are allowed that pose a safety risk and/or a distraction to the educational process. Tattoos that are vulgar, gang related, obscene, or that cause a distraction to the learning environment, must be covered.
12. Excessively large/tight clothing will not be permitted.
13. Chains/spikes or spike jewelry or belts with chains or spikes are not allowed.
14. Clothing must be worn as the manufacturer intended.
15. School officials will determine the appropriateness of attire.
16. Any clothing/appearance that disrupts the teaching and learning process is prohibited.

Violation of the Dress Code policy shall be documented and result in disciplinary action as follows:
- First offense: Warning and student will return to class if violation can be corrected.
- Second offense: In-school-suspension for the remainder of the day and parent notification of the violation and future consequences if additional violation
- Third offense: In-school-suspension for three (3) days and parent notification of the violation and future consequences if additional violation
- Fourth offense and all subsequent offenses: In-School suspension for 5 days plus one (+1) day added for each offense thereafter.

Note: the fourth violation and beyond are considered defiance of school authority and are not treated as dress code offenses.

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS
A student is prohibited from having in his/her possession firearms of any kind, at any time, and at any place in a school building, on school grounds, on Board property, on school buses, or while attending any Board sponsored or sanctioned event, program, activity, or function. For purposes of this policy, the term "firearm" has the same definition as is found in 18 U.S.C §921.

Weapons
A student is prohibited from having in his/her possession a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument of any kind, at any time, and at any place in a school building, on school grounds, on Board property, on school buses, or while attending any Board sponsored or sanctioned event, program, activity, or function.

Penalties for Violations
Students who are found in violation of the above policy may be placed on immediate suspension from school. In addition, parents and police authorities will be notified.

Students may be expelled for possession of weapons of any kind, at any time, on school property, or school sponsored functions.

Students who bring a weapon to school, or are found in possession of a weapon at school, may be referred to the juvenile delinquency system or criminal justice system. Expulsion may be required for any student who violates this policy with respect to a firearm for a period of not less than one year, subject to § 16-1-24.3 of the Code of Alabama, as amended.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION
In-school suspension is a structured disciplinary action in which a student is isolated or removed from the regular classroom and extracurricular activities but is not dismissed from the regular school environment.

NO FIGHT POLICY
The Board will not tolerate fighting or an assault and battery. When a fight or an assault occurs, in addition to normal school discipline, the principal or designee may notify appropriate law enforcement officials. Police may escort the offending student(s) off campus. In appropriate cases, school personnel may request warrants of arrest.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION OR ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT
The Board recognizes its authority to maintain good order and discipline within the schools of the school system. Therefore, the Board gives school principals the authority to suspend a student from school for just cause, and/or to place a student into an alternative school setting. However, the principal shall be required to advise the Superintendent or designee of all student out-of-school suspensions and alternative school placements.

Authority
The school principal or designee has the authority to suspend regular education students from school, or to place the student in an alternative school setting, for up to ten (10) school days per incident/disciplinary infraction. Prior to suspending or placing students in this manner, the student will be afforded minimal due process with the school principal or designee as set forth in Policy JCAA. However, where a student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, such student may be immediately removed from school, and in such cases, the minimal due process set forth in Policy JCAA should follow as soon as practicable.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION, LONG-TERM ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENT, AND EXPULSION
In more serious situations, a student may face more serious disciplinary consequences, including long-term suspension (more than 10 and less than 90 days per incidence), long-term alternative school placement (more than 15 and less than 90 days per incidence), or expulsion (more than 90 days per incidence). In these cases, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The student is afforded an opportunity for a disciplinary hearing.
2. The student and parent/guardian receive written notice of the disciplinary hearing. (If the notice is not responded to by a parent/guardian, the hearing shall be waived). The student has the right to waive the hearing and accept the discipline.
3. If parent/guardian responds to the notice, a disciplinary hearing shall occur within 10 school days after the initial suspension from school unless good cause is otherwise shown or agreed upon by parties.
4. The student may be represented at the hearing by legal counsel or another advocate of the student's choice at the student's expense.
5. At least 5 days before the hearing, the student, parent/guardian, and/or legal counsel/advocate, may review information that may be presented as evidence at the hearing in accordance with federal and state student record laws and regulations.
6. At the hearing, school officials shall offer evidence that the student violated the code of student conduct or state law.
7. The student may present a defense.
8. Each party to the hearing, upon request, shall receive an electronic or written record of the hearing from the Board of Education.
9. Within five (5) school days after the hearing, a written decision will be sent to the student and parent/guardian.
10. A student has the right to appeal the decision by filing an action in juvenile court pursuant to Ala. Code §12-15-115. Students wishing to appeal must file a notice with the local juvenile court within 14 days of the Board's decision.
11. *More information and detail can be found about these procedures in school board Policy JDE.*

WAIVER OF STUDENT DISCIPLINARY HEARING
A parent/guardian and student may choose to waive the student disciplinary hearing and accept the school's recommended disciplinary response for the violation of the code of conduct by reviewing and signing a disciplinary hearing waiver prior to the scheduled disciplinary hearing date.
Any efforts to negotiate the school's disciplinary recommendation relative to the incident should be concluded prior to the signing of the waiver in which the stated rule violation(s) and disciplinary recommendations are noted. By signing and submitting a hearing waiver to the school, the parent/guardian and student agree to and accept the disciplinary recommendation of the school and waive their rights to challenge and/or appeal the waiver at a later date.

A disciplinary waiver is not final until reviewed and approved by the Superintendent or designee.

READMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS, LONG-TERM ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENTS, AND EXPULSIONS
The student and his/her parents or guardians are required to meet with the principal or designee to discuss conditions and terms related to the suspension.

STUDENTS LEAVING SCHOOL SITES
No suspended student shall be allowed to leave the school campus during the school day until the student's parent, guardian, or proper authority assumes responsibility for him/her. When a student's parent, guardian, or other designated individual(s) cannot be notified, the student must remain on the school campus until the end of the school day. At the end of the school day, the student will return home via normal transportation methods.

IMMEDIATE REMOVAL OF STUDENTS
Immediate removal of a student from a school campus is justified only when his/her presence threatens himself/herself, endangers school property, or seriously disrupts the orderly educational process. If immediate removal is necessary, attempts must be made by the principal or designee to notify a parent or guardian.

FORCED REMOVAL OF STUDENTS
Principals may call upon law enforcement agencies to remove students who create material and/or substantial disruption by endangering themselves, school personnel, other students, or school property. The principal will notify the Superintendent regarding forced removals.

SUSPENSION DURING EXAMS
When a student is suspended during nine weeks/midterm/final examinations, he/she may be given the opportunity to take missed examinations at a time specified by the principal or designee. The following terms/conditions apply during the time students are on out-of-school suspension:

- While suspended, a student may not attend or participate in school functions or enter school property for any reason.
- When a student is suspended, his/her teachers must be notified immediately concerning the date and duration of the suspension. Suspension is an excused absence
- A suspended student must comply with the full length of the suspension unless the principal approves an alternative.

Students with Disabilities
This policy shall not be read to contradict federal and state laws/regulations concerning students with disabilities. When disciplinary measures involve students with disabilities, said law/regulations shall prevail in the case of any inconsistency with this policy.

SMOKING/USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS
Students will not be permitted to possess, smoke, or use tobacco products in any form while in school buildings, on school property, in school buses, during any school sponsored activities, or on the way to and from school sponsored activities. For purposes of this policy, the phrase “tobacco products” includes, but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, pipes, lighters, matches, electronic cigarettes/vapor, synthetic nicotine products, etc.

REFUSAL TO IDENTIFY SELF
All students must, upon request, identify themselves to school authorities while in school buildings, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored events, and failing to do so constitutes a violation of board policy. A person who refuses to identify himself/herself upon request of school officials will be considered trespassing.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT
Sexual Harassment Prohibited
In accordance with Title IX and its regulations (34 CFR Part 106), the Board does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in the education programs and activities that it operates, and it strictly prohibits such discrimination on the basis of sex or gender in its education programs or activities, including sexual harassment, as defined by law and Board policy. Inquiries regarding the application of Title IX regulations may be referred to the Board’s Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both. Sexual harassment complaints will be filed and reviewed under this policy. All other complaints under Title IX will be filed and reviewed according to the Board’s general complaint and grievance procedures.

