STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT
FANNIN COUNTY SCHOOLS
Approved 7-9-2026

The school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes into conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations, and rules set forth in the Code of Conduct.

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

- At school or on school property at any time;
- Off school grounds at any school-related activity, function, or event and while traveling to and from such events;
- On school buses and at school bus stops.

Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus, which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony, and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school, or which disrupts the educational process.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community.

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

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

AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER

The superintendent fully supports the authority of principals and teachers in the school system to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to provisions of state law. Each teacher shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-737 and 20-2-738 which requires the filing of a report by a teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior that repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his or her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn, where such behavior is in violation of the student Code of Conduct. Such a report shall be filed with the principal or designee on the school day or the following school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior, shall not exceed one page, and shall describe the behavior. The principal or designee shall, within one day of receiving such a report, notify in writing the teacher and the student's parents or guardian of the discipline or student support services that have occurred as a result of the teacher's report. This written notification shall include information as to how the parents or guardian may contact the principal or designee. Reasonable attempts to confirm receipt of such written notification by the parent or guardian shall be made.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student, and other relevant factors such as placement in special education programs. Discipline for special education students will be dictated by the student's IEP and in accordance with due process.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral corrections in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

The Code of Conduct shall be available in each school, classroom, and online at www.fannin.k12.ga.us. It shall also be provided for each student upon enrollment and to the parents and guardians. Students and parents or guardians are asked to sign to acknowledge receipt of the Code of Conduct.

The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of this Code of Conduct:

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Isolation or Time-out
- Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Corporal Punishment
- Detention/Saturday School
- Temporary Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- Short-term Suspension
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia Law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The school will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion; however, these punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Fannin County Board of Education policies.

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated that would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must also be approved by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy.

Before a student is suspended for ten days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parent/guardian will be notified if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

Any disability of a student will be taken into account when addressing misbehavior. All discipline of students with disabilities must follow the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, IDEA, and the Georgia Special Education rules.

No student in preschool through third grade shall be expelled or suspended from school for more than five consecutive or cumulative days during a school year without first receiving a multi-tiered system of supports, such as response to intervention, unless such student possessed a weapon, illegal drugs, or other dangerous instrument or such student's behavior endangers the physical safety of other students or school personnel pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-742.

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Student vehicles brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, desks, and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without prior notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers, or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus, at the discretion of administrators.

BEHAVIORS WHICH WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The degree of discipline imposed will be in accordance with the progressive discipline process unless otherwise stated.

Possession, sale, use in any amount, distribution, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, drug paraphernalia, CBD (with or without THC), alcoholic beverage, or other intoxicant

Possession, distribution, attempted sale, or sale of substances represented as drugs or alcohol

Sale, attempted sale, distribution, or being under the influence of a prescription or over-the-counter drug

Possession or use of a weapon or dangerous instrument: As outlined in O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1, A student shall not possess, use, handle, or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

1. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun, or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.

2. Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 will be subject to a minimum of a one-year expulsion and will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney. Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the student code of conduct. See Board Policy JCDAE-Weapons

Assault, including threats of bodily harm and/or sexual assault, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student or a person attending a school-related function

Battery, including sexual battery, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

Physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel: (1) Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher or other school personnel**;** Expulsion for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public schools for acts of physical violence found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contact or physical harm was in defense of himself or herself, as provided in Code Section 16-3-21; or the Board may authorize the student to attend alternative school for the period of the expulsion; provided, however, that such student is in kindergarten through grade six, then the Board, upon the recommendation of the Tribunal, may permit the student to re-enroll in regular programs for grades 9

through 12; and provided further that if the Board does not operate an alternative education program for grades kindergarten through grade six, then the Board may permit the student in kindergarten through grade six who commits such an act to re-enroll in the public school system. The student shall be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior. (2) Possible punishments may include expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension for students found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another.

Bus Misbehavior: Students shall be prohibited from acts of physical violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6. These include bullying, as defined by subsection (a) of Code Sections 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior. As defined by Code Section 20-2-751.5, the local school board policy shall require a meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and an appropriate school district official to form a school bus behavior contract for the student. Such contracts shall provide for progressive age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Contract provisions may include, but shall not be limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus. This subsection is not to be construed to limit the instances when a school code of conduct or local board of education may require use of a student bus behavior contract.

