

The safety of our students and staff is our first priority in Forsyth County Schools. It takes a strong partnership between students, teachers, staff, and parents/guardians to keep our schools safe, beginning with an understanding and acknowledgment of the 2026-27 Code of Conduct.

VISION

A safe, connected, and thriving community for all

MISSION

To provide an unparalleled education for all to succeed

BELIEFS

- Respect and empathy are vital to building trust
- All students and staff must be connected and supported
- All students and staff must have a strong sense of purpose
- All students and staff must be challenged to think critically and creatively
- Family and community engagement are essential to continuous improvement

Forsyth County Board of Education

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SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES RELATIVE TO STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND SAFE SCHOOLS

The Forsyth County School Board establishes policies to govern the behavior of the Board, its school officials (as defined in policy JR), and students. The policy manual is available for public review at the Board of Education/Professional Development Center and www.forsyth.k12.ga.us.

It is the purpose of the Forsyth County Board of Education to operate the school system in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education for the welfare and safety of all students, staff, and visitors who attend our schools. Students are required to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that facilitates a learning environment for themselves and others. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school officials, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board, and to obey student behavior rules established at each school in the district. Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses, can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16 Unsafe School Choice Option.

Each school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in 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 the policies, regulations, and rules set forth in this Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures. Student conduct is further governed by the rules contained in each school's Student Handbook.

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

- on the way to school and on the way home from school, including at bus stops and on school buses or other vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system,
- at school or on school property at any time, and
- off school grounds at any school or school-related activity, function, or event and while traveling to and from such events.

In addition, students may be disciplined for any off-campus behavior which occurs enroute to or from school, or which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony or its juvenile equivalent, 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.

State law requires a parent/guardian to sign a statement acknowledging receipt of the Code of Conduct. Questions about the Code should be addressed to the principal.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the Code with their children and to support its enforcement throughout the community. **The Code of Conduct covers all grade levels. Some areas are not relevant for your child's age.**

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

The principal is the leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. Principals are granted authority to enforce this Code of Conduct; and in cases of disruptive, disorderly, or dangerous conduct not covered in this Code, the principal is authorized to undertake corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the students and the school, provided such action does not violate law, or a Board policy or procedure.

TEACHER AUTHORITY

Each teacher is authorized by law to remove from his or her class a student who repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of other students to learn, provided the student's behavior is in violation of the student Code of Conduct and the teacher has previously filed a report with the principal; or if the teacher determines that such behavior poses an immediate threat to the safety of that student or to some other person. The superintendent and principal fully support the authority of every teacher to remove a student from the classroom under the conditions and procedures outlined in Georgia law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-738).

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents/guardians, teachers, school officials, 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, each school's administrative staff will provide information to parents/guardians about on-going opportunities to communicate with school officials (as defined in policy JR)..

Parents/guardians and students are invited to participate in the Code of Conduct revision process by making suggestions for improving the Code through the Local School Council (LSC). Questions about the Code should be addressed with the principal or an assistant principal.

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations that may result in a school staff member's request for a parent/guardian to come to the school for a conference. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes that are 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 to the student's parent/guardian of the disciplinary problem; invite the parent/guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation; and request at least one parent/guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral support plan.

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

The law authorizes the Board of Education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent/guardian to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent/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/guardian to attend such a conference; order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior; or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine not to exceed \$500.00 on a parent/guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

Please note, a parent/guardian does not have to be informed of a school investigation when interviewing a student. The State Board of Education has rejected the student's claim that parental notice was

required before he/she gave any statement to administrators. M.S. V. Clarke Co. Bd of Educ., Case No. 2002-25; A.C. v Henry Co. Bd of Educ., 2002-26. ("Although parents feel they should be notified so they can be involved in the investigation, or take disciplinary action themselves, or to provide counsel to their children, due process does not require such notice.")

DUE PROCESS

Due Process requires in connection with a suspension of 10 days or less, that the student be given oral or written notice of the charges against them and, if he/she denies them, an explanation of the evidence the authorities have an opportunity to present his/her version. Generally, notice and hearing should precede the student's removal from school, since the hearing may almost immediately follow the misconduct, but if prior notice and hearing are not feasible, as where the student's presence endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, thus justifying immediate removal from school, the necessary notice and hearing should follow as soon as practicable.

APPEAL PROCESS

If a parent/guardian feels that his/her child received discipline from an administrator and they are not satisfied with the consequences, the appeal process for a student's discipline is as follows: Contact the administrator that dealt with the student, principal, Office of School Safety and Student Discipline, Superintendent's Office.

STUDENT CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Information concerning clubs, activities, and their sponsors can be acquired at each base school.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES

The Forsyth County Board of Education provides a variety of resources to help address student behavior problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of available behavioral support processes to help students resolve such problems. Strategies that may be considered include:

A. referral to a:

- school counselor
- school social worker
- school nurse
- Student Support Team
- drug awareness and intervention program
- mentoring program
- Threat Assessment Team

B. participation in:

- peer mentoring, tutoring or mediation
- conflict resolution program
- anti-bullying program
- anger management course or counseling
- violence prevention course or counseling

C. development and implementation of an individualized Chronic Disciplinary and Behavioral Support Plan.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

To the extent appropriate to the situation, school administrators, and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official should be in proportion to the severity of the behavior, while considering the totality of the situation, including the student's age, discipline history, and other relevant factors. Drugs and alcohol will not be tolerated.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to maintain an appropriate learning environment, encourage self-discipline, and to help students substitute behaviors that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program for their inappropriate behaviors.