Sexual harassment in any form that is directed toward students and/or employees is prohibited. Persons who violate the policy will be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences up to and including

termination (for employees) and expulsion (for students) as dictated by the nature and severity of the violation and other relevant considerations. If appropriate, the circumstances constituting the violation may be reported to law enforcement agencies or child welfare agencies for further investigation and action.

Title IX Coordinator
The Superintendent is authorized and directed to designate a Title IX Coordinator to oversee implementation and enforcement of this policy, as well as compliance with applicable procedures, rules and regulations. The Title IX Coordinator shall receive complaints of prohibited conduct, coordinate investigations, and ensure adequate training. Contact information for the Title IX Coordinator can be found on the district webpage and in the student handbook.

Sexual Harassment Defined
Title IX regulations define sexual harassment to include one or more of the following:

- An employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the school/school system on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo sexual harassment);
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school/school system's education program or activity; or Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, as each of those terms is defined by federal statutes enumerated in the Title IX regulations, 34 C.F.R. § 106.30(a).

Examples of Sexual Harassment
The following are examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment,depending on the circumstances:

- Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature, including graphic comments, the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, and sexual propositions;
- Repeated unwelcome sexual advances, solicitations of sexual activity, or sexual contact;
- Unwelcomed, inappropriate sexual touching;
- Demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats with regard to the student's educational status.

Employees and students should note that misconduct falling outside this policy may nonetheless violate other Board policies (such as the student code of conduct) and thus be otherwise subject to disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures Authorized
The Superintendent is authorized and directed to establish, implement and revise more detailed sexual harassment complaint procedures in compliance with Title IX that are designed to provide students and employees who believe that they are victims of unlawful sexual harassment with a thorough, discreet, and prompt internal procedure for investigating and resolving sexual harassment complaints. The process and procedures will be drafted so as to provide supportive measures, facilitate the gathering of relevant facts and evidence, permit timely assessment of the merits of the complaint, provide an opportunity for informal resolution of the complaint where appropriate, eliminate any harassment that is established by the investigation, and prevents any retaliation based upon the filing of the complaint. The procedures will reflect due regard for the legal rights and interests of all persons involved in the complaint, and will be drafted, explained, and implemented so as to comply with federal regulations, and to be understandable and accessible to all student/employee population groups and ages. Initial Confrontation of Accused Harasser Not Required

A student or employee who invokes the harassment complaint procedure will not be required to present the complaint to the accused or suspected harasser for resolution.

Reporting
Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, by electronic mail, to the Title IX Coordinator. Students will also be permitted to report allegations of suspected harassment to any appropriate Board administrator, teacher, counselor, or employee, and such persons have a duty to promptly refer such allegations to the Title IX Coordinator or to take such action as may be required by the procedures established under "Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures Authorized" above. In no case will any employee who is the subject of a complaint be permitted to conduct, review, or otherwise exercise decision-making responsibility in connection with the processing of the complaint.

Notice of Policy to be Promulgated
The Superintendent will promulgate and disseminate this policy and the complaint procedures to applicants for admission and employment, the schools, parents and legal guardians, unions and professional organizations, and will take such other steps and measures as may be reasonably available and expedient for informing the school community of the conduct prohibited by this policy and the recourse available to students who believe that they have been subjected to sexual harassment.

Confidentiality
To the extent possible, reports of sexual harassment will be kept confidential; however,complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Retaliation Prohibited
No retaliation or adverse action may be imposed as a result of a good faith complaint or report of sexual harassment. Complaints alleging such retaliation may be made in the same manner as a complaint for sexual harassment. False accusations that are made in bad faith or for improper reasons may result in disciplinary action.

Penalties for Failing to Cooperate with Investigation
All employees must cooperate with any investigation regarding allegations of sexual harassment under this policy. Any employee who impedes or unreasonably refuses to cooperate with an investigation regarding allegations of sexual harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES
Disciplinary Consequences for Violations
No student may possess a Wireless Communication Device (WCD) in any public elementary or secondary school building or on the grounds thereof during the instructional day unless the WCD is turned off and stored off the student's person.

Best practice is to leave all wireless communication devices at home. Athens City Schools is not responsible for storage, security, loss, and/or damage of electronic devices.

Violation of this policy shall result in disciplinary action as follows:

- **FIRST OFFENSE:** WCD is confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day.
- **SECOND OFFENSE:** WCD is confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Student receives one day of ISS. Parent is notified.
- **THIRD OFFENSE:** WCD is confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Student receives five days ISS. Parent is notified.
- **FOURTH OFFENSE:** WCD is confiscated and parent must pick up from the school office. Student receives 10 days ISS.
- **NOTE:** Further offenses (beyond four) are considered defiance of school authority.

Failure to comply with directions of staff and/or consequences may result in additional disciplinary action

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Classification of Violations
Violations of the Code of Conduct are grouped into the three classifications of minor, intermediate, and major offenses. Each classification is followed by a disciplinary procedure to be implemented by the principal or designees.

Procedures for the Administration of Formal Disciplinary Action
In the following classes of violations and disciplinary procedures, it is understood that the principal or designee shall hear the student's explanation and consult further with school personnel, if necessary, before determining the classification of the violation. Each classroom teacher will deal with general classroom disruption only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective or the disruption is severe, should the student be referred to the principal or designee.

MINOR OFFENSES – CLASS I

1.1 **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.
1.2 **Unauthorized organizations**: Any on-campus participation in non-sanctioned fraternities, sororities, secret societies, or non-affiliated clubs.
1.3 **Excessive Tardiness**: Reporting late to school or class.
1.4 **Use of profane or obscene language**
1.5 **Non-conformity to dress code**
1.6 **Minor disruption on a school bus**
1.7 **Inappropriate public display of affection**
1.8 **Unauthorized absence from class or school**
1.9 **Repeated refusal to complete class assignments and failure to bring required instructional materials to class**
1.10 **Minor vehicular violations**
1.11 **Littering of school property**
1.12 **Academic dishonesty**
1.13 **Soliciting, procuring, causing, encouraging, aiding, abetting, or assisting another to commit any of the Class I offenses**
1.14 **Any other violation of school rule or disruption that has a detrimental impact on school activities or the educational process that the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category.**

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES – CLASS I
Administrative responses for Class I violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Student conference
- Parent contact(s)/conference(s)
- Detention
- Suspension from bus
- Corporal punishment
- In-school suspension
- Principal's probation

INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES – CLASS II

2.1 **Defiant use of a Wireless Communication Device or Student Dress Code**
2.2 Defiance of Board employee's authority
2.3 **A. Possession**, control, or use of tobacco products, lighters, matches
B. **Vape/Vapor possession:** Possession of a device used to inhale and exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance.
C. Vape/Vapor Usage: Using a device used to inhale and exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or

flavoring or other substance
D. Vape/Vapor sale: Selling of a device used to inhale and exhale vapor containing nicotine and/or flavoring or other substance

2.4 Intentional touching, striking, or badgering of another
2.5 Fighting: Any physical conflict involving two or more individuals
2.6 Vandalism: Intentional and deliberate action resulting in injury or damages of less than $200 to public property or the real or personal property of another
2.7 Stealing – Larceny – Petty Theft: The intentional, taking and/or carrying away of public, real, or personal property valued at less than $100 belonging to or in the possession or custody of another.
2.8 **Possession of stolen property**
2.9 **Threats to commit extortion:** NOTE: Completion of the threat, either by the victim complying with the demands or the carrying out of the threats against the victim, constitutes a Class III offense.
2.10 **Trespassing:** The willful 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.
2.11 **Possession of fireworks or ammunition**
2.12 **Inappropriate sexual behavior (verbal, written or physical)**
2.13 **Use of obscene manifestations (verbal, written, physical) toward another person (student, visitor, board employee, etc.**
2.14 **Verbal assault upon a Board employee ~~or~~ visitor** or student.
2.15 **Verbal Abuse or Hate Speech- Speech** or other expression intended to insult or stigmatize others on the basis of their sex, race, color, handicap, religion, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin.
2.16 **Leaving premise without permission**
2.17 **Cheating or other academic dishonesty: serious or repeated violations**
2.18 **Unauthorized absence from class or school**
2.19 **Threat, bullying, cyberbullying or intimidation**
2.20 **Loitering:** Remaining in the restroom, cafeteria, hallway, parking lot, gym areas, or any other unauthorized area.
2.21 **Inappropriate use of technology resources,** including but not limited to taping or filming without consent
2.22 **Possession of pocket knife**
2.23 **Violation of the conditions of principal's probation**
2.24 **Gambling:** Any participation in games of chance for money and/or other things of value
2.25 Intentionally providing false information to Board employee
2.26 **Soliciting, procuring, causing, encouraging, aiding, abetting or assisting another to commit any of the Class II offenses:**
2.27 **Any other violation of school rule or disruption that has a detrimental impact on school activities** or the educational process that the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category.
2.28 **Multiple, repeated, persistent, or blatant/gross Class I violations** that result in a significant disruption of school events, school days, school activities, classes or other parts of the educational process.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES – CLASS II

