



# TCSS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## Board Policy Manual Troup County Schools

### **Board Regulation JCDA-R(2): Student Code of Conduct**

#### Student Code of Conduct

##### A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Troup County Board of Education strongly believes that appropriate behavior and conduct of all students in the Troup County Schools is necessary to create a proper learning environment, to maintain good order and discipline, and to teach and instill in all students the attitude of being law abiding citizens. The rules, regulations, and due process procedures set forth herein are designed to guide all students in the exercise of their duty of appropriate behavior.

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

Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which is felonious or which may pose a threat to the school's learning environment or the safety of students and employees. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community.

##### AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

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

##### DISCIPLINE & PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Education is a partnership in which most successful schools are those where parents/guardians and educators work together to provide children with the best education possible. The responsibility includes maintaining good discipline on the part of all students. The key to a successful discipline program is parental involvement; therefore, parents should expect to be contacted by the school if their student experiences problems regarding inappropriate behavior at school. Different violations of the Code of Conduct warrant different responses and consequences, the teacher may work with the child first to correct these problems; then if they persist, the teacher may contact parents for help and input. If the problems still cannot be worked out, the child may be referred to the assistant principal. At that time parents may be asked to come to the school for a conference.

##### B. EFFECTIVE TIME AND LOCATION

These District's Code of Conduct are effective during the following times and in the following places:

1. On the school grounds during and immediately before or immediately after school hours or off school grounds while enroute to or from school.
2. On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group or at school related functions.
3. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event.
4. Enroute to and from school on a school bus or other school vehicle or while waiting off school grounds at a designated school bus stop for a school bus to transport a student to or from school or a school activity.

5. Off school grounds when the prohibited conduct is directed, because of a school-related connection, against the person, family, property, privacy, or tranquility of an employee of the Troup County Board of Education.
6. Apply to conduct by student whether directed to or committed upon another student or a teacher, administrator, or other school personnel or toward persons attending school related functions.
7. Apply to any off-campus behavior of a student which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at school or which disrupts the educational process.

These offenses are applicable to include acts against students, teachers, administrators, bus drivers, or other school personnel, as well as persons legitimately on school property or attending school related functions

### C. STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE

Accordingly, the following listing of offenses and conduct are declared to be prohibited by all students enrolled in the Troup County Schools. Violation of this policy shall result in disciplinary actions and may include appropriate hearings and review, and the suspension, short or long term, or the expulsion of a student from the school in accordance with Troup County Board of Education policies.

Codes L1 -L4 in the following list of offenses are aligned to the Georgia Department of Education Discipline Matrix utilized for state reporting purposes.

**Level 1** behaviors are minor disruptions that interfere with the learning environment or the overall operation of the school. These behaviors may be addressed by the classroom teacher and do not always require administrative involvement. The primary goal in responding to Level 1 behaviors is to correct the misconduct while minimizing loss of instructional time. Staff are encouraged to use a range of graduated interventions to address these behaviors effectively.

**Level 2** behaviors involve actions that pose a risk to the safety or well-being of others, cause damage to property, or significantly disrupt the school environment. These behaviors may also include repeated instances of similar misconduct. Such offenses can lead to the student's temporary removal from the school setting and related activities. Unless specified otherwise, school administrators have the discretion to apply consequences that balance the seriousness of the offense with efforts to minimize the impact on the student's education. Responses may include a combination of interventions, restorative practices, and disciplinary measures—up to and including a disciplinary tribunal hearing and/or involvement of law enforcement.

**Level 3** behaviors are serious violations that involve actions against individuals or property which may directly or indirectly compromise the health, safety, or well-being of others. These offenses represent severe forms of misconduct and must be reported to the principal immediately. Due to their severity, these incidents may necessitate the involvement of external agencies and/or law enforcement and could result in criminal charges. Any behavior that poses a significant threat to the school community may lead to the student's immediate suspension from school and school-sponsored activities, pending the outcome of a disciplinary investigation. Based on the investigation, a disciplinary tribunal hearing may be required.

