

***Gates County
Schools***

**Student/Parent
Policy
and Information
Manual**

2026-2027

“Reaching New Heights Together”

Note: electronic acknowledgement is required by parents and students

STUDENT POLICY AND INFORMATION MANUAL FOR GATES COUNTY SCHOOLS

The Gates County Board of Education has adopted written policies for the operation of the school system. It is the Board members' belief that the educational process should be conducted in an atmosphere conducive to learning, free of disruption and threat to person or property, and supportive of individual rights. To share existing policies and to clarify various matters of concern to all students, parents, teachers, and administrators, the Board of Education establishes a Student/Parent Policy & Information Manual for Gates County Schools.

This document shall set forth basic guidelines prohibiting certain types of student behavior while a student is on school property, going to and from school, and during the time he/she is under the supervision of board employees, or attending school-sponsored activities. Additional regulations, not in conflict with those adopted by the board, may be established by school-based personnel to implement the intent of the manual and to determine disciplinary action for infractions of such regulations. Additional policies are available online at <https://v3.boardpolicyonline.com/b/gates>. If you are unable to access this handbook on-line, please contact Central Office and a hardcopy will be made available for you.

Inquiries regarding this manual and its application should first be made to the teacher and principal of the school in which a student is enrolled. Further inquiries should be directed to the Central Office contact below.

In this document the term parent(s) also means guardian(s) or custodian(s) of a student. The function of the principal may be undertaken by an assistant principal or another employee designated by the principal. The function of the superintendent may be undertaken by another employee designated by the superintendent.

Jeremy Wright, Director of Student Services

205 Main Street
Gatesville, NC 27938
(252) 357-1113

TABLE OF CONTENTS - 2026-2027

I.	Attendance	4
II.	Student Behavior Policies	7
III.	Short-term Suspensions	12
IV.	Long-term Suspensions, 365 Day Suspensions, Expulsion	13
V.	Student Discipline Hearing Procedures	20
VI.	Drugs and Alcohol	22
VII.	Tobacco Products – Students	24
VIII.	Student Health Services	25
IX.	Administering Medicine to Students	27
X.	Communicable Disease	32
XI.	Emergency Epinephrine Auto-Injector Devices	36
XII.	Parent Information – Flu	38
XIII.	Parent Information - Meningitis	40
XIV.	Parent Information – Human Papillomavirus	41
XV.	Parent Information – Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion	42
XVI.	Education of Pregnant and Parenting Students	43
XVII.	Non-Discrimination on The Basis of Disabilities	45
XVIII.	Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law	46
XIX.	Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited	54
XX.	Student and Parent Grievance Procedures	60
XXI.	Registered Sex Offenders	66
XXII.	Student Records	68
XXIII.	Student Dress Code	80
XXIV.	Student Searches	81
XXV.	Student Insurance Program	85
XXVI.	Survey of Students	85
XXVII.	Parental Involvement	88
XXVIII.	Title I Parent and Family Engagement	102
XXIX.	Use of Wireless Communication Devices	108
XXX.	Emergency Closing	111

I. ATTENDANCE

School attendance and class participation are integral parts of academic achievement and the teaching-learning process. The board believes that prompt and continuous attendance during the school term is essential for a child to profit from education. Through regular attendance, students develop patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory. The State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of 7 (or younger if enrolled) and 16 attend school. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily. School administrators shall communicate attendance expectations to parents and guardians and work with students and their families to overcome barriers to attendance.

A. Attendance Records

School officials shall keep accurate records of attendance, including accurate attendance records in each class. Students will be considered in attendance if present at least half of the instructional day on-site in the school or at a place other than the school attending an authorized school-related activity.

To be in attendance during remote instruction days (with the exception of the initial enrollment day), students must: (1) complete their daily assignments, either online or offline; and/or (2) have a daily check-in through two-way communication with (a) the homeroom teacher for grades K-5 or (b) for all other grade levels, each course teacher as scheduled. School officials shall communicate the attendance procedures to students and their families before the first day remote instruction begins.

B. Late Arrivals and Early Departures

Students are expected to be at school on time and to remain at school until dismissed. During the school day, students are expected to be present at the scheduled starting time for each class and to remain until the class ends.

When a student must be late to school or leave school early, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian should be presented upon the student's arrival at school. Tardies or early departures may be excused for any of the reasons listed below in Section C.

Any disciplinary consequences for unexcused tardiness or unexcused early departures from school or class will be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for such offenses. Consequences may not exceed a short-term suspension of two days.

C. Excused Absences

When a student must miss school, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be presented to the student's teacher on the day the student returns after an absence. Absences due to extended illnesses may also require a statement from a health care practitioner. An absence may be excused for any of the following reasons.

1. personal illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school;
2. isolation ordered by the local health officer or the State Board of Health or isolation or quarantine that is a required state or local control measure;
3. death in the immediate family;
4. medical or dental appointment;
5. attendance at the proceedings of a court or administrative tribunal if the student is party to the action or under subpoena as a witness;
6. a minimum of two days each academic year for observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent or legal guardian;
7. participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a legislative or Governor's page, with prior approval from the principal;
8. pregnancy and related conditions or parenting, when medically necessary;

9. a minimum of two days each academic year for visitation with the student's parent or legal guardian if the student is not identified as at risk of academic failure because of unexcused absences and the student's parent or legal guardian (a) is an active duty or inactive member of the uniformed services as defined by policy 4050, Children of Military Families, and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting; or
10. any other reason as approved by the board in a board resolution.

The principal shall determine whether an absence will be excused based on this policy.

D. School-Related Activities

While recognizing the importance of classroom learning, the board also acknowledges that out-of-classroom, school-related activities can provide students with valuable experiences not available in the classroom setting. The following school-related activities will not be counted as absences from either class or school:

1. field trips sponsored by the school;
2. job-shadowing and other work-based learning opportunities, as described in [G.S. 115C-47\(34a\)](#);
3. school-initiated and -scheduled activities;
4. athletic events that require early dismissal from school; and
5. Career and Technical Education student organization activities approved in advance by the principal.

In addition, students participating in disciplinary techniques categorized as in-school suspensions will not be counted as absent.

E. Makeup Work

In the case of excused absences, short-term out-of-school suspensions, and absences under [G.S. 130A-440](#) (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school), the student will be permitted to make up his or her missed work. (See also policies 4110, Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission, and 4351, Short-Term Suspension.) Assignments missed due to participation in school-related activities also are eligible for makeup by the student. The teacher shall determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

F. Unexcused Absences

The principal shall notify parents and take all other steps required by [G.S. 115C-378](#) for excessive, unexcused absences.

Any school disciplinary consequences for unexcused absences will be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for such offenses. Consequences may not exceed a short-term suspension of two days.

G. Chronic Absenteeism

Because class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process, any absences, whether excused or unexcused, can have a negative impact on a student's academic achievement. Regular attendance must be prioritized within each school and encouraged throughout the community. School administrators shall monitor and analyze attendance data to develop and implement strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism. Such strategies should involve engaging students and parents, recognizing good and improved attendance, providing early outreach to families of students missing school, and identifying and addressing barriers to attendance.

H. Special Circumstances

1. Students with Chronic Health Problems

No penalties will be imposed for absences due to documented chronic health problems.

2. Students Experiencing Homelessness

For students experiencing homelessness (see board policy 4125, Homeless Students), school officials must consider issues related to the student's homelessness, such as a change of caregivers or nighttime residence, before taking disciplinary action or imposing other barriers to school attendance based on excessive absences or tardies.

3. Attendance Requirements for Extracurricular Activities

Absences may impact eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities. Principals shall inform students and parents of the applicable attendance standards for the various types of extracurricular activities,

including interscholastic athletics. See also policy 3620, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations.

II. STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICIES

All decisions related to student behavior are guided by the board's educational objective to teach responsibility and respect for cultural and ideological differences and by the board's commitment to creating safe, orderly, and inviting schools. Student behavior policies are provided in order to establish (1) expected standards of student behavior; (2) principles to be followed in managing student behavior; (3) consequences for prohibited behavior; and (4) required procedures for addressing misbehavior.

A. Principles

The reasons for managing student behavior are to (1) create an orderly environment in which students can learn; (2) teach expected standards of behavior; (3) help students learn to accept the consequences of their behavior; and (4) provide students with the opportunity to develop self-control. The following principles apply in managing student behavior.

1. Student behavior management strategies will complement other efforts to create a safe, orderly, and inviting environment.
2. Positive behavioral interventions will be employed as appropriate to improve student behavior.
3. Responsibility, integrity, civility, and other standards of behavior will be integrated into the curriculum.
4. Disruptive behavior in the classroom will not be tolerated.
5. Consequences for unacceptable behavior will be designed to help a student learn to comply with rules, to be respectful, to accept responsibility for his or her behavior, and to develop self-control.
6. Strategies and consequences will be age and developmentally appropriate.

B. Code of Student Conduct

Board policies related to student behavior are codified mainly in the 4300 series. The superintendent shall direct each principal to incorporate information from such policies into a Code of Student Conduct that, at a minimum, notifies students of the behavior

expected of them, conduct that may subject them to discipline and the range of disciplinary measures that may be used by school officials. At the discretion of the principal, and subject to review by the superintendent, the Code of Student Conduct may include additional rules needed to implement the board's student behavior policies.

The Code of Student Conduct must not impose mandatory long-term suspension or expulsion for specific violations unless otherwise provided in state or federal law.

C. School Behavior Management Plan

To elaborate further on processes for addressing student misbehavior and the use of intervention strategies and consequences, each school will create a student behavior management plan that is consistent with the law, board policies, and the Code of Student Conduct (see policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior). The Code of Student Conduct must incorporate by reference any additional student behavior standards, prohibited conduct or disciplinary measures identified in student behavior management plans developed by individual schools.

D. Communication of Expected Student Behavior

At the beginning of each school year, principals shall distribute the Code of Student Conduct and the school plan for management of student behavior (if the school has developed such a plan pursuant to policy 4302) as part of the Student and Parent Handbook for each school. In addition, principals shall make available to each student and parent all of the following: (1) the Code of Student Conduct; (2) any board policies related to behavior that are not part of the Code of Conduct; (3) any related administrative procedures; (4) any additional discipline-related information from the school's student behavior management plan, including behavior standards, prohibited conduct, or disciplinary measures; and (5) any other school rules. This information must be available at other times upon request and must be made available to students enrolling during the school year and their parents.

For the purpose of board policies related to student behavior, all references to "parent" include a parent, a legal guardian, a legal custodian, or another caregiver adult authorized to enroll a student under policy 4120, Domicile or Residence Requirements.

E. Applicability

Students must comply with the Code of Student Conduct in the following circumstances:

1. while in any school building or on any school premises before, during, or after school hours;
2. while on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity;
3. while waiting at any school bus stop;

4. during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity;
5. when subject to the authority of school employees; and
6. at any other place or time when the student's behavior has or is reasonably expected to have a direct and immediate impact on the orderly and efficient operation of the schools or the safety of individuals in the school environment.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, students will not be disciplined for constitutionally protected behavior. School officials are encouraged to consult with senior administrators before regulating student expression that may be protected by the [First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution](#).

F. Consequences for Violations

Subject to review by the superintendent, principals shall assign a range of possible consequences for violations of each of the behavioral standards established in the Code of Student Conduct, and shall include such consequences as part of the Code of Student Conduct. The range of possible consequences must comply with the requirements in this Section and must be consistent with any consequences established in other board policies or school behavior management plans for specific violations (see policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior).

Principals may assign different ranges of consequences for elementary, middle, and high school level students as deemed appropriate, subject to review by the superintendent. The superintendent may also direct principals to consider various aggravating or mitigating factors in determining appropriate disciplinary consequences.

In accordance with state law, long-term suspension, 365-day suspension, or expulsion shall not be assigned as a mandatory consequence for specific violations of the Code of Student Conduct unless such penalty is required by state or federal law. Principals shall observe the following additional standards in assigning the range of possible consequences for violations of the Code of Student Conduct:

1. Minor Violations

Minor violations of the Code of Student Conduct are those less severe infractions involving a lower degree of dangerousness and harm. Examples of minor violations include the use of inappropriate or disrespectful language, noncompliance with a staff directive, dress code violations, and minor physical altercations that do not involve a weapon or an injury. Aggravating circumstances, however, may justify treating an otherwise minor violation as a serious violation.

Minor violations of the Code of Student Conduct may result in disciplinary measures or responses up to and including short-term suspension. Further information regarding the

procedures for short-term suspensions is provided in policy 4351, Short-Term Suspension. Other disciplinary measures or responses may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. parental involvement, such as conferences;
- b. isolation or time-out for short periods of time;
- c. behavior improvement agreements;
- d. instruction in conflict resolution and anger management;
- e. peer mediation;
- f. individual or small group sessions with the school counselor;
- g. academic intervention;
- h. in-school suspension;
- i. detention before and/or after school or on Saturday;
- j. community service;
- k. exclusion from graduation ceremonies;
- l. exclusion from extracurricular activities;
- m. suspension from bus privileges; and
- n. placement in an alternative program.

The student's parent is responsible for transportation that may be required to carry out a consequence. With the exception of suspension from bus privileges, if a parent is unable to provide transportation, another consequence will be substituted.

2. Serious Violations

Serious violations of the Code of Student Conduct may result in any of the consequences that may be imposed for minor violations. In addition, serious violations that threaten to substantially disrupt the educational environment may result in long-term suspension, and serious violations that threaten the safety of students, school employees, or school visitors may result in long-term suspension or expulsion. Certain violations involving firearms or explosive devices may result in a 365-day suspension. Further information regarding the standards and procedures for long-term suspensions, 365-day suspensions, and expulsions is provided in policies 4351, Short-Term Suspension, and 4353, Long-Term

Suspension, 365-Day Suspension, Expulsion. (See also policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats and Clear Threats to Safety, for information regarding 365-day suspensions for certain violations involving firearms or explosive devices.)

G. Enforcement

The superintendent and school administrators are responsible for supervising the enforcement of the Code of Student Conduct to ensure that school disciplinary policies are uniformly and fairly applied throughout the school system and consistent with students' constitutional rights.

III. SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS

A short-term suspension is the disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for up to 10 school days. A short-term suspension does not include (1) the removal of a student from class by the classroom teacher, the principal or other authorized school personnel for the remainder of the subject period or for less than one-half of the school day, (2) the changing of a student's location to another room or place on the school premises, or (3) a student's absence under [G.S. 130A-440](#) (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school). A student who is placed on a short-term suspension will not be permitted to be on school property or to take part in any school function during the period of suspension without prior approval from the principal.

The principal or designee has the authority to determine when a short-term suspension is an appropriate consequence and to impose the suspension, so long as all relevant board policies are followed.

In accordance with [G.S. 115C-390.6\(e\)](#) and [115C-45\(c\)\(1\)](#), a student is not entitled to appeal the principal's or designee's decision to impose a short-term suspension to either the superintendent or the board unless it is appealable on some other basis.

A. Pre-Suspension Rights of the Student

Except in the circumstances described below, a student must be provided with an opportunity for an informal hearing with the principal or designee before a short-term suspension is imposed. The principal or designee may hold the hearing immediately after giving the student oral or written notice of the charges against him or her. At the informal hearing, the student has the right to be present, to be informed of the charges and the basis for the accusations against him or her, and to make statements in defense or mitigation of the charges.

The principal or designee may impose a short-term suspension without first providing the student with an opportunity for a hearing if the presence of the student (1) creates a direct and immediate threat to the safety of other students or staff or (2) substantially disrupts or interferes with the education of other students or the maintenance of discipline at the school. In such cases, the principal or designee shall give the student notice of the charges and an opportunity for an informal hearing as soon as practicable.

B. Student Rights during the Suspension

A student under a short-term suspension must be provided with the following:

1. the opportunity to take textbooks home for the duration of the suspension;
2. upon request, the right to receive all missed assignments and, to the extent practicable, the materials distributed to students in connection with such assignments; and
3. the opportunity to take any quarterly, semester or grading period examinations missed during the suspension period.

C. Notice to Parent or Guardian

When imposing a short-term suspension, the principal or designee shall provide the student's parent or guardian with notice that includes the reason for the suspension and a description of the student conduct upon which the suspension is based. The principal or designee must give this notice by the end of the workday during which the suspension is imposed when reasonably possible, but in no event more than two days after the suspension is imposed. If English is the second language of the parent, the notice must be provided in English and in the parent's primary language, when the appropriate foreign language resources are readily available. Both versions must be in plain language and easily understandable.

The initial notice may be by telephone, but it must be followed by timely written notice. The written notice must include all of the information listed above and may be sent by fax, e-mail or any other method reasonably designed to give actual notice. School officials also shall maintain a copy of the written notice in the student's educational record.

Multiple short-term suspensions for a student with disabilities will be addressed in accordance with the *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities* and other applicable state and federal law.

IV. Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day Suspension, Expulsion

Suspension or expulsion from the public schools is an extreme action involving a student's right to a free public education. The procedures set forth in this policy assure that each student will be afforded due process prior to any deprivation of this right.

Suspension or expulsion from one school automatically applies to all six schools and the community center.

A. Definitions

1. Superintendent

For purposes of this policy, superintendent includes the superintendent and the superintendent's designee.

2. Principal

For purposes of this policy, principal includes the principal and the principal's designee.

3. Long-Term Suspension

A long-term suspension is the disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for more than 10 school days. Disciplinary reassignment of a student to a full-time educational program that meets the academic requirements of the standard course of study established by the State Board of Education and that provides the student with the opportunity to make timely progress toward graduation and grade promotion is not a long-term suspension requiring the due process procedures set out in this policy, nor is an absence under [G.S. 130A-440](#) (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school).

Upon the recommendation of the principal, the superintendent may impose a long-term suspension on a student who willfully engages in a serious violation of the Code of Student Conduct and the violation either (1) threatens the safety of students, staff or school visitors, or (2) threatens to substantially disrupt the educational environment. The principal may recommend long-term suspension for a minor violation if aggravating circumstances justify treating the student's behavior as a serious violation.

If the offense leading to the long-term suspension occurred before the final quarter of the school year, the exclusion must be no longer than the remainder of the school year in which the offense was committed. If the offense leading to the long-term suspension occurred during the final quarter of the school year, the exclusion may include a period up to the remainder of the school year in which the offense was committed and the first semester of the following school year.

4. 365-Day Suspension

A 365-day suspension is the disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for 365 calendar days. The superintendent may impose a 365-day suspension only for certain firearm and destructive device violations, as identified in policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats and Clear Threats to Safety.

5. Expulsion

An expulsion is the indefinite exclusion of a student from school enrollment for disciplinary purposes. Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, the board may expel a student who is 14 years of age or older for certain types of misbehavior as provided in policy 4325, Drugs and Alcohol, policy 4330, Theft, Trespass and Damage to Property, policy 4331, Assaults and Threats, and policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats and Clear Threats to Safety, if the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees.

Additionally, a student who is subject to policy 4260, Student Sex Offenders, may be expelled if the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees. During the expulsion, the student is not entitled to be present on educational property and is not considered a student of the school system.

B. Determination of Appropriate Consequence

1. Principal's Recommendation

The principal may impose a short-term suspension or any other consequence that is consistent with policy 4351, Short-Term Suspension, policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior, and the Code of Student Conduct. If the principal determines that a suspension of more than 10 days (either long-term or 365-day) or an expulsion is an appropriate consequence, the principal shall propose the disciplinary penalty based upon a review of the student's culpability and dangerousness and the harm caused by the student, plus any other mitigating or aggravating factors the principal finds relevant.

a. Culpability of Student – In assessing the culpability of the student for his or her behavior, the principal may consider criteria such as:

- 1) the student's age;
- 2) the student's ability to form the intent to cause the harm that occurred or could have occurred; and
- 3) evidence of the student's intent when engaging in the conduct.

b. Dangerousness of the Student – In assessing the dangerousness of the student, the principal may consider criteria such as:

- 1) the student's disciplinary or criminal record related to anti-social behavior or drugs and alcohol;
- 2) whether a weapon was involved in the incident and if a weapon was involved, whether the student had the ability to inflict serious injury or death with the weapon;
- 3) evidence of the student's ability to cause the harm that was intended or that occurred; and
- 4) whether the student is subject to policy 4260, Student Sex Offenders.

c. Harm Caused by the Student – In assessing the severity of the harm caused by the student, the principal may consider criteria such as whether any of the following occurred:

- 1) someone was physically injured or killed;
- 2) someone was directly threatened or property was extorted through the use of a weapon;
- 3) someone was directly harmed, either emotionally or psychologically;
- 4) educational property or others' personal property was damaged; or
- 5) students, school employees or parents were aware of the presence of a weapon or of dangerous behavior on the part of the perpetrator.