Administrative responses for Class II violations include, but are not limited to, all of the responses for Class I violations, as well as the following:

- Out-of-school suspension not to exceed 10 days
- E-Discipline (Virtual)
- Long-term alternative school placement
- Long-term suspension
- Legal action

MAJOR OFFENSES – CLASS III

3.1 **Drugs and alcohol:** The unauthorized possession, transfer, use, sale, soliciting, trafficking, misuse and/or abuse of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages, or other intoxicant of any kind.

3.2 **Arson:** The willful and malicious burning of any part of a building or its contents.

3.3 **Assault or battery upon Board employee, student, and/or visitor:** The threatening by word or act OR the unlawful and intentional touching or striking OR the intentional causing of bodily harm.

3.4 **Robbery:** The taking of money or other property from the person which may be the subject of larceny from the person or custody of another by force, violence, assault or putting in fear of the same.

3.5 **Stealing – Larceny – Grand Theft:** Knowingly or intentionally taking, obtaining, receiving, or exerting unauthorized control over property valued at $100 or more belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another.

3.6 **Burglary of school property:** The breaking into, entering, or remaining in a structure or conveyance with the intent to commit an offense therein.

3.7 **Criminal mischief:** Willful and malicious injury or damages at or in excess of $200 to public property, or real property belonging to another.

3.8 **Possession of firearms:** Any firearm (including a starter gun) which will, or is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device.

3.9 **Discharging of any pistol, rifle, shotgun, air gun, pellet gun or BB gun, or any other device on school property or at any school related function**

3.10 **Possession of weapons:** Any knife, metallic knuckles, tear gas gun, chemical weapon or device, or any other weapon, instrument, or other object capable of causing bodily harm, or with the intent to be armed.

3.11 **Bomb threats:** Any such communication(s) that has the effect of interrupting the educational environment.

3.12 **Explosives:** Preparing, possessing, or igniting on School Board property explosives likely to cause serious bodily injury or property damage.

3.13 **Sexual acts:** Acts of sexual nature including, but not limited to, battery, sodomy, intercourse, attempted rape, or rape.

3.14 **Aggravated battery:** Intentionally causing great bodily harm, disability, or permanent disfigurement; use of a deadly weapon.

3.15 **Inciting or participating in major student disorder:** Leading, encouraging, or assisting in major disruptions of school events, activities, classes, or other parts of the educational process.

3.16 **Unjustified activation of a fire alarm system**

3.17 **Igniting fireworks**

3.18 **Sexual harassment**

3.19 **Written or Verbal Propositions to Promote Sexual Acts**

3.20 **Distribution, display, solicitation, possession, or production of a sexually or pornographic explicit image of any individual,** including sexually explicit images of a child, including images generated by artificial intelligence (whether or not the image is of an identifiable person or whether the age of the individual can be determined, and whether or not the image is of a known or unknown individual).

3.21 **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create content** that is intended to cause another to believe that the material or purported material is a visual depiction of an actual individual under 18 years of age engaging in sexually explicit conduct

3.22 **Threats of Death or Serious Bodily Harm:** The verbal, written or electronic communication of a threat to kill or do serious bodily harm to another person.

3.23 **Soliciting, procuring, causing, encouraging, aiding, abetting or assisting another to commit any of the Class III offenses.**

3.24 **Multiple, repeated, persistent, or blatant/gross Class I or Class II violations that result in a major disruption of school events, school days, school activities, classes or other parts of the educational process.**

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES - CLASS III

Administrative responses for Class III violations include, but are not limited to, all of the responses for Class I and II violations, as well as the following:

- Expulsion
- NOTE: Due to the serious nature of some offenses, it may be necessary to remove a student immediately from school property.

Students with Disabilities

This policy shall not be read to contradict federal and state laws/regulations concerning students with disabilities. When disciplinary measures involve students with disabilities, said law/regulations shall prevail in the case of any inconsistency with this policy.

STUDENT SEARCHES

School Property – Desks and lockers are school property, and school authorities may make regulations regarding their use. No school official shall inspect or search lockers or desks unless there is a reasonable cause to believe that articles are kept there that may endanger other individuals in the school or that such articles possessed are contrary to law or the regulations or policies of the school and/or Board.

Individuals – School officials (school principal or approved designee under the direction of the school principal only) may make searches of a student and/or personal belongings if there is reasonable cause to believe that the student is carrying articles that may endanger other individuals in the school or that such articles possessed are contrary to law or the regulations or policies of the school and/or Board. If a student is searched, it will be in private by a school official of the same sex with a certified staff member of the same sex present. In any case where the principal or designee determines that a search of more than a student's pockets, jacket, cap, outer shirt, shoes, socks, belt, purse, book bag, and other outer garments and articles is justified by sufficient reasonable cause, the principal or designee will notify the student's parent or guardian prior to the search and the parent or guardian will be given a reasonable opportunity to be present.

Automobiles – School officials may search selected vehicles while on school property when there is plain view evidence or reasonable cause to believe that the vehicle contains articles that may endanger other individuals or are contrary to law or regulations or policies of the school and/or Board.

Law Enforcement Officials

School officials will cooperate with law enforcement officials in their effort to enforce the law; however, school officials will not permit warrantless searches of students by law enforcement officials on school property.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) 1974
FERPA affords parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age "eligible students" certain rights with respect to the student's education records and personally identifiable information.
These rights are:

- Inspect and review information contained in their education records, to challenge the contents of the education records, to have a hearing if the outcome of the challenge is unsatisfactory, and to submit explanatory statements for inclusion in the files if the decisions of the hearing panels are not acceptable to the challenging party.
- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the eight protected areas as designated by the statute. It also provides the right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of protected area surveys, nonemergency invasive physical exams, or screenings.
- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Information may be disclosed to school officials with legitimate educational interests.
- File a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO), US Dept of Education; Washington, DC. with the alleged failure(s) by the school district to comply with FERPA requirements.

PARENTAL INFORMATION AND RESPONSIBILITY
Under Alabama law, local school systems are required to inform parents and guardians of their education-related responsibilities. Parents and guardians are responsible for the child's attendance and conduct in school. Parents and guardians are required to receive the Code of Student Conduct and sign acknowledgement electronically through the registration/returning student online process.Under Alabama law, parents or guardians who fail to compel their child to regularly attend school or fail to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the Board of Education shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than $100 and may be sentenced to hard labor for the county for not more than 90 days. (Code of Alabama, §16-28-12)

Furthermore, with certain exceptions, the school system is entitled to recover actual damages from the parent or guardian, or both, of any minor who maliciously and willfully damages or destroys property belonging to the school system.

CURRICULUM TRANSPARENCY ACT (Act 2024-35)
At the beginning of each school year, and no later than 30 days after a new or revised curriculum is adopted, the superintendent shall verify that each school has posted current adopted curricula for each class on the school's website. Access to the online curricula shall be made available to students, parents, or guardians of enrolled students through the local website.

Parents of students enrolled in a teacher's class may make requests for detailed summaries of the following information directly to the teacher:

- Instructional materials adopted by the local board
- Supplementary materials used in the classroom that were not adopted by the local board
- Books available in the classroom for students to read

For any class in which reading books is required, the parent may request the title and syllabus for those books.

If parents want more information about how materials relate to the state-adopted content standards or want to physically examine any materials used in the classroom, they may request this information by contacting the school principal. If necessary, parents may also request that the local board allow the examination at the next work session or at the end of a board meeting.