**Level 4** behaviors are the most egregious violations of the Student Code of Conduct and involve intentional, malicious, or criminal acts that present a direct and substantial threat to the safety, security, or well-being of students, staff, or the school environment. These actions may also include repeated or escalating Level 3 offenses that demonstrate a pattern of disregard for school rules and authority. Level 4 offenses require immediate administrative action and must be reported to the principal, district officials, and appropriate law enforcement agencies. A disciplinary tribunal hearing may be required. The severity and intent of the behavior, as well as the student's disciplinary history, will be considered when determining final outcomes.

# Progressive Discipline Process

Progressive Discipline is a systematic approach utilizing a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences. The purpose of the progressive discipline model is to make every reasonable effort to correct inappropriate student behavior with logical consequences and restorative responses. Administrators will use a range of identified behaviors along with a range of possible responses that support the corrective action of the behavior. This process creates an environment where the degree of discipline corresponds with the severity of the behavior leading to the discipline and follows all due process procedures. Determining the most appropriate disciplinary response for a given circumstance involves the exercise of discretion. Progressive discipline can include prevention measures, early and ongoing interventions, short- or long-term suspension, or other disciplinary responses to address inappropriate behavior. All interventions and disciplinary responses should be selected and implemented to assist students in understanding why the behavior is unacceptable, take responsibility for their action, and understand how they could approach the situation differently to avoid repeated inappropriate behaviors which may result in more serious consequences.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits taught through our Social and Emotional Program.

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

Notification of Parents

Parent Conference

Counseling with a school Administrator or Counselor

Loss of Privileges

Isolation or Time Out

Temporary Removal from Class or Activity

Altered School Day

In School Detention (ISS)

Short-term Suspension

Long-Term Suspension

Referral to a Discipline meeting for temporary placement in Alternative Education Program

Suspension or Expulsion from School Bus

Expulsion

Permanent Expulsion

Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia Law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The school will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate

## BULLYING

**Bullying**, as the term is defined in Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-751.4), is strictly prohibited. The Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system expressly prohibits bullying. If you or your student believe that a student is being bullied, please report it to a school staff member or administrator immediately.

Bullying is defined as an act that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act that a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - a. causes another person substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm;
  - b. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - c. is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
  - d. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying may occur as a single severe act or as a pattern of behavior. Repeated conduct is not required when a single act is sufficiently serious to meet the definition of bullying.

The term “bullying” applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer networks, or other electronic technology of a local school system. Such terms include acts of cyberbullying that originate on school property or involve the use of school equipment, including, but not limited to, acts that occur within a school sponsored online activity.

“Cyberbullying” means bullying that involves the use of electronic communication, including, but not limited to, communication devices and services, including, but not limited to, cellular telephones, cameras, computers, social media platforms, text messages, chat platforms, and internet sites.

Professional development and training opportunities for school staff on how to respond appropriately to acts of bullying, victims of bullying, and bystanders who report bullying, shall be in place. Any teacher or other school employee who, in the exercise of his or her personal judgment and discretion, believes he or she has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that someone is a target of bullying shall immediately report it to the school principal. The school system shall provide age-appropriate instruction to students on bullying prevention, digital citizenship, and strategies for reporting bullying. Schools may incorporate bullying prevention lessons into counseling programs, advisory periods, or character education initiatives.

All reports of bullying shall be documented and investigated promptly. Documentation shall include the report, witness statements when available, investigative findings, and actions taken by the school. Investigations should begin promptly and be completed within a reasonable timeframe unless extenuating circumstances exist.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. Such consequences shall include disciplinary action as appropriate under the circumstances. However, upon a finding by the Disciplinary Hearing Officer/Tribunal Panel that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the violation of bullying for the third (3rd) time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to the alternative school.

Depending on the severity of the bullying allegation, school administrators have the discretion to send a student to a disciplinary hearing for the first (1st) or second (2nd) bullying violation whereby the student, if found to have committed the violation, will be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student and parent handbook, including but not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

Upon a determination by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying, as defined by Georgia law, or has been the victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall promptly notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which may include electronic communication. Each local school shall provide annual notice to students and parents of the prohibition against bullying and the procedures for reporting incidents of bullying. Such notice shall be disseminated by posting information in a prominent location at each school and by including the applicable policy and consequences in the student and parent handbook.