The following range of disciplinary actions may be imposed for violations of this Code of Conduct:

- warning and/or counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- loss of privileges
- time out
- temporary or permanent removal from class, activity, event, or recess
- notification of parent/guardian
- parent/guardian conference
- detention
- Saturday School
- suspension or expulsion from the school bus
- temporary placement in an alternative education program
- short-term suspension - (ten days or less)
- referral to a Tribunal for long-term suspension or expulsion - (more than ten days)
- referral to law enforcement, district attorney, or Juvenile Court officials. Georgia law mandates that certain acts of misconduct be referred to law enforcement, the district attorney, or other public officials. School officials may also report other acts of misconduct as deemed appropriate.

The maximum punishment that can be imposed by a disciplinary tribunal is permanent expulsion from the school system.

In the event of a disciplinary tribunal hearing, a parent/guardian or student may choose not to contest whether the student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parent/guardian, or student waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved by a disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local Board policy.

Before a student is suspended 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 indicates that a law may have been violated or when there is a legal requirement to report the incident.

If there is reason to believe that a student is in possession of an item that violates the law or school rules, school officials may search that student and his/her personal property. Student vehicles brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, school desks, and other school or personal property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time and without further notice to students or parents/guardians. Given those conditions, students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers, or any vehicle brought on campus. In addition, school administrators are further authorized to use metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs at school or at any school function or event.

In reference to cell phone searches that are in a school setting, when the initial encounter with the student is based upon reasonable suspicion, the subsequent search of the phone will also be valid and requires no additional justification so long as it is reasonably related to the need of the educator to turn up evidence of the extent to which the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Bullying: FCS prohibits conduct which may be construed as bullying. Upon a finding by a tribunal that a middle or high school student has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, at a minimum the student shall be assigned to an alternative education program.

Bullying is defined as follows: An act that is:

- (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
- (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
- (3) 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;
 - (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, 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. Such term includes acts of cyberbullying that originate on school property or involve the use of school equipment, including but not limited to, acts that occur within a school sponsored online activity.

Procedures may be developed at each school encouraging a teacher or other school employee, student, parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student, to either anonymously or in the person's name, at the person's option, report or otherwise provide information on bullying activity. Any teacher or other school employee who, in the exercise of his or her personal judgment and discretion, believes he or she has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that someone is a target of bullying is encouraged to immediately report it to the school principal.

Any report will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated by the administration based on the nature of the complaint in a timely manner to determine whether bullying has occurred, whether there are other procedures related to illegal harassment or discrimination that should be implemented and what other steps should be taken. Any report of retaliation for reporting bullying will also be investigated and addressed as called for Board Policy Manual Forsyth County Schools in this policy and in accordance with school procedures.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal 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.

Any student who threatens death or serious injury to individuals in the District may be temporarily assigned to home pending investigation.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student telephone call, or through written notice, which may be done electronically.

Students and parents will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at each school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.

Georgia Compulsory Attendance: § 20-2-690.1. Mandatory education for children between ages six and 16 (a) Mandatory attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall be required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma. For additional requirements under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1. please see local school attendance administrators.

Threats of Violence: FCS will not tolerate threats of violence toward persons or property, whether the threat is made in seriousness or in jest. Any comment, statement, threat, situation, or condition that indicates the possibility of becoming a life-threatening situation is a serious matter and will be investigated and dealt with accordingly.

Sexual Conduct and Criminal Penalties: The General Assembly of Georgia requires that this Code of Conduct include language encouraging parents/guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

Private Property: FCS and all schools will not be held accountable for lost or stolen private property; and will not investigate thefts of personal property to the extent that the investigation substantially interferes with the educational mission of the school. Personal items brought to school will be at the owner's risk.

Instigating Rule Violations: A student shall not advise, counsel, urge, encourage, incite, cause, or attempt to cause any other person to engage in a prohibited act or violate the school's Student Handbook, this Code of Conduct, or any Forsyth County Board of Education policy.

False Reporting: The General Assembly of Georgia requires that this Code of Conduct include language regarding falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school official toward a student. Such false reporting may be punishable by law and is punishable by this Code of Conduct.

Visitor Photos and Videos: Parents/guardians may decline the inclusion of student photographs under the FERPA Directory Information Notice (www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/ferpa). Therefore, visitors are prohibited to take photos and videos, which includes posting on personal social media/websites, of students they are not the parent/guardian of while on school property/at school events.

Water Safety: HB 402 requires public schools and local school systems to annually provide water safety education information to parents and guardians of students under 18 years of age. Please visit <https://cummingaquaticcenter.com/swim-lessons/> and <https://www.redcross.org/> > swimming + water safety.

PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS AND THE RANGE OF ACCEPTABLE CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS

Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to infringe on any right provided to students pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

FCS will facilitate the transfer of discipline records to any public or private school in which a student is enrolled or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll on a full-time or part-time basis in the school.