If the teacher fails to comply, the parent/guardian may file a complaint with the superintendent. If the complaint is not resolved by the local superintendent within 10 school days, the parent/guardian may file a complaint with the State Superintendent of Education or his/her designee.

DIVISIVE CONCEPTS AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION LAW (Act 2024-409)
Athens City Schools will adhere to the Divisive Concepts and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Law.

STUDENT DUE PROCESS
Before being punished for violation of a Board policy or local school rule and regulation, (but not necessarily before being removed from the immediate academic setting), the local school principal or designee will ensure that students are accorded appropriate due process. The following minimal due process will be accorded the student:

- The student will be given oral or written notice of the charge(s) against him/her.
- The evidence supporting the charge(s) will be explained to the student.
- The student will be given an opportunity to present his/her own version of the facts concerning the charge(s).

If the disciplinary action recommendation is for long-term alternative placement (more than 15 days), long-term suspension (more than 10 and less than 90 days), or expulsion, the student is afforded an opportunity for a disciplinary hearing.

STUDENT GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS
Students have both the right and the responsibility to express school-related concerns and grievances to the teachers and school administrators. The term “grievance” applies to matters that fall within the discretionary powers of the principal, Superintendent and/or Board. Any student with a personal grievance is to discuss the matter with the teacher involved. When the nature of the grievance dictates otherwise, the student, upon notifying the teacher directly involved, may request a meeting with the school principal. One faculty member of the student's choice or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) may be present at such a meeting. A grievance is defined as a written claim submitted by a student of a violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of local Board policy, local school rules and regulations, or local administrative procedure.

In the event that the grievance cannot be settled at the school level, then the student through his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) may pursue the grievance to the Superintendent and then to the Board.

SUMMARY OF CIVIL LIABILITIES AND CRIMINAL PENALTIES
The following laws relate to civil liabilities and criminal penalties for violence or other misbehavior by students on school property, at school-sponsored events, on the way to or from school, or against school employees.

ATTENDANCE AND CONDUCT (Ala. Code § 16-28-12 (1975))
Each parent/guardian or other person having control or custody of a child required to attend school who fails to have the child enrolled, to have the child regularly attend school, or to compel the child to properly conduct himself/herself as a pupil in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local Board of Education shall be guilty of a misdemeanor (and may be fined up to $100 and may be sentenced to hard labor for up to ninety (90) days.)

STUDENTS OF ACTIVE MILITARY PARENTS (Acts 2024-328, 2024-397)
According to Ala. Code §16-28-60, children of military members may enroll in school before their arrival in Alabama even if they do not yet have proof of residency if their parent/legal guardian:

- Is on active military duty and is transferred or is pending transfer to a military installation or reservation in Alabama;
- Provides a copy of the official military order transferring to a military installation or reservation in Alabama if requested by the school system; and
- Completes and submits all the other required enrollment forms and documentation.

The same opportunities for school assignment, course selection, and sporting activities for resident students will be provided to these military students.

If the enrolling student is transferring with a Section 504 plan, an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), the school system shall take necessary steps, including but not limited to, the transfer of records and past evaluations, performing reevaluations, and holding meetings, to ensure the comparable services are in place when the student arrives in Alabama. If a new evaluation is required, it must be completed within 30 days of the student's arrival, subject to the informed consent of the parent/guardian.

Immediate Athletic Eligibility for Children of Active Duty Military (Act 2024-397)
No public school can deny a dependent of an active-duty military parent from immediate eligibility to participate in an interscholastic athletic contest due to the child making a bona fide move following a change of station orders. This applies no matter when the child enrolls in the school within the new attendance zone. The school and athletic association can require the parent to provide the permanent change of station orders to confirm the move that made the child's enrollment necessary.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) PROTECTIONS FOR STUDENTS (ACT 2024-98)
This Act redefines child sexual abuse material and sexually explicit conduct to include virtually indistinguishable depictions. It is a Class B felony to use AI to create content that is intended to cause another to believe that the material or purported material is a visual depiction of an actual individual under 18 years of age engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

TEACHERS' BILL OF RIGHTS
The Teachers' Bill of Rights requires teachers to have an approved classroom management plan and affords teachers the right to exclude disruptive students from their classrooms in limited circumstances if they follow that plan.

FENTANYL EDUCATION (Act 2024-221)
Fentanyl education will be provided to students in grades 6-12.

TEACHER ASSAULT (Ala. Code § 13A-6-21 (1975))
A person commits the crime of assault in the second degree (Class C felony) if the person assaults with intent to cause serious physical injury to a teacher or to an employee of a public educational institution during or as a result of the performance of his or her duty.

DRUG DEALING (Ala. Code § 6-5-72 (1975))
A person who unlawfully sells, furnishes, or gives a controlled substance to a minor may be liable for injury or damage or both suffered by a third person caused by or resulting from the use of the controlled substance by the minor, if the sale, furnishing, or giving of the controlled substance is the proximate cause of the injury or damage.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, WEAPONS, PHYSICAL HARM, OR THREATENED PHYSICAL HARM (Ala. Code § 16-1-24.1 (1975))
The school principal shall notify appropriate law enforcement officials when a person violates local board of education policies concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, physical harm to a person, or threatened physical harm to a person. If any criminal charge is warranted, the principal is authorized to sign the appropriate warrant. If that person is a student, the local school system shall immediately suspend that person from attending regular classes and schedule a hearing within ten (10) school days.

If a person is found to have violated a local board of education policy 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 criminal charges, if any, have been disposed of by appropriate authorities and the person has satisfied all other requirements imposed by the local board of education as a condition for readmission.

WEAPONS IN SCHOOLS (Ala. Code § 13A-11-72 (1975))
No person shall knowingly with intent to do bodily harm carry or possess a deadly weapon on the premises of a public school. Possession of a deadly weapon with the intent to do bodily harm on the premises of a public school or school bus is a class C felony. (Deadly weapons include but are not limited to hand grenade, explosive or incendiary device; a pistol, rifle, or shotgun; or a switch-blade knife, gravity knife, stiletto, sword, or dagger; or any club, baton, billy, black-jack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles.)

VANDALISM (Ala. Code § 6-5-380 (1975))
The parents, guardian, or other person having control of any minor under the age of 18 with whom the minor is living and who has custody of the minor shall be liable for the actual damages sustained to school property, plus the court costs, caused by intentional, willful, or malicious act of the minor.

PISTOL POSSESSION/DRIVER'S LICENSE (Ala. Code § 16-28-40 (1975))
Any person over the age of 14 who is convicted of the crime of possession of a pistol on the premises of a public school, or a public school bus, shall be denied issuance of a driver's permit or license to operate a motor vehicle for 180 days from the date the person is eligible and applies for a permit or license. If a person over age 14 possesses a driver's license on the date of confiscation, the driver's license will be suspended for 180 days.

DROP-OUT/DRIVER'S LICENSE (Ala. Code § 16-28-40 (1975))
The Department of Public Safety shall deny a driver's license or learner's permit to any person under 19 who is not enrolled or has not received a diploma or certificate of graduation. Exceptions are students who: are enrolled in a GED program; are enrolled in a secondary school; are participating in an approved job training program; are gainfully employed; are a parent of a minor or unborn child; or are the sole source of transportation for the parent.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

STUDENT PARKING/DRIVING

All students who operate a motor vehicle on the Athens High School or Renaissance School campuses will be required to register their automobile(s) before being issued a parking permit. The cost of the permit is $30.00. Athens Middle School and/or SAFE & CARE students are not allowed to drive vehicles on any campus. *Exceptions: The principal of each campus, in writing to the parent/guardian, must approve any exception to these rules.*

Athens High School students must adhere to the following conditions when driving a vehicle on campus:

- Vehicles are to be parked in the authorized parking areas on school grounds.
- Students are not to park in front of the building, along any yellow curb on campus, nor in the access road of the lunchroom.
- Students are not permitted to sit in cars or loiter in the parking lot.
- The school is not and cannot be held responsible for vehicles and/or contents thereof while parked on campus. It is the responsibility of the driver/owner.
- Vehicles should be kept locked at all times when unoccupied.
- Any damage to or tampering with a vehicle while it is parked on campus should be reported immediately to the office.
- Towing is at Owner's Expense.