### **BULLYING VIOLATIONS**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Elementary                                                                                                                                        | Middle & High                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bullying Level 1, 2, 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Consequence                                                                                                                                       | Consequence                                                                                                                                         |
| Level 1<br>1st Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Parent Conference/ Restorative Conversation/One (1) Days OSS/No Contact Agreement /Referral to Counselor/and all other actions deemed appropriate | Parent Conference/ Restorative Conversation/Three (3) Days OSS/No Contact Agreement /Referral to Counselor/and all other actions deemed appropriate |
| Level 2<br>2nd Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Parent Conference/ One (1)- Three (3) day OSS Referral to school counselor/ No Contact Agreement and all other actions deemed appropriate         | Parent Conference/ Five (5) days OSS / Referral to school counselor/ and all other actions deemed appropriate                                       |
| Level 3<br>3rd Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Parent Contact/ Short Term Out of School Suspension Three (3)-Five (5) Days/Reentry Plan                                                          | Referral for required placement to the system's alternative education program in accordance with district procedures                                |
| <b>Required actions in all cases of bullying</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented Investigation</li> <li>• Written Communication to both families</li> <li>• Support Plan for the targeted student</li> <li>• Opportunities Peer mediation and Skill-building</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                     |

### **False Reports of Bullying**

The school system prohibits knowingly making false reports of bullying. Any individual who knowingly files a false report of bullying or provides false information during an investigation may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. A report made in good faith shall not be considered a false report solely because the investigation does not result in a finding of bullying.

### **Prohibition Against Retaliation**

Retaliation against any individual who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation, or participates in the investigation of a bullying complaint is strictly prohibited. Retaliation includes intimidation, harassment, threats, or any adverse action taken against a person for reporting bullying. Any student found to have engaged in retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary consequences.

**Bystander Reporting**

Students and staff are encouraged to report bullying behavior when they witness it or have reliable information that bullying may be occurring. Reports may be made to a teacher, counselor, school administrator, or through any reporting procedures established by the school.

**Supportive Interventions**

When bullying is substantiated, the school may provide support services to both the student who engaged in bullying behavior and the student who was targeted. Such services may include counseling, behavioral interventions, conflict resolution strategies, or other appropriate supports designed to restore a safe learning environment.

**Anonymous Reporting**

Individuals may report bullying anonymously through procedures established by the school system. While anonymous reports will be investigated to the extent possible, disciplinary action may be limited when sufficient evidence cannot be obtained through the investigation.

**Good Faith Reporting**

Any student, parent, or staff member who reports bullying in good faith shall not be subject to retaliation or disciplinary action for making the report.

**Administrative Authority to Investigate**

School administrators may investigate reports of bullying even when a formal complaint has not been filed if reliable information suggests that bullying behavior may be occurring.

**Distinguishing Bullying from Peer Conflict**

The school system recognizes that not all disagreements, conflicts, or inappropriate behaviors between students constitute bullying. Bullying typically involves behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or harass another student and may involve an imbalance of power or repeated actions.

Peer conflict refers to disagreements or arguments between students who have relatively equal power in the situation. While peer conflict may still result in disciplinary action if it violates the Student Code of Conduct, it may not meet the legal definition of bullying.

School administrators will review each reported incident to determine whether the behavior constitutes bullying as defined by Georgia law or another violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

## Non-Consensual Intimate Imagery

The Troup County School Board of Education is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment. The creation, possession, distribution, or threat to distribute non-consensual intimate imagery is strictly prohibited and may constitute sexual harassment under Title IX, as well as a violation of state and federal law.

By definition Non-Consensual Intimate Imagery (NCII) refers to any image, video, or digitally altered content (including AI-generated content) that:

- Depicts a student or staff member in a state of nudity or engaged in sexual conduct;
- Is created, shared, stored, or distributed without the knowing and voluntary consent of the person depicted;
- Is shared beyond the scope of consent originally granted; or
- Is used to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate, or exploit another person.

