

BUTLER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY REVISIONS/NEW POLICIES
ADOPTED OCTOBER 16, 2025

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Cum Laude Recognition System for High School Graduates

Ranking and Recognition of Students: Eligibility for academic honors will be determined by calculating the cumulative weighted average of all final course grades posted on the high school transcript through the first semester of the student's graduation year. The student must have a cumulative ACT score of 18 by the end of the first semester of the student's graduation year to receive the following academic honors designations:

- a. Summa Cum Laude (with highest honors) 4.00 and higher
- b. Magna Cum Laude (with high honors) 3.75-3.9999
- c. Cum Laude (with honors) 3.50-3.7499

The calculation of the grade point average will include all courses taken from the start of the students ninth grade (freshman) year through the conclusion of the first semester of their twelfth grade (senior) year.

A student's final cumulative weighted grade point average calculated to at least the fourth decimal place, including grades earned for repeated courses, will be used to determine class rank.

This policy would begin with the Freshman class of 2025-2026.

[References: Code of Alabama 16-11-9]

SCHOOL PROVIDED OR SPONSORED COUNSELING OR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR STUDENTS UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE (PARENTAL OPT-IN)

Butler County Schools offers a variety of student counseling and mental health services for your child. However, Alabama law now requires that parents and/or guardians of all children under 16 years of age must submit a written “**opt-in**” **each year** for their children to receive most counseling and mental health services. Parents/Guardians may choose for their child to receive none, some, or all the counseling or mental health services listed below:

- **General Guidance Counselor Services** – access to or participation in ongoing counseling services addressing issues including, but not limited to bullying, stress management, test, or other anxiety, making good choices, substance abuse, peer relationships, etc.
- **Mentoring** – Counselors or partner organizations addressing student needs on issues such as friendships, healthy relationships, anger management, and anxiety.
- **Assessments/Surveys** – student questionnaires related to social behaviors, feelings, etc.
- **Intervention** - short-term assistance by school counselors or professionals to address concerns regarding the student’s well-being or mental health.
- **School-Based Mental Health** - Mental health counseling services by school professionals or private practitioners in the school setting. Parent or legal guardian’s permission will be obtained for specific private practitioner counseling before services are provided.

Exceptions

Counseling or mental health services may be provided without an opt-in

- (1) based on a PST, IEP or §504 plan,
- (2) when there is an imminent threat to the health of the student or others, or (3) when students meet with guidance counselors related to course selection, course registration, career interests or opportunities, or similar activities. Opt-in is also not required for instructional services in the approved curriculum or required by law.

Parents/Guardians may request to review any materials used in the guidance and counseling programs available to students by submitting your written request for access to those materials to the school principal.

If a child is under sixteen, under Alabama law, they will only be allowed to participate in certain counseling or mental health services if the parents/guardians opt-in unless one or more exceptions noted above occur. Parents/Guardians must OPT-IN for the listed service they choose for their child on the district form provided by the schools. Parents/Guardians may limit or prevent their child’s participation in ongoing counseling or mental health services by checking only the services desired, by declining to opt-in to one or more counseling or mental health services, or by rescinding a previous opt-in for services.

Ala. Act. #2022-442

VAPE AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND PREVENTION POLICY

This policy has been developed for compliance with Alabama Act 2025-403 that requires the Alabama State Department of Education to adopt a model policy relating to vaping, tobacco products, and alternative nicotine products. The purpose of this policy is to establish a vape awareness, education, and prevention program to prohibit the possession and use of prohibited tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products by students in public K-12 schools.

- A. **Prohibition**: The possession or use of tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products is prohibited by any student at a public K-12 school, on a school bus, or at any school sponsored function.
- B. **Violation**: Any student who violates the prohibition contained within this policy shall be subject to graduated consequences which may include:
 - a. Notification of the student's parent or legal guardian shall be made regarding the violation.
 - b. Required participation in the Alabama State Board of Education approved vaping awareness, education, and prevention class.
 - c. In-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or placement in an alternative school.
 - d. Referral of the matter to the juvenile court for disposition.
 - e. Or, any combination of the foregoing.
- C. **Complaint procedure**: When a complaint is lodged against a student for violating the prohibition, the complaint must be memorialized using the model complaint form (attached). An anonymous report may not be used as the sole basis for imposition of formal disciplinary action. Once a complaint is made against a student for a violation, the complaint form is then to be forwarded to the principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer for investigation. The complaint form must include all of the following information:
 - a. Name of student who has violated the policy.
 - b. Date, time, and location of violation.
 - c. Description of conduct that violates the policy.
 - d. Name(s) of witness(es) to violation of the policy.
 - e. Any other pertinent information.

- D. Investigation Procedure:** Once a principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer receives a complaint of a serious violation, they must then promptly investigate the violation. The principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer must be the individual responsible for the investigation.
- E. Response Procedure:** If the student has violated the prohibition, the student shall immediately, and without delay, be subject to the graduated consequences. Any and all consequences shall conform with applicable disability, antidiscrimination, education laws, and school discipline policies. Additionally, a copy of the complaint form and the disposition shall be placed in the student's permanent record.
- F. Notice Requirement:** This policy adopted by our local school board shall be included in the code of conduct policy of the local board of education and included in the student handbook so as to give adequate notice to students and parents of prohibited behaviors occurring on school property, school buses, and at school sponsored events and the punishments attached thereto.
- G. Applicability to Employees:** The use of tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products by any teacher, administrator, or other school employee on the campus of any public K-12 school is prohibited.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe on any right provided to a student pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, provided that student information related to this policy shall be included as necessary into any and all Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), behavioral intervention plans, and other similar documents.

Generated pursuant to Act 2025-403.

Other Pertinent Information (If Applicable):

Procedure

After completing this complaint form, the signor must forward the form to the principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer for investigation pursuant to local procedure. Please take all necessary steps to ensure that this form is forwarded expeditiously and without delay.

Verification

I hereby affirm that my answers to the questions on this form, and any explanations and documents that I have provided, are true and accurate to the best of my ability. I understand that any intentional falsification or dishonesty in my answers may be grounds for administrative action as provided by law.

Printed Name of Affiant

Signature

Date