After considering the above factors, the principal shall make a recommendation to the superintendent, stating the nature of the offense, the substance of the evidence involved and the length of suspension recommended. The principal also must consider and make a recommendation as to whether any alternative education services, counseling or other programs should be part of the consequence for violating board policy, the Code of Student Conduct, school standards or school rules.

If the principal recommends a 365-day suspension, he or she must identify the type of firearm or destructive device involved and the evidence substantiating that the student brought it to school grounds or to a school activity or possessed it on school grounds or at a school activity.

If the principal recommends an expulsion, he or she shall identify the basis for determining that there is clear and convincing evidence that the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees.

2. Notice to the Student's Parent

The principal must provide to the student's parent written notice of the recommendation for long-term suspension, 365-day suspension or expulsion by the end of the workday during which the long-term suspension or expulsion is recommended when reasonably possible or as soon thereafter as practicable. The notice must be written in plain English and, when appropriate language resources are readily available, also in the parent's native language. The notice must contain the following 10 elements:

- a. the notice type, i.e., notice of long-term suspension, 365-day suspension or expulsion;*
- b. a description of the incident and the student's conduct that led to the recommendation;
- c. the specific provision(s) of the Code of Student Conduct that the student allegedly violated;
- d. the specific process by which the parent may request a hearing to contest the decision and the deadline for making the request;*
- e. the process by which the hearing will be held, including all due process rights to be accorded the student during the hearing;
- f. notice of the right to retain an attorney to represent the student in the hearing process;
- g. notice that an advocate, instead of an attorney, may accompany the student to assist in the presentation of the appeal;
- h. notice of the right to review and obtain copies of the student's educational records prior to the hearing;
- i. a reference to policy 4345, Student Discipline Records, regarding the expungement of disciplinary records; and
- j. the identity and phone number of a school employee whom the parent may call to obtain assistance in receiving a Spanish translation of the English language information included in the document.*

*This information must be provided on the notice in both English and Spanish.

3. Superintendent's Decision

The student or student's parent may request a hearing before the superintendent within three days of receiving notice from the principal of the recommendation for long-term suspension, 365-day suspension or expulsion. Any hearing held will follow the hearing procedures outlined in Section A of policy 4370, Student Discipline Hearing Procedures. A decision will be rendered before the long-term suspension is imposed.

If the student or parent makes a timely request for a hearing, the superintendent shall confirm that the charges against the student, if substantiated, could warrant the recommended disciplinary action and shall give the student and parent reasonable notice of the time and place of the hearing.

If neither the student nor the parent appears for a scheduled hearing after being given reasonable notice of the time and place of the hearing, the student and parent are deemed to have waived the right to a hearing.

If the student and parent fail to make a timely request for a hearing or if they waive the right to a hearing by failing to appear for a duly scheduled hearing, the superintendent shall review the circumstances of the recommended long-term suspension. Following this review, the superintendent (1) may impose the long-term or 365-day suspension if it is consistent with board policies and appropriate under the circumstances, (2) may impose another appropriate penalty authorized by board policy or (3) may decline to impose any penalty.

If the student or parent requests a postponement of the hearing, or if the request for the hearing is untimely, the hearing will be scheduled, but the student does not have the right to return to school pending the hearing.

Based on substantial evidence presented at the hearing, the superintendent shall decide whether to uphold, modify or reject the principal's recommendation. The superintendent shall immediately inform the principal of the decision regarding the recommended disciplinary penalty of a long-term or 365-day suspension and, when applicable, of any modifications to the penalty recommended by the principal.

The superintendent shall send notice of the decision via certified mail to the student and parent. The notice must include:

- a. the basis of the decision, with reference to any policies or rules that the student violated;
- b. notice of what information will be included in the student's official record pursuant to [G.S. 115C-402](#);
- c. notice of the student's right to appeal the decision and the procedures for such appeal;
- d. if the decision is to suspend the student for 365 days, notice of the student's right to petition the board for readmission under [G.S. 115C-390.12](#);
- e. if applicable, notice that the superintendent or designee is recommending to the board that the student be expelled and any required notifications related to the expulsion if the student did not already receive such notice from the principal or designee; and

f. if the student is to be suspended, notice of the superintendent's or designee's decision on whether to offer alternative education services to the student during the period of suspension, and, as applicable, a description of the services to be offered or the reason justifying the superintendent's or designee's decision to deny such services.

Following issuance of the decision, the superintendent shall implement the decision by authorizing the student's return to school upon the completion of any short-term suspension or by imposing the suspension reflected in the decision.

The superintendent shall offer alternative education services to any student who receives a long-term or 365-day suspension unless the superintendent provides a significant or important reason for declining to offer such services. Alternative education services are part-time or full-time programs that provide direct or computer-based instruction to allow the student to progress in one or more core academic courses. Such services may include programs described in policy 3470/4305, Alternative Learning Programs/Schools.

The student may appeal to the board the superintendent's decision not to provide alternative education services, as permitted by [G.S. 115C-45\(c\)\(2\)](#). Any appeal to the board must be made in writing within five days of receiving the superintendent's decision. The superintendent shall inform the board chairperson of the request for an appeal and arrange in a timely manner a hearing before the board. In advance of the hearing, the superintendent shall provide to the student and parent and to the board a written explanation for the denial of services along with any documents or other information supporting the decision. The hearing will be conducted pursuant to policy 2500, Hearings Before the Board. The board will provide to the student and parent and to the superintendent written notice of its decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal.

If the superintendent determines that expulsion is appropriate, the superintendent shall submit to the board a recommendation and the basis for the recommendation along with any proposal for alternative education services.

4. Hearings Before the Board

a. Long-Term or 365-Day Suspensions

A student or his or her parent may appeal an imposed long-term or 365-day suspension. The student or parent must appeal to the board in writing within three days of receiving the superintendent's decision. The superintendent shall inform the board chairperson of the request for an appeal and shall arrange in a timely manner a hearing before the board. The suspension need not be postponed pending the outcome of the appeal. The hearing will be conducted pursuant to Section B of policy 4370, Student Discipline Hearing Procedures. The board will provide to the student and parent and to the superintendent written notice of its decision not more than 30 calendar days after receiving the appeal.

b. Expulsions

The student or parent may request a hearing within five days of receiving notice of the superintendent's recommendation that the student be expelled. The hearing will be scheduled with the board within five days of the superintendent's receipt of the hearing request. The superintendent shall notify the student and parent of the date, time and place of the hearing. Any appeal of a long-term or 365-day suspension will be addressed in the same hearing. The hearing will be conducted pursuant to Section B of policy 4370.

If a hearing is not requested by the student or parent, the superintendent shall submit written evidence to support his or her recommendation to the board. The board may elect to request a hearing or to request additional records and documents.

When the board decides to expel a student, the board will document the basis for its determination that there is clear and convincing evidence that the student's behavior indicates that the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees. The board also will consider and make a written determination of whether alternative education services are to be provided to the expelled student. Regardless of whether the school system provides alternative education services, the board expects school system administrators to work with other agencies to help the student and parent identify other types of services that may be of assistance to the student. The board will send via certified mail to the student's parent a copy of the decision, notification of what information will be included in the student's official record, the procedure for expungement of this information under [G.S. 115C-402](#), and notice of the right to petition for readmission pursuant to [G.S. 115C-390.12](#).

C. Educational Services for Students with Disabilities During Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day Suspension or Expulsion

Students with disabilities recognized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act will receive educational services during periods of suspension or expulsion to the extent required by *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities* and state and federal law.

D. Reducing Suspension and Expulsion Rates

Though the board believes that suspension or expulsion may be an appropriate and necessary consequence in certain situations, the board also recognizes that excessive use of suspension and expulsion may have a negative impact on academic achievement and graduation rates. Thus, the board encourages school administrators to find ways to reduce suspension and expulsion rates in the schools.

V. STUDENT DISCIPLINE HEARING PROCEDURES

A. ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

The rules set out below will govern hearings held by the superintendent or designee in assessing misbehavior and appropriate consequences. For purposes of this section, "designee" means a hearing officer or hearing panel designated by the superintendent to conduct the hearing. No individual who is under the direct supervision of the principal recommending suspension may serve as a hearing officer or on a hearing panel. If the superintendent appoints a designee, the designee shall determine the relevant facts and credibility of witnesses based on the evidence presented at the hearing. Following the hearing, the superintendent shall make a final decision on the suspension. The superintendent must adopt the designee's factual determinations unless they are not supported by substantial evidence in the record.

1. The hearing will be conducted in private.
2. Prior to the hearing, the student and his or her parents and representative will have an opportunity to review any audio or video recordings of the incident and, consistent with federal and state student records laws and regulations, the information that may be presented as evidence against the student, including statements made by witnesses whose names are withheld in accordance with number 5, below.
3. The hearing must be attended by the superintendent or designee, the principal and/or assistant administrators and any persons the superintendent deems necessary. The student has the right to be present at the hearing, to be accompanied by his or her parents and to be represented by an attorney or non-attorney advocate. Witnesses should be present only when providing information.
4. The school representatives have the burden of proving the misbehavior; the violation of board policy, the Code of Student Conduct, school standards or school rules; and the appropriateness of the recommended consequence for the violation.
5. The school representatives will present the witnesses and documentary evidence against the student first. School officials may withhold witness names or other identifying information if identification of a witness could threaten the witness's safety.
6. After the school representatives have presented their evidence, the student or his or her representative may present evidence relating to the alleged disciplinary infraction, the student's intent at the time of the incident, any mitigating or aggravating factors involved, the disciplinary and academic history of the student and the potential benefits to the student of alternatives to suspension. Such evidence may include oral testimony by the student or witnesses, written statements and other documents.
7. Both the school representatives and the student or his or her parent or representative may examine the witnesses presented by the other side. The superintendent or designee has the authority to limit questioning by any person if the questioning is unproductive, unnecessarily lengthy, repetitive or irrelevant.

8. In reaching a determination in the matter, the superintendent or designee shall consider the documents produced in the hearing, the testimony of the witnesses and other evidence presented at the hearing. If the superintendent or designee determines that a violation occurred, the superintendent or designee also shall determine the appropriateness of the recommended consequences for the violation. Formal rules of evidence do not apply, and the superintendent or designee may rely on evidence that a reasonably prudent person would consider in the conduct of serious affairs.

9. Following the hearing, the superintendent shall render a written decision based on substantial evidence presented at the hearing. The superintendent shall notify the student and parent of that decision in accordance with the requirements of policy 4353, Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day Suspension, Expulsion.

10. The superintendent or designee shall provide for making a record of the hearing, including any findings or conclusions made by the superintendent. The student will have the right to make his or her own audio recording of the hearing.

B. BOARD HEARINGS

1. Appeal of a Long-Term or 365-Day Suspension

The board will provide the opportunity for a hearing that follows the procedures established for administrative hearings, except that (1) the superintendent or designee will represent the school system and the board or a panel of the board will be the decision maker, and (2) unless the board requests otherwise or doing so would create a substantial threat of unfairness, the board will limit presentations of testimony to the student, the student's parent and representative, and the school system's representative and will limit documentation to the records and evidence presented at the administrative hearing. The board, at its discretion, may request additional information or evidence.

The board will review any records created by the superintendent's decision and the record created from any administrative hearing held. The board will review the superintendent's decision to be sure that: (1) there was a reasonable basis for determining that the student engaged in the specified misbehavior; (2) a board policy, the Code of Student Conduct, a school standard or a school rule was violated; (3) the consequence for the violation was reasonable; and (4) procedures established by board policy were followed.

2. Board Decision on Expulsion

The board will provide an opportunity for a hearing to review the superintendent's recommendation for expulsion. The rules established for administrative hearings will be followed, except that the superintendent or designee will represent the school system and the board will be the decision maker. The board may request additional records or witnesses. A decision will be made on the superintendent's recommendation following the standards for expulsion established in policy 4353, Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day Suspension, Expulsion.

VI. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Unauthorized or illegal drugs and alcohol are a threat to safe and orderly schools and will not be tolerated. The superintendent is responsible for ensuring that this policy is consistently applied throughout the school system.

This policy applies to students while on school property or at a school-sponsored event or activity (whether on or off school property) and at any other time or place where the conduct is reasonably expected to have a direct and immediate impact on the orderly and efficient operation of the schools or the safety of individuals in the school environment.

A. Prohibited Behavior

1. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, selling or being under the influence of any of the following substances:

- a. narcotic drugs;
 - b. hallucinogenic drugs;
 - c. amphetamines;
 - d. barbiturates;
 - e. marijuana;
 - f. synthetic stimulants, such as MDPV and mephedrone (e.g., “bath salts”), and synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., “Spice,” “K2”);
 - g. any other controlled substance;
 - h. any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified or unfortified wine or other intoxicating liquor;
 - i. any chemicals, substances or products procured or used with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration or euphoria or of otherwise altering the student’s mood or behavior; or
 - j. any substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under state or federal law.
2. Students also are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, or manufacturing counterfeit (fake) drugs.

3. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, or manufacturing drug paraphernalia, including but not limited to rolling papers, roach clips, lighters, matches, vaping devices, vape liquid containers, pipes, syringes, and other delivery devices for prohibited substances.
4. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, or sharing prescription or over-the-counter drugs, except in accordance with policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students. A student who possesses or uses a prescription or over-the-counter drug in accordance with policy 6125 does not violate this policy.
5. A student is not in violation of this policy for being under the influence of a prohibited substance following its proper use as a medication lawfully prescribed for the student by a licensed health care practitioner.
6. Students may not participate in any way in the selling or delivering of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or delivery ultimately occurs on school property.
7. The principal may authorize lawful uses of substances that are otherwise prohibited by this policy for legitimate curriculum-related purposes, such as for the use of matches or lighters in approved chemistry or other school projects.

B. Consequences

As required by policy 4335, Criminal Behavior, the principal must report to the appropriate law enforcement agency any student who has used or possessed a controlled substance in violation of law while on school property.

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy will be consistent with Section F of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

VII. TOBACCO PRODUCTS – STUDENTS

The board is committed to creating safe, orderly, clean and inviting schools for all students and staff. To this end, the board supports state laws that prohibit the sale or distribution of tobacco products to minors and that prohibit the use of tobacco products by minors. The board also supports state and federal laws that prohibit the use of tobacco products in school buildings, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board. For the purposes of this policy, the term

“tobacco product” means any product that contains tobacco and is intended for human consumption. The term “tobacco product” also includes alternative nicotine products (noncombustible products that contain nicotine, whether natural or synthetic, but do not contain tobacco and are intended for human consumption whether chewed, absorbed, dissolved, ingested, or by other means), consumable products (nicotine liquid solutions or other materials containing nicotine that is depleted as a vapor product is used), vapor products (noncombustible products that employ a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit regardless of shape or size and that can be used to heat consumable products) including electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic cigarillos, and electronic pipes, and components of vapor products.

A. Prohibited Behavior

In support of the board’s commitments and state and federal law, students are prohibited from using or possessing any tobacco product (1) in any school building, on any school campus, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board, including school vehicles; (2) at any school-related activity, including athletic events; or (3) at any time when the student is subject to the supervision of school personnel, including during school trips.

Nothing in this policy prohibits the use or possession of tobacco products for an instructional or research activity conducted in a school building, provided that the activity is conducted or supervised by a faculty member and that the activity does not include smoking, chewing or otherwise ingesting tobacco.

B. Consequences

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section F of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

In determining appropriate consequences for violations of this policy, school officials are encouraged to identify programs or opportunities that will provide students with a greater understanding of the health hazards of tobacco use, the hazards of secondhand smoke, and the impact of tobacco use on efforts to provide a safe, orderly, clean and inviting school environment.

C. Services for Students

The administration shall consult with the county health department and other appropriate organizations to provide students with information and access to support systems and programs to encourage students to abstain from the use of tobacco products. The school system may, from time to time, provide free non-smoking programs and services to its students.

D. Notice

Students will be provided with notice of the information in this policy through the Code of Student Conduct, student handbooks, or other means identified by the principal. In addition, the principal shall post signs in a manner and at locations that adequately notify students, school personnel, and visitors about prohibitions against the use of tobacco products in all school facilities, on all school grounds, and at all school-sponsored events.

VIII. Student Health Services

A. Student Health Services Generally

The board will provide health services to students as required by law. State law authorizes school employees to administer medication prescribed by a health care practitioner upon the written request of the parents; give emergency health care when reasonably apparent circumstances indicate that any delay would seriously worsen the physical condition or endanger the life of the student; and perform any other first aid or lifesaving technique in which training has been provided to school employees. A registered nurse will be available to provide assessment, care planning and ongoing evaluation of students with special health care service needs in the school setting.

The superintendent may develop procedures or delegate the development of procedures to each principal for providing these health services and meeting the board requirements listed below. All procedures must be approved by the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) and updated as needed.

1. The principal shall determine at the beginning of each school year prior to the beginning of classes, and thereafter as circumstances require, which employees will be selected to participate in the health services program. The principal shall inform his or her staff about which health services duties are delegated to which employees.
2. Any employee designated to provide health care services must receive appropriate training.
3. Health manuals prepared by the governing state agencies must be followed in developing appropriate procedures and for determining which tasks must be performed by registered nurses.
4. Procedures must be consistent with all related board policies, including policy 4230, Communicable Diseases – Students, and policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students.
5. Procedures must be consistent with state and federal law for students with disabilities, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities* will be followed, as applicable.

6. Procedures must be consistent with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education under [G.S. 115C-12](#)(31) to serve students with diabetes, including developing and implementing individual diabetes care plans for such students and providing information and training to school personnel to appropriately support and assist such students, in accordance with their individual diabetes care plans.

7. Written information maintained by the school or school personnel regarding a student's medicinal and health needs is confidential. Parents and students must be accorded all rights provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and state confidentiality laws. Any employee who violates the confidentiality of the records may be subject to disciplinary action.

8. School personnel must obtain parental consent for medical services as required by law. Parents will be notified of their rights in accordance with policy 1310/4002, Parental Involvement.

9. Health professionals will be consulted in the development of health services. Opportunities also will be provided for input from staff, parents and students on the health services provided.

B. School System Mental Health Plan

The superintendent shall develop a school-based mental health plan that includes a mental health training program and suicide risk referral protocol that satisfies the requirements of State Board of Education Policy [SHLT-003](#). The superintendent shall submit the plan to the board for approval and direct implementation of the plan within all applicable deadlines.

By September 15 of each year, the superintendent shall report to the Department of Public Instruction all information required by State Board of Education Policy [SHLT-003](#). The board will review the components of the school system's mental health plan at least every five years, starting August 1, 2025, and will update the mental health plan in accordance with any updated requirements provided by the State Board of Education.

IX. ADMINISTERING MEDICINE TO STUDENTS

The board recognizes that students may need to take medication during school hours and seeks to ensure that such medication is administered safely and accurately. To minimize disruptions to the school day, students should take medications at home before and/or after school rather than at school whenever feasible. School officials may deny a request to administer any medication that could be taken at home or when, in the opinion of the

superintendent or designee in consultation with school nursing personnel, other treatment options exist and the administration of the medication by school personnel would pose a substantial risk of harm to the student or others. The administration of medication to students by school employees will be permitted only according to this policy, any corresponding administrative procedures and upon the proper authorization by a health care practitioner and a student's parent.

For purposes of this policy, all references to "parent" include parents, legal guardians and legal custodians. In addition, for purposes of this policy, the term "health care practitioner" is limited to licensed medical professionals who are legally authorized to prescribe medications under North Carolina law, such as doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathic medicine, physician assistants and nurse practitioners.

Unless otherwise indicated, the terms "medication" and "medicine" include any substance intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of any disease. The term includes all prescription medications and all such substances available over-the-counter without a prescription, such as drugs, herbs, alternative medicines, and supplements (hereinafter "over-the-counter drugs"). The administration of any prescription or over-the-counter drug to students by school employees is prohibited except when performed in accordance with Section A.

The self-administration of any prescription or over-the-counter drug by students at school is prohibited and constitutes a violation of policy 4325, Drugs and Alcohol, except in the limited circumstances described in Section C.

The administration, including by parents, school employees, or self-administration, of any substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) at school is prohibited unless the CBD or THC product is available by prescription only and has been approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA); and all requirements of this policy are met.

A. Medication Administration by School Employees

1. Conditions for Administering Medication

Authorized school employees may administer medication to students when all of the following conditions are met. These conditions apply to all medications, including those available over-the-counter without a prescription.

a. Parental Consent: The student's parent must make a signed, written request that authorizes school personnel to administer the medication to the student.

b. Medication Authorization/Order: A health care practitioner must prescribe the medication for use by the student and provide explicit written instructions for administering the medication.

c. Certification of Necessity: The student's health care practitioner must certify that administration of the medication to the student during the school day is necessary to maintain and support the student's continued presence in school.

d. Proper Container/Labeling: If the medication to be administered is available by prescription only, the parent must provide the medication in a pharmacy-labeled container with the child's name, the name of the medication, the exact dose to be given, the time/frequency the medication is to be given, the route of administration, the number of doses in the container, and the expiration date of the medication. If the medication is available over-the-counter, it must be provided in the original container or packaging, labeled with the student's name.

e. Proper Administration: The employee must administer the medication pursuant to the health care practitioner's written instructions provided to the school by the student's parent, and in accordance with professional standards.