1. **A. Alcohol (DM 1) and/or other drugs (DM7):** A student shall not be involved in any substance, drug, alcohol or tobacco transaction, including, without limitation to buy, possess, sell, consume, transmit, solicit; attempt to buy, possess, sell, consume, or transmit; or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, depressant or stimulant drug including without limitation caffeine pills, hallucinogenic drug, anabolic steroid, amphetamine, barbiturate, cannabis, inhalant, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. A student shall not possess, sell, buy, or transmit, or attempt to sell, buy, or transmit any substance under the pretense that it is, in fact, a prohibited substance

as described in this rule. The prohibited substances and behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind
- (2) amphetamine/methamphetamine drug
- (3) hallucinogenic drug ex. Peyote, PCP, etc.
- (4) anabolic steroid
- (5) controlled drug or controlled substance (Ritalin, Adderall, Phenobarbital, Percocet, OxyContin, Xanax, etc.)
- (6) cannabis (including but without limitation to marijuana, hemp, THC, CBD, etc.)
- (7) LSD
- (8) cocaine
- (9) heroin
- (10) inhalants (any volatile solvents, aerosols, anesthetics, or volatile nitrites such as glue, paint thinner, hair spray, ether, etc.)
- (11) look alike substance (under the pretense)
- (12) cannabis (selling-including possession of cannabis that is packaged for distribution or possession)
- (13) offering, requesting, and/or receiving of a substance
- (14) furnishing/providing/selling of a substance
- (15) possession of drug paraphernalia, including but not limited to hypodermic needles, "roach clips", rolling papers, pipes, scales, improvised smoking devices, vaping devices used as drug paraphernalia, etc.

B. Intentional misuse of prescribed medications, non-prescription medications, (including prescription and non-prescription skin patches), inhalants or any other chemical; also, to include their sale, purchase, distribution, or possession for the purpose of misuse.

2. Violation of school medication control procedure.

3. **Weapons, explosives, and fireworks:** Actual or attempted possession, sale, purchase, transmission, or use of any real or facsimile weapon, hazardous object, bomb, other explosive device, or explosive material as defined by this code, Board policy, state, or federal law: Weapon related law violations will be referred to tribunal and law enforcement. The minimum expulsion for possession of a firearm or other destructive device, excluding firecrackers, is one calendar year subject to the provisions of Board Policy JCD and Georgia Law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.1 and 16-11-127.1).
4. **Threats or acts of violence against a teacher, administrator, school bus driver, other school official, employee, or their personal property:** Examples include any verbal assault, threat of violence; threat or act of unwanted physical touching (*DM17*); sexual harassment (*DM15*); intentional physical attack against a teacher (*DM44*), physical violence, assault, or battery against other school officials (*DM3*); attempt to 'frame' or entrap through deceit; stalking; intentional damage to personal property, etc.
5. **Disrespectful conduct toward teachers, administrators, or other school officials:** Violations include but are not limited to the use of vulgar, derogatory, and profane language or gestures; and falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school officials toward a student. (*DM33*)
6. **Disrespectful conduct toward other students, school visitors or persons attending school-related functions:** Examples include use of vulgar, derogatory, or profane language; verbal

assault, including threat of violence; verbal or physical taunting; any threat or act of unwanted physical touching; sexual harassment (*DM15*); intentional damage to personal property; stalking; reckless endangerment; attempt to 'frame' or entrap through deceit; any threat or act of verbal or physical violence, assault, battery (*DM03*) or fighting (*DM8*); sexual, racial or ethnic harassment; or any other violent act. A second fight within a school year may lead to a tribunal hearing. (*Other DM codes if relevant DM17, DM18*)

7. **Tobacco:** Actual or attempted possession, sale, purchase, transmission or use of tobacco, any substance represented or believed to be tobacco, or tobacco related paraphernalia to include **electronic cigarettes**, smoking devices or nicotine products. (*DM18*)
8. **Off-Campus Behavior:** A student who is alleged to have committed an offense off-campus on the way to or from school, or any time if the offense is a felony or would be a felony if the student were an adult, may be disciplined if his or her continued presence at school poses a potential danger to persons or property or disrupts the educational process. Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.5 (c)
9. **Vandalism (*DM20*) or arson (*DM2*):** Actual, attempted or threatened willful or malicious damage to personal property, school property or school buses, to include the marking, defacing or destruction of property, downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware or any other unauthorized program on any school's computer or computer system, altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software and attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any network or computer component and bringing on premises or accessing via email or file sharing any computer, disk or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data, bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies.
10. **Breaking and entering, burglary (*DM4*), theft (*DM13*), entering a school event without paying, bribery, possession of stolen property, possession/use of forged or photocopied money, extortion, or the attempt thereof:** Mandatory referral to tribunal for theft of standardized tests, answer keys or other restricted materials. Theft of a teacher's test will result in discipline to be administered by the base school administration. (*DM13*)
11. **Bullying, harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, other), hazing, intimidation, verbal or non-verbal taunting or stalking:** FCS prohibits conduct which may be construed as bullying. Upon a finding by a tribunal that a middle or high school student has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, at a minimum the student shall be assigned to an alternative education program. Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4 (*DM29*)
12. **Gang related activity:** Any act or exhibition, individual or collective, which communicates gang allegiance or affiliation; and/or would be a criminal act if committed by an adult and is deemed gang related by the principal. Gang related activity includes but is not limited to hand sign flashing; wearing of clothing articles in a certain way or color scheme typical of that worn by known gang members; jewelry, tattoos, graffiti on personal items; vandalism of public or private property; and acts of intimidation, threat, fighting and other forms of violence. (*DM35*)
13. **Terroristic threats or acts, false public alarms, or prank 911 calls:** Mandatory parent or guardian conference, mandatory threat assessment for terroristic threats, OSS, tribunal referral, law enforcement referral. Warning Statement: Threats of violence toward persons or property will not be tolerated, whether the threat is made in seriousness or in jest. Any comment, statement,

threat, situation, or condition that indicates the possibility of becoming a life-threatening situation is a serious matter and will be investigated and dealt with accordingly. (DM17)

A threat may be, but is not limited to, a communication or behavior made in seriousness or jest that carries a risk of harm to students or staff or is intended to harass or intimidate a victim. An expression of intent to harm someone, whether communicated to the intended victim or if the intended victim is not aware of the threat, is considered a threat. They can be verbal, written, or conveyed through social media, text messages, email, etc.