Students are allowed to "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD), but shall be prohibited from using such devices during the operation of a school bus in such a manner that interferes with the communication equipment or the bus driver's operation of the school bus. The bus driver may allow the wearing of headphones with an audio system on a case-by-case basis as long as it is in accordance with local school rules. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Disrespectful conduct, including use of vulgar or profane language, toward teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions

Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student

Any behavior based on a student's race, national origin, sex, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient is prohibited, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, sexual harassment in the form of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature

Possession or use of tobacco in any form

Possession or use of e-cigarettes, vaping, or related paraphernalia

Damaging or defacing personal property, including the property of another student or any person legitimately at the school, or school property (vandalism or graffiti) during school hours or off-school hours

Theft

Extortion or attempted extortion

Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive

Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat

Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives; Disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff

Classroom and school disturbances

Violation of school dress code

Indecent exposure or use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words

Inappropriate public displays of affection

Gambling or possession of gambling devices

Moving and non-moving driving violations

Giving false information to school officials

Cheating on school assignments

Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, leaving campus without permission, failure to comply with compulsory attendance law as required under O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1

Bullying: Georgia law O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4 mandates that upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal of school officials that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Hazing

Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts

Willful and persistent violation of the student Code of Conduct

Criminal law violations: A student who has committed a violation of the criminal laws and whose presence on the school campus may endanger the safety of other students or cause substantial disruption to the school operation may be subject to disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, short-term suspension and referral to a disciplinary tribunal.

DISRUPTIVE PRESENCE

The Fannin County School District reserves the right to exclude a student's enrollment/attendance at a school due to any off-campus behavior that could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony, and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school, or which disrupts the educational process.

If, through notification by legal authorities or other official/unofficial entities, a principal needs to make a determination regarding the application of this policy as it relates to a student's off-campus behavior, the principal will adhere to the following protocol:

- Contact the Assistant Superintendent of Transportation and Student Conduct, who will work with the principal, the school resource officer, and the school board attorney in order to confirm whether or not charges are being filed against the student.
- Work with the Assistant Superintendent of Transportation and Student Conduct on the potential application of the Fannin County School System's "Disruptive Presence" infraction code regarding the student's off-campus behavior.
- Communicate with the student's parents regarding (a) the current Georgia requirements regarding schools/school districts dealing with off-campus behaviors and (b) the application of local board policy as it pertains to their student.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Assault: Any threat or attempt to physically harm another person or any act which reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: threatening language or swinging at someone in an attempt to strike)

Battery: Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person (Example: fighting)

Bullying: In accordance with Georgia law as defined in O.C.G.A 20-2-751.4, bullying is defined as follows: An act that is: Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:

a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education or otherwise substantially infringing upon the rights of a student;
c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school-related functions or activities, including, but not limited to, extracurricular activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system.

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student: A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics that interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur. Disruptive students can be placed in alternative education settings in lieu of being suspended or expelled.

Corporal Punishment: Physical punishment of a student by a school official in the presence of another school official.

Detention: A requirement that the student report to a specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official to make up work missed. Detention may require the student's attendance before school or after school. Students are given one day's notice so that arrangements for transportation can be made by the parents or guardians.

Disciplinary Tribunal: School officials appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact finders and judges with respect to student disciplinary matters. These officials have received the appropriate initial and ongoing training to serve in this capacity. Georgia law shall be observed in developing and implementing disciplinary hearings held by the hearing officer, disciplinary panel, or disciplinary tribunal pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-751 through O.C. G.A. 20-2-759, including the ability to honor disciplinary orders of private schools and other public schools/school systems as outlined in O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.2.

Dress Code: The current dress code is explained in the student handbook.

Drug: The term drug does not include prescriptions issued to the individual, aspirin or similar medication, and/or cold medications that are taken according to product use recommendations and board policy. Caffeine pills are considered drugs.

Expulsion: Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school quarter or semester. Such action may be taken only by a disciplinary tribunal.

Extortion: Obtaining money or goods from another student by violence, threats, or misuse of authority.

Fireworks: The term "fireworks" means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance.

Gambling: Engaging in a game or contest in which the outcome is dependent upon chance, even though accompanied by some skill, and in which a participant stands to win or lose something of value.

Hazing: Any conduct which subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of association with a group or organization, regardless of the person's consent or lack of consent.

In-School Suspension: Removal of a student from class or regular school program and assignment of that student to an alternative program isolated from peers.

Physical Violence: Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another; or intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another.

Suspension: Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed 10 days (short-term) or for a period greater than 10 days (long-term, which may be imposed only by a disciplinary tribunal). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities, including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.

System's Early Intervention Program for Students and Parents: This early intervention program is for youth ages 12-18 and their parents/guardians. First offenders for possession or use of alcohol or other intoxicants may be offered the opportunity to attend the Substance Use Prevention Education Resource (SUPER) Program.

Theft: The offense of taking or misappropriating any property of another with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

Truant: Any child subject to compulsory attendance who, during the school calendar year, has more than five days of unexcused absences.

Waiver: A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of the consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.

Weapon: The term weapon is defined as any object that is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well-being. The following may be defined as dangerous weapons: Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade, OR any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

.

UNSAFE SCHOOLS

Major offenses, including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses, can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES

The Fannin County Board of Education provides a variety of resources that are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. This Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) includes interventions, Student Support Teams, school counselors, and chronic disciplinary problem student plans.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers, and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contact is extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents as well as ongoing opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments.

Parents and students should contact the principal of the school if specific questions arise related to the Code of Conduct.

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

Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify by telephone call and by mail the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, and request that at least one parent or guardian attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call or by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior. After notice and opportunity for a hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed $500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.