The board of education and its employees assume no liability for complications or side effects of medication when administered in accordance with the instructions provided by the parent and health care practitioner.

2. Procedures for Administering Medications

The superintendent shall develop procedures for the implementation of this policy. The procedures and a copy of this policy must be made available to all students and parents each school year. The superintendent's procedures should be developed according to the guidelines listed below.

a. The health and welfare of the student must be of paramount concern in all decisions regarding the administration of medication.

b. Procedures for medication administration must be consistent with recommendations of the School, Adolescence and Child Health Unit of the Whole Child Health Section of the Division of Child and Family Well-Being of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, as described in the *North Carolina School Health Program Manual*.

c. Students with special needs are to be afforded all rights provided by federal and state law as enumerated in the *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*. Students with disabilities also are to be afforded all rights provided by anti-discrimination laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

d. Except as permitted by this policy, no student may possess, use, sell, deliver, or manufacture any drug or counterfeit drug prohibited by policy 4325, Drugs and Alcohol, nor be under the influence of any drug in violation of that policy.

- e. The board generally encourages school personnel to administer medication from a centralized location. However, in all instances, whether administered from a centralized location or multiple locations, any medications kept at school for a student must be kept in a locked and secure place. An exception to the requirement for locked storage may be made for emergency medications that must be immediately accessible. Access to controlled substances should be limited to the school nurse, school staff person authorized to administer medication, and the principal or designee.
- f. All school personnel who will be administering medications must receive appropriate training.
- g. Only medications clearly prescribed for the student may be administered by school personnel. At the time a parent brings a medication to school for administration, if school personnel have concerns regarding the appropriateness of the medication or dosage for a student, a confirmation should be obtained from the student's health care practitioner or another health care practitioner prior to administering the medication or allowing a student to self-administer the medication.
- h. Although efforts should be made not to disrupt instructional time, a parent has the right to administer medication to his or her child at any time while the child is on school property, unless otherwise prohibited by this policy.
- i. Written information maintained by school personnel regarding a student's medicinal and health needs is confidential. Parents and students must be accorded all rights provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and state confidentiality laws. Any employee who violates the confidentiality of the records may be subject to disciplinary action.

B. Emergency Medication

Students who are at risk for medical emergencies, such as those with diabetes, asthma, or severe allergies, must have an emergency health care plan developed for them to address emergency administration of medication. Students must meet the requirements of subsection A.1, above, including providing authorization and instructions from the health care practitioner and written consent of the parent, in order for emergency medication to be administered by school personnel while the student is at school, at a school sponsored activity and/or while in transit to or from school or a school-sponsored event.

C. Student Self-Administering Medications

The board recognizes that students with certain health conditions like diabetes or asthma, or an allergy that could result in an anaphylactic reaction, may need to possess and self-administer medication on school property.

Students are prohibited from self-administering medication at school unless (1) the medicine has been prescribed for the treatment of diabetes, asthma or anaphylactic

reactions, including insulin or a source of glucose, a prescribed asthma inhaler or a prescribed epinephrine auto-injector; (2) the medicine is administered in accordance with the student's individualized health care plan or emergency health care plan and any relevant administrative regulations; and (3) the requirements of this section are met. The superintendent shall develop procedures for the possession and self-administration of such medication by students on school property, during the school day, at school-sponsored activities and/or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events.

1. Authorization to Self-Administer Medication

Before a student will be allowed to self-administer medication pursuant to this subsection, the student's parent must provide to the principal or designee all of the documents listed below:

- a. written authorization from the student's parent for the student to possess and self-administer the medication;
- b. a written statement from the student's health care practitioner verifying that:
 - 1) the student has diabetes or asthma, or an allergy that could result in anaphylactic reaction;
 - 2) the health care practitioner prescribed the medication for use on school property during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events; and
 - 3) the student understands, has been instructed in self-administration of the medication, has demonstrated the skill level necessary to use the medication and any accompanying device, and has been determined to be competent for self-administration;
- c. a written treatment plan and written emergency protocol formulated by the prescribing health care practitioner for managing the student's diabetes, asthma or anaphylaxis episodes and for medication use by the student;
- d. a statement provided by the school system and signed by the student's parent acknowledging that the board of education and its employees and agents are not liable for injury arising from the student's possession and self-administration of the medication; and
- e. any other documents or items necessary to comply with state and federal laws.

Prior to being permitted to self-administer medication at school, the student also must demonstrate to the school nurse, or the nurse's designee, (1) the skill level necessary to use the medication and any device necessary for its administration; and (2) sufficient knowledge and maturity to be independent in the management of the medication with no oversight from school staff.

The student's parent must provide to the school backup medication that school personnel are to keep in a location to which the student has immediate access in the event the student does not have the required medication.

All information provided to the school by the student's parent must be reviewed by the school nurse and kept on file at the school in an easily accessible location. Any permission granted by the principal or designee for a student to possess and self-administer medication will be effective only for the same school for 365 calendar days. Such permission must be renewed each school year.

2. Responsibilities of the Student

A student who is authorized in accordance with this policy to carry medication for self-administration must carry the medication in the original labeled container with the student's name on the label.

3. Consequences for Improper Use

A student who uses his or her medication in a manner other than as prescribed or who permits another person to use the medication may be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the school disciplinary policy. However, school officials shall not impose disciplinary action on the student that limits or restricts the student's immediate access to the diabetes, asthma or anaphylactic medication.

The board does not assume any responsibility for the administration of medication to a student by the student, the student's parent or any other person who is not authorized by this policy to administer medications to students.

X. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

The board strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students and employees. The board also strives to maintain a balance among the needs to educate all eligible students, to protect students' and employees' rights, and to control communicable diseases.

Under certain circumstances, students with communicable diseases may pose a threat to the health and safety of other students and employees. Decisions regarding the educational status of students with communicable diseases will be made on a case-by-case basis in accordance with this policy. Nothing in this policy is intended to grant or confer any school attendance or education rights beyond those existing by law. This policy will be shared with school employees annually and with new employees as part of any initial orientation.

A. Definitions

A “communicable disease” is defined as an illness due to an infectious agent (usually a virus or bacterium), or its toxic products, that is transmitted directly or indirectly to a person from an infected person or animal.

A “communicable condition” exists if a person is infected with a communicable agent but does not have symptoms.

A “reportable disease or condition” is defined as a communicable disease or condition declared to be dangerous to the public health and required by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services to be reported after the disease or condition is reasonably suspected to exist.

B. Precautions

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, school system officials shall distribute guidelines for necessary health and safety precautions that all school system employees must follow. (See policy 7260, Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens, and policy 7262, Communicable Diseases – Employees). Employees are also required to follow the school system’s bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan that contains universal precautions and specific work practice controls relating to the handling, disposal, and cleanup of blood and other potentially infectious materials.

Students should not be involved in the handling, disposal and cleanup of potentially infectious materials. Employees shall take reasonable precautions to avoid allowing students to come in contact with these substances.

C. Curriculum

The curriculum will include health, hygiene and safety education, including age-appropriate information concerning safe health practices that inhibit and prevent the spread of communicable diseases. (See policy 3540, Comprehensive Health Education Program.)

D. Reporting, Notice, and Confidentiality Requirements

1. Principal’s Report to Health Department and Superintendent

In accordance with [G.S. 130A-136](#), school principals shall report suspected cases of reportable diseases and conditions to the county health department. Such reports must be made in a manner consistent with the school system’s Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) obligations. Confidentiality of such reports is protected by law. School principals are immune from liability under state law for making such reports in good faith.

Without releasing any information that would identify the student in violation of FERPA, the principal also must report suspected cases of reportable diseases or conditions to the superintendent.

2. Privacy and Confidentiality of Affected Persons

- a. The local health director is responsible for determining whether and which school personnel will be informed of the identity of students with communicable diseases or conditions required to be reported.
- b. Any employee who is informed of or becomes aware of a student's communicable disease or condition, whether reportable or not, shall respect and maintain that student's right of privacy and the confidentiality of his or her records and may not share that information in a manner that violates FERPA.
- c. In addition, if the student has a disease or condition that is required to be reported to the local health director, employees who are informed of or become aware of the student's status may not share that information with anyone, including other school personnel, unless specifically permitted to do so by the health director, by written consent of the student's parent or guardian, or by other applicable state or federal laws or regulations.
- d. Any documents relating to a student's reportable disease or condition, including HIV infection or AIDS, will be retained in a strictly confidential manner, such as in a locked cabinet separate from the student's other school records and medical records and will be released or shared only as necessary to comply with this policy.
- e. Employees who are informed of the student's reportable disease or condition will be provided appropriate information concerning necessary precautions and will be made aware of the strict confidentiality requirements. The release of confidential information or records relating to a student's reportable disease or condition, except as permitted by law, is a misdemeanor and may subject the employee to discipline up to and including dismissal.

3. Employee Reports of Communicable Diseases

In order to address the needs of the student within the school environment, school employees are required to notify the principal if they have reason to believe that any student is suffering from a communicable disease. Parents will be encouraged to notify the principal as well.

4. Notice Relating to Students Who are Immunodeficient

Students who are immunodeficient face an increased risk of severe complications from exposure to communicable diseases that appear in the school setting. Students and their

parents or guardians are encouraged to inform the principal if a student suffers from immunodeficiency.

If notified that a student suffers from an immunodeficiency, the principal should request that the notifying party provide information about what types of exposures might put the student at risk and what reasonable practices can be taken in the school setting to minimize risk to the student. Whenever possible, the principal of a school should notify the parents or guardians of an infected or immunodeficient student (or the student himself or herself, where appropriate) about the presence of chicken pox, influenza, meningococcus, measles, tuberculosis or other contagious diseases occurring in the school that may present a serious threat to the student's health. Students who are removed from school as a result of such conditions will be provided instruction in an appropriate alternative educational setting.

5. Notification to Parent/Guardian of Exposure to Infectious Agent

Parents or guardians will be notified in a timely manner when their child has potentially been exposed to an infectious agent, such as an instance of blood-to-blood contact, and will be encouraged to contact their private physician or the county health department for consultation.

E. Education/School Attendance for Students with AIDS/HIV Infection or Hepatitis B Infection

Students with AIDS or HIV infection or hepatitis B infection will be permitted to attend school without special restrictions except in accordance with [10A N.C.A.C. 41A .0201-.0203](#) and this subsection.

1. Appointment of an Interdisciplinary Committee

When the local health director notifies the superintendent that a student with AIDS, HIV infection, or hepatitis B infection may pose a significant risk for transmission, the superintendent, in consultation with the local health director, shall appoint an interdisciplinary committee in accordance with state health regulations and procedures established by the superintendent. The committee shall consult with the local health director regarding the risk of transmission and advise the superintendent regarding the placement of the student. The committee will include appropriate school system personnel, medical personnel, and the student's parent or guardian and may include legal counsel. The parent may request additional participants as necessary to appropriately evaluate the risk. The health director will be responsible for determining whether to add additional members requested by the parents. The superintendent shall inform the board whenever a committee has been formed and shall advise the board of the professional composition of the committee.

2. Determination of Educational Placement

The interdisciplinary committee shall review each case individually in consultation with the local health director to determine (1) the degree to which the student's conduct or presence in school exposes others to possible transmission or other harm and (2) what risk the school environment may pose to the infected student. If the local health director concludes that a significant risk of transmission exists in the student's current placement, the committee must determine whether an appropriate adjustment can be made to the student's school program to eliminate this risk. If that is not possible, the student will be provided instruction in an appropriate alternative educational setting that incorporates protective measures required by the local health director.

3. Referral for Special Education Services as Appropriate

If the administrative or instructional personnel on the committee determine that the student has limited strength, vitality or alertness due to a chronic or acute health problem that adversely affects the student's educational performance, they must refer the student for possible identification and placement as a student with special needs.

4. Confidentiality

All deliberations of the interdisciplinary committee will be kept strictly confidential and shared only as allowed by law. Any student records related to the deliberations of the committee will be retained in a strictly confidential manner, such as in a locked cabinet separate from the student's other school records and medical records.

F. Education/School Attendance for Students with Communicable Diseases Other than AIDS or HIV or Hepatitis B Infection

In some circumstances, students with communicable diseases or conditions may pose a threat to the health and safety of other students and school employees. In other cases, students may have only mild illness and be able to attend school and participate in all activities. Accordingly, decisions regarding the educational status of students with signs and symptoms of communicable disease will be made on a case-by-case basis with input from the students' health care provider, public health specialists, and the school nurse.

A student with an acute or chronic communicable disease who remains in school shall observe any protective procedures or other control measures recommended by the student's physician, the school nurse, or other relevant medical authority.

Students with a chronic communicable disease may be referred for special education services or a Section 504 plan of accommodation, as consistent with law.

G. Other Control Measures

School personnel shall implement measures to control the spread of communicable disease as directed by the state or local health department. In the case of emerging illnesses not addressed by state or local health department rules or guidance, school

personnel shall implement control measures recommended by the CDC unless directed otherwise by the school nurse or other relevant medical authority.

Decisions regarding school closures shall be made in accordance with policy 5050, Emergency Closings.

XI. EMERGENCY Epinephrine Auto-Injector Devices

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction from exposure to allergens that is rapid in onset and can cause death. Many severe allergies are undiagnosed, and students or others may experience their first severe allergic reaction while at school. Epinephrine auto-injector devices can be used to administer epinephrine to provide rapid, convenient first aid for persons suffering a potentially fatal anaphylactic reaction. This policy addresses the use of emergency epinephrine auto-injector devices administered under a non-patient specific prescription. Student-specific orders for epinephrine auto-injector devices are addressed in policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students.

Designated trained school personnel are authorized to use emergency epinephrine auto-injector devices to deliver emergency medical aid to any person suffering from an anaphylactic reaction during the school day or at a school-sponsored event on school property. The superintendent shall ensure that at least two emergency epinephrine auto-injector devices are located at each school for this purpose and are stored in secure, but unlocked and easily accessible, locations.

Each school principal shall designate one or more school personnel, as part of the medical care program under [G.S. 115C-375.1](#), to receive initial training and annual retraining from a school nurse or qualified representative of the local health department regarding the storage and emergency use of epinephrine auto-injector devices. Only such trained personnel are authorized to administer epinephrine to persons believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction. The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify other school staff members as to which employee(s) has received this training in order to facilitate a prompt emergency response.

The principal, in collaboration with appropriate school personnel, shall create an emergency action plan for the use of epinephrine auto-injector devices that complies with all state law requirements. Principals are encouraged to include in the plan school-wide employee training in recognizing symptoms of anaphylaxis.

Epinephrine auto-injector devices provided by the school are intended for unforeseen emergencies. Students known to have medical conditions requiring the availability of an epinephrine auto-injector device are expected to provide such devices for their use at school. Parents of students with known life threatening allergies and/or anaphylaxis should provide the school with written instructions from the students' health care provider for handling anaphylaxis and all necessary medications for implementing the student

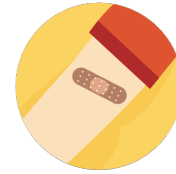
specific order in accordance with policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students. Students who meet the conditions established in policy 6125 may possess and self-administer their own medication.

This policy does not require emergency epinephrine auto-injector devices to be available at activities held off school grounds during or after the school day, including field trips or off-site athletic events, or during transportation to or from school, except as may be required pursuant to an individual student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or health or emergency plan.



The Flu:

A Guide for Parents



Influenza (also known as flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat and lungs. Flu is different from a cold, and usually comes on suddenly. Each year flu viruses cause millions of illnesses, hundreds of thousands of hospital stays and thousands or tens of thousands of deaths in the United States.

Flu can be very dangerous for children. CDC estimates that between 6,000 and 26,000 children younger than 5 years have been hospitalized each year in the United States because of influenza. The flu vaccine is safe and helps protect children from flu.

What parents should know

How serious is flu?

While flu illness can vary from mild to severe, children often need medical care because of flu. Children younger than 5 years and children of any age with certain long-term health problems are at high risk of flu complications like pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus and ear infections. Some health problems that are known to make children more vulnerable to flu include asthma, diabetes and disorders of the brain or nervous system.

How does flu spread?

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly by droplets made when someone with flu coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby. A person also can get flu by touching something that has flu virus on it and then touching their mouth, eyes, or nose.

What are flu symptoms?

Flu symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, feeling tired and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children than adults). Some people with the flu will not have a fever.



Protect your child

How can I protect my child from flu?

The first and best way to protect against flu is to get a yearly flu vaccine for yourself and your child.

- Flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older every year. Flu shots and nasal spray flu vaccines are both options for vaccination.
- It's especially important that young children and children with certain long-term health problems get vaccinated.
- Caregivers of children at high risk of flu complications should get a flu vaccine. (Babies younger than 6 months are at high risk for serious flu complications, but too young to get a flu vaccine.)
- Pregnant women should get a flu vaccine to protect themselves and their baby from flu. Research shows that flu vaccination protects the baby from flu for several months after birth.
- Flu viruses are constantly changing and so flu vaccines are updated often to protect against the flu viruses that research indicates are most likely to cause illness during the upcoming flu season.

Is flu vaccine safe?

Flu vaccines are made using strict safety and production measures. Millions of people have safely received flu vaccines for decades. Flu shots and nasal spray flu vaccines are both options for vaccination. Different types of flu vaccines are licensed for different ages. Each person should get one that is appropriate for their age. CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend an annual flu vaccine for all children 6 months and older.

What are the benefits of getting a flu vaccine?

- A flu vaccine can keep you and your child from getting sick.** When vaccine viruses and circulating viruses are matched, flu vaccination has been shown to reduce the risk of getting sick with flu by about half.
- Flu vaccines can keep your child from being hospitalized from flu.** One recent study showed that flu vaccine reduced children's risk of flu-related pediatric intensive care unit admission by 74%.

- **Flu vaccine can prevent your child from dying from flu.**
A study using data from recent flu seasons found that flu vaccine reduced the risk of flu-associated death by half among children with high risk medical conditions and by nearly two-thirds among children without medical conditions.
- **Flu vaccination also may make your illness milder if you do get sick.**
- **Getting yourself and your child vaccinated also can protect others** who may be more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people, and people with certain long-term health problems.

What are some other ways I can protect my child against flu?

In addition to getting a flu vaccine, you and your child should take everyday actions to help prevent the spread of germs.

Stay away from people who are sick as much as possible to keep from getting sick yourself. If you or your child are sick, avoid others as much as possible to keep from infecting them. Also, remember to regularly cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and clean surfaces that may be contaminated with flu viruses. These everyday actions can help reduce your chances of getting sick and prevent the spread of germs to others if you are sick. However, a yearly flu vaccine is the best way to prevent flu illness.

If your child is sick

What can I do if my child gets sick?

Talk to your doctor early if you are worried about your child's illness.

Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids.

If your child is 5 years or older and does not have a long-term health problems and gets flu symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, consult your doctor as needed.

Children younger than 5 years of age – especially those younger than 2 years – and children with certain long-term health problems (including asthma, diabetes and disorders of the brain or nervous system), are at high risk of serious flu complications. Call your doctor or take your child to the doctor right away if they develop flu symptoms.

What if my child seems very sick?

Even healthy children can get very sick from flu. If your child is experiencing the following emergency warning signs, you should go to the emergency room:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish lips or face

- Ribs pulling in with each breath
- Chest pain
- Severe muscle pain (child refuses to walk)
- Dehydration (no urine for 8 hours, dry mouth, no tears when crying)
- Not alert or interacting when awake
- Seizures
- Fever above 104°F
- In children less than 12 weeks, any fever
- Fever or cough that improve but then return or worsen
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions



This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptom that is severe or concerning.

Is there a medicine to treat flu?

Yes. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines that can be used to treat flu illness. They can shorten your illness and make it milder, and they can prevent serious complications that could result in a hospital stay. Antivirals work best when started during the first 2 days of illness. Antiviral drugs are recommended to treat flu in people who are very sick (for example, people who are in the hospital) or people who are at high risk of serious flu complications who get flu symptoms. Antivirals can be given to children and pregnant women.

How long can a sick person spread flu to others?

People with flu may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to up to 5 to 7 days after. Severely ill people or young children may be able to spread the flu longer, especially if they still have symptoms.

Can my child go to school, day care, or camp if he or she is sick?

No. Your child should stay home to rest and to avoid spreading flu to other children or caregivers.

When can my child go back to school after having flu?

Keep your child home from school, day care, or camp for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone. (The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) A fever is defined as 100°F (37.8°C)* or higher.