14. **Disrupting public school, class disruption, disorderly conduct, insubordinate or disrespectful behavior, willful disobedience (school rules, regulations, or directives), or entering an unauthorized area or event including connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which are not school system property to or in the district's technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel. Willful disobedience for refusal to allow an administrator to search property involved in a school investigation. (DM6)**

15. **Language and sexual behavior restrictions:** Use of lewd, profane, vulgar or obscene words or gestures, also to include videos or pictures taken of such behavior with or without subsequent posting to the internet or social media; use of speech or gestures that are perceived, or where the inference is intended, to demean or threaten the well-being, safety, or dignity of another person with or without that person's knowledge; possession or transmission of obscene or pornographic pictures, materials or objects; indecent exposure; and all forms of sexual contact are prohibited. (DM14, DM15, DM16)

Note: The General Assembly of Georgia requires that this code of conduct include language encouraging parents/guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

16. **Electronic entertainment and electronic communication devices restrictions:**

By creating environments free from the distractions of cell phones and personal electronic communication devices, Forsyth County Schools is committed to ensuring that students are provided with every opportunity to focus on learning and engage in positive interactions to support their well-being. (DM24)

Elementary and Middle Schools

- All cell phones and personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored away during the bell-to-bell school day.
- These restrictions do not apply to school buses, bus stops, or school grounds before and after the bell-to-bell day.

High Schools

- All cell phones and personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored away during the bell-to-bell school day; however, students may access cell phones and personal electronic devices during assigned lunch periods.
- These restrictions do not apply to school buses, bus stops, or school grounds before and after the bell-to-bell day.

Students are also strictly prohibited from using cell phones, audio or recording equipment to record school officials and students. This rule is in place to protect the safety, privacy, and integrity of both school officials and students. Violating the electronic entertainment and electronic communication

devices restrictions policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include confiscation of the device, detention, suspension, tribunal or other appropriate measures as determined by the school administration.

Notice regarding private property: The school and school system will not be held responsible for lost or stolen private property; and will not investigate thefts of personal property to the extent that the investigation substantially interferes with the educational mission of the school. Personal items brought to school will be at the owner's risk.

In reference to cell phone searches that are in a school setting, when the initial encounter with the student is based upon reasonable suspicion, the subsequent search of the phone will also be valid and requires no additional justification so long as it is reasonably related to the need of the educator to turn up evidence of the extent to which the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school.

17. **Public displays of affection that are inappropriate for a school setting (DM24)**
18. **Gambling (DM24)**
19. **Giving false information to school officials, dishonesty, forgery and using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account (DM24)**
20. **Academic dishonesty, misuse of AI tools, cheating, plagiarism, altering record, or other fraudulent act on school assignments, exams, records, or college entrance examinations; using the computer network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music, images or violation of copyright laws which includes using BYOT devices to copy or share copyrighted items or intellectual property.** (Academic dishonesty /cheating may result in the loss of credit, completing an alternative assignment and/or disciplinary consequences up to a tribunal referral). (DM32)
21. **Bus misconduct:** See School Bus Code of Conduct for specifics.: Warning, seat assignment, parent or guardian conference, detention, ISS, OSS, loss of transportation privilege (bus suspension), tribunal referral. (DM33)
22. **Lunchroom misconduct (DM33)**
23. **Violation of school attendance requirements:** Violations include unexcused absence from school or class; unexcused late arrival (tardy) to school or class; unexcused early dismissal from school or class; and leaving school or class without permission (skipping). See definition of Truant for additional information. In accordance with O.C.G.A. 15-11-67 if the child is found to be unruly, the court may make any disposition authorized for a delinquent child except that, if commitment to the Department of Juvenile Justice is ordered, the court shall first find that the child is not amenable to treatment or rehabilitation pursuant to paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection (a) of Code Section 15-11-66. (DM30)
24. **Dress and grooming code:**

The responsibility for student dress and grooming rests primarily with the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s).

To support a safe, respectful, and focused learning environment, student clothing must meet the following expectations:

- Clothing must fully cover private areas, including undergarments and waistbands, and must remain covered during typical movement (e.g., sitting, standing, bending, and walking).
- Clothing must be opaque (non-see-through) and provide coverage of the front, back, and sides. Clothing must fully cover the chest and abdomen.
- Exposed midriffs, low-cut tops, strapless tops, and visible undergarments are not permitted.
- Clothing and accessories must allow the face and ears to remain visible for identification and safety purposes, except for verified religious or documented medical reasons. Hats or head coverings may be permitted at the discretion of school administration.
- Clothing must be safe, appropriate, and functional for all school activities, including physical education, science labs, and Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) courses. Clothing that restricts movement or creates a safety concern may not be permitted.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.

The following student clothing items are **not** permitted:

- Promotion of or references to alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, vaping products, or other controlled or illegal substances.
- Images or language depicting pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- Profanity, obscene language or images, including symbols or abbreviations that imply inappropriate content.
- Gang-related identifiers, including symbols, colors, signs, or references, as determined by school administration.
- Discriminatory language or threatening images targeting individuals or groups, as determined by school administration.

School administration has the authority to determine whether student attire complies with the dress code. Students may be required to change clothing or take other corrective action if attire is deemed inappropriate.