NCII includes, but is not limited to:

- Screenshots of private images
- Images obtained through coercion or manipulation
- AI-generated or digitally altered “deepfake” images
- Threats to release intimate images (“sextortion”)

Consent may be withdrawn at any time. Prior consent does not authorize redistribution.

### Prohibited Conduct

The following behaviors are strictly prohibited:

- Creating or generating intimate images of another person without consent
- Sharing, forwarding, reposting, or storing intimate images without consent
- Pressuring, coercing, or blackmailing someone into sending intimate images
- Threatening to distribute intimate images
- Possessing intimate images of minors, which may constitute child sexual abuse material under federal law
- Students may face disciplinary action regardless of whether the conduct occurs:
  - On school grounds
  - During school-sponsored activities
  - Through district-issued devices
  - Off campus if the conduct substantially disrupts the school environment

### Reporting Procedures

Any student, parent, or staff member who becomes aware of possible NCII must report it immediately to one of the following :

- A school administrator
- The Title IX Coordinator
- A counselor or trusted staff member

Reports may be made verbally or in writing. Anonymous reports will be investigated to the extent possible.

Students are prohibited from:

- Creating or generating intimate images of others
- Sharing, forwarding, reposting, or storing such images

- Pressuring or coercing others to send intimate images
- Threatening to distribute intimate images

This policy applies whether the conduct occurs on campus, off campus, or online if it substantially disrupts the school environment.

Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion, loss of technology privileges, and referral to law enforcement.

Retaliation against anyone who reports a violation is strictly prohibited.

**L3.3A Sexual Misconduct:** Any inappropriate act of a sexual nature that involves physical contact or that rises above a Level 2 offense; any intentional act of indecent exposure of the intimate body parts/genitals, including “flashing,” “mooning,” or “streaking” as those terms are commonly understood, any act of indecent fondling, groping or touching of the student’s own intimate body parts or the intimate body parts of another; any act of viewing or possessing of any materials which depict a minor or any student in a sexual manner; any act of recording images of intimate body parts, whether of oneself or of another person. Note: May also involve a separate sexual harassment investigation.

**L3.3B Sexual Misconduct/Non-Consensual Intimate Imagery:** The creation, possession, sharing, or threat to share intimate images or videos of another person is strictly prohibited. Non-Consensual Intimate Imagery includes: Nude or sexually explicit images or videos shared without permission, Images originally shared privately but redistributed without consent, AI-generated, altered, or “deepfake” images, Threats to release intimate images to embarrass, harass, or blackmail someone.

## TCSS Vaping & Drug Infractions

### **L3.14 Possession of any Vaping Device/Electronic Cigarettes, Tobacco/Nicotine Products, or Related Products:**

Possession, use, distribution, sale, purchase, giving away, bartering, exchanging, or otherwise providing any device, product, or paraphernalia designed, marketed, or intended to simulate smoking or deliver vapor, aerosol, tobacco, nicotine, or related substances through inhalation. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes, e-cigs, JUULs, vapes, vape pens, vaping cartridges or pods, hookah devices or hookah look-alikes, advanced personal vaporizers, nicotine pouches, tobacco pouches, nicotine or tobacco patches, chewing tobacco, snuff, long-cut dip, snus, and other tobacco- or nicotine-related products or smoking paraphernalia. Students may be held responsible for the possession or use of prohibited products regardless of whether the student claims to have been unaware of the product's contents or intended use. (42)

The severity of a violation may be elevated when circumstances demonstrate intentional distribution, sale, purchase, exchange, or provision of prohibited products to another person; possession or use in a manner that creates a risk of harm to others; concealment or other efforts to avoid detection; repeated violations; or other circumstances that increase the seriousness or potential impact of the conduct.