*Many authorities use either 100 (37.8 degrees Celsius) or 100.4 F (38.0 degrees Celsius) as a cut-off for fever, but this number can vary depending on factors such as the method of measurement and the age of the person.



Meningococcal Vaccines for Preteens and Teens

All preteens and teens should get vaccines to protect against meningococcal disease. Talk with your child's doctor or nurse about meningococcal vaccination to help protect your child's health.



Why does my child need meningococcal vaccines?

Meningococcal vaccines help protect against the bacteria that cause meningococcal disease. Meningococcal disease can refer to any illness caused by a type of bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. Meningococcal disease is not very common in the United States, but teens and young adults are at increased risk.

The two most common types of illnesses include infections of the

- Lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis)
- Bloodstream

Even with treatment, about 10 to 15 out of 100 people with meningococcal disease will die from it. Meningococcal vaccines are the best way to protect preteens and teens from getting meningococcal disease.



When should my child be vaccinated?



Dose 1: Ages 11-12
Dose 2: Age 16

All preteens and teens should get 2 doses of the meningococcal conjugate (MenACWY) vaccine. They should get the first dose at ages 11-12 and a booster dose at 16 years old. If your teen hasn't gotten this meningococcal shot, talk to their doctor or nurse about getting it as soon as possible.

Teens and young adults (16 through 23 years old) may also get a serogroup B meningococcal (MenB) vaccine (2 doses). The preferred age to get MenB vaccine is 16 through 18 years old. Talk with your teen's doctor or nurse about meningococcal vaccination to help protect your child's health.

Are meningococcal vaccines safe for my child?

Researchers have studied the meningococcal vaccines very carefully and they are shown to be very safe. Like any vaccine, meningococcal vaccines may cause mild side effects, like redness and soreness where the shot was given (usually in the arm). Note that your child can get both meningococcal vaccines during the same visit, but in different arms.

Some preteens and teens might faint after getting a meningococcal vaccine or any shot. To help avoid fainting and injuries related to fainting, preteens and teens should sit or lie down when they get a shot and then for about 15 minutes after getting the shot. Serious side effects from meningococcal vaccines are rare.

How can I get help paying for these vaccines?

Most health insurance plans cover routine vaccinations. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program also provides vaccines for children 18 years and younger who are uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid-eligible, American Indian, or Alaska Native. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/Features/VFCprogram.



Talk to your child's doctor or nurse about meningococcal vaccines, or visit www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/vaccine-info.html



Last updated JULY 2019

A photograph of three children, a boy and two girls, standing together and smiling. The boy on the left is wearing a red shirt and pointing towards the central sign. The girl in the middle is wearing a yellow shirt. The girl on the right is wearing a green shirt and also pointing towards the central sign. They are holding a large white sign with a blue border. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. There are three speech bubble callouts around the children, each containing text about HPV vaccination. At the bottom of the image, there is a blue banner with the website address, the CDC logo, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services logo.

HPV vaccination is the best way to **PREVENT** many types of **CANCER**.

HPV vaccination is **REDUCING** HPV **DISEASE**.

HPV vaccination is **RECOMMENDED** at ages 11 or 12.

3 THINGS PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PREVENTING CANCER

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/teens

NCIRDig525 | July 31, 2015

 **CDC**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

A FACT SHEET FOR Parents



What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even what seems to be a mild bump to the head can be serious. Concussions can have a more serious effect on a young, developing brain and need to be addressed correctly.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury. It is important to watch for changes in how your child or teen is acting or feeling, if symptoms are getting worse, or if s/he just "doesn't feel right." Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.

If your child or teen reports one or more of the symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the signs or symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. Children and teens are among those at greatest risk for concussion.

Signs & Symptoms of a Concussion

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about events
- Answers questions slowly
- Repeats questions
- Can't recall events *prior* to hit, bump, or fall
- Can't recall events *after* hit, bump, or fall
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Forgets class schedule or assignments

Symptoms Reported by Your Child or Teen

Thinking/Remembering

- Difficulty thinking clearly
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- Feeling more slowed down
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy

Physical

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Fatigue or feeling tired
- Blurry or double vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Numbness or tingling
- Does not "feel right"

Emotional

- Irritable
- Sad
- More emotional than usual
- Nervous

Sleep*

- Drowsy
- Sleeps *less* than usual
- Sleeps *more* than usual

**Only ask about sleep symptoms if the injury occurred on a prior day.*

To download this fact sheet in Spanish, please visit: www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP. Para obtener una copia electrónica de esta hoja de información en español, por favor visite: www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP
January 2021



XVI. 4023/7233 Pregnant and Parenting Students and Employees

A. Students

1. Nondiscrimination

The board will provide all pregnant and parenting students with the same educational instruction as other students or its equivalent. Students will not be discriminated against or excluded from school or from any program, class, or extracurricular activity based on the students' current, potential or past pregnancy or related conditions or because they are parenting students. For purposes of this policy, "pregnancy or related conditions" means pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy or lactation; medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy or lactation; or recovery from pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, lactation or related medical conditions.

2. General Requirements

School administrators shall provide assistance and support to encourage pregnant and parenting students to remain enrolled in school and graduate. In accordance with state law, school system officials shall use, as needed, supplemental funds from the At-Risk Student Services allotment to support programs for pregnant and parenting students. Students who are pregnant or parenting will be given excused absences from school for pregnancy and related conditions for the length of time the students' physicians find medically necessary and for absences due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent. Homework and make-up work will be made available to pregnant and parenting students to ensure that they have the opportunity to keep current with assignments and avoid losing course credit because of their absence from school. To the extent necessary, a homebound teacher will be assigned.

3. Providing Title IX Coordinator Contact and Other Information

When a student or student's parent or guardian informs any school system employee of the student's pregnancy or related conditions, the employee shall promptly provide that person with the Title IX coordinator's contact information and inform that person that the Title IX coordinator can coordinate specific actions to prevent sex discrimination and ensure the student's equal access to the school system's education program or activity. The employee does not need to provide

such information if the employee reasonably believes that the Title IX coordinator has already been notified of the student's pregnancy or related conditions.

4. Specific Actions to Prevent Discrimination and Ensure Equal Access

Once a student or student's parent or guardian notifies the Title IX coordinator of the student's pregnancy or related conditions, the Title IX coordinator must coordinate the following specific actions designed to promptly and effectively prevent sex discrimination and ensure access to the school system's education program or activity:

- a. inform the student (and, if applicable, the student's parent or guardian) of the school system's Title IX obligations under [34 C.F.R. 106.40\(b\)\(1\)](#) through (5) and [34 C.F.R. 106.44\(j\)](#) and provide the school system's notice of nondiscrimination on the basis of sex (see policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex);
- b. consult with the student in order to offer, based on the student's individualized needs, reasonable modifications to school system policies, practices or procedures, as necessary, and implement each reasonable modification offered by the school system and accepted by the student;
- c. allow the student to voluntarily access any separate and comparable portion of the school system's education program or activity provided that the separate portion is comparable to that offered to students who are not pregnant and who do not have related conditions;
- d. allow the student to voluntarily take a leave of absence from the school system education program or activity to cover, at a minimum, the period of time deemed medically necessary by the student's licensed healthcare provider and when the student returns following the voluntary absence, reinstate the student to the academic status and, as practicable, to the extracurricular status that the student held when the absence began; and
- e. ensure that the student can access, as needed, a lactation space, other than a bathroom, that is clean, shielded from view, free from intrusion by others and may be used for expressing breast milk or breastfeeding.

Supporting documentation or certifications will not be required except as permitted by law.

XVII. NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITIES

The board of education will not discriminate against qualified persons with disabilities on the basis of a disability. This non-discrimination policy includes, but is not limited to, benefits of and participation in system programs and activities. The system will provide aids, benefits and school services to a person with disabilities in the most integrated school setting appropriate to his or her needs so that he or she may have an opportunity commensurate to that provided to persons without disabilities to obtain the same results, gain the same benefit or reach the same level of achievement.

The superintendent is directed to develop appropriate procedures to implement this nondiscrimination policy. The superintendent or designee shall:

1. submit an assurance of nondiscrimination with each application for federal financial assistance;
2. designate a person to coordinate the system's efforts to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") and its regulations;
3. designate a person to coordinate the system's efforts to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and its regulations;
4. publish the name, office address and phone number of the compliance coordinator(s) in a manner intended to ensure that employees, applicants, students, parents, and other individuals who participate in the school system's programs are aware of the coordinator(s);
5. make complaint procedures available as provided in policy 1710/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, which provides opportunities for prompt and equitable resolutions to complaints alleging actions prohibited by Section 504 or ADA or regulations for these statutes;
6. provide notice that the school system does not discriminate on the basis of disability in violation of Section 504 or the ADA, or their implementing regulations, and make such notice accessible to employees, applicants, students, and parents;
7. make reasonable accommodations for qualifying applicants or employees with disabilities; however, a reasonable accommodation does not include an accommodation that demonstrably would impose an undue hardship on the program or would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity;
8. not inquire about any disabilities that may need accommodation until after an applicant has been made an offer and, additionally, avoid using employment tests or other selection criteria that tend to screen out persons with disabilities unless the criteria are demonstrably job-related and effective alternatives are not available;

9. provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 and its regulations; and

10. establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards with respect to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with disabilities under Section 504 which includes an opportunity for the student's parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with the opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

XVIII. Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law

The board acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The board prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, disability, or age (40 or older) in its education program, which includes all operations, services and activities of the school system, and will provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by law. In the context of employment, the board prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, color, national origin, religion, disability, age (40 or older), military affiliation, genetic information or other unlawful grounds.

All forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment are subject to this policy except for sexual harassment in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, which is addressed separately in policies 1725/4035/7236, Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process, and 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process.

Though claims of discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability, as specified in policy 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities, are subject to this policy, allegations regarding or related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or free appropriate public education of a student under Section 504 or the IDEA may be raised through the system of procedural safeguards established under policy 1730/4022/7231, (for Section 504 complaints) or in accordance with the procedures described in Parents Rights & Responsibilities in Special Education, published by the NC Department of Public Instruction (for IDEA complaints).

The board encourages all individuals who believe that they have been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy or who have reliable information that another person has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy to report such conduct as soon as possible through the process provided in Section B below. The board takes seriously all reports of unlawful discrimination and harassment and directs school officials to take prompt action to investigate and remedy violations of this policy. The superintendent is responsible for ensuring that effective notice of this policy is provided to students, parents, employees and applicants for admission or employment.

Prohibited Behavior

Students, school system employees, volunteers, and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. The board expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination and harassment as defined below by students, employees, board members, volunteers, or visitors. “Visitors” includes parents and other family members and individuals from the community, as well as vendors, contractors, and other persons doing business with or performing services for the school system.

Discrimination

Discrimination is any act or failure to act, whether intentional or unintentional, by an employee or agent of the school system that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on one or more of the legally-protected characteristics listed in the first paragraph of this policy so as to interfere with or limit their ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges offered by the school system’s education program.

Harassment

Harassment is deliberate unwelcome conduct directed at another person or group of persons based on one or more of the legally protected characteristics listed in the first paragraph of this policy that creates a hostile environment or adversely affects a school system employee’s employment. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be motivated by animus, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when (1) the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by the school system or (2) the conduct is so severe or pervasive that an employee finds his or her working conditions to be abusive and a reasonable person in the employee’s position would conclude that the working conditions were abusive.

Examples of behavior that may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to, acts of disrespect, intimidation, or threats, such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, derogatory epithets, comments, or slurs, imitating a person’s disability-based limitations, mocking a person’s accent, making fun of a person’s religious garments, jewelry or displays, exclusion from peer groups, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching, or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as hate symbols or derogatory posters or cartoons. Harassment may occur through electronic means, such as through the Internet, email, text message, or video calls.

Petty slights, annoyances, simple teasing, offhand comments or isolated incidents (unless extremely serious) are not harassment under this policy. Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassment, nor are reasonable performance management actions taken to direct and control how work is performed or to monitor and

give feedback on work performance. The exercise of legitimate authority administered in a professional and constructive manner is not harassment under this policy.

Application of the Policy

This policy applies to behavior that takes place: (1) in any school building or on any school premises before, during, or after school hours; (2) on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity; (3) at any bus stop; (4) during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity; (5) through the use of school system technological resources; (6) at any time or place when the individual is subject to the authority of school personnel; or (7) at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools or has consequences in the workplace contributing to a hostile work environment.

This policy will not be construed to allow school officials to punish student expression or speech based on undifferentiated fear or apprehension of a disturbance or out of a desire to avoid the discomfort and unpleasantness that may accompany an unpopular viewpoint.

Reporting Discrimination or Harassment

Reporting Suspected Discrimination or Harassment

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy or any third person who knows or suspects conduct that may constitute discrimination or harassment in violation of this policy should inform a school official designated in Section C below. Reports also may be made anonymously, including through the anonymous tip line.

Mandatory Reporting by School Employees

Any employee who witnessed or who has reliable information or reason to believe that another person may have been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy must report the offense immediately to an appropriate individual designated in Section C below. Any doubt about whether particular conduct is possible discrimination or harassment under this policy or any other policy of the board must be resolved in favor of reporting the conduct.

Employees who observe an incident of harassment are expected to intervene to stop the conduct in situations in which they have supervisory control over the perpetrator and it is safe to do so. If an employee knows of an incident involving discrimination or harassment and the employee fails to report the conduct or take proper action or knowingly provides false information in regard to the incident, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Preliminary Inquiry

School officials may make a preliminary inquiry when a report is received to understand what occurred and to determine whether further action under this policy or otherwise is necessary.

Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment

Making a Complaint of Discrimination or Harassment

Any person who believes he or she is the victim of discrimination or harassment in violation of this policy, or any person who has witnessed or who has reliable information that another person has been subject to discrimination or harassment in violation of this policy, may request that school officials investigate and redress any such unlawful conduct by making a formal written complaint to any of the following persons:

the principal or assistant principal of the school either the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator attends;

the principal, assistant principal or site supervisor at the location where either the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator is employed;

the senior human resources official (or if the senior human resources official is the alleged perpetrator, the superintendent) if the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator is an employee or applicant for employment;

the Section 504 coordinator or the ADA coordinator for claims of discrimination on the basis of a disability;

the Title IX coordinator, as established in policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex, for claims of discrimination on the basis of sex; or

for claims of other forms of prohibited discrimination, the applicable civil rights coordinator as established in Section I of this policy.

If a written complaint alleges that the perpetrator is an employee, the school official receiving the complaint shall notify the senior human resources official without delay.

Addressing Complaints

A written complaint alleging that a student, employee or applicant for employment has been discriminated against or harassed will be addressed in accordance with this policy.

A written complaint alleging that a person who is not a student, employee or applicant for employment has been discriminated against or harassed will be addressed in accordance with the general process for resolving complaints provided in policy 1742/5060, Responding to Complaints, not this policy.

Time Period for Making a Complaint

Alleged discrimination or harassment should be reported as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the complaint. Complaints submitted after the 30-day period may be investigated; however, individuals should recognize that delays in reporting may significantly impair the ability of school officials to investigate and respond to such complaints.

School Officials' Response to Reports and Complaints of Discrimination or Harassment

Investigation

School officials shall investigate all formal written complaints received. Reports of discrimination or harassment that are not followed by a formal written complaint may be investigated when necessary to remedy violations of this policy and may be investigated even if the alleged victim does not seek action by school officials.

The principal or designee or site supervisor will be the investigator when the alleged perpetrator is a student or third party. The senior human resources official or designee will be the investigator when the alleged perpetrator is an employee. The superintendent may determine that individual circumstances warrant the assignment of a different investigator.

Notwithstanding the above designations, (1) if the alleged perpetrator is the senior human resources official, the superintendent will be the investigator, and (2) if the alleged perpetrator is the superintendent or a member of the board, the board chair shall direct the board attorney to investigate, unless the board chair determines that outside counsel should be engaged to investigate.

As applicable, the investigator shall immediately notify the Section 504, ADA, Title IX, or other relevant coordinator of the complaint and, as appropriate, may request assistance from the coordinator in conducting the investigation.

If the investigator, after interviewing the complaining party and/or the alleged victim and consulting with the board attorney, determines that the allegations submitted, even if factual, do not constitute discrimination or harassment as defined in this policy or policy 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities, school officials shall address the matter outside the scope of this policy. Information regarding the investigator's determination and any further avenues for addressing the complaint will be provided to the complaining party.

Any investigation conducted must be impartial, prompt, and thorough. The investigator shall investigate the facts and circumstances related to the allegation(s) of discrimination or harassment and give the alleged perpetrator an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

The investigator shall consider all the evidence collected, the context in which the alleged incidents occurred, the age and maturity of the parties, and any other relevant circumstances and, in consultation with the board attorney as appropriate, shall determine whether the alleged act(s) constitutes a violation of this policy, policy 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities, and/or any other board policy or expected standard of student or employee behavior.

The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible and consistent with law. Information may be shared only with individuals who need the information in order to investigate and address the complaint appropriately and those with a legal right to access the information.

Investigator's Findings

If the investigator finds that discrimination or harassment occurred, the investigator shall take or recommend steps to address the discrimination or harassment. The investigator shall assign or recommend appropriate disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator and/or take or recommend other reasonable measures to eliminate the discrimination or harassment, rectify any wrongful impacts and prevent its recurrence.

If the investigator finds that the conduct did not violate this policy but violated policy 1735/4329/7311, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited, or another board policy or expected standard of conduct, the investigator shall assign or recommend discipline or other action appropriate to the violation.

The investigator shall make a record of the evidence and findings of the investigation and the assigned or recommended discipline and/or other remedial action and provide a copy to the appropriate civil rights coordinator. If the investigator recommends a disciplinary consequence or remedial action that is beyond his or her authority, the investigator shall provide a copy of the record to the superintendent for further action.

The investigator shall inform the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator of the outcome of the investigation.

Steps to Reasonably End Discrimination or Harassment

The superintendent is responsible for taking or causing appropriate action to be taken in response to discrimination and harassment in violation of this policy. Appropriate action must include:

reasonable, timely, age-appropriate corrective action intended to end the discrimination or harassment and prevent it from recurring;

as needed, reasonable steps to address the effects of the discrimination or harassment on the victim; and

as needed, reasonable steps to protect the victim from retaliation as a result of the complaint.

Appropriate steps to end discrimination and harassment may include, but are not limited to, separating the parties, providing counseling for the parties, and/or taking disciplinary action against a perpetrator determined to have violated this policy. The superintendent may take non-punitive measures to end or prevent instances of discrimination or harassment regardless of whether any individual has been found responsible for the discrimination or harassment. The superintendent also may implement or direct the implementation of classroom-wide, school-wide, or school system-wide responses such as additional staff training, harassment prevention programs, and other measures reasonably calculated to end the behavior, eliminate a hostile environment and its effects if one has been created, and prevent recurrence of the behavior.

The applicable civil rights coordinator shall encourage victims of discrimination and harassment to report any subsequent problems and may conduct follow-up inquiries as warranted to determine if there have been any new incidents of discrimination or harassment or any instances of retaliation.

Appeals

Appeals to the Superintendent

The alleged victim may appeal the investigator's decision to the superintendent (unless the alleged perpetrator is the superintendent, in which case the alleged victim may appeal directly to the board in accordance with the next subsection). The appeal must be submitted in writing within three business days of receiving the notice of the outcome of the investigation. The superintendent may review the documents, conduct any further investigation necessary, or take any other steps the superintendent determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. The superintendent shall provide a written response within 10 business days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is needed.

Appeals to the Board

Student victims or their parents may appeal the superintendent's decision to the board in accordance with subsection E.5.a of policy 1740/4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure. Victims who are employees or applicants for employment may appeal the superintendent's decision to the board in accordance with subsection E.4.a of policy 1750/7220, Grievance Procedure for Employees.

Discipline Rights Provided by Law

Any student or employee subject to discipline for violating this policy will be accorded all rights provided by law.

Retaliation Prohibited

The board prohibits retaliation against any person for making a report or complaint of a violation of this policy, supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or participating in the investigation of a reported violation of this policy. No reprisals will be taken by the board against a complaining party or other individual who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment. Any person who is found to have engaged in retaliation will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance processes established in policies 1740/4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, and 1750/7220, Grievance Procedure for Employees. Acts of retaliation may also be subject to policy 1760/7280, Prohibition Against Retaliation.

Training and Programs

The board directs the superintendent to establish training and other programs that are designed to prevent discrimination and harassment and to foster an environment of understanding and respect for all members of the school community. Information about the prohibited conduct and grievance procedure in this policy and those in policies 1725/4035/7236, Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process, and 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process, must be included in the training plan.

As funds are available, the board will provide students, employees, and volunteers who have significant contact with students with additional training regarding the board's efforts to address discrimination and harassment and will create programs to address these issues. The training or programs should (1) provide examples of behavior that constitute discrimination or harassment; (2) teach employees to identify groups that may be the target of discrimination or harassment; and (3) train school employees to be alert to locations where such behavior may occur, including locations within school buildings, at school bus stops, on cell phones, and on the Internet.