25. Violation of the Responsible Use Guidelines for Computer Hardware, Software, Network and Internet Access, to include any unauthorized entry into a computer network secured site: (DM5)

Warning Statement: The act of entering or attempting to enter a computer network secured site (hacking) is a very serious offense that warrants a very serious consequence that may include permanent expulsion from the school system and confiscation of technology being used inappropriately if an incident occurs. Access is a privilege, not a right, and all students are

expected to treat this learning tool with respect. FCS technology, network access, and electronic resources must not be used to:

- harm other people
- interfere with other people's work
- steal property
- gain access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person
- provide another student with user account information or passwords
- make changes to the hardware or software configuration of any machine, including installing or deleting any software
- purposely bring on premises or infecting any school computer or network with a Virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information
- steal or damage data and/or computers and network equipment
- attempt to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other system users.
- access, upload, download, and distribute pornographic, hate-oriented, profane, obscene, or sexually explicit material
- utilize the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by their teacher or inconsistent with school policy

Failure to follow these guidelines can violate the Official Code of Georgia, O.C.G.A., Codes 16-9-90, 16-9-91 and 16-9-93 as well as Title XVII of United States Public Law 106-554, known as the Children's Internet Protection Act.

26. Willful and persistent violation of the Code of Conduct, to include failure to abide by a Behavioral Support Plan (DM36)

27. Trespassing on any Forsyth County school campus while suspended or during non-school hours without cause or need to conduct legitimate school business Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-1180 (DM19)

28. Traffic or parking violations (DM33)

29. Instigating rule violations: A student shall not advise, counsel, urge, encourage, incite, cause or attempt to cause any other person to engage in a prohibited act or violate the school's Student Handbook, this code of conduct or any Forsyth County Board of Education policy. Intentional dissemination of false or unfounded information that causes additional disruptions to the school environment is not permitted. (DM33)

30. Possession of any item reasonably considered inappropriate to the school setting as determined by the principal. (DM34)

31. Loitering on campus: A student shall not loiter in bathroom stalls or any unsupervised area of the school campus

VIOLENCE AGAINST A TEACHER, ADMINISTRATOR, BUS DRIVER, OR ANY OTHER SCHOOL EMPLOYEE OR OFFICIAL

A disciplinary tribunal hearing will be held following any alleged assault or intentional physical attack against a teacher with the intent to cause bodily harm, resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack against a teacher or any other school system official, if such teacher, other school system employee, school official, or the principal requests a tribunal hearing (O.C.G.A. 20-2-753). In cases involving an alleged intentional act of physical violence by a student against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee, the student shall be suspended pending a hearing by a tribunal (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.6).

A student found by a tribunal to have committed an intentional act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or school employee that results in physical harm to that person shall be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior, and also shall be expelled from the public school system by the tribunal for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school, subject to appeal to the Board of Education. The Board at its discretion: (1) may permit the student to attend an alternative education program for some or all of the period of expulsion; and, if recommended by a tribunal, (2) may permit a student in a grade K-8 to re-enroll in the regular public school program for grades 9-12; and/or (3) may also permit a student in a grade K-6 to re-enroll in the public school system. Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.6; 16-3-21

In addition, a disciplinary tribunal hearing will be held following any substantial damage intentionally caused by a student on school premises to the personal property of a teacher or any other school official, or at the discretion of the principal, to the property of another student.

DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL HEARINGS

Disciplinary tribunal hearings are held following any instance of an alleged violation of the student code of conduct if the principal recommends a suspension or expulsion of a student longer than ten days or following an alleged assault or battery upon any school official if that school official requests a hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to hear the charges and the evidence; to determine if the Code of Conduct was violated; and if so, to determine appropriate disciplinary action. The student and parents/guardians have a right to this due process hearing before a long-term suspension (more than ten days) or expulsion can be administered. The maximum penalty that can be imposed by a tribunal is permanent expulsion. A second tribunal request during a student's school career may lead to an additional semester consequence. A third tribunal request during a student's school career may lead to permanent expulsion.

In the event that a student chooses to admit guilt or chooses not to contest the charges before a tribunal; and if the school and a parent/guardian agree as to appropriate disciplinary action; and if the parent/guardian chooses to waive the opportunity to participate in a tribunal hearing, present evidence, subpoena and cross examine witnesses and be represented by an attorney at such hearing; a Tribunal Waiver Agreement may be written, co-signed and dated. If the tribunal chooses to adopt the agreement as its decision, the decision will be final and cannot be appealed by the school or the family. If the agreement is not adopted as the decision of the tribunal, the document becomes null and void, all parent/guardian rights will be restored, and a new hearing date and time will be established.

GATEWAY ACADEMY

Gateway Academy provides a structured alternative learning environment for Forsyth County students in grades 6-12 who have been placed on long term suspension from their base school program. The program is designed to focus on the remediation of behavioral issues that frequently interfere with the learning process. The goal at Gateway Academy is to prepare each student for a successful return to the base school and ultimately, to graduate. Emphasis is placed on goal setting

and problem-solving methods to help students make good choices. Study skills and organizational skills are also stressed. Gateway Academy students will receive academic instruction in core subjects and limited number of electives while the negative behaviors are being confronted and addressed. Because of the time lost away from the regular academic track at the base school, parents/guardians, and students need to realize that the student may not be able to graduate on time. Students are referred to Gateway through a tribunal process but must be accepted by the Gateway Academy administration following a parent, student, principal conference held during orientation. The student and parent/guardian must attend orientation prior to attending Gateway Academy and will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to comply with the rules and regulations. There are very rigorous expectations of all Gateway Academy students that include wearing school uniforms, following a strict code of behavior and submitting to periodic, random drug screening. Random searches may also be conducted. There is no bus transportation provided to Gateway Academy except that which is required through an Individual Educational Plan. If a student violates the Code of Conduct and attends Gateway Academy, their coursework will be limited to the courses offered by Gateway Academy or Forsyth Virtual Academy (FVA). If a student wishes to take courses beyond those offerings, it would be at the student/family's expense.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The terms used in this Code of Conduct are not intended to be limited to the definition of the same terms as they may be used in the criminal and other laws of this state.