All students must follow these procedures in order to operate a motor vehicle on school campus:

- Students operating motorized vehicles on school premises shall do so in accordance with Alabama traffic laws.
- System and school rules and regulations must be followed at all times.
- Students must provide a copy of their driver's license and proof of insurance before they are authorized to bring a vehicle on school premises.
- Violation of these procedures may result in arrest and prosecution in accordance with Alabama law and/or disciplinary action by local school officials.
- Failure to follow safe driving procedures may result in the suspension of driving privileges.

Students attending classes at Limestone County Career Technical Center (LCCTC) are provided daily bus transportation.

Students that need to transport special projects must follow these procedures in order to drive to the LCCTC:

- Must have a driving permit from Athens High School or Renaissance School.
- Must have a driving permit from LCCTC completed and signed by all required personnel.
- Students are not allowed passengers for this purpose.

STUDENT BUS TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from school shall be provided by the Board to eligible students of the school district. The transportation program shall be operated in accordance with provisions of the Code of Alabama and State Board of Education rules and regulations. The primary considerations of the transportation program shall be the safety and welfare of students. Policies pertaining to student safety and the transportation program are as follows:

Students

- Students must be at their bus stop on time. The bus will not wait for students who are tardy.
- Plan to be at the bus stop at least ten (10) minutes early. Failure to be at your bus stop on time may result in bus riding privileges being suspended.
- Students must board the bus and find their seat promptly and remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
- Drivers have the authority to assign seats and students are required to sit in the seat they are assigned.
- The bus/bus stop is an extension of the school in which the student attends.
- Misconduct on the bus/bus stop will be subject to discipline just as if the misconduct took place in the classroom. Student due process will be followed.
- Music devices are allowed by driver permission only and only with ear-buds or headphones. A driver may deny one or all riders the use of music devices on their bus.
- Do not run to or from the bus stop.
- Be alert for vehicles in driveways and parking lots. Refrain from horseplay while waiting on the bus.
- Do not move toward the bus until the driver has given you permission.
- Do not talk to driver while bus is in motion.
- School procedures for cell phone use and discipline are in effect.

Parents

- Students will only be picked up and dropped off at their designated stop.
- Parents are responsible for getting students to and from the bus stop.
- Kindergarten students must have a parent/guardian/adult at the bus stop when student is dropped off. Student will be taken back to school for parent to pick up if an adult is not present.
- Parents should read and discuss school bus riding policies with their children and explain that the rules are written for the safety of everyone on the bus.
- Know the laws concerning stopping for school buses that are loading and unloading.
- Objects that could c ause reduced visibility or distractions should not be carried on
- the bus. Items included but not limited to are: balloons, kites, animals, insects, plants, large posters. All items must fit under the seat or in lap.
- Parents and unauthorized persons are not allowed to board the school bus.

Bus Discipline

- Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. Misconduct on the bus is a safety hazard and may result in a student losing that privilege.
- Principals and bus system administrators are authorized to suspend or terminate bus privileges.
- If a child loses his/her bus riding privilege, the parents assume the responsibility for transportation to and from school.

On the Bus

- Follow the instructions of the driver at all times.
- Talk quietly and stay seated while the bus is in motion. Be courteous and respectful of others.
- No loud talking or shouting.
- Keep arms and head inside the windows. Be silent at railroad crossings.
- Keep books, backpacks, and other belongings out of the aisle.

- Do not use profanity or abusive language.
- Eating and drinking on the bus is prohibited.
- Do not write on or damage the seats. Students/parents may be responsible for damages.
- Never throw objects inside the bus or out of the window. (Students will be responsible for damages incurred by such action.)
- Do not leave paper or trash on the bus. Thank you for helping to keep the bus clean.
- Cell phones on the bus are allowed but only to be used by the owner of the phone. Taking pictures and recording any videos is prohibited.
- Students shall not make any physical contact with any other student, including public displays of affection, horseplay, scuffles or fights, or making any threats while riding the bus.

Safety Tips

- Hold onto the handrail to prevent a slip or fall. Go directly to your seat and sit down.
- Move away from the bus as soon as you exit.
- Look to the rear of the bus for oncoming vehicles as you exit the bus.
- Do not play in the loading/unloading zones.
- Never go back to retrieve anything you may have dropped or left behind.
- Never bend down near or under the bus.
- **ALWAYS STAY WHERE THE BUS DRIVER CAN SEE YOU – THINK BEFORE YOU MOVE!!**

WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES

A. **POSSESSION OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES** Students are allowed to bring wireless communication devices into school buildings and onto school grounds. Wireless communication devices include:

- a cellular telephone;
- a tablet computer;
- a laptop computer;
- a pager;
- a gaming device;
- a smart watch;
- AirPods; and
- any other portable electronic device that has the capability of exchanging voice, messaging, or other data communication with another electronic device.

The Board is not responsible for the theft, loss, or damage to any wireless communication device brought onto campus by a student.

B. **STORAGE OF DEVICES** Unless one of the exceptions listed below applies, any wireless communication device that is in the possession or control of a student, while that student is in a school building or on school grounds, must be turned off and stored off the student's person in a locker, car, or a similar storage location during the instructional day, which includes:

- when school is open and in session;
- during class time, lunch, transitions between classes, and any non-instructional periods; and
- at any other time students are required to do so by the Code of Conduct or other school rules or are instructed to do so by school staff.

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to determine appropriate storage locations for such devices at each school.

C. **PROHIBITION ON USE AND EXCEPTIONS** Students cannot use, operate, or possess a wireless communication device during the instructional day, except under the following limited circumstances:

- The use, operation, and/or possession of the device is specifically included in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or an Individualized Health Plan;
- **T**he use, operation, and/or possession of the device is for educational or learning purposes under the supervision of school personnel; or
- The use, operation, and/or possession occurs during an emergency threatening the life or safety of the student or another person.

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to develop additional guidelines for implementation of these exceptions.

D. **SEARCHES** School officials may read, examine, or inspect the contents of any wireless communication device upon reasonable suspicion that the device contains evidence of a violation of Board policy, the Code of Conduct, or other school rules, provided that the nature and extent of such examination shall be reasonably related and limited to the suspected violation.

E. **DISCIPLINARY ACTION** Any violations of this policy can result in disciplinary action as outlined in the I Code of Conduct.

F. **ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES AUTHORIZED** The Superintendent or designee is authorized to develop any additional rules necessary to carry out this policy.
[Reference: Ala. Act 2025-386]

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS

No student may possess a Wireless Communication Device (WCD) in any public elementary or secondary school building or on the grounds thereof during the instructional day unless the WCD is turned off and stored off the student's person.

Best practice is to leave all wireless communication devices at home. Athens City Schools is not responsible for storage, security, loss, and/or damage of electronic devices.

Violation of this policy shall result in disciplinary action as follows:

- **FIRST OFFENSE:** WCD is confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day.
- **SECOND OFFENSE:** WCD is confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Student receives one day of ISS. Parent is notified.
- **THIRD OFFENSE:** WCD is confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Student receives five days ISS. Parent is notified.
- **FOURTH OFFENSE:** WCD is confiscated and parent must pick up from the school office. Student receives 10 days ISS.
- **NOTE:** Further offenses (beyond four) are considered defiance of school authority.

Failure to comply with directions of staff and/or consequences may result in additional disciplinary action.

Offenses start over at the beginning of each semester.

DEVICES ON SCHOOL BUSES

Students may bring and use devices on school buses if allowed by the bus driver. However, recording, videoing, and/or creating a disruption is prohibited. Violations may result in loss of bus device privileges and further disciplinary actions. Athens City Schools assumes no responsibility for device loss, theft, or damage.

INTERNET SAFETY & ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

GENERAL

Athens City Schools (ACS) is pleased to offer students access to a networked computer environment that provides access to a variety of instructional software and to the Internet. In order for the school system to be able to continue to make its computer network and Internet access available, all students must take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of this access. Access to technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. Access entails responsibility.

The following pages describe the provisions of your agreement regarding computer network and Internet use. Students violating these rules will lose computer privileges and/or receive punishment as defined in the Student Code of Conduct. Misuse of the school system's technology will result in the student's computer usage being revoked, monetary charges for repairing damaged equipment, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Violation of civil and/or criminal law relating to technology and its use can result in criminal prosecution and civil liability.