#### **First Offense (Elementary)**

- Administrator confiscates the device
- Administrator will notify parent
- Student will be OSS up to (5) Days

*All suspensions greater than 5 days, consequence must be given through MTSS meeting and MTSS team decision*

#### **First Offense (Middle & High School)**

- Administrator confiscates the device
- Administrator will notify parent
- Student will be assigned (10) Days, pending discipline hearing

#### **Second Offense-Repeat first offense protocol (Middle & High School)**

**L3.7 Drugs:** Possession, use, distribution, sale, purchase, giving away, bartering, exchanging, receiving, or otherwise providing any illegal drug, narcotic, controlled substance, or other substance or chemical that is mood-altering when consumed, inhaled, injected, or otherwise introduced into the body, unless the substance has been lawfully prescribed to and is being used by the student for whom it was prescribed. This prohibition includes substances identified as illegal drugs or narcotics under the Official Code of Georgia and other substances prohibited by applicable federal, state, or local law or district policy. This infraction also includes being under the influence of a prohibited substance while on school property, at a school-sponsored activity, or while participating in school-related activities, regardless of where the substance was obtained or consumed. (07)

The severity of a violation may be elevated when circumstances demonstrate an intent to distribute, sell, provide, exchange, or otherwise facilitate access to a prohibited substance; when the quantity, type, or nature of the substance increases the potential for harm; when the student engages in concealment or other efforts to facilitate possession or distribution; when the conduct involves multiple prohibited substances; when the violation is repeated; or when the conduct creates an increased risk of harm to the student or others.

#### **First Offense (Elementary)**

- Administrator confiscates the device
- Administrator will notify parent
- Student will be OSS up to (5) Days

*All suspensions greater than 5 days, consequence must be given through MTSS meeting and MTSS team decision*

### **First Offense (Middle & High School)**

- Administrator confiscates the substance
- Administrator will notify parent and campus SRO
- Student will be assigned (10) Days, pending discipline hearing

### **Second Offense-Repeat first offense protocol (Middle & High School)**

### **Transportation**

**Bus Conduct.** Students must obey all bus safety rules and all rules listed in the Student Code of Conduct. In addition, Georgia law prohibits the following acts while on a bus:

1. Acts of physical violence.
2. Bullying.
3. Physical assault or battery of persons on the bus.
4. Verbal assault of persons on the bus.
5. Disrespectful conduct toward bus drivers or other persons.
6. Unruly behavior.
7. Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices with or without headphones or ear buds during the loading and unloading process. Students should keep electronic equipment packed away when preparing to board and when getting off the bus. Use of electronic devices while onboard the bus with headphones or ear buds is permitted as long as it does not interfere with the driver's operation of the school bus.
8. Using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the driver's operation of the bus.
9. Students must maintain silence at all railroad crossings until the driver has crossed and gives all clear.
10. Students must obey all rules listed in the Bus Transportation Safety section of this handbook.

Any violation of the Code of Conduct occurring on any bus may have consequences of being suspended from riding on the bus in addition to any other discipline consequences set forth in the Code of Conduct.

During the period of bus suspension, parents/guardians will be responsible for providing the student's transportation to/from school. Bus suspension is not an excused absence or tardy. If a student causes damage to a school bus, parents/guardians will be required to repay the cost of any damage to the bus. At the discretion of the principal, parents/guardians may be asked to meet with school officials to develop a school bus behavior contract for the student.

### **BUS CONDUCT**

| Bus Conduct Level<br>1.3                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Elementary                                            | Middle & High                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Consequence                                           | Consequence                                           |
| 1st Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Warning and Parent Notification and Parent Conference | Warning and Parent Notification and Parent Conference |
| 2nd Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Bus Suspension for (3) Days                           | Bus suspension for (3) Days                           |
| 3rd Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Bus Suspension for (5) Days                           | Bus suspension for (5) Days                           |
| If a student accumulates <b>four (4) or more bus conduct violations</b> within a semester or school year, <b>school administration reserves the right removal from bus transportation for the remainder of the current school year.</b> |                                                       |                                                       |

Additionally, misconduct on the school bus may result in both transportation-related and school-based disciplinary actions. Severe or repeated bus infractions may lead to a long-term suspension or expulsion from **bus services**. All bus violations will be investigated and consequences issued by school based administration