Absence - Excused: Any absence from school or class CAUSED BY personal illness; serious illness or death in the immediate family; order of a governmental agency or court of law; celebration of a religious holiday; conditions that render attendance impossible or hazardous to health or safety; registration to vote or voting, not to exceed one day; and service as a page of the General Assembly.

Absence - Unexcused: Any absence from school NOT CAUSED BY personal illness; serious illness or death in the immediate family; order of a governmental agency or court of law; celebration of a religious holiday; conditions that render attendance impossible or hazardous to health or safety; registration to vote or voting, not to exceed one day; and service as a page of the General Assembly.

Arson: Any willful or malicious burning of property, to include any threat or unsuccessful attempt to do so.

Assault: Any threat to the well-being, safety, or dignity of a person, to include any threat or attempt to physically harm another person that reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm; (Example: threatening language or attempt to strike someone).

Battery (Also known as physical assault): Intentionally made direct or indirect physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person. (Examples: shoving, fighting, hitting without provocation, etc.)

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student: A student who exhibits a pattern of intentionally violating the Code of Conduct or exhibiting behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of other students and which are likely to recur.

Detention: Assignment of a student to a specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official as a disciplinary consequence or to make up work missed. Detention may require the student's attendance before school or after school, or on Saturday or a student holiday. Notice of the detention assignment will be given to the student no later than the day before the assignment to provide the student's parent or guardian an opportunity to make arrangements for transportation.

Dress and Grooming Code: The standard of dress and grooming for students. The school administration is authorized to determine what constitutes a violation of the dress code. With the approval of the superintendent, principals are authorized to institute additional restrictions that are reasonable and do not violate Board policy or procedures.

Expulsion: Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current semester.

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, audible, or malodorous effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and/or tablets or 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.

Gang Member: A person who is part of an association of three or more people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and engages, individually or collectively, in illegal behavior.

Gang Related Activity: Any act or exhibition, individual or collective, which communicates gang allegiance or affiliation; and/or would be a criminal act if committed by an adult and is deemed gang related by the principal. Gang related activity includes but is not limited to hand sign flashing; wearing of clothing articles in a certain way or color scheme typical of that worn by known gang members; jewelry, tattoos, graffiti on personal items; vandalism of public or private property; and acts of intimidation, threat, fighting and other forms of violence.

In-School Suspension (ISS): Temporary removal of a student from his or her regular classroom(s) **FOR AT LEAST HALF A SCHOOL DAY**. The student remains under the direct supervision of school officials. Direct supervision means school officials are physically in the same location as students under their supervision. During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities regardless of location. Suspension days end at midnight.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): 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 campuses and all school-sponsored activities regardless of location. This includes practices and events. Suspension days end at midnight.

O.C.G.A. 20-2-742. Multi-tiered system of supports prior to suspension or expulsion for certain students (b)

Physical Violence: (1) Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another; or (2) intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or harms were in defense of himself or herself, as provided by Georgia Law. Ref. O.C.G.A. 16-3-21; O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.6

Sexual Harassment/Crimes: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Also includes repeated remarks of a demeaning nature, demeaning jokes, stories, or actions. O.C.G.A. 20-2-735 Encourages parents/guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

Terroristic: The use or threatened use of force or violence to coerce or intimidate.

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.

Tribunal: A due process disciplinary hearing before a three-person tribunal to hear charges made against a student in any grade K-12 who is alleged to have violated the Code of Conduct. More information: disciplinary tribunal hearings are held following any instance of an alleged violation of the student code of conduct if the principal recommends a suspension or expulsion of a student longer than ten days or following an alleged assault or battery upon any school official if that school official requests a hearing. The objective of the hearing is to determine if the student did or did not violate the Code of Conduct, and if so, to determine appropriate disciplinary action.

Tribunal Waiver Agreement: An agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of an actual hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. If the tribunal accepts the agreement as its decision, the agreement becomes a disciplinary order of the school system.

Truant: Any student subject to the state compulsory attendance law, who during the school calendar year accumulates more than five days of unexcused absences. School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy. Note: Cases of truancy and excessive excused absenteeism will be handled in accordance with the protocol that was developed by the county-wide Student Attendance Protocol Committee.

Vandalism: Any willful or malicious act committed during or after school hours that marks, defaces, damages, alters, or destroys school property, the personal property of another student, or the personal property of any other person that is legitimately at the school or at a school event, or making any threat or attempt to damage the aforementioned property.

Weapons: Any object that is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well-being. 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. No handcuffs on campus other than those held by law enforcement.

Students who possess any weapon in section 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. The superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one year expulsion under

circumstances where the one year expulsion appears excessive to the superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment. Finally, in any tribunal decision appealed to the Board of education, the Board may reduce the mandated punishment but shall consider whether the superintendent and/or tribunal considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction.

Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in section 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the student code of conduct.

SCHOOL BUS CODE OF CONDUCT

The bus riding privilege is granted to your child as a service of FCS. To help us protect them, students are expected to follow the rules set forth in the Code of Conduct and this special School Bus Code of Conduct while a) walking to or from the school bus stop, b) waiting at the school bus stop and c) riding on the school bus. Students are expected to be safe, orderly, and respectful at all times. Failure to act accordingly may result in suspension or expulsion from the bus. Concerns or issues pertaining to our transportation service should be addressed according to our operational procedures found on our website.