ACCESS

The school system's technology network is a limited forum, similar to the school newspaper, and therefore the school system may restrict your speech while using the network. Students should expect no privacy in the contents of personal files or records of web research activities on the network. The school system reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. If a user is believed to be in violation of any of the technology guidelines, a system administrator may review communications and provide documentation related to any violation. The school system does not guarantee the privacy, security, accuracy, truthfulness, or confidentiality of any information sent or received via the Internet.

- The use of all ACS technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate or suspected inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges, pending investigation.
- Individuals may use only accounts, files, software, and/or other technology resources that are assigned to, provided, or approved for use.
- Individuals identified as a real or suspected security risk will be denied access.
- Individuals must not attempt to disrupt any technology services or data integrity by engaging in inappropriate activities. Examples include, but are not limited to, spreading viruses, spamming, excessive network and/or Internet activity, or modification of equipment or infrastructure.
- Individuals must not attempt to modify technology resources, utilities, and configurations, and/or change the restrictions associated with his/her accounts, or attempt to breach any technology resources security system or filtering systems, either with or without malicious intent.
- Personal technology-related devices such as, but not limited to laptops, cell phones, smart-phones, smart watches, iPads, pagers, AirPods, gaming devices, cameras or other eDevices, etc. used on school grounds are subject to all rules covered in this policy and other applicable published guidelines, as well as local, state, and federal laws.
- The district technology team, and/or school system administrators will determine when inappropriate use has occurred, and they have the right to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

LIMITING INTERNET ACCESS TO AGE-APPROPRIATE SUBJECT MATTER/MATERIALS

With respect to student access to the Internet on electronic devices owned by the Board, the Superintendent (and his/her designee) will engage in reasonable efforts to modify/restrict such devices so that they limit Internet access by students to only age-appropriate subject matters and materials deemed age-appropriate by the Superintendent (and his/her designee). For example, these restrictions will be designed to thwart access to pictures that are obscene, that constitute child pornography, or that are otherwise harmful to minors. From time to time, the Superintendent (and his/her designee) will periodically engage in efforts to update and adjust such modifications/restrictions to continue their effectiveness.

INTERNET USE

The Internet is a global network made up of many smaller contributing networks connecting millions of users throughout the world. Through the Internet, students can explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other resources to enhance educational experiences. In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, signed into law December 21, 2000, Athens City Schools has established several measures to help protect Internet users.

Although ACS provides a reputable Internet blocking system in addition to teacher/staff supervision, it is not possible to screen all materials. It is important for families to discuss the appropriate use of the Internet and to set expectations for the kinds and types of materials that are acceptable for viewing. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using the Internet and the school's technology resources.

- The intent of ACS is to provide access to resources available via the Internet with the understanding that staff and students will access and use information that is appropriate for their various curricula.
- All school rules and guidelines for appropriate technology usage, as well as local, state, and federal laws apply to usage of the Internet.
- Students gain access to the Internet by agreeing to conduct themselves in a considerate and responsible manner and by providing written permission from their parents.
- Internet activity can and will be monitored, along with other aspects of technology usage.
- Successful or unsuccessful attempts to bypass the Internet filters by using proxies or other resources are a violation of this policy.

ELECTRONIC MAIL

Electronic mail access is intended to support only educational, instructional, and administrative functions. Students are not allowed to use instructional time and school resources to check personal email accounts via the Internet. The school system cannot guarantee the privacy, security, accuracy, truthfulness, or confidentiality of any information sent or received via electronic mail.

STUDENT USE OF INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

With respect to student access to the Internet on electronic devices owned by the Board, the Superintendent (and his/her designee) will engage in reasonable efforts to: (a) prioritize the safety and security of students when using email, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication; (b) prohibit access by students to unlawfully obtained data or information, including hacking, or other unlawful online activity; and (c) prohibit access to websites, web applications, or software that exposes students to the disclosure, use, or dissemination of their personal information. To these ends, the Superintendent (or his/her designee) will ensure that each student handbook includes Board-approved rules and regulations concerning Internet Safety & Acceptable Use of Computer Technology, which set out rules related to the foregoing items and note the disciplinary consequences to students for failing to abide by such rules.

STUDENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA
Students are prohibited from accessing social media platforms on electronic devices owned by the Board, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for an educational purpose.

WEB PUBLISHING
ACS websites are limited to usage associated with activities of the school district. The web site(s) cannot be used for profit, for commercial purposes, to express personal opinions, or to editorialize.

- Student pictures or other personally identifiable information can be used in accordance with FERPA guidelines.
- Individual students may be identified by full name unless permission to do so is denied in writing by the parent or guardian to the school principal. Full names may only be used in reporting student participation in school sponsored extracurricular activities, achievements, and other positive recognitions.
- Infringement of copyright laws, obscene, harassing, or threatening materials on web sites are against the law and are subject to prosecution.

The school system's web sites are publications designed to inform students, parents, and the community about school activities.

- The term "web site(s)" includes the web pages that are an integral part of the site as well as the web sites and/or pages to which a link has been provided within a school system site or page. Only schools, departments, activities, and teachers of ACS will have web pages sponsored by and linked together under the ACS homepage. ACS takes no responsibility for sites that may unknowingly link to school-sponsored web pages.
- Material (including but not limited to text, graphics, photographs, artwork, audio, video, etc.) generated by or using the resources of a school, a school-sponsored activity, or the school system may only be shown on a web site or page with the approval of the technology coordinator, principal and/or superintendent.
- The provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S. C. 1232g, will be observed regarding the inclusion of student and family data on web sites.
- Many teachers post assignments on websites. Although this is an excellent instructional tool, there are times when the internet may not be available. Lack of Internet access does not relieve the student of the responsibility of complying with classroom instructions from the teacher or contacting the teacher or school to obtain current instructions, assignments, or other guidance.
- Students attempting to or found to have tampered with web site content or operation without authorization shall be considered to have committed a Class III offense punishable as provided in the Student Code of Conduct.

DATA SECURITY

- Students are expected to follow all local, state, and federal laws and system policies regarding the protection of student and staff confidential data.
- Users should not have any expectation that their usage of such resources is private. Reasonable efforts will be taken to maintain security of technology resources, but the school district cannot ensure that such security will not be penetrated or breached and cannot assume any liability arising out of any such penetration or breach of security.
- Users are responsible for their individual network accounts and must take all reasonable precautions to prevent unauthorized access to accounts, data, and any other unauthorized usage within and outside ACS. Individuals must take all reasonable precautions to prevent any such unauthorized usage, which shall be reported immediately to the local school principal and/or the district technology supervisor.
- Students shall be responsible for reporting suspected or actual breaches of data security, whether due to inappropriate actions, carelessness, loss/theft of devices or failures of technical security measures. Students should not go looking for security problems, as this will be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.

- Individuals may not attempt to log into the network using any network account and/or password other than the login(s) assigned to him/her. Individuals may not allow someone to use his/her network account and/or password to access the network, email, specific software packages, or the Internet.
- The system-wide technology staff performs routine backups in an effort to assure continuity of business. There can be no assurance, however, that technology resources will be available within a particular time frame following an outage. There is no guarantee that information that existed prior to an outage, malfunction, or deletion can be recovered.
- Users are expected to maintain and back up their critical files and data. To maintain effective network performance, data stored on the servers will be deleted on a regular basis.
- If any policy violation or inappropriate behavior is suspected, the technology team, local school administrators, and/or other designated technology staff reserve the right to inspect any and all data, including data stored by individual users on individual school or personal devices. Users should be aware that activities might be monitored at any time without notice.
- Users should not have any expectation that their use of technology resources, including files stored by them on the ACS network, will be private and will be secure from access by others.
- Because communications on the Internet are public in nature, all users should be careful to maintain appropriate and responsible communications.
- ACS cannot guarantee the privacy, security, or confidentiality of any information sent or received, either via the Internet, an email facility, telephone, or otherwise.
- Users should not store personal and/or private information on the district and/or school's technology resources.

