

Preparing Panthers for Their Highest Potential

Daily Expectations: Be Here. Be Kind. Be Your Best.

What Parents Need to Know: 2025–2026 School Year Updates

This year, Glascock County Schools has made a few key updates to support student success, safety, and accountability. Below is a summary of the most important changes in the Student Handbook, Attendance Policy, Tardy & Early Checkout Plan, and Student Code of Conduct. Full documents are available on the school website. In addition, all students will receive a copy of the 2025-2026 Student Handbook on Monday, August 4, 2025.

This year's updates are focused on helping every student succeed by addressing patterns that interfere with learning. These changes are about more than just rules—they're designed to:

- **Promote consistency** in expectations and consequences
- **Strengthen communication** with families earlier in the process
- **Support student growth** with personalized, age-appropriate responses
- **Protect instructional time**, ensuring students are present, prepared, and engaged
- **Create a healthier and more focused learning environment**

Student Handbook Highlights

There are a few changes in the Student Handbook. This list is not inclusive of all changes.

- **Energy Drinks Now Prohibited** (*see page 8 of the Student Handbook*)
To support student health and focus, energy drinks and supplements are no longer allowed on campus, on buses, or at school events. Examples include but not limited to: Red Bull, Monster, Bang, Celsius, Prime (caffeinated), and 5-Hour Energy.
- **School Lunch Prices Updated** (*see page 7 of the Student Handbook*)
 - Pre-K to 5th grade: \$3.10
 - Grades 6–12: \$3.20
 - Breakfast remains free for all students.
- **New Prom Dues Policy** (*see page 83 of the Student Handbook*)
 - Students must pay \$60/year (9th–11th grade) or \$180 by the end of January of the junior year.
 - Missed Junior-year dues? Seniors can still attend by paying \$230 by the end of January of the senior year to attend their senior year.
 - All payments are due by January 31. Late fees apply.

Updated Attendance Policy (*see page 36 of the Student Handbook*)

Chronic absenteeism has a major impact on student achievement, even in the early grades. Data shows that students who miss just 10% of the school year are far more likely to struggle academically, fall behind in key skills, and be at risk for dropout in later years.

We are strengthening our attendance policy to:

- **Engage families sooner**—before attendance becomes a serious issue
- **Recover lost instructional time** through Seat Time Recovery
- **Provide clear, consistent steps** for support and accountability
- **Meet state requirements** for reporting excessive unexcused absences

The goal is not punishment—but **prevention, support, and partnership** with parents to keep students on track.

- Key Steps:
 - 3 unexcused: absences Parent notified
 - 5 unexcused absences: Phone call + Seat Time Recovery
 - 9 unexcused absences: In-person meeting + No extracurriculars until Seat Time Recovery completed
 - 12 unexcused absences: DFCS & DJJ referrals + No extracurriculars until Seat Time Recovery completed
 - 15 unexcused absences: Required Bridge Program + Loss of extracurriculars privileges
- Seat Time Recovery: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 3:15–4:15 PM
 - K–8: iReady MyPath
 - 9–12: Teacher-assigned work based on missed standards

Tardy & Early Checkout Plan (see page 40 of the Student Handbook)

Frequent late arrivals and early dismissals chip away at instruction the same way absences do—just more quietly. They can also disrupt classrooms and make it harder for students to settle into routines.

We've aligned our approach to mirror our attendance interventions so that:

- Students and parents **understand the academic cost** of missing parts of the day
- Schools can **intervene early and consistently**
- Expectations are **fair across all grade levels**
- Patterns of chronic tardiness or checkouts are addressed in a **constructive, step-by-step way**

Our goal is for every child to **start and finish the school day with full access to learning**.

- Grades K–8:
 - 3rd unexcused tardy or early checkout: Teacher calls home
 - 6th unexcused tardy or early checkout: Admin contacts family
 - 9th unexcused tardy or early checkout: Seat Time Recovery + conference
 - 12th unexcused tardy or early checkout: More Seat Time + DFCS/DJJ referrals
- Grades 9–12:
 - 3rd unexcused tardy or early checkout: Student warning + reflection
 - 6th unexcused tardy or early checkout: Detention + 5-day driving suspension (bus route information will be given)
 - 9th unexcused tardy or early checkout: detention + 10-day driving suspension (bus route information will be given)
 - 12th unexcused tardy or early checkout: Semester loss of driving privileges + referrals

Student Code of Conduct Updates (see page 55 of the Student Handbook)

Students thrive when expectations are clear and support systems are in place. Our updated Code of Conduct reflects:

- **A stronger foundation of shared expectations** for behavior
- **A shift toward progressive and personalized discipline**—taking into account age, history, and individual needs
- **Empowerment of teachers** as the first line of support for classroom management

Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, the updated policy encourages fairness, growth, and accountability—while protecting learning time for all.

- Core Expectations for All Students:
 - Respect adults and peers
 - Be prepared and on time
 - Act with integrity
 - Be safe and responsible
 - Use technology properly
 - Follow the dress code
- New Discipline Approach:
 - Personalized based on student's age, history, and willingness to improve
 - Teacher-managed for minor behaviors
 - Progressive consequences based on severity