Detailed information regarding our operational procedures, including how we manage student behavior on the school bus, is available at the FCS website.

Driver Authority: The bus driver is authorized to give directions, assign seats, and to prohibit any item from the bus that may threaten the safety or welfare of any person. The driver's actions are subject to review by the Transportation Director.

Important School Bus Rules:

Follow the driver's directions; be respectful to the driver and all passengers.

Follow the Code of Conduct at school bus stops and on the school bus. The school bus and stops are extensions of your school and classroom.

Audible electronic music playing devices may be transported on a school bus if not prohibited by the student's school, but they may not be used without the permission of the driver and may not be used without headphones. Electronic devices, including cell phones...must be kept in the OFF mode and concealed in a pocket, book bag, purse, or other similar carrying device while loading or unloading the school bus. Additionally, no listening device (earphone(s), earbud(s), etc.) should be in the ear(s) while loading or unloading the school bus.

On school buses, Georgia Law specifically prohibits acts of: (a) *physical violence, *physical assault or *battery; (b) *bullying; (c) verbal assault; (d) disrespectful conduct toward the bus driver or any other person; (e) using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the driver's operation of the bus; (f) using any electronic device during the operation of the bus, including but not limited to cell phones; audible radios or media devices without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the bus; and (g) engaging in any other unruly behavior.

Exception: Some items prohibited in another section of the Code of Conduct or in items three and four above, may be permitted on a bus during field trips, athletic trips, etc., if approved in advance by the principal and the teacher/coach in charge (Example: baseball bats may be transported to a

baseball game, radio with headphones may be used with permission on a field trip, etc.). *Ref. O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1

Some Critical School Bus Operational and Safety Procedures:

1. Transportation service is provided to/from an assigned bus stop ONLY. After school, students who board a bus other than their assigned bus or request to get off the bus at a different stop will be returned to the school where a parent or guardian may pick them up.
2. Arrive at the bus stop five minutes early. Wait in an orderly manner. Stay off the road and away from traffic. Do not approach a moving bus.
3. Before crossing a road, follow the directions of the school bus driver. You must understand and follow the “two-finger sweep” crossing procedure. Cross the road about ten feet in front of the bus. Do not cross behind the bus. Use the handrail going up or down the steps.
4. If you drop something while crossing, signal the driver with a waving motion of your hand. Wait for the driver to signal back before picking it up.
5. Sit with your back against the back of the seat and bottom against the bottom of the seat. Stay seated while the bus is in motion. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus. The open door is your signal to get up from your seat.
6. Talking in a quiet voice is permitted. Be silent at railroad crossings. Do not distract the driver.

Detailed information regarding these and other operational procedures is available at the FCS website.

RESPONSIBLE USE GUIDELINES

The district provides ongoing student instruction that develops graduated digital citizenship for using technology as a tool to achieve this mission. Information and communication technology is an integral part of FCS’ curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways, and it is aligned to the competencies listed in the district’s Learner Profile which include pursue continuous learning; exhibit strong personal qualities; utilize creative and critical thinking; engage and contribute; and interact effectively.

I understand that using digital devices (whether personal or school owned) and the FCS network is a privilege, and when I use them according to the Responsible Use Guidelines, I will keep that privilege. All members of FCS’ community agree to follow the district’s Code of Conduct, school rules, and commit to the following responsible use guidelines.

I will:

- use digital devices, networks, and software in school for **educational purposes and activities**,
- keep my personal information (including home/mobile phone number, mailing address, and user password) and that of others **private**,
- show **respect** for myself and others when using technology including social media,
- give **acknowledgement** to others for their ideas and work, and
- report inappropriate use of technology immediately.

The Responsible Use Procedure will be reviewed each school year together with students and teachers and will provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as Internet safety, digital citizenship, and ethical use of technology.

SCHOOL RELATED GEORGIA LAWS

Required Reporting: Any teacher or other person employed at any public or private elementary or secondary school who has reasonable cause to believe that a student at that school has committed upon school property or at any school function any act prohibited by law relative to aggravated assault if a firearm is involved; aggravated battery; sexual offenses; carrying deadly weapons at public gatherings; carrying a weapon on school property, at school functions or in a school safety zone; or possession and other activities regarding marijuana and controlled substances, shall immediately report the act and the name of the student to the principal or his/her designee. Any principal who receives a report or has knowledge of any acts prohibited by these laws and has reasonable cause to believe the validity of the act(s) shall immediately notify the appropriate school system superintendent and law enforcement if a student possesses a firearm, incendiary device, or other dangerous weapon; or if the student is involved in an assault using a hazardous object. Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-1184

Weapon Possession: Possession of deadly weapons on school property is punishable by law “.....it shall be unlawful for any person to carry to or to possess or have under such person’s control while within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school any weapon or explosive compoundAny person who violates this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, by imprisonment for not less than two nor more than ten years, or both. . . . As used in this code section ‘Weapon’ means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or 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, metal knucks, blackjack, 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 weapon of like kind, and any stun gun or taser. ...” Ref. O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1

Drug Use is Prohibited: “It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance or marijuana in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, secondary school, or School Board used for elementary or secondary education. Any person who violates or conspires to violate . . . this Code section shall be guilty of a felony. . .” Ref. O.C.G.A. 16-13-32.4

Loitering in School Safety Zone: It is unlawful for any person to remain upon the premises or within the school safety zone of any public school when that person does not have a legitimate need or cause to be present. The principal has the authority to exercise control over the buildings and grounds to prohibit any person who does not have a legitimate need or cause to be present thereon from loitering on the premises. The principal shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency to prohibit loitering. If a person refuses to remove himself from the premises if requested to do so by the principal or designee, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-1180

Disrupting Public School: It shall be unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public-school bus stop as designated by local school boards of education. Any person violating this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-1181

Non-Student Conduct on School Premises and Buses: Persons other than students who insult or abuse school officials in presence of pupils may be ordered to leave school premises. Any parent, guardian, or person other than a student at the public school in question who has been advised that minor children are present and who continues to upbraid, insult, or abuse any public school teacher, public school administrator, school official, or public school bus driver in the presence and hearing of a pupil while on

the premises of any public school or public school bus may be ordered by any of the above designated school officials to leave the school premises or school bus, and upon failure to do so such person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$500.00.