RULES AND USES

The following rules and policies govern the use of ACS technology resources:

- **PERSONAL SAFETY AND PERSONAL PRIVACY** You are prohibited from posting personal contact information about yourself. Personal contact information includes your address, telephone, school address, work address, etc. This information may not be provided to an individual, organization, or company, including websites that solicit personal information. Never meet or agree to meet with a person you communicated with online. You will promptly disclose to your teacher, counselor, or principal any message you receive that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable. Under no conditions should you provide your password to another person. You must not use school computers and resources to participate in Internet chat rooms that are not related to instruction. Entry into chat rooms during school hours must be pre-approved by teachers.
- **ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES** You will not use the school's technology resources to engage in any illegal act. In the event there is a claim that you have violated this policy, you will be provided due process rights and will be subject to criminal prosecution and civil liability.
- **INAPPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION AND CYBERBULLYING** Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on web pages. You will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language. You will not post information that could cause damage or a danger of disruption. You will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks. You will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that causes distress or annoyance to another person. If you are told by a person to stop sending messages, you must stop. You will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization. Athens City School Board Policy JNA – Jamari Terrell Williams Student Bullying Prevention Act Policy.
- **RESPECTING RESOURCE LIMITS** You will use the system only for educational activities. You will not download large files unless approved by the school's computer lab manager/teacher. If it is necessary to download a large file, you should do so during a time when the system is not being heavily used, and will remove the file from the system as soon as it is used for the required

educational activity. You will not post chain letters or engage in "spamming." Spamming is the act of sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.

- **PLAGIARISM** You will not plagiarize works that you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is the act of taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were one's own. **Artificial intelligence** is a vastly emerging technology. As such, its uses and the implications of its use are still being discovered. However, its use will be treated like any established technology resource in ACS. Any work produced must be properly cited and/or attributed to the generative AI engine. Any malicious or unethical use will be subject to the disciplinary actions outlined in the Code of Conduct.
- **CARE OF EQUIPMENT** You will take care to protect the school system's equipment from damage and will follow all rules established by the school regarding use of the equipment. You are prohibited from installing software on school equipment. You and your parents can be held financially responsible for any and all harm to the system's equipment and/or network as a result of misuse and/or intentional damage.
- **INAPPROPRIATE ACCESS TO MATERIAL** You will not use the school's technology resources to access material that is designated for adults only or is profane or obscene (pornography), that advocates illegal or dangerous acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature). If you mistakenly access inappropriate information, please notify your teacher immediately. Your parents should instruct you if there is additional material they think would be inappropriate for you to access. The school system fully expects that you will follow your parent's instructions in this matter.

It is the obligation and intent of ACS to comply with the copyright laws of the United States – including those pertaining to computer software and peer-to-peer file sharing. You will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, you should follow the expressed requirements. If you are unsure whether or not you can use that work, you should request permission from the copyright owner.

You are not authorized to make copies of any software owned by ACS without the knowledge and permission of the System Technology Coordinator. In addition, you are prohibited from using school equipment to make illegal copies of personal software or to download copyrighted materials. Illegal, unauthorized, or unlicensed copies of software or files must not be used on school system equipment and will be removed if identified.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Routine maintenance and monitoring of the network may lead to discovery that you have violated school policies or the law. The school system will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted while using school technology resources. In the event there is a claim that you have violated any of these policies, you will be provided due process rights and will be subject to criminal prosecution and civil liability. In addition, you will be subject to punishment as defined in the Student Code of Conduct.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

ACS expressly denies all warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of its computer networks and the Internet provided under this Policy. It shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages, or costs (including attorney's fees) of any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any user or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) arising out of the user's use of its computer networks or the Internet under this Policy. By signing this Policy, users are taking full responsibility for his or her use. The user who is 18 or older or, in the case of a user under 18, the parent(s) or guardian(s) are agreeing to indemnify and hold the Athens City Schools Board, the Athens City School System, and all of their administrators, teachers, agents, and staff harmless from any and all loss, costs, claims or damages resulting from the user's access to its computer network and the Internet,

including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchases of goods or services by the user. The user or, if the user is a minor, the user's parent(s) or guardian(s) agree to cooperate with the school Board in the event of the Board's initiating an investigation of a user's use of his or her access to its computer network and the Internet, whether that use is on a school computer or on another computer outside the school system's network.

POWER UP STUDENT HANDBOOK

The PowerUP student handbook includes the guidelines and policies specific to students in grades Pre-K-12 who are participating in the PowerUP program. Guidelines included in the PowerUP handbook supplement, but do not replace, the Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy. Sign the **2025-2026 Parent-Student PowerUp Device Agreement**.

DEVICE PURPOSE, QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

PURPOSE

Athens City Schools offers students access to a variety of technological resources to complement instruction and to encourage creativity, collaboration, and communication. The purpose of the Power Up Program is to expand this access by providing each student with a digital device during an academic year for use at school and, in some grade levels, at home.

QUALIFICATIONS

A student who is enrolled in Athens Middle, Athens High, Athens Renaissance, or Renaissance Virtual qualifies for use of a district owned mobile device. To maintain use of the device, students must comply with the rules and expectations outlined in the Student/Parent Power Up Handbook and the Athens City Schools Internet Safety and Use of Technology Policy (Board Policy JCBA). Any failure to comply with these rules and expectations may result in suspension or termination of the student's qualification for use of a device and its accessories (charging cable, charging adapter, and case for iPads).

A device issued by Athens City Schools (ACS) has been assigned a unique identification code, which is indicated by a barcode affixed to a device. This identification code is one method used to track a device; a device will also be tracked electronically. A device and its accessories shall remain the property of ACS. Students will make a device and its accessories available to ACS faculty for necessary inspection, physical maintenance, and software maintenance at any time.

Devices and their accessories will be distributed once the student and parent (or guardian) have:

- Read, agreed to, and signed the Athens City School District's Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy, and the ACS Student/Parent Handbook;
- Paid the mandatory Technology Usage Fee.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the belief of the Athens City School District that every student should be granted equal access to resources provided by the school district. It is not the district's recommendation that a student be restricted from accessing any learning resources granted to all other students. However, if the student's parent (or legal guardian) believes that circumstances warrant restricting the student's access to the use of the mobile device outside of school hours, a written request from the student's parent must be submitted to the school principal or their designee. Once the request is approved, arrangements will be made to store the student's iPad at school after school hours. In such cases, devices must be turned into the school library by 3:15 p.m. each afternoon and picked up in the library before school begins the following day. Devices not turned in to the library by 3:15 p.m. will become the responsibility of the student.

DEVICE CONTENT, FILTERING AND PRIVACY

CONTENT

Athens City Schools will provide the necessary programs and applications needed for course materials and assignments. ACS may push updates to student devices each time they are logged on to the district's network. Students are not allowed to download unauthorized software programs or add-ons. ACS does

not allow students to alter the integrity of a device. Downloading illegal software to a device may result in disciplinary action, and/or the suspension/termination of the student's use of a device and its accessories.

INTERNET FILTERING

Internet filtering is set to function at any time a student accesses the Internet - both in and out of school. However, no content filter is capable of preventing all access to all online content that is not school-related and/or inappropriate; therefore, the user assumes responsibility for information accessed on a device and is bound by the terms and conditions of the ACS Internet Safety and Acceptable Use policy and procedures. Violating this policy may result in disciplinary action, and/or the suspension/termination of the student's use of a device and its accessories.

PRIVACY

No right of privacy exists in the use of a device. Files and content downloaded, created, transmitted, and stored on a device are not private and shall be subject to inspection, adjustment, removal, and/or deletion by ACS personnel. To ensure compliance, ACS personnel may monitor all files, communications, and online activities of individuals who access a device.

Be advised that ACS may be required to disclose information to law enforcement or other third parties, for example, as a response to a document production request in a lawsuit against the board of education, as a response to a public records request, or as evidence of illegal activity in a criminal investigation. Additionally, any writings that indicate a student might be subject to harming themselves or someone else will be reported to officials and civil authorities. Again, there is no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of a device.

DEVICE RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRECAUTIONS

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Keep the device and its accessories (charging cable, charging adapter, case) in a secure, supervised area. Bring the device to school or class each day.
- Fully charge the device before arriving at school or class each day.
- Back up data and other important files regularly to Google Drive.
- Ensure that the device will receive secure storage if you have it at school related activities, performances, sporting events, etc.
- Keep the device in its case at all times or the warranty is subject to be voided.
- Insert charging cables and USB devices carefully to avoid damage.
- Handle the device with care in the classroom and during transportation.
- Clean the device screen with a soft, nonabrasive, microfiber cleaning cloth.
- Clean the case with a soft, non- abrasive cloth with no harsh chemicals.