Records

The superintendent or designee shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of discrimination or harassment. The records must identify the names of all individuals accused of such offenses and the resolution of such complaints or reports. The superintendent also shall maintain records of training conducted and corrective action(s) or other steps taken by the school system to provide an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Contacts for Inquiries

The superintendent has appointed individuals to coordinate the school system's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under federal nondiscrimination laws, including investigating any complaints communicated to school officials alleging

noncompliance with those laws. Inquiries about the application of the nondiscrimination laws addressed in this policy may be referred to the designated civil rights coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education or the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission.

The contact information for the Title IX coordinator can be found in policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex. The contact information for the other designated civil rights coordinators is as follows.

The Section 504 Coordinator is: Jeremy Wright
Office Address: 205 Main Street Gatesville, NC 27938
Email Address: wrightje@gatescountyschools.net
Phone Number: 252-357-1113 ext. 23

The ADA Coordinator is: Chante Jordan
Office Address: 205 Main Street Gatesville, NC 27938
Email Address: jordanc1@gatescountyschools.net
Phone Number: 252-357-1113 ext. 25

The Age Discrimination Coordinator is: Chante Jordan
Office Address: 205 Main Street Gatesville, NC 27938
Email Address: jordanc1@gatescountyschools.net
Phone Number: 252-357-1113 ext. 25

The Coordinator for Other Non-discrimination Laws is: Jeremy Wright
Office Address: 205 Main Street Gatesville, NC 27938
Email Address: wrightje@gatescountypublicschools.net
Phone Number: 252-357-1113 ext. 21

XIX. Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited

The board is committed to providing a safe, inviting, and civil educational environment for all students, employees, and other members of the school community. The board expects all students, employees, volunteers, and visitors to behave in a manner consistent with that goal. The board recognizes that bullying and harassing behavior creates an atmosphere of intimidation and fear, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious misconduct or to violence. Accordingly, the board prohibits all forms of bullying and harassing behavior, including encouragement of such behavior, by students, employees, volunteers, and visitors. "Visitors" includes parents and other family members and individuals from the community, as well as vendors, contractors, and other persons doing business with or performing services for the school system.

This policy prohibits bullying and harassing behavior, or the encouragement of bullying or harassing behavior, that takes place (1) in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours; (2) on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity; (3) at any bus stop; (4) during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity; (5) at any time or place when the student, employee, or other person is subject to the authority of school personnel; or (6) at any time or place when the bullying has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools.

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, social, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment.

A. Relationship to Other Policies

This policy applies to bullying and harassing behavior that is not otherwise prohibited by the following board policies that address discriminatory harassment in violation of federal law:

- Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, policy 1710/4020/7230 (prohibiting harassment based on race, color, national origin, disability, or religion)
- Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process, policy 1725/4035/7236 (prohibiting sexual harassment)
- Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace, policy 7232 (prohibiting harassment of employees and applicants based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, military affiliation, or genetic information)

Individuals who wish to report bullying or harassing behavior that is based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, or other personal characteristic addressed by the policies above should refer to and follow the reporting processes provided in those policies.

Conduct that may constitute discriminatory harassment under federal law must be addressed first in accordance with the requirements of the applicable policy(ies) listed above. If subsequently, the conduct is determined not to rise to the level of discriminatory harassment prohibited by those policies, the conduct may be addressed under this policy. Conduct that does not rise to the level of bullying or harassing behavior as defined and prohibited in this policy may nevertheless violate other board policies or school rules.

B. Conduct that is Considered Bullying or Harassing Behavior

1. Bullying is deliberate conduct intended to harm another person or group of persons. It is characterized by repeated unwanted aggressive behavior that typically involves a real or perceived imbalance of power, such as a difference in physical size, strength, social standing, intellectual ability, or authority. It may consist of either physical, verbal, or nonverbal behavior. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that is carried out using electronic communication media, such as words, action, or conduct conveyed through email, instant messages, text messages, tweets, blogs, photo or video sharing, chat rooms, or websites, and may exist in the absence of a power imbalance typical of other forms of bullying.
2. Harassing behavior is conduct that is intimidating, hostile, or abusive, or is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Harassing behavior may violate this policy even if no harm is intended to the target and no power imbalance is evident.
3. Bullying or harassing behavior includes conduct that is, or reasonably appears to be, motivated by actual or perceived differentiating personal characteristics, or by a person's association with someone who has or is perceived to have a differentiating personal characteristic. Differentiating personal characteristics include, but are not limited to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability. Bullying and harassing behavior can violate this policy regardless of a student's motivation.
4. Examples of behavior that may constitute bullying or harassing behavior are repeated acts of disrespect, intimidation, or threats, such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory or lewd comments, spreading rumors, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, offensive touching, physical interference with normal work or movement, visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons, and sharing intimate photos or video of a person or sharing photos or videos that may subject a person to ridicule or insult.
5. Other behaviors that may constitute bullying or harassing behavior under this policy are deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature, pressure for sexual activity, offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, verbal remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual, or the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures, or written materials.
6. These examples are not exhaustive but are intended to illustrate the wide range of behavior that may constitute bullying and harassing behavior.

7. Conduct such as the following is not considered bullying or harassing behavior: legitimate pedagogical techniques, the exercise of legitimate authority, and academic or work performance monitoring and evaluation.

C. When Bullying or Harassing Behavior Violates This Policy

Not all conduct that may be described as bullying or harassing behavior violates this policy. Bullying or harassing behavior violates this policy when any pattern of repeated gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or threatening communication:

1. places a student, an employee, or other person in actual and reasonable fear of harm to their person or property; or
2. creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits.

“Hostile environment” means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

The definition of bullying and harassing behavior in this section is intended to be no less inclusive than the definition of bullying and harassing behavior in [G.S. 115C-407.15](#).

Bullying or harassing behavior based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, or religion may also constitute discriminatory harassment in violation of federal law and other board policies as described in Section A, above.

D. Reporting Bullying and Harassing Behavior

1. Reports by Students and/or Parents and Guardians

- a. The board encourages students or parents/guardians of students who have been the victim of or who have witnessed bullying or harassing behavior in violation of this policy to immediately report such incidents to a teacher, counselor, coach, assistant principal, or the principal.
- b. Reports may be made orally or in writing and may be made anonymously.
- c. All reports of serious violations and complaints made under this policy will be investigated expeditiously. Anonymous reports will be investigated to the extent reasonably possible under the circumstances.

d. If, at any time, school officials determine that the alleged bullying or harassing behavior appears to be based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, or religion, the matter will be investigated in accordance with the applicable policy listed in Section A above.

2. Mandatory Reporting by School Employees

An employee who witnesses or who has reliable information that a student or other individual has been bullied or harassed in violation of this policy must report the incident to his or her supervisor or to the building principal immediately. If sexual harassment is suspected, the employee also must report the incident to the Title IX coordinator. An employee who does not promptly report possible bullying or harassing behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Reporting by Other Third Parties

Other members of the school community may report incidents of bullying or harassment to the school principal or the superintendent or designee.

4. Reporting False Allegations

It is a violation of board policy to knowingly report false allegations of bullying or harassing behavior. A student or employee found to knowingly report or corroborate false allegations will be subject to disciplinary action.

E. Reports of Bullying or Harassing Behavior Based on Sex, Race, Color, National Origin, Disability, or Religion

Bullying or harassing behavior that is based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, or religion may constitute discriminatory harassment that is a violation of the individual's civil rights. A school employee who receives a report of bullying or harassing behavior that may constitute sexual harassment must immediately contact the Title IX coordinator. If the reported behavior appears to be based on any other such personal characteristic, the employee must immediately notify the appropriate civil rights coordinator designated in policy 1710/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law. Uncertainty as to whether alleged bullying or harassing behavior is based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, or religion should be resolved by notifying the Title IX Coordinator.

F. Response to Reports of Bullying or Harassing Behavior

1. Reports of bullying and harassing behavior or the encouragement of such behavior under this policy will be investigated promptly by the principal or the principal's designee and addressed in accordance with this policy and

policy 4340, School-Level Investigations. If the principal is the alleged perpetrator, the superintendent will designate an appropriate investigator.

2. If at any time before, during, or after the investigation under this policy, the principal or designee determines or suspects that the alleged bullying or harassing behavior is based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, or religion, the principal or designee shall notify the appropriate civil rights coordinator and proceed in accordance with the applicable board policy as described in Section A, above. However, referral to the civil rights coordinator will not preclude appropriate disciplinary consequences for a violation of this policy if, following the designated investigation and resolution process under the appropriate board policy, the behavior is determined not to constitute discriminatory harassment in violation of federal law.

3. No reprisals or retaliation of any kind are permitted as a result of good faith reports of bullying or harassing behavior. An employee who engages in reprisal or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. A student who does so is subject to disciplinary consequences as provided in Section G, below.

G. Consequences

1. Students

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy should take into consideration the frequency of incidents, the developmental age of the student involved, and the severity of the conduct and must be consistent with the Code of Student Conduct. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

A student who is convicted under [G.S. 14-458.2](#) of cyberbullying a school employee will be transferred to another school. If there is no other appropriate school within the school system, the student will be transferred to a different class or assigned to a teacher who was not involved as a victim of the cyberbullying. The superintendent may modify the required transfer of an individual student on a case-by-case basis and shall provide a written statement of this modification in the student's record.

2. Employees

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

3. Others

Volunteers and visitors who violate this policy will be directed to leave school property and/or reported to law enforcement, as appropriate, in accordance with policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools. A third party under the supervision and control of the school system will be subject to termination of contracts/agreements, restricted from school property, and/or subject to other consequences, as appropriate.

H. Other Interventions

Interventions designed to remediate the impact of a violation of this policy and to restore a positive school climate will be provided as determined necessary by school officials.

I. Notice

This policy must be provided to employees, students, and parents, guardians, and caregivers at the beginning of each school year. Notice of this policy must be included in the Code of Student Conduct and in all student and employee handbooks. Principals are encouraged to post a copy or summary of this policy in each classroom and in a prominent location within the school building and to make an age-appropriate summary of the policy available to elementary students. Information about this policy must also be incorporated into employee training programs.

J. Records

The superintendent or designee shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of bullying or harassing behavior under this policy. The records must identify the names of all individuals accused of such offenses and the resolution of such complaints or reports. The superintendent also shall maintain records of any remedial interventions or other steps taken by the school system to provide an environment free of bullying.

XX. Student and Parent Grievance Procedure

It is the policy of the board that formal grievance procedures should not become nor be regarded as the primary method by which grievances are resolved. The board encourages informal discussion and intermediary intercessions to resolve grievances. Only when these methods fail should the formal grievance procedure be used.

A. Options for Resolving Complaints

The board strives to resolve concerns and complaints of students and parents whenever possible. To this end, the board has provided opportunities for students and parents to express their concerns through processes established in board policies. Policy

1742/5060, Responding to Complaints, identifies these different processes, including a mechanism for resolving complaints in an informal manner.

While the board encourages resolutions of complaints through informal means, it recognizes that, at times, a formal process may be necessary for certain types of complaints or if the informal process did not produce satisfactory results. This policy provides a complaint procedure that may be used as described below.

Any parent or student who has questions about the options for proceeding with a complaint or concern may contact the principal or superintendent for further information and copies of all applicable board policies.

B. Definitions

1. Days

Days are working days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, vacation days, or holidays, as set forth in the school calendar. In counting days, the first day will be the first full working day following the receipt of the grievance. After May 1, time limits will consist of all weekdays (Monday – Friday) so that the matter may be resolved before the close of the school term or as soon thereafter as possible.

2. Final Administrative Decision

A final administrative decision is a decision of a school employee from which no further appeal to a school administrator is available.

3. Grievance

A grievance is a formal complaint regarding specific decisions made by school personnel that alleges that such decisions have adversely affected the person making the complaint. A grievance includes, but is not limited to, circumstances such as when a student or parent believes that board policy or law has been misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated. The term “grievance” does not include any matter for which the method of review is prescribed by law, for which there is a more specific board policy providing a process for addressing the concern, or upon which the board is without authority to act.

4. Grievant

The grievant is the parent, student or group of parents or students submitting the grievance.

5. Parent

All references to parent include a student's parent, legal guardian, legal custodian, or another caregiver adult authorized to enroll a student under policy 4120, Domicile or Residence Requirements.

C. Timeliness of Process

The number of days indicated at each step of the grievance process should be considered a maximum, and every effort should be made to expedite the process.

Failure by a school system official at any step to communicate a decision within the specified time limit will permit the grievant to appeal the grievance to the next step unless the official has notified the grievant of the delay and the reason for the delay, such as the complexity of the investigation or report. The official shall make reasonable efforts to keep the grievant apprised of progress being made during any period of delay. Delays that interfere with the exercise of the grievant's legal rights are not permitted.

Failure by the grievant at any step of the process to appeal a grievance to the next step within the specified time limit will be considered acceptance of the decision at the current step, unless the grievant has notified the appropriate school system official of a delay and the reason for the delay and the official has consented in writing to the delay.

D. General Requirements

1. No reprisals of any kind will be taken by the board or by an employee of the school system against any grievant or other student or employee because of his or her participation in a grievance filed and decided pursuant to this policy.
2. All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
3. The board and school system officials will consider requests to hear grievances from a group of grievants, but the board and officials have the discretion to hear and respond to grievants individually.
4. The grievant may have a representative, including an attorney, at any stage of the grievance. However, if the grievant intends to be represented by legal counsel, he or she must notify the appropriate school official in advance so that school personnel also will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel. At any meeting or hearing during the grievance process, a student grievant may be accompanied by a parent as well as a representative.

E. Process for Grievance

1. Filing a Grievance

- a. Whenever a student or parent believes that he or she has been adversely affected by a decision of a school employee, the student or parent may file a grievance as provided in this policy.
- b. A grievance must be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the grievance. For a grievance submitted after the 30 day period that claims a violation, misapplication or misinterpretation of state or federal law, the superintendent or designee shall determine whether the grievance will be investigated after considering factors such as the reason for the delay; the extent of the delay; the effect of the delay on the ability of the school system to investigate and respond to the complaint; and whether the investigation of the complaint is necessary to meet any legal obligations. However, students and parents should recognize that delays in filing a grievance may significantly impair the ability of the school system to investigate and respond effectively to such complaints.
- c. A student or parent who has a grievance must provide the following information in writing to the principal: (1) the name of the school system employee or other individual whose decision or action is at issue; (2) the specific decision(s) or action(s) at issue; (3) any board policy, state or federal law, state or federal regulation, or State Board of Education policy or procedure that the parent or student believes has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated; and (4) the specific resolution desired. If there is not a specific decision or action at issue and no concern that state or federal law has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated, then the procedure established in policy 1742/5060 is appropriate, and the principal shall address the concern following that policy.
- d. Even if the principal is the employee whose decision or action is at issue, the student or parent must submit the grievance first to the principal in order for the principal to address the issue within the formal process. If, however, the grievance claims that a state or federal law has been misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated, the student or parent may submit the grievance directly to the superintendent or designee.
- e. If a student or parent wants to initiate a formal grievance regarding a decision by the superintendent that directly and specifically affects the student or parent, the general process described in this policy will be used, except that the grievance will be submitted to the director of human resources, who shall forward the grievance to the board chairperson.

2. Investigation

- a. The principal shall schedule and hold a meeting with the grievant within five school days after the grievance has been filed with the principal.
- b. The principal shall conduct any investigation of the facts necessary before rendering a decision.

3. Response by Principal

- a. The principal shall provide a written response to the grievance within 10 days of meeting with the grievant. The response will include the principal's decision regarding resolution of the grievance and the basis for the decision. In responding, the principal may not disclose information about other students or employees that is considered confidential by law.
- b. A copy of the grievance and the principal's response will be filed with the superintendent.

4. Response by Superintendent

- a. If the grievant is dissatisfied with the principal's decision, the grievant may appeal the decision to the superintendent. The appeal must be made in writing within five days of receiving the principal's decision.
- b. The superintendent may review the written documents and respond or the superintendent may schedule and hold a conference with the grievant, principal, and any other individuals the superintendent determines to be appropriate within five school days after receiving the appeal.
- c. The superintendent shall provide a written response within 10 days after receiving the appeal. In responding, the superintendent may not disclose information about other students or employees that is considered confidential by law.

5. Appeal to the Board

If the grievant has alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, the grievant will have the right to appeal a final administrative decision to the board of education (see subsection E.5.a, Mandatory Appeals, below). If a grievant has not alleged such specific violations, he or she may request a board hearing, which the board may grant at its discretion (see subsection E.5.b, Discretionary Appeals, below).

a. Mandatory Appeals

- 1) If the grievant is dissatisfied with the superintendent's response to his or her grievance and has alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, the grievant may appeal the decision to the board within five days of receiving the superintendent's response.
- 2) A hearing will be conducted pursuant to policy 2500, Hearings Before the Board.

3) The board will provide a final written decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

b. Discretionary Appeals

1) If the grievant is dissatisfied with the superintendent's response to his or her grievance but has *not* alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, then within five days of receiving the superintendent's response, the grievant may submit to the superintendent a written request for a hearing before the board of education.

2) If the full board will be meeting within two weeks of the request for a hearing, the board will decide at that time whether to grant a hearing. Otherwise, the board chairperson will appoint a three-person panel to review the request and determine whether to (1) deny the appeal; (2) review the superintendent's decision on the written record only; or (3) grant a hearing. The panel will report the decision to the board. The board may modify the decision of the panel upon majority vote at a board meeting.

3) If the board denies the appeal, the decision of the superintendent will be final and the grievant will be notified within five days of the board's decision.

4) If the board decides to grant a hearing, the hearing will be conducted pursuant to policy 2500.

5) The board will provide a final written decision within 30 days of the decision to grant a hearing, unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

F. Notice

The superintendent or designee is responsible for providing effective notice to students, parents and school system employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating grievances.

G. Records

Appropriate records shall be maintained in accordance with state and federal law.

XXI. Registered Sex Offenders

The board is committed to the safety of students and other persons on school property. In order to maintain a safe school environment, the superintendent and all school personnel shall enforce the provisions of this policy at all times.

A. Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply.

1. Registered Sex Offender

A registered sex offender is a person who (1) is required to register under the Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Program and (2) has committed any of the following: an offense in [G.S. 14, art. 7B](#); a federal offense or offense committed in another state, which if committed in this state, is substantially similar to an offense in [G.S. 14, art. 7B](#); an offense in which the victim was under the age of 18 years at the time of the offense; an offense in violation of [G.S. 14-190.16](#), [14-190.17](#), [14-190.17A](#), or [14-190.17C](#); or a federal offense or offense committed in another state, which if committed in this state, is substantially similar to an offense in violation of [G.S. 14-190.16](#), [14-190.17](#), [14-190.17A](#), or [14-190.17C](#).

2. School Property

School property is defined as any school grounds or any property owned or operated by the school system where minors frequently congregate.

B. Registered Sex Offenders Banned from All School Property

In accordance with [G.S. 14-208.18](#), registered sex offenders are expressly forbidden to knowingly be present on any school property whether before, during or after school hours. In addition, registered sex offenders may not attend or be present at any student function or field trip on or off school property that is (1) school-sponsored or (2) otherwise under the official supervision or control of school personnel. This policy applies to all registered sex offenders regardless of their relationship to or affiliation with a student in the school system.

C. Enforcement

All school personnel must immediately report to a school administrator the presence or suspected presence of a known or suspected registered sex offender on school property. School administrators and other supervisory personnel shall report to the superintendent and law enforcement when they reasonably believe that a registered sex offender is or has been on school property or at a school event.

School administrators also shall notify the superintendent or designee of any known student or parent or guardian of a student at their school who is suspected to be a registered sex offender.

D. Exceptions

A person who is banned from school property under [G.S. 14-208.18](#) may be on school property only under the following circumstances.

1. Students

Students who are registered sex offenders may be on school property only in accordance with policy 4260, Student Sex Offenders.

2. Voters

Registered sex offenders who are eligible to vote may be present on school property for the sole purpose of voting if the school property is being used as a voting place. The voter must not be outside the voting enclosure other than for the purpose of entering and exiting the voting place. If the voting place is a school, the voter must notify the principal of the school that he or she is registered under the Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Program. The voter must leave school property immediately after voting.