Ref. O.C.G.A. 20-2-1182

Driver's License: Effective July 1, 2015, schools will certify that a student is enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school to be eligible for a driver's license or learner's permit. The Certificate of Enrollment form will replace the Certificate of Attendance and the Certificate of Eligibility for Restoration of Driving Privileges forms.

Distraction Free Policy:

FCS High School Cell Phone/ Electronic Device Policy

In alignment with GA HB340, the Distraction-Free Education Act, which mandates that local school systems establish policies governing personal electronic device use for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Under this policy, devices must remain powered off and stored away (not on person) before the first instructional bell through the end of the school day, except for permitted use during lunch periods. According to research, restricting electronic device use in schools fosters a more focused learning environment, minimizing distractions and enhancing student achievement. It encourages interpersonal communication, allowing students to build collaboration skills and develop social-emotional learning through face-to-face interactions. By promoting digital citizenship, schools can reduce cyberbullying and instill responsible technology habits. Teaching self-regulation with electronic use strengthens executive functioning, preparing students for success in education and the workplace. Additionally, eliminating mobile distractions optimizes instructional time, ensuring educators can create structured and engaging lessons that support academic growth. Prohibited items to include but not limited to: Cell phones, Earbuds, Headphones (unless admin approved), Smartwatches, Smart glasses, Personal Laptops/ Computers, and other Similar Communication Devices.

FCS Middle School Cell Phone/ Electronic Device Policy:

In alignment with GA HB340, the Distraction-Free Education Act, which mandates that local school systems establish policies governing personal electronic device use for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Under this policy, devices must remain turned off and stored away from the beginning of the school day (9am) until the end of the school day (4:15 pm). According to research, restricting electronic device use in schools fosters a more focused learning environment, minimizing distractions and enhancing student achievement. It encourages interpersonal communication, allowing students to build collaboration skills and develop social-emotional learning through face-to-face interactions. By promoting digital citizenship, schools can reduce cyberbullying and instill responsible technology habits. Teaching self-regulation with electronic use strengthens executive functioning, preparing students for success in education and the workplace. Additionally, eliminating mobile distractions optimizes instructional time, ensuring educators can create structured and engaging lessons that support academic growth. Prohibited items to include but not limited to: Cell phones, Earbuds, Headphones (unless admin approved), Smartwatches, Smart glasses, Personal Laptops/ Computers, and other Similar Communication Devices.

FCS Elementary School Cell Phone/ Electronic Device Policy:

In alignment with GA HB340, the Distraction-Free Education Act, which mandates that local school systems establish policies governing personal electronic device use for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Under this policy, devices must remain turned off and stored away from the student's arrival on campus until departure at the end of the school day. Before and after school programs are at the administration's discretion. According to research, restricting electronic device use in schools fosters a more focused learning environment, minimizing distractions and enhancing student achievement. It encourages interpersonal communication, allowing students to build collaboration skills

and develop social-emotional learning through face-to-face interactions. By promoting digital citizenship, schools can reduce cyberbullying and instill responsible technology habits. Teaching self-regulation with electronic use strengthens executive functioning, preparing students for success in education and the workplace. Additionally, eliminating mobile distractions optimizes instructional time, ensuring educators can create structured and engaging lessons that support academic growth. Prohibited items to include but not limited to: Cell phones, Earbuds, Headphones (unless admin approved), Smartwatches, Smart glasses, Personal Laptops/ Computers, and other Similar Communication Devices.

Violation under the distraction free policy will constitute a cell phone/electronic device contract.

Legal/Non-Discrimination Notice

FCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability or sex in employment decisions or educational programs and activities, including its athletic programs. Any student, school official, applicant for employment, parent/guardian or other individual who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or school officials of the school district based upon any of the factors listed above should promptly report the same to the principal of the school or the appropriate coordinator as listed below, who will implement the Board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor. FCS is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion for all. Equity coordinators for the school system are:

Title VI

Mr. Nathan Turner (Students)

Mr. Derrick Hershey (Personnel)

Title IX

Mr. Todd Shirley (Students)

Mr. Derrick Hershey (Personnel)

ADA and 504

Ms. Sarah Taylor (Students)

Mr. Derrick Hershey (Personnel)

Sports Equity

Mr. Nathan Turner (Students)

Chief of Community Engagement and Lifelong Education

Dr. Valery Lowe (Students)

Equity coordinators may be contacted at the Forsyth County Board of Education and Professional Development Center, 1120 Dahlonega Highway, Cumming, Georgia 30040, (770) 887-2461. Students and school officials will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. Visit www.forsyth.k12.ga.us for a copy of the discriminatory complaints procedure under Forsyth County School District Policy GAAA/JAA (Equal Opportunity/Discriminatory Complaints) or under Policy IDFA (Gender Equity in Sports).

www.forsyth.k12.ga.us

Produced by the FCS Department of School Safety and Discipline

For more information, contact tshirley@forsyth.k12.ga.us