PRECAUTIONS

- Do not clean the device with liquid cleaning products.
- Do not leave the device unattended.
- Safeguard accessories at all times.
- Do not let other students borrow the device or its accessories.
- Avoid leaving the device in a vehicle.
- Do not leave the device outside.
- Avoid allowing pets in close proximity to the device.
- Avoid eating or drinking in close proximity to the device.
- Do not use the device near water such as a pool, tub or shower.
- Do not place heavy objects on the device.
- Do not lean or push on the device.
- Do not check the device as luggage at the airport.
- Do not place pencils, paper, or other objects on the device keyboard.

- Do not place pencils, paper, or other objects in the device or in between the keyboard and screen.

DEVICE DAMAGE, LOSS AND REPAIRS

IN GENERAL

By taking possession of a device and its accessories, the student and parent(s) (or legal guardian(s)) agree to assume full responsibility for the safety, security, care, and proper use of a device and its accessories.

A Device Protection Plan is required with respect to the mobile devices, which should assist the student and parent(s) or legal guardian(s) by providing for the replacement and repair of damaged, stolen, or lost devices. However, whether coverage will apply in a particular case will depend on the facts of each individual situation. There will be an amount required to be paid by the student/parent/guardian. The school system will determine, in its sole discretion, the amount required of the student/parent/guardian.

DAMAGE

In case of damage to a device caused by accident, fire, or flood, the student/parent/guardian agrees to assume full responsibility for the damaged device, to the extent that the same is not covered in the Device Protection Plan.

Damage to a device must be reported within 24 hours to the school principal or designee. Not reporting damage or failing to report damage in a timely manner will increase the likelihood that the damage is not covered by the Device Protection Plan, and result in a financial obligation for the student/parent/guardian in the amount of repair costs for the damaged property.

LOSS

In a case of complete loss of a device, through liquid damage, theft, loss, or other cause, the student/parent/guardian agrees to pay the replacement cost for a device as identified by the school district, to the extent that the same is not covered by the Device Protection Plan. This may result, for example, in responsibility for the full replacement cost or the claim fee. In the case of a loss or theft occurring on school grounds, the student/parent/guardian must report the incident to the principal or designee on the day of the occurrence. In the case of loss or theft occurring away from school grounds, the student/parent/guardian must report the incident to the law enforcement officials of jurisdiction within 24 hours of the occurrence and then provide documentation of the aforementioned law enforcement report to the school principal or designee within one school day of the occurrence.

Failing to report loss or theft in the manner described here will increase the likelihood that the loss will not be covered by the Device Protection Plan, and in a financial obligation for the student/parent/guardian for the full responsibility for the loss of the device and the corresponding financial obligation for the replacement costs of the lost property. The school system will determine, in its sole discretion, the amount required of the student/parent/guardian (the amount, for example, of any deductible or replacement cost) with respect to any complete loss.

Once a copy of the report of loss has been given to the school system and the student pays the claim fee and/or the amount determined by the school system, the student will be issued another device.

In order for a device to be replaced due to theft, all procedures mentioned above must be adhered to and the claim fee must be paid under the school Device Protection Plan policy.

A student/parent/guardian is responsible for the cost of replacement of a lost device if the loss of the property is not reported as stated herein, or a device is lost as the result of handling, storing, or using in a manner not in compliance with the “Device Responsibility” section.

LOSS OR DAMAGE TO ACCESSORIES

A student/parent/guardian is fully responsible for the replacement cost of any device accessories (charging cable, charging adapter, case) damaged or lost while in their possession. Replacement costs of the accessories are based on the price for which the Athens City School District purchases replacement accessories from 3rd party vendors.

DAMAGES OR LOSS CAUSED BY BAD ACTS

Students/parents/guardians may be held fully responsible for damages or loss caused by dishonest, fraudulent, intentional, negligent, or criminal acts, including but not limited to altering the operating system, altering the physical device and the removal of the Athens City School District provided identification code. This may include the suspension or termination of the student's ability to use a device and its accessories, disciplinary action against the student, and/or legal action against the parent (or legal guardian(s)). State law provides that parents, custodians, and guardians are responsible financially for their minor child's destructive acts against school property or persons (Alabama Code - Section 16-1-24).

REPAIRS ONLY BY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Although students/parents/guardians are responsible for the costs of any repairs to an IPAD (to the extent that the protection plan does not apply), the Athens City School District is responsible for arranging for the performance of any and all repairs to IPADs. Students and parents (or legal guardians) may not and should never attempt to repair a device themselves or through any party other than the school district.

DEVICE RETURN

RETURN Devices and their accessories will be returned during the final week of school unless otherwise instructed by school officials. If a student withdraws or is expelled from the Athens City School District, a device will be returned at that time.

FAILURE TO RETURN A student failing to return a device and/or its accessories at the end of the year or before his or her departure from the Athens City School District may be subject to criminal prosecution or civil liability. The student's parents (or legal guardians) may also be subject to liability. School records may be held until the issue is resolved and a theft report will be filed with the local authorities if an Athens City School District owned device and accessories are not returned.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

ACT NATIONAL TESTING SCHEDULE

Students planning to attend college should be aware that many colleges require an entrance exam for admission and/or scholarship selection. The entrance examination most used by colleges in the

Southeast is the ACT Assessment. The ACT contains four curriculum-based tests which measure academic achievement in the areas of English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. An optional writing test (ACT Plus Writing) is available as a fifth test for students taking the ACT. The tests are measures of academic development that rely largely on students' skills in applying the content knowledge and reasoning skills acquired in their course work. The ACT is given in a four- hour morning session on various test dates. Those registered for the ACT Plus Writing will test for thirty additional minutes. Students may register online, review sample test questions, and obtain more information concerning the ACT at www.act.org. Parent information is also available on ACT's website.

Students should contact the Guidance Department for more information.

STATE TESTING DATES

STATE ASSESSMENT	GRADES	TESTING WINDOW	DAYS
PreACT	Grade 10	September 29 - October 24	1
ACT WorkKeys	Grade 12	October 15 - November 10	1
ACCESS & Alternate ACCESS	Grades 6-12	January 26 - March 13	2-4
ACT with Writing	Grade 11	March 10 - 13	1
ACAP Alternate	Grades 6-8, 10-11	March 2 - April 3	1-3
ACAP Summative	Grades 6-8	March 30 - April 24	2-4

NOTE: No student takes all tests listed above; nor is all day devoted to testing on the specified number of days.

STUDENT DIGITAL DEVICE POLICY FOR ACAP TESTING

Students shall not possess or use any digital device when they are participating in ACAP testing. The possession or use of a digital device by a student participating in the ACAP is strictly prohibited during the administration of the test, unless pre-approved by the ALSDE. If a student is observed in possession of a digital device during the administration of an ACAP test, the device may be confiscated. If a student is observed using a digital device during the administration of an ACAP test (or if there is reasonable suspicion that the device was used during the test), testing for the student shall cease, the device may be confiscated and searched for any information related to the ACAP. Additionally, the student shall be dismissed from testing, and the student's test shall be invalidated in accordance with ACAP policy. Violation(s) may result in disciplinary action by the LEA in accordance with the LEA's disciplinary policy.

EAGLE APPS

Eagle Apps powered by Google Apps for Education provides all students with access to a Google Education Account and to more than 30 GB of storage space to store school related electronic date files, an online calendar, and a variety of other collaboration tools.

Students will be encouraged to use Eagle Apps as their "digital locker" for the storage of their school related electronic files. Students will receive a unique username and password to this system during the first few days of school.

Below are just a few of the advantages of this service:

- An electronically appropriate, advertisement free, filtered email address for students accessible from any Internet connected device or computer (grades 3-12).
- Web-based access from anywhere in the world to Google Docs, a word processing program similar to Microsoft Office for the storage, preparing and sharing of a variety of document types.
- Access to shareable online calendars to help students plan their time, organize assignments and meet project deadlines.
- Teachers and students can easily collaborate through the Eagle Apps platform in a paperless environment.

These services are provided to students as a privilege and every student is expected to use the system ethically, responsibly, and in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy located in the student handbook. We are hopeful that the suite of products available to students at Athens City Schools will enhance the way that students create, communicate, collaborate and store electronic files and media. Please visit Google for Education for more information, online training and support materials.



455 U.S. Highway 31 North
Athens, Alabama 35611
256.233.6600
WWW.ACS-K12.ORG