3. Parents or Guardians

a. A registered sex offender who is the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in school may be on school property only for the following reasons:

1) to attend a scheduled conference with school personnel to discuss the student's academic or social progress; or

2) at the request of the principal or designee, for any reason relating to the welfare or transportation of the student.

b. In order to visit school property for one of the reasons authorized by subsection (a) above, the parent or guardian must notify the principal of his or her registration under the Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Program and of his or her presence at school. Notice of his or her presence at school includes the nature and specific times of the visit.

c. For each visit authorized by subsection (a) above, the parent or guardian must arrange to meet a staff member at the edge of school property, check in at the principal's office upon arrival and departure,

and remain under the direct supervision of school personnel at all times. If school personnel are not available to supervise the parent or guardian during any visit, then the parent or guardian will not be permitted to enter or remain on school property.

d. For each visit authorized by subsection (a) above, the parent or guardian must comply with all reasonable rules and restrictions placed upon him or her by the principal, including restrictions on the date, time, location and length of meeting.

E. Contractual Personnel

Each contract executed by the board must include a provision requiring the other party to the contract to conduct an annual check of the State Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Program, the State Sexually Violent Predator Registration Program, and the National Sex Offender Registry for all contracted employees whose contractual job with the board requires or may result in direct interaction with students, including but not limited to any employee whose contractual job duties include: (1) delivering services directly to students; or (2) performing tasks on or delivering products to school property.

The contract must specify that no contractor or employee of a contractor registered with the State Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Program, the State Sexually Violent Predator Registration Program, or the National Sex Offender Registry may have direct interaction with children. This provision applies to contracts with a single individual.

XXII. Student Records

All student records must be current and maintained with appropriate measures of security and confidentiality. The principal is responsible for complying with all legal requirements pertaining to the maintenance, review and release of student records retained at the school. For purposes of this policy “student records” or “student education records” are those records, files, documents and other materials that contain information directly related to the student that are maintained by the school system or by a party acting for the school system.

A. Annual Notification of Rights

The superintendent or designee shall provide eligible students and parents with annual notification of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The notice must contain all information required by federal law and regulations, including the following:

1. the right to inspect and review the student’s education records and the procedure for exercising this right;

2. the right to request amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's privacy rights; and the procedure for exercising this right;
3. the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent;
4. the type of information designated as directory information and the right to opt out of release of directory information;
5. that the school system releases records to other institutions that have requested the information and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll;
6. the right to opt out of releasing the student's name, address and phone number to military recruiters or institutions of higher education that request such information;
7. a specification of the criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest if a school official discloses or intends to disclose personally identifiable information to school officials without consent;
8. notification if the school system uses contractors, consultants, volunteers or similar persons as school officials to perform certain school system services and functions that it would otherwise perform itself; and
9. the right to file complaints with the Student Privacy Policy Office in the U.S. Department of Education.

School officials are not required to individually notify parents or eligible students of their rights but must provide the notice in a manner reasonably likely to inform the parents and eligible students of their rights. Effective notice must be provided to parents or eligible students with disabilities or those whose primary or home language is not English.

B. Definition of Parent and Eligible Student

1. Parent

For purposes of this policy, the term "parent" includes a natural parent, a guardian or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. If the parents of a student are separated or divorced, both parents have the right to access the student's records as provided in this policy, unless the school system has been provided with evidence that there is a

court order, state statute or other legally binding document that specifically revokes these rights.

2. Eligible Student

For purposes of this policy, an eligible student is a student who has reached 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education. The rights afforded to parents under this policy transfer to an eligible student. However, parents may still have access to the records as long as the student is claimed as a dependent by the parent for federal income tax purposes. An eligible student who desires to prevent access to records by his or her parents must furnish to the principal information verifying that the student is not a dependent of his or her parents. If a parent of a student who is at least 18 and no longer attending a school within the system wishes to inspect and review the student's records, he or she must provide information verifying that the student is a dependent for federal income tax purposes.

A student under age 18 may have access to student records only upon the consent of his or her parents.

C. Classification and Maintenance of Records

1. Student Education Records

Student education records may be separated into several categories, including, but not limited to, the following.

a. Cumulative Records

The cumulative record is the official record for each student. The cumulative record includes student identification information, such as the student's name, address (or a homeless student's living situation), sex, race, birthplace and birth date; family data including the parents' names, addresses, work and home telephone numbers and places of employment; academic work completed; grades; standardized test scores; health screenings and immunization documentation; attendance records; withdrawal and reentry records; discipline records; honors and activities; class rank; date of graduation; and follow-up records.

b. Discipline Records

Student discipline records are part of the student's official record and must be maintained and reviewed pursuant to policy 4345, Student Discipline Records. Discipline records must be expunged and forwarded pursuant to the requirements of law and the procedures of policy 4345.

c. Records of Students with Disabilities

Students with recognized disabilities must be accorded all rights in regard to their records as provided by state and federal law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and policy 3520, Special Education Programs/Rights of Students with Disabilities. Records for a student identified as a student with a disability are considered part of the student's official records and must be maintained in accordance with all appropriate federal and state regulations. Access to these records will be restricted to personnel having specific responsibility in this area. A list of all approved personnel having access to these restricted files will be updated as needed, and a current, dated list will be posted in the student records location.

d. Records Received from the Department of Social Services

The Department of Social Services may disclose confidential information to the school system in order to protect a juvenile from abuse or neglect. Any confidential information disclosed under these circumstances must remain confidential and may only be redisclosed for purposes directly connected with carrying out the school system's mandated educational responsibilities.

e. Juvenile Records

Juvenile records include documentation or information regarding students who are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. These records may be received from local law enforcement and/or other local agencies authorized to share information concerning juveniles in accordance with [G.S. 7B-3100](#). These records also may include notice from the sheriff to the board that a student has been required to register with the sheriff because the student has been found to be a danger to the community under [G.S. Chapter 14, Part 4](#). Such documents must not be a part of a student's official records but must be maintained by the principal in a safe, locked storage area that is separate from the student's other records. The principal shall not make a copy of such documents under any circumstances.

Juvenile records will be used only to protect the safety of or to improve the educational opportunities for the student or others. The principal may share juvenile records with individuals who have (a) direct guidance, teaching or supervisory responsibility for the student and (b) a specific need to know in order to protect the safety of the student and others. Persons provided access to juvenile records must

indicate in writing that they have read the document(s) and agree to maintain confidentiality of the records.

The principal or designee must destroy juvenile documents if he or she receives notification that a court no longer has jurisdiction over the student or if the court grants the student's petition for expunction of the records. The principal or designee shall destroy all other information received from an examination of juvenile records when he or she finds that the information is no longer needed to protect the safety of or to improve the educational opportunities for the student or others. If the student graduates, withdraws from school, transfers to another school, is suspended for the remainder of the school year or is expelled, the principal shall return all documents not destroyed to the juvenile court counselor. If the student is transferring, the principal shall provide the juvenile court counselor with the name and address of the school to which the student is transferring.

f. Other Student Records

School system personnel may also keep other student records but must review such records annually and destroy them in accordance with Section K of this policy.

2. Records Not Considered Education Records (Sole Possession, Employment and Law Enforcement Records)

Student education records do not include, and release of information under this policy does not apply to:

- a. records made by teachers, counselors and administrators that are in the sole possession of the maker thereof and that are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute;
- b. employment records of student employees if those records relate exclusively to the student in his or her capacity as an employee and are not made available for any other use; and
- c. records created by a law enforcement unit of the school system if created for a law enforcement purpose and maintained solely by the law enforcement unit of the school system. However, a law enforcement record containing information that was obtained from a student's confidential file or other education record must be treated as an education record and may be released only in accordance with this policy.

D. Records of Students Participating in the North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program

Students or parents enrolled in the North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program (NCACP) must provide a valid NCACP authorization card to the school principal if they wish to keep their home address confidential. The school system will maintain a confidential record of the actual home address for admission and assignment purposes only and will not release that address except as provided by law. With the exception of such specially-maintained records, student records will include only the substitute address provided by the NCACP and not the actual home address of any students or parents for whom a valid NCACP authorization card is on file.

When transferring the record of a student participating in the North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program to a school outside of the system, the transferring school may send the files to the Address Confidentiality Program participant (parent or guardian) via the substitute address provided by the Address Confidentiality Program.

E. Records of Missing Children

Upon notification by a law enforcement agency or the North Carolina Center for Missing Persons of the disappearance of a child who is currently or was previously enrolled in the school, school officials shall flag the record of that child. If the missing child's record is requested by another school system, the principal shall provide notice of the request to the superintendent and the agency that notified the school that the child was missing. The principal shall provide the agency with a copy of any written request for information concerning the missing child's record.

Any information received indicating that a student transferring into the system is a missing child must be reported promptly to the superintendent and the North Carolina Center for Missing Persons.

F. Records of Children of Military Families

In compliance with the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children ([G.S. 115C-407.5](#)) and [G.S. 115C-407.12](#), school administrators shall assist in the timely enrollment of children of military families, as defined by policy 4050, Children of Military Families, by facilitating the transfer of their educational records.

1. For Students Leaving the School System

In the event that official education records cannot be released to the parents of military children who are transferring away from the school system, the custodian of records shall prepare and furnish to the parent a complete set of

unofficial education records containing uniform information as determined by the Interstate Commission.

When a request for a student's official record is received from the student's new school, school officials shall process and furnish the official records to the student's new school within 10 days.

2. For Students Enrolling in the School System

Upon receiving an unofficial education record from the student's previous school, school administrators shall enroll the student and place him or her in classes as quickly as possible based on the information in the unofficial records, pending validation by the official records.

Simultaneous with the enrollment and conditional placement of the student, school administrators shall request the student's official record from his or her previous school.

G. Review, Release of Records to Parent or Eligible Student

1. Review by Parent or Eligible Student

A parent or eligible student may access the student's education records upon proper request. The written request should specify the record(s) to which the student or parent seeks access. The principal (or appropriate school official) of the student's school shall schedule an appointment as soon as possible but no later than 45 days after the request by the parent or eligible student. The parent or eligible student may formally review the student's complete education records only in the presence of the principal or a designee competent to explain the records. School personnel shall not destroy any education records if there is an outstanding request to inspect or review the records.

2. Review of Video or Audio Recordings and Photographs

a. Parent's Right to Review

Upon request, a parent or eligible student may inspect and review a video or audio recording or photograph that is determined to be an education record of the student. Individuals acting on behalf of a parent or eligible child, such as advocates or attorneys, will not be permitted to review a video or audio recording or photo unless accompanied by the parent or eligible student.

b. Status as Education Record

A video or audio recording or photo will be deemed an education record of the student if it is directly related to the student and is maintained by the school system or its agent, as provided by law. A photo, video or audio recording (such as a surveillance video), that is created and maintained by a law enforcement unit for a law enforcement purpose, is not an education record; however, a copy of such photo, video or audio recording provided to the school for disciplinary or other school purposes may be an education record if it is directly related to a student and is maintained by the school system.

c. Records of More Than One Student

If the recording or photo is an education record of multiple students, the school system shall make reasonable efforts to redact or segregate out the portions of the recording or photo directly related to other students before providing the parent or eligible student access, provided doing so would not destroy the meaning of the record. If redaction or segregation of the recording or photo cannot reasonably be accomplished or would destroy the meaning of the record, then the parent of each student to whom the recording or photo directly relates or such eligible students themselves shall be permitted to access the entire record.

d. Copies of Recordings and Photos

A copy of a video or audio recording or photo will be provided to a parent or eligible student only (1) if circumstances effectively prevent the parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect the recording or photo, such as when the parent no longer lives within commuting distance of the school system; (2) when directed by a court order or subpoena; or (3) when otherwise required by law.

3. Request to Amend the Education Record

A parent or eligible student has the right to challenge an item in the student education record believed to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. The student or parent should write the principal (or appropriate school official) and clearly identify the part of the record that requires amending and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The principal shall examine a request to amend a student record item and respond in writing to the person who challenges the item. Subsequent steps, if necessary, will follow the student grievance procedures as provided in policy 1740/4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure. If the final decision is that the information in the record is not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, the principal shall inform the parent or eligible student of the right to place a

statement in the record commenting on the contested information in the record or stating why he or she disagrees with the decision of the school system.

H. Release or Disclosure of Records to Others

Before releasing or disclosing education records as permitted by law, school officials shall use reasonable methods to identify and authenticate the identity of the party to whom the records are disclosed.

1. Release/Disclosure with Parental Consent

School officials shall obtain written permission from a parent or eligible student before releasing or disclosing student records that contain personally identifiable information, except in circumstances where the school system is authorized by law to release the records without such permission. The written permission must specify the records to be released, the purpose of the release and the party(ies) to whom they are to be released.

2. Release/Disclosure without Parental Consent

As permitted by law, student records with personally identifiable information may be released to the following persons without parental permission:

- a. School officials with a legitimate educational interest in reviewing the student's records.

For purposes of this policy, a "school official" is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (e.g. an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee (e.g. a disciplinary or grievance committee) or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks (e.g. a tutor). A school official has a "legitimate educational interest" if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility;

- b. Officials of other schools to which a student is transferring;

- c. Authorized federal, state, and local government officials for the purposes of auditing, evaluating, enforcing or complying with federal or state-supported educational programs.

- d. Appropriate parties in connection with a student's application for or receipt of financial aid.
- e. Organizations acting under a written agreement with the school system to conduct educational studies for or on behalf of the school system.
- f. Accrediting organizations, to the extent necessary to allow them to carry out their accrediting functions.
- g. Persons acting under a court order or a lawfully-issued subpoena.
- h. Appropriate persons in connection with an emergency, if the release of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons.
- i. State and local representatives of the juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

Personally identifiable information from a student's record may be released or disclosed to someone other than a parent or eligible student without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student only as specifically provided by federal law. Except as otherwise permitted by federal law, when personally identifiable information from a student's record is released or disclosed to someone other than a parent or eligible student without their written consent, the party to whom the information is released must agree not to disclose the information to any other party without the prior written consent of the parent or eligible student.

The superintendent shall employ reasonable methods to ensure that teachers and other school officials obtain access only to those education records in which they have legitimate educational interests.

3. Release of Directory Information

Permission of the parent or eligible student is not required for the release of information that is designated as directory information by the board, provided that the parent or eligible student has been given proper notice and an opportunity to opt out (see policy 1310/4002, Parental Involvement). If a parent does not want directory information from his or her child's education records released, he or she must notify the student's school in writing within 15 days of receiving the annual notification of the opportunity to opt-out.

- a. Directory information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The board designates the following student record information as directory information:

- (1) name;
- (2) address;
- (3) telephone listing;
- (4) email address;
- (5) photograph or digital image, including still or video images of a student engaged in ordinary school activities;
- (6) date and place of birth;
- (7) participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- (8) weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- (9) dates of attendance;
- (10) grade level;
- (11) diplomas (including endorsements earned), industry credentials/certifications, honors and awards received; and
- (12) most recent previous school or education institution attended by the student.

b. The telephone number and actual address of a student who is or whose parent is a participant in the North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program is not considered directory information and will not be released except as required by law.

c. Information about a homeless student's living situation is not considered directory information and will not be released.

d. As required by law, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary school students shall be released, upon request, to military recruiters or institutions of higher learning, whether or not such information is designated directory information by the school system. In addition, secondary school students' email addresses (which will be the email addresses provided by the school, if available) must be provided to military recruiters upon request. Students or their parents, however, may request that the student's name, address, email address, and telephone number not be released without prior written parental consent. School officials shall notify parents of the option to make a request and shall comply with any requests made.

e. All requests for directory information must be submitted to the superintendent or designee for approval. The superintendent is directed to establish regulations regarding the release of directory information. At a minimum, the regulations must:

- (1) specify the types of organizations that are eligible to receive directory information, and for what purposes;
- (2) provide for equal disclosure to organizations that are similar in purpose; and
- (3) authorize access to directory information to recruiters of military forces of the state or United States for the purpose of informing students of educational and career opportunities available in the military to the same extent that such information is made available to persons or organizations that inform students of occupational or educational options.

4. Records of Students with Disabilities

Students with recognized disabilities must be accorded all rights in regard to their records as provided by state and federal law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

5. Disclosure of De-Identified Information

Education records may be released without consent of the parent or eligible student if all personally identifiable information has been removed. Personally identifiable information includes both direct and indirect identifiers that, alone or in combination, would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty.

Unless specifically permitted by law, records that have been de-identified must not be released without the consent of the parent or eligible student if school officials reasonably believe that the person requesting the information knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

I. Withholding Records

School system administrators shall not withhold records upon a valid request by a parent, eligible student or school to which the student is transferring for any reason, including in order to collect fines assessed to the parent or student.

J. Record of Access and Disclosure

The principal or designee shall maintain a record in each student's file indicating all persons who have requested or received personally identifiable information from a student's record and the legitimate reason(s) for requesting or obtaining the information. This requirement does not apply to requests by or disclosure to parents, eligible students, school officials, parties seeking directory information, a party seeking or receiving the records under a court order or subpoena that prohibits disclosure, or those individuals with written parental consent.

K. Destruction of Student Records

To the extent required by law, school officials shall maintain student records in accordance with the applicable records retention and disposition schedule(s) issued by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. School officials shall not destroy student records if there is an outstanding request to inspect the particular records.

School officials shall notify parents and eligible students prior to the destruction of personally identifiable information in a student's special education records so that parents may collect the records from the school system if desired. Special education records must be destroyed at the request of parents if no longer needed to provide educational services to the child, including services to protect the safety of the student or others. However, a record of a student's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed and year completed may be maintained permanently.

L. Longitudinal Data System

School system administrators will comply with the data requirements and implementation schedule for the North Carolina Longitudinal Data System (NCLDS) and will transfer designated student record data to the system in accordance with the NCLDS data security and safeguarding plan and all other requirements of state law, provided that doing so does not conflict with the requirements of FERPA.

XXIII. Student Dress Code

The board believes that the dress and personal appearance of students greatly affect their academic performance and their interaction with other students. The board requests that parents outfit their children in clothing that will be conducive to learning.

A. General Guidelines

Generally, dress and grooming standards as determined by the student and his or her parents will be deemed acceptable. However, the board prohibits appearance or clothing that does the following:

1. violates a reasonable, nondiscriminatory dress code adopted and publicized by the school;
2. is substantially disruptive (for information on gang-related attire, see policy 4328, Gang-Related Activity);
3. is obscene; or
4. endangers the health or safety of the student or others.

Before receiving disciplinary consequences, a student who is not in compliance with this policy or a school dress code will be given a reasonable period of time to make adjustments so that he or she will be in compliance. A student's failure to comply after being offered this opportunity or a student's second or repeated violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action. Such disciplinary consequences shall be consistent with Section F of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violation of the dress code.

B. Specific Guidelines

Principals will maintain specific guidelines to assist students in determining appropriate dress and appearance for each particular school, copies of which will be made available to parents and students.

Reasonable accommodations shall be made by the school principal or designee for those students who, because of a sincerely held religious belief, cultural heritage or medical reason request a waiver of a particular guideline for dress or appearance.

Reasonable accommodations shall be made by the principal or designee to accommodate students involved in special duties, activities or projects approved by the school. This would include but not be limited to: athletics, career and technical classes and projects, special events or other activities that would allow for non-conforming dress on a school campus.

XXIV. Student Searches

School officials have the authority to conduct reasonable searches of students and to seize students' unauthorized materials for the purposes of maintaining a safe, orderly environment and upholding standards of conduct established by the board or school. Any searches or seizures must be conducted in accordance with the standards described in this

policy and any other applicable legal requirements. Any school official carrying out a search or seizure is expected to be knowledgeable about the legal rights of students and the appropriate procedures for conducting the search or seizure. A search must be justified at its inception, permissible in scope and conducted using methods that are narrowly tailored to be minimally intrusive. School officials shall make reasonable, good faith efforts to investigate allegations of misconduct before a student search is conducted.

This policy applies to searches conducted on school grounds, in school facilities or at school-sponsored events.

Policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use, not this policy, applies to the search of school system-owned technological resources and the data located on school-system owned electronic equipment.

A. Searches Based on Individualized Reasonable Suspicion

A student or the student's possessions may be searched when a school official has reasonable suspicion that the search will turn up evidence that the particular student has violated or is violating a specific law or school rule. This reasonable suspicion must be based upon specific and articulable facts, which have been acquired through reliable and/or corroborated information from employees, students, law enforcement officers or other credible sources, or upon visual or other evidence (e.g., the smell of alcohol or marijuana, an alert from a metal detector or drug dog) viewed in light of the totality of the circumstances and the school official's professional judgment. The scope of the search must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search, and the methods used to conduct the search must be narrowly tailored to be minimally intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

Reasonable suspicion is not required if a student freely and voluntarily consents to the search of his or her person or possessions.

In accordance with the standards described above, the board authorizes the following types of searches based on reasonable suspicion.

1. Searches of Personal Effects

School officials may search a student's desk, locker and/or personal effects, including but not limited to purses, book bags and clothing (for example, coats or jackets) not currently being worn by the student. Policy 4318, Use of Wireless Communication Devices, addresses the circumstances under which searches of student cell phones and other electronic devices may be conducted.

2. Searches of Motor Vehicles

School officials may search the interior of a student's motor vehicle.

3. "Pat-down" Searches

A school official may conduct a frisk or "pat-down" search of a student's person. The search must be conducted in private by a school official with an adult witness present. Both the school official conducting the search and the adult witness must be the same sex as the student.

4. More Intrusive Personal Searches

More intrusive personal searches are discouraged and are to be used only in very limited circumstances. A personal search is more intrusive when it extends beyond a student's personal effects and outer clothing and potentially exposes intimate body parts and/or undergarments. Such intrusive personal searches will be permissible only if: (1) the school official has reasonable suspicion that a search of a particular student will yield dangerous contraband (e.g., drugs or weapons); and (2) the school official has reasonable suspicion that the student has hidden the contraband in his or her undergarments. This search must be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex as the student, with an adult witness of the same sex present, and only with the prior approval of the superintendent or designee, unless the health or safety of students will be endangered by the delay that might be caused by following these procedures. Body cavity searches and searches that require a student to completely disrobe are strictly prohibited.

5. Metal Detector Searches

A metal detector may be used to search a student's person and/or personal effects. The search must be conducted by a school official and will be done in private, when feasible.

B. Suspicionless General Searches

In an effort to maintain a safe, drug-free and weapon-free learning environment, school officials may conduct certain types of general, suspicionless searches in the schools. All general searches must be conducted in a minimally-intrusive, nondiscriminatory manner (e.g., all students in randomly selected classrooms, every third individual entering a school-sponsored extracurricular activity) and may not be used to single out a particular individual or category of individuals. The searches must be conducted in accordance with standardized procedures established by the superintendent or designee. Absent exigent circumstances (e.g., a report of a weapon on campus), prior to conducting general searches, school administrators must: (1) demonstrate to the superintendent or designee the need for general searches based upon a pattern or expectation of violence, drug activity or disruption; and (2) provide written notice to students and parents of the school

policy and/or procedures governing general searches, but not of specific times when or places where searches will be conducted.

When conducted in accordance with the standards described above and any corresponding procedures, the board authorizes the following types of general, suspicionless searches.

1. Searches of Desks and Lockers

School officials may conduct routine searches of student desks and lockers. Student desks and lockers are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school. However, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their desks and lockers. Student desks and lockers may not be used to store illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials.

A student's personal effects found within a desk or locker, such as a backpack, gym bag, or purse, may be searched only in accordance with the guidelines for individualized searches of personal effects described in Section A, above.

2. Point-of-Entry Metal Detector Searches

Due to the increasing problem of weapons in schools, school officials may use metal detectors to conduct general point-of-entry searches of students and other persons for weapons.

3. Use of Trained Dogs

With the prior approval of the superintendent, and in conjunction with local law enforcement, school officials may use trained dogs (canines) to locate illegal materials. All dogs must be accompanied by a certified and authorized trainer who is responsible for the dog's actions and who is able to verify the dog's reliability and accuracy in sniffing out illegal material. Trained dogs may sniff lockers, desks, book bags, motor vehicles and other inanimate objects. Dogs may not be used to sniff students or other persons under any circumstances. No students should be present during a dog search. Before a search occurs in a classroom, students will first be moved to a location outside the classroom.

C. Seized Items

Any illegal contraband seized by school officials must be promptly turned over to the proper law enforcement authorities.

D. Failure to Cooperate

A student's failure to cooperate with a reasonable search or seizure as provided in this policy will be considered a violation of the expected standard of behavior, and will subject the student to appropriate consequences.

Any person who is not a student who refuses to permit a general metal detector search of his or her person and/or belongings at the point-of-entry to a school-sponsored activity may be denied entry to the activity.

E. Notice

School principals shall take reasonable steps to provide notice of this policy to students and parents at the start of each school year.

XXV. Student Insurance Program

Membership in a group accident insurance program will be made available to students each year. In arranging for this insurance, the board will make every reasonable attempt to identify a company offering comprehensive insurance at economical rates. Information on the plan will be made available through school publications.

Purchase of this insurance constitutes an agreement between the student and/or parent and the insurance company. The school system is not a party to this agreement. The school system does not assume any contractual responsibility for expenses not covered by insurance. The insurance coverage policies offered by the school system (either school athletic insurance provided for athletes or the policies parents can purchase at the beginning of the year) are supplemental insurance and are not meant to provide full coverage in most situations. It is very important that every parent read the insurance brochure (sent home with each student) to understand what is and is not covered.

Students who choose to participate in programs that may have a higher risk of physical injury than most school activities, including off-site internship programs, football and other interscholastic sports, are required to have accident insurance through the group plan or comparable coverage. The superintendent may designate other activities, including certain school trips, as requiring accident insurance.

XXVI. Survey of Students

The superintendent shall ensure that all notification and other requirements of state law and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment are met, including all legal requirements regarding the surveying of students.

A. Surveys Involving Protected Topics

1. Definition of Protected Topic Survey

For purposes of this policy, the following are considered a “protected topic”:

- a. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent;
- b. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- c. sex behavior or attitudes;
- d. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- e. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- f. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
- g. religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent; or
- h. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

For purposes of this policy, a “protected topic survey” is any survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals information concerning any of the protected topics.

2. Rules Regarding Protected Topic Surveys

a. Protection of Student Privacy

The school system will take measures to protect the identification and privacy of students participating in any protected topic survey. These measures may include limiting access to completed surveys and to survey results, as allowed by law.

b. Parental Notification and Consent

The school system will notify parents at the beginning of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of administration of protected topic surveys. At least 10 days prior to the administration of a

protected topic survey, parents and eligible students (students who are 18 years of age or older or who are emancipated minors) will be provided the opportunity to review both electronically and in person the process for providing consent to participate in the protected topic survey and the full text of the protected topic survey.

Parents will be provided notice of the opportunity to opt out of any protected topic survey given as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey. Before a student will be permitted to participate in any other protected topic survey, the parent or eligible student must provide prior written consent.

B. Well-Being Questionnaires and Health Screening Forms

Before any student well-being questionnaire or health screening form is administered to students in kindergarten through third grade, the principal or designee shall provide parents with a copy of the questionnaire or form and shall inform parents of the means for parents to consent to the use of the questionnaire or form for their children. See also policy 1310/4002, Parental Involvement.

If a well-being questionnaire or health screening form falls under the definition of a protected topic survey, all rules for protected topic surveys, as described above in subsection A.2, also apply.

C. Other Surveys Created by a Third Party

Parents and eligible students have the right, upon request, to inspect any other survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to a student.

D. Collection of Student Data for Marketing Purposes

The school system generally will not collect, disclose or use personal student information for the purpose of marketing or selling the information or otherwise providing the information to others for that purpose.

However, in the event the board approves a collection, disclosure, or use of personal student information for one of those purposes, the school system will (1) notify parents at the beginning of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of such collection, disclosure, or use, (2) allow parents to inspect any instrument used to collect the information before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student, and (3) offer the parent the opportunity to opt out of the collection, disclosure, or use of the student's personal information.

The preceding rules for the collection, disclosure, and use of personal student information do not apply if the school system collects, discloses, or uses personal information from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for or to students or educational institutions, such as the following:

1. college or other postsecondary education recruitment or military recruitment;
2. book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products;
3. curriculum and instructional material used by elementary schools and secondary schools;
4. tests and assessments used by elementary schools and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments;
5. the sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities; and
6. student recognition programs.

E. Other Relevant Policies

In addition to this policy, the board, with parental and community input, has developed other policies concerning surveys and related matters as required by the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment. These policies include: 1310/4002, Parental Involvement; 3210, Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials; 4700, Student Records; and 5240, Advertising in the Schools.

XXVII. Parental Involvement

The board recognizes the critical role of parents in the education of their children and in the schools. The board believes that the education of children is a cooperative effort in which parents, teachers and administrators work together for the common goal of student success. The board directs school administrators to develop programs that will promote and support parental involvement in student learning and achievement at school and at home and encourage successful progress toward graduation. Each parent is encouraged to learn about the educational program, the educational goals and objectives of the school

system, and his or her own child's progress. The board also encourages parents to participate in their children's education and in activities designed by school personnel to involve them, such as parent conferences, in order to foster effective teacher and parent communication. Parents are responsible for cooperating with school employees to facilitate their children's compliance with board policies concerning homework, school attendance and behavior.

For purposes of this policy, "parent" includes parents, legal guardians and legal custodians of students who are under 18 years old and who have not been emancipated.

A. Parental Involvement Plans

1. Parental Involvement Plan as Part of the School Improvement Plan

The board directs each principal to ensure that the school improvement team develops a plan for the school's parental involvement program as a part of the school improvement plan. The principal shall publicize drafts of the parental involvement plan prior to finalization and solicit input from parents of students in the school. This plan must include, at a minimum, efforts to enhance parental involvement by promoting the following priorities:

- a. regular, meaningful two-way communication between home and school;
- b. responsible parenting;
- c. involvement of parents in student learning;
- d. parental volunteering in the school;
- e. involvement of parents in school decisions that affect children and families;
- f. parental training based on parents' informational needs;
- g. collaboration with community agencies and other organizations to provide resources to strengthen school programs, families and student learning; and
- h. student health awareness among parents by addressing the need for health programs and student health services, which are linked to student learning.

2. Title I Parent and Family Engagement Plan

Each school participating in the Title I program must develop, with parents and family members, a school-level written parent and family engagement plan that involves parents in the planning and improvement of Title I activities and describes the means for carrying out school-level policy, sharing responsibility for student academic achievement, building the capacity of school staff and parents for involvement, and increasing

accessibility for participation of all parents and family members of children participating in Title I programs. See policy 1320/3560, Title I Parent and Family Engagement.

3. Parental Involvement Component of a School Plan for Managing Student Behavior

Each school's plan for managing student behavior should include parental involvement strategies that address when parents will be notified or involved in issues related to their child's behavior. See policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior.

B. Parent Communication, Participation and Conferences

1. Communication with Parents

The board encourages school personnel to have regular contact with parents for informational purposes as well as for commendation of students and notification of concerns. School personnel shall communicate with parents about student behavior issues in accordance with requirements of policy 4341, Parental Involvement in Student Behavior Issues, and about student attendance as described in policy 4400, Attendance. In addition, parents will be notified promptly if school personnel suspect that a criminal offense has been committed against the parent's child, unless notification would impede an investigation by law enforcement or the child welfare agency.

The principal must effectively communicate to parents the manner in which textbooks are used to implement the school's curricular objectives. Any parent interested in learning more about their child's course of study or the source of any supplementary instructional materials should contact the principal for more information. If a parent would like to inspect and review particular instructional materials, the parent should make such a request in accordance with policy 3210, Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials.

To the extent practicable, parents and students will be provided advance notice of classroom discussions, activities or assigned readings so that the parent has the opportunity to request that the student be excused from such classroom discussions, activities or assigned readings in accordance with policy 3510, Religious-Based Exemptions from School Programs.

The principal shall ensure that information about the nature and purpose of all clubs and activities, curricular and extracurricular, offered at the school is available at the school's main office. Any parent who would like information about such clubs or activities should contact the school's main office.

The principal or designee shall strive, through oral or written communication or other means, to include the parents of students identified as at-risk in the implementation and review of academic and/or behavioral interventions for their children, in accordance with policy 3405, Students at Risk of Academic Failure.

The principal or designee shall provide the parent of each student in kindergarten, first or second grade with written notification of the student's reading progress. The notice will be provided three times a year, following each benchmark assessment and will include: (1) assessment results; (2) whether the child may not reach reading proficiency by the end of third grade; and (3) instructional support activities for use at home.

2. Parent Participation at Schools

The board encourages parents to engage in activities in their children's schools. Parents are welcome to visit schools in accordance with policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools, and, if interested, are urged to participate in school volunteer programs as described in policy 5015, School Volunteers. In addition, opportunities exist for parents to participate on school advisory councils, such as the school health advisory council (see policy 6140, Student Wellness), school improvement teams (see policy 3430, School Improvement Plan), school media and technology advisory committees (see policy 3200, Selection of Instructional Materials), and the business advisory council (see policy 2670, Business Advisory Council).

3. Conferences

Teachers are responsible for scheduling conferences or meetings with parents. Principals shall strongly encourage and support these conferences. The board encourages the superintendent to work with local business leaders, including the local chambers of commerce, to encourage employers to adopt, as part of their stated personnel policies, time for employees who are parents or guardians to attend conferences with their child's teachers.

C. Parental Notification

1. Title I Notifications

Each principal or designee of a Title I school shall effectively notify parents of all parental rights and other required information regarding Title I schools and programs, in accordance with federal law. Parents of students in Title I schools shall receive a copy of the system-wide Title I parent and family engagement policy (policy 1320/3560) and the school-wide parent involvement plan.

2. Parent Guide for Student Achievement

Each year, the superintendent or designee shall create a parent guide for student achievement that meets the requirements of state law and the State Board of Education. All parents will receive a written copy of the guide, and information in the guide will be discussed at the beginning of each school year in meetings of students, parents, and teachers.

At a minimum the guide will include the following:

- a. information for parents regarding the following as it pertains to their child: (1) requirements for promotion to the next grade, including the requirements of the North Carolina Read to Achieve Program as set forth in [Part 1A of Article 8 of Chapter 115C](#); (2) the course of study, textbooks, and other supplementary instructional materials and policy 3210, Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials, which provides for the inspection and review of those materials; (3) the child's progress toward achieving State and unit expectations for academic proficiency, including policies for student assessment, and the child's assessment results, report cards, and progress reports; (4) qualifications of the child's teachers, including licensure status; and (5) school entry requirements, including required immunizations and the recommended immunization schedule;
- b. parental actions that can do the following: (1) strengthen the child's academic progress, especially in the area of reading as provided in the North Carolina Read to Achieve Program; (2) strengthen the child's citizenship, especially social skills and respect for others; (3) strengthen the child's realization of high expectations and setting lifelong learning goals; and (4) place a strong emphasis on the communication between the school and the home;
- c. services available for parents and their children, such as family literacy services; mentoring, tutoring, and other academic reinforcement programs; after-school programs; and college planning, academic advisement and student counseling services (see policy 3610, Counseling Program);
- d. opportunities for parental participation, such as parenting classes, adult education, school advisory councils and school volunteer programs;
- e. opportunities for parents to learn about rigorous academic programs that may be available for their child, such as academically and/or intellectually gifted programming, honors programs, Career and College Promise and other dual enrollment opportunities, advanced placement, Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE)

- courses, International Baccalaureate, North Carolina Virtual High School courses and accelerated access to postsecondary education;
- f. educational choices available to parents, including each type of public school unit available to residents of the county in which the child lives and nonpublic school options, educational choice options offered within the school system and programs for scholarship grants for nonpublic schools ([Part 2A of Article 39 of Chapter 115C](#)) and for personal education student accounts for students with disabilities ([Article 41 of Chapter 115C](#));
 - g. rights of students who have been identified as students with disabilities, as provided in [Article 9 of Chapter 115C](#);
 - h. contact information for school and unit offices;
 - i. resources for information on the importance of student health and other available resources for parents, including the following information on available immunizations and vaccinations: (1) a recommended immunization schedule in accordance with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations; and (2) information about meningococcal meningitis and influenza, including the causes, symptoms, and vaccines, how the diseases are spread and places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children as required by [G.S. 115C-375.4](#); and
 - j. this policy (policy 1310/4002, Parental Involvement); policy 1320/3560, Title I Parent and Family Engagement; policy 2670, Business Advisory Council; policy 3210, Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials; policy 3430, School Improvement Plan; policy 3540, Comprehensive Health Education Program; policy 4400, Attendance; policy 5015, School Volunteers; policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools; and policy 6140, Student Wellness.

3. Additional Annual Notifications

The principal or designee shall annually notify parents of the following information to the extent that it has not already been provided to parents as part of the parent guide for student achievement:

- a. parental rights related to student records (see policy 4700, Student Records);
- b. parental rights related to student surveys (see policy 4720, Surveys of Students);

- c. the approximate dates of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is: (a) required as a condition of attendance, (b) administered and scheduled in advance by the school administration, and (c) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students;
- d. the schedule of pesticide use on school property and their right to request notification of nonscheduled pesticide use (see policy 9205, Pest Management);
- e. student behavior policies, the Code of Student Conduct and school standards and rules (see policies in the 4300 series);
- f. the permissible use of seclusion and restraint in the schools (see regulation 4302-R, Rules for Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools);
- g. policy 1735/4329/7311, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited;
- h. policy 1740/4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure;
- i. the dates of the system-wide and state-mandated tests that students will be required to take during that school year, how the results from the tests will be used and whether each test is required by the State Board of Education or by the local board;
- j. grading practices that will be followed at the school and, for parents of high school students, the method of computing the grade point averages that will be used for determining class rank (see policies 3400, Evaluation of Student Progress, and 3450, Class Rankings);
- k. available opportunities and the enrollment process for students to take advanced courses and information explaining the value of taking advanced courses;
- l. if applicable, that their child will be provided advanced learning opportunities in mathematics or will be placed in an advanced mathematics course;
- m. when a student initially creates a career development plan, that the plan has been created and information on how to access the plan;
- n. a clear and concise explanation of the North Carolina testing and accountability system that includes all information required by federal law;
- o. a report containing information about the school system and each school, including, but not limited to:
 - i. the following information both in the aggregate and disaggregated by category: student achievement, graduation rates, performance on other school quality and/or student success indicators, the progress of students toward meeting

- long-term goals established by the state, student performance on measures of school climate and safety and, as available, the rate of enrollment in post-secondary education;
- ii. the performance of the school system on academic assessments as compared to the state as a whole and the performance of each school on academic assessments as compared to the state and school system as a whole;
- iii. the percentage and number of students who are:
 - 1. assessed,
 - 2. assessed using alternate assessments,
 - 3. involved in preschool and accelerated coursework programs, and
 - 4. English learners achieving proficiency;
- iv. the per pupil expenditures of federal, state and local funds; and
- v. teacher qualifications;
- p. the grade earned by the school on the most recent annual report card issued for it by the State Board of Education, if the grade was a D or F;
- q. if the school and/or the school system is identified by the State Board of Education as low-performing, the notifications required by [G.S. 115C-105.37](#)(b) and/or [G.S. 115C-105.39A](#)(c);
- r. supportive services available to students, including health services;
- s. for parents of students in grades 5 through 12, information about cervical cancer, cervical dysplasia, and human papillomavirus, including the causes and symptoms of these diseases, how they are transmitted, how they may be prevented by vaccination, including the benefits and possible side effects of vaccination, and places parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children;
- t. how to reach school officials in emergency situations during non-school hours;
- u. information about and an application form for free and reduced price meals and/or free milk (see policy 6225, Free and Reduced Price Meal Services);
- v. information about the school breakfast program;
- w. information about the availability and location of free summer food service program meals for students when school is not in session;

- x. for parents of children with disabilities, procedural safeguards (see also policy 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities);
- y. information on the availability of the asbestos management plan and planned or in-progress inspections, re-inspections, response actions and post-response actions, including periodic re-inspection and surveillance activities;
- z. education rights of homeless students (see policy 4125, Homeless Students);
- aa. the content and implementation of the local school wellness policy (see policy 6140, Student Wellness);
- bbb. their right to take four hours of unpaid leave from their jobs every year in order to volunteer in their child's school as stated in [G.S. 95-28.3](#) (see policy 5015, School Volunteers);
- cccc. that the school system does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age, and the school system's processes for resolving discrimination and harassment complaints (see policies 1710/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex, 1725/4035/7236, Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process, 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process, and 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities);
- ddddd. that the school system provides equal access to its facilities, programs, and activities to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups (see policy 1710/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law); and
- eeeeee. the availability of and the process for requesting a waiver or reduction of student fees (see policy 4600, Student Fees).

4. Opportunities to Withhold Consent/Opt Out Notifications

As a part of the annual notification described above, parents will be effectively notified that they may opt out of any of the following:

- a. release of student directory information about their child for school purposes or to outside organizations (see policy 4700, Student Records);

- b. release of their child's name, address and telephone listing to military recruiters or institutions of higher education (see policy 4700, Student Records);
- c. their child's participation in curricula related to (a) prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; (b) avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy; or (c) reproductive health and safety education, as provided in policy 3540, Comprehensive Health Education Program. A copy of the materials that will be used in these curricula will be available in the school media center during the school year and at other times that the media center is available to the public. To meet any review periods required by law, materials also may be made available for review in the central office;
- d. their child's participation in academic or career guidance or personal or social counseling services of a generic nature offered to groups of students (e.g., peer relations strategies offered to all sixth graders). (However, parents do not have the right to opt out of: (a) short-duration academic, career, personal or social guidance and counseling and crisis intervention that is needed to maintain order, discipline or a productive learning environment; (b) student-initiated individual or group counseling targeted at a student's specific concerns or needs; and (c) counseling if child abuse or neglect is suspected (see policies 3610, Counseling Program, and 4240/7312, Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety));
- e. their child's participation in any protected information survey given as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey or the North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (see policy 4720, Surveys of Students);
- f. their child's participation in any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is: (a) required as a condition of attendance; (b) administered and scheduled in advance by the school administration; and (c) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students;
- g. the collection, disclosure or use of their child's personal information for marketing purposes (see policy 4720, Surveys of Students); and
- h. release of their child's free and reduced-price meal information to State Medicaid or State children's health insurance program (SCHIP).

Any parent or legal guardian who wishes to opt out/withhold consent must do so in writing after receiving notice. Otherwise, consent to the programs or activities is presumed. After the annual notification, the school is not

required to provide further notice to the parent or legal guardian as to the manner in which student directory information is used, the curriculum is provided, or guidance programs are made available.

D. Parental Permission Required

Written parental permission is required prior to the following activities:

1. the administration of medications to students by employees of the school system (see policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students);
2. the release of student records that are not considered directory information, unless the release is allowed or required by law (see policy 4700, Student Records);
3. off-campus trips;
4. students' participation in high-impact or high-risk sports or extracurricular activities, such as football or mountain climbing (see policy 4220, Student Insurance Program);
5. all decisions or actions as required by the IDEA with regard to providing special education or related services to students with disabilities (see policy 3520, Special Education Programs/Rights of Students with Disabilities);
6. certain health services, as required by law;
7. participation in a mental health assessment or mental health services under circumstances prescribed by federal law;
8. students' participation in programs or services that provide information about where to obtain contraceptives or abortion referral services;
9. students' participation in any protected information survey other than those given as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey or the North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (see policy 4720, Surveys of Students);
10. disclosure of students' free and reduced price lunch eligibility information or eligibility status;
11. students' access to school system technological resources, including the Internet, as described in policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use; and
12. students sharing sleeping quarters with a member of the other biological sex during any activity or event authorized by the school, unless the member of the other biological sex is the student's immediate family member (see policies 3320, School Trips, and 3620, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations).

E. Procedures for Parental Involvement in Student Health

1. Parent Notifications Regarding Student Physical and Mental Health

At the beginning of each school year, the principal or designee shall notify parents of (1) each health care service offered at their children's schools and the means for parents to provide consent for any specific services; (2) acknowledgement that consenting to a health care service does not waive the parents' right to access their children's educational records or health records or to be notified of changes in their children's services or monitoring; and (3) the procedures to exercise the parental remedies for concerns related to student health provided by [G.S. 115C-76.60](#) and described below in subsection E.6.

Before any student well-being questionnaire or health screening form is administered to students in kindergarten through third grade, the principal or designee shall provide parents with a copy of the questionnaire or form and shall inform parents of the means for parents to consent to the use of the questionnaire or form for their children.

The principal or designee shall notify parents of changes in services or monitoring related to their children's mental, emotional or physical health or well-being and the school's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for their children prior to or contemporaneously with the changes being made. In addition, the principal or designee shall notify parents before any changes are made to the names or pronouns used for their children in school records or by school personnel.

No school system policy, procedure, or form will expressly or otherwise prohibit school employees from notifying parents about their children's mental, emotional or physical health or well-being or a change in related services or monitoring, nor will any school system policy, procedure or form intentionally encourage or be designed in a manner that is reasonably likely to have the effect of encouraging any children to withhold from their parents information about their mental, emotional or physical health or well-being or a change in related services or monitoring. School personnel shall not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional or physical health or well-being.

2. Discussions Related to Student Well-Being

In accordance with the rights of parents provided in [Chapter 114A of the General Statutes](#), when issues of a student's well-being arise, school personnel shall encourage the student to discuss the issues with his or her

parent. As appropriate, school personnel may facilitate discussions of such issues with parents.

3. Parent Access to Student Records

Parents will not be prohibited from accessing any of their children's education and health records created, maintained or used by the school system, except as permitted by law. See policy 4700, Student Records.

4. Student Support Services Training

Student support services training developed or provided by the school system to school personnel will adhere to student services guidelines, standards and frameworks established by the Department of Public Instruction.

5. Instruction on Gender Identity, Sexual Activity and Sexuality

Instruction on gender identity, sexual activity or sexuality will not be included in the curriculum provided in kindergarten through fourth grade, regardless of whether the information is provided by school personnel or third parties. For purposes of this subsection, curriculum includes the standard course of study and support materials, locally developed curriculum, supplemental instruction and textbooks and other supplementary materials, but does not include responses to student-initiated questions.

6. Remedies for Parental Concerns Related to Student Health

If a parent has a concern about the school or school system's procedure or practice under [Part 4 of Article 7B of Chapter 115C](#), as described here in Section E of this policy, the parent should submit the concern in writing to the principal. The principal shall schedule and hold a meeting with the parent within five days after the concern was submitted. The principal shall conduct any necessary investigation. If possible, the principal should resolve the concern within seven days after the concern was submitted. If the principal cannot resolve the concern within seven days, the principal shall immediately notify the superintendent or designee. The superintendent or designee shall assist, as needed, in resolving the concern.

If the concern has not been resolved within 15 days after the parent initially submitted the concern, the superintendent or designee shall schedule a board hearing to be conducted pursuant to policy 2500, Hearings Before the Board, to occur within the next 15 days. If the concern is not resolved 30 days after the parent initially submitted the concern, the board will provide a statement of the reasons for not resolving the concern.

If the concern is not resolved within 30 days of initial submission, the parent has the right to pursue additional remedies as provided in [G.S. 115C-76.60\(b\)](#).

F. Parent Requests for Information

A parent may request in writing from the principal any of the information the parent has the right to access under [Part 3 of Article 7B of Chapter 115C](#). The principal, within 10 business days, shall either provide the requested information to the parent or provide an extension notice to the parent that, due to the volume or complexity of the request, the information will be provided no later than 20 business days from the date of the parental request.

If the principal (1) denies or fails to respond to the request for information within 10 business days or (2) fails to provide information within 20 business days following an extension notice, the parent may then submit the written request for information to the superintendent, along with a statement specifying the time frame of the denial or failure to provide information by the principal.

If the superintendent denies or does not respond to the request for information within 10 business days, the parent may appeal the denial or lack of response to the board no later than 20 business days from the date of the request to the superintendent. The board will place the parent's appeal on the agenda for the next board meeting occurring more than three business days after submission of the appeal.

The information in this Section F will be posted on the school system's website along with the list of parents' legal rights for their child's education as described in [G.S. 115C-76.25](#).

G. Community Services Available

A variety of community services are available to provide parents and families of students in the school system with needed information, support and resources. Parents are encouraged to utilize applicable community services such as the following:

Gates County Public Schools –

<https://coserver.gates.k12.nc.us/>

Gates County Cooperative Extension

<https://gates.ces.ncsu.edu/>

Gates County Public Library –

<https://gatescountync.gov/index.asp?SEC=9590E116-3F9E-415D-ADB4-9DB10E6E7ED4&DE=A8BC9E69-BCE0-4F2A-920C-CAC8E2E9BE86>

Gates County Community Center –

<https://coserver.gates.k12.nc.us/domain/5>

Gates County Health Department –

<https://gatescountync.gov/index.asp?SEC=8845373D-9589-4388-8B1F-C8FF34966982>

Integrated Family Services –

<https://www.integratedfamilyservices.net/>

Trillium Health Resources –

<https://www.trilliumhealthresources.org/explore-trillium/resources-links>

H. Reporting Requirements

By September 15 of each year, the superintendent or designee shall report to the State Board of Education parental involvement information as required by State Board of Education Policy [PRNT-002](#) and [G.S. 115C-76.70](#).

XXVIII. Title I Parent and Family Engagement

The board of education recognizes the value of family engagement in a child's academic success and believes that the education of children is an ongoing cooperative partnership between the home and the school. Parents and other family members are their children's first teachers; therefore, the continued involvement of parents and family members in the educational process is most important in fostering and improving educational achievement. School system officials shall strive to support parents and provide parents and family members with meaningful opportunities to become involved in the programs offered by the Title I schools. The board encourages parents and family members to participate in the design and implementation of the programs and activities in order to increase the effectiveness of the school system's Title I program in helping students meet state and local achievement standards.

A. Definition of Parent and Family Engagement

For the purposes of this policy, the term "parent and family engagement" means the participation of parents, guardians and other family members in regular, two-way and

meaningful communication involving student learning and other school activities, including ensuring the following:

1. that parents and family members play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
2. that parents and family members are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
3. that parents are full partners in their child's education and parents and family members are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and
4. that the school system utilizes activities to support parent and family engagement in the Title I programs.

B. Purpose and Operation of Title I Program

The Title I program is a federally supported program that offers assistance to educationally and economically disadvantaged children to help ensure they receive an equitable, high-quality, well-rounded education and meet the school system's challenging academic standards. The Title I program provides instructional activities and supportive services to eligible students over and above those provided by the regular school program.

Qualified Title I schools will operate as school-wide programs or targeted assistance programs based upon federal eligibility criteria. School-wide programs will provide comprehensive support to offer improved opportunities for all students in the school to meet the school system's academic standards. Targeted assistance programs will provide services to eligible students most in need of assistance in the school, as determined by objective criteria established by the superintendent or designee. Eligibility criteria may include, for example, standardized test scores, teacher judgment and results of preschool screening and home-school surveys.

Both school-wide and targeted assistance programs shall be based on effective means of improving student achievement and shall include evidence-based strategies to support parent and family engagement.

C. Annual Meeting and Program Evaluation

Each year, school officials must invite parents of students participating in Title I programs to a meeting to explain parental rights, discuss the programs and activities to be provided with Title I funds and solicit input on the Title I program and this policy. In addition, school officials must provide parents and family members a meaningful opportunity annually to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Title I programs and the parent and family engagement policies and plans. Information collected from these

proceedings will be used to revise Title I programs and parent and family engagement plans.

D. Parent and Family Engagement Efforts

The board believes that the involvement of Title I parents and family members in the design and implementation of the Title I program will increase the effectiveness of the program and contribute significantly to the success of the children. The Title I staff and all school system personnel shall strive to conduct outreach to parents and family members and involve them in activities throughout the school year.

The superintendent shall ensure that this system-level parent and family engagement policy and plan is developed with, agreed upon with and annually distributed to parents and family members of participating students. In addition to the system-level parent and family engagement plan, each school participating in the Title I program shall jointly develop and annually distribute to parents and family members a school-level written parent and family engagement plan that describes the means for carrying out school-level policy, sharing responsibility for student academic achievement, building the capacity of school staff and parents for involvement, and increasing accessibility for participation of all parents and family members of children participating in Title I programs, including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, who have disabilities or who are migratory. School-level plans must involve parents in the planning and improvement of Title I activities and must provide for the distribution to parents of information on expected student achievement levels and the school's academic performance.

School officials shall invite appropriate school personnel from private schools to consult on the design and development of its programs in order to provide equitable services to students enrolled in private schools. The superintendent or designee shall establish any additional procedures necessary to achieve timely and meaningful consultation with private school officials in accordance with federal law.

In addition, school system officials and Title I school personnel shall do the following:

1. involve parents and family members in the joint development of the Title I program and school support and improvement plan and the process of school review and improvement by including parents on the school advisory committee and any committees that review the Title I program;
2. provide coordination, technical assistance and other support from various central office departments necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities that are designed to improve student academic achievement and school performance;

3. coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies in the Title I program to the extent feasible and appropriate with parental engagement strategies established in other federal, state and local laws and programs;
4. with the meaningful involvement of parents, conduct an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the school system parent and family engagement policies and program in improving the academic quality of the school and assisting students to meet the school system's academic standards;
5. strive to eliminate barriers to parental participation by assisting parents who have disabilities and parents who are economically disadvantaged, have limited English proficiency, are migratory, or have other backgrounds or characteristics that may affect participation;
6. provide outreach and assistance to parents and family members of children who are participating in Title I programs in understanding the state's testing standards, the assessments used, Title I requirements and all national, state and local standards and expectations through such efforts as community-based meetings, posting information on school websites, sending information home, newsletters, workshops and newspaper articles;
7. design a parent–student–school staff compact that sets out respective responsibilities in striving to raise student achievement and explains how an effective home/school partnership will be developed and maintained;
8. with the assistance of parents, ensure that teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other staff are educated in the value of parents as partners in the educational process and understand how to work with, communicate with and reach out to parents as equal partners in education;
9. distribute to parents information on expected student proficiency levels for their child and the school's academic performance, and provide materials and training to help parents monitor their child's progress and work with educators to improve achievement through such methods as literacy training or using technology, which may include education about the harms of copyright piracy;
10. coordinate and integrate, to the extent feasible and appropriate, parental involvement programs and activities with federal, state and local programs, including public pre-school programs and conduct other activities in the community that encourage and support parents to more fully participate in the education of their child;
11. strengthen the partnership with agencies, businesses and programs that operate in the community, especially those with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education;
12. ensure that parents are involved in the school's Title I activities; and

13. provide such other reasonable support for Title I parental involvement activities as requested by parents.

E. Notice Requirements

School system officials and Title I school personnel shall provide effective notice of the following information as required by law. The notice must be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

1. Program for English Learners

Each year the principal or designee shall provide notice of the following to parents of English learners identified for participation in a Title I, Part A or Title III funded language-instruction educational program:

- a. the reasons for the child's identification;
- b. the child's level of English proficiency and how such level was assessed;
- c. methods of instruction;
- d. how the program will help the child;
- e. the exit requirements for the program;
- f. if the child has a disability, how the language instruction educational program meets the objectives of the child's individualized educational program (IEP);
- g. any other information necessary to effectively inform the parent of the program and the parental rights regarding enrollment, removal and selection of a program for English learners; and
- h. notice of regular meetings for the purpose of formulating and responding to recommendations from parents.

2. System Report Card

Each year, school system officials shall disseminate to all parents, schools and the public a school system report card containing information about the school system and each school, including, but not limited to:

- a. the following information both in the aggregate and disaggregated by category: student achievement, graduation rates, performance on other school quality and/or student success indicators, the progress of students toward meeting long-term goals established by the state, student performance on measures of school climate and safety and, as available, the rate of enrollment in post-secondary education;

b. the performance of the school system on academic assessments as compared to the state as a whole and the performance of each school on academic assessments as compared to the state and school system as a whole;

c. the percentage and number of students who are:

i. assessed,

ii. assessed using alternate assessments,

iii. involved in preschool and accelerated coursework programs, and

iv. English learners achieving proficiency;

d. the per pupil expenditures of federal, state and local funds; and

e. teacher qualifications.

3. Teacher Qualifications

a. At the beginning of each year, school system officials shall notify parents of students who are participating in Title I programs (1) of the right to request certain information on the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to the child and (2) that such information will be provided in a timely manner (see policy 7820, Personnel Files).

b. The principal or designee of a Title I school shall provide timely notice informing parents that their student has been assigned to or has been taught for at least four consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements at the grade level or subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

4. Student's Academic Growth and Achievement

School officials shall provide to each parent of a student who is participating in a Title I program information on the level of achievement and academic growth, if applicable and available, of the student on each of the state's academic assessments.

5. Parental Rights and Opportunities for Involvement

a. Each year, the principal or designee of a Title I school shall provide notice to parents of the school's written parent and family engagement policy, parents' right to be involved in their child's school and opportunities for parents and family members to be involved in the school.

b. Each year, the principal or designee of a Title I school shall provide notice to parents of their right to request information regarding student participation in state-required assessments.

F. Website Distribution of Information

Each year, school system officials shall publicize on the school system website and, where practicable, on the website of each school:

1. the report card described in subsection E.2, above; and
2. information on each assessment required by the state and, where feasible, by the school system, organized by grade level. The information must include:
 - a. the subject matter assessed;
 - b. the purpose for which the assessment is designed and used;
 - c. the source of the requirement for the assessment;
 - d. if available, the amount of time students will spend taking the assessments and the schedule of the assessments; and
 - e. if available, the time and format for distributing results.

The superintendent shall develop any administrative procedures necessary to implement the requirements of this policy.

XXVIX. Use of Wireless Communication Devices

The board recognizes that cellular phones and other wireless communication devices are an important tool through which parents communicate with their children and through which students gather information. The board also understands that excessive use of wireless communication devices may pose significant health and social risks for students. Therefore, to balance these interests and the needs of students, parents and the school community, the board limits the use of wireless communication devices as provided in this policy.

Administrators will establish guidelines regarding the proper storage of these devices during times when their use is not authorized.

A. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply.

1. “Instructional time” is the time during which students are assigned to a teacher for the primary purpose of instruction.
2. A “wireless communication device” is any portable wireless device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties, including but not limited to cellular telephones, tablet and laptop computers, paging devices, two-way radios and gaming devices.

B. Authorized Use During Instructional Time

Students are permitted to possess wireless communication devices on school property so long as the devices are not turned on, used or displayed during instructional time or as otherwise directed by school rules or school personnel.

Additionally, individual students may use wireless communication devices as required by the student’s Individualized Education Program or Section 504 plan or to manage the student’s health care in accordance with a documented medical condition. Teachers may authorize individual students to use the devices for instructional purposes, provided that they supervise the students during such use, or in the event of an emergency.

C. Authorized Use During Non-Instructional Time

Although use generally is permitted before and after school, wireless communication devices should not be used during transition time or during non-instructional times, such as lunch breaks.

Students may not use wireless communication devices inside school buildings, at school-sponsored events or on school buses to capture audio, video or still pictures of other students and/or employees in which such individuals can be personally identified, nor share such recordings or pictures in any way, without the consent of the other students and/or employees. An exception will be made for recordings at events that are open to the public, such as athletic competitions, band and choral concerts, assemblies, presentations and award ceremonies. If recording at a public event is restricted for any reason, including due to copyright issues (e.g., a school play), the students and all other members of the audience will be notified of the recording restrictions before the event begins.

Use of wireless communication devices may be prohibited on school buses when noise from such devices interferes with the safe operation of the buses. In addition, elementary and middle school students who participate in after-school programs are prohibited from using wireless communication devices during such programs. The principal may establish additional limitations on the use, possession or display of such devices consistent with this policy.

D. Consequences

School employees may immediately confiscate any wireless communication devices that are on, used, or displayed in violation of this policy. In general, the confiscated device will be returned only to the student's parents in accordance with the Schools Code of Student Conduct.

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section F of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

The following factors should be considered when determining appropriate consequences: whether the wireless communication device was used (1) to reproduce images of tests, obtain unauthorized access to school information or assist students in any aspect of their instructional program in a manner that violates any school board policy, administrative regulation or school rule; (2) to bully or harass other students; (3) to send illicit text messages; (4) to take and/or send illicit photographs; or (5) in any other manner that would make more severe disciplinary consequences appropriate.

The taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise (e.g. texting, emailing, "sexting," etc.) may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be reported to law enforcement and/or other appropriate state or federal agencies, which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution, and/or lifetime inclusion on sex offender registries.

E. Search of Wireless Communication Devices

In accordance with policy 4342, Student Searches, a student's wireless communication device and its contents, including, but not limited to, text messages and digital photos, may be searched whenever a school official has reason to believe the search will provide evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law, board policy, the Code of Student Conduct or a school rule. The scope of such searches must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the nature of the suspected infraction.

F. Liability

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their wireless communication devices. The school system is not responsible for the theft, loss, or damage of a personal wireless communication device.

XXX. Emergency Closings

The superintendent shall develop procedures for the temporary closing of a school or all schools in the school system because of inclement weather or any other unforeseen occurrence that presents a threat to the safety of students and employees or causes major damage to school property. The superintendent shall notify parents, members of the board of education, the news media and other interested parties of a decision to close a school or schools as soon as it is feasible to do so under the circumstances.

In the event that an emergency closing is for a definite period exceeding one week, the superintendent shall notify the members of the board of education before making a formal announcement of the closing. A decision to close one or more schools for an indefinite period that is anticipated to exceed one week shall be made by the superintendent in consultation with the members of the board of education.

XXXI.CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT OF STUDENT POLICY AND INFORMATION MANUAL FOR GATES COUNTY SCHOOLS

PLEASE SIGN ELECTONICALLY WITHIN THREE DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS DOCUMENT.

We encourage everyone to review the complete policy manual online at <https://v3.boardpolicyonline.com/b/gates>. If you are unable to access this handbook on-line, please contact Central Office and a hardcopy will be made available for you.

Student Signature (Grades 6-12)

The electronic signature indicates that I, as a student of Gates County Schools, have received a copy of the Student/Parent Policy & Information Manual for the 2026-2027 school year.

Parent Signature (Grades K-12)

The electronic signature indicates that I, as a parent/guardian of a student in Gates County Schools, have received a copy of the Student/Parent Policy & Information Manual for the 2026-2027 school year and will communicate with my child to help him/her understand his/her responsibilities as a student in this school system.

Failure to electronically sign does not relieve the student or parent of their responsibility to abide by the regulations printed herein or within the complete policy manual.