#### Level 1 Violations with Consequences

- L1 **Behavior Detrimental to Learning:** Such behaviors include, but is not limited to, conduct that disrupts the learning environment and insulting/disrespectful communication (06)
- L1.2 **Bullying 1st Violation:** Bullying/Cyberbullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-751.4), is strictly prohibited. The Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system expressly prohibits bullying. Bullying is one of three Level 1 violations that has an alternate progression, please see the Bullying progressions on pg. 4 (29)
- L1.3 **Bus Conduct:** Students must obey all bus safety rules and all rules listed in the Student Code of Conduct. Bus Conduct is one of three Level 1 violations that has an alternate progression, please see the Bus Conduct progression on page 10 (33)
- L1.4 **Unexcused Tardies to school or class:** Students that briefly miss class can accumulate tardies which may result in a level 1 violation. Tardies to class of an extended nature may result in an immediate level 1 violation. (30)
- L1.5 **Dress Code:** Violation of the dress code. Refer to Dress Code Policy on Page (31)
- L1.6 **Misuse of Electronic Devices:** Unauthorized possession, displaying or using a cell phone, or other electronic communication device during the school day without the consent of the principal or his/her designee. This includes, but is not limited to, headphones, earphones, earbuds, ocular and other listening devices. (34)
- L1.7 **Encouraging Prohibited Behavior:** Inciting, urging, encouraging, counseling, or advising others to engage in prohibited behavior that violates the K-12 Student & Parent Handbook or any policy of the district. A student violates this rule when he/she verbally or physically encourages others to engage in prohibited behavior, which may include oral instruction or physically showing a student how to engage in prohibited behavior in addition to videoing prohibited behavior (06)
- L1.8 **False Information:** Deliberately giving false or misleading information, including, but not limited to, forgery, altering records and academic dishonesty/cheating. (32)
- L1.9 **Gambling:** Includes, but is not limited to, betting money or other items on card games, dice games, or the outcome of athletic contests or other activities, and/or possession of gambling materials or paraphernalia. (06)
- L1.10 **Failure to Report:** Failure to report to a teacher or administrator the knowledge of an event, device, object, or substance that could cause harm to self or others. (24)
- L1.11 **Inappropriate items and activity:** Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, or exchanging any material, substance, food item, or personal belonging that is inappropriate for school. Possession or non-damaging use of a laser pointer. (34)
- L1.12 **Inappropriate physical contact between students:** Includes, but is not limited to, non-violent, disruptive pushing, inappropriate displays of affection (including, but not limited to kissing or embracing on campus), or minor inappropriate touching and/or continuous horseplay (24)

L1.13 **Incivility/Insubordination:** Being insubordinate to school personnel or school volunteers. All students shall comply with directions or commands of all authorized District and school personnel or designees. (33)

L1.14 **Over the counter medications:** Using or possessing over-the-counter medication at school without the written consent of the principal or his/her designee. **When students must take medicine at school, parents must bring all medicine and related equipment to the principal or his/her designee and complete a Student Health and Medication Authorization Form.** Medicine cannot be given without written permission and instructions from the parent. Please do not send medicine to school with students. All prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines must be kept in the school clinic or office unless authorized in writing by a physician and approved by the principal in accordance with Regulation JGCD-R(1): Medication Procedures. Students are subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion, if they possess medicine at school without the principal's consent, distribute the medicine to other students, or use the medicine in a manner that is not prescribed or per label directions. (24)

L1.15 **Profanity:** Using profane, vulgar, obscene, insulting, language, gestures, graphics, or materials, whether spoken, written, gestured, or communicated in person or via any electronic device. (33)

L1.16 **Possessing obscene materials:** Possessing obscene or vulgar materials when such conduct does not involve another student. Included, but not limited to, videos or pictures of self, or items that can disrupt the school day and cause mental anguish to others (34)

L1.17 **Skipping School/Class:** Leaving school without permission of the principal or his/her designee, skipping school, or skipping class. (For high school students, parking privileges may be revoked for two or more Skipping School violations). (30)

L1.18 **Unauthorized Area:** Being in an area without the permission of school personnel. (33)

L1.19 **Allowing unauthorized entry:** Opening or propping open doors to allow unauthorized entry into the school (24)

L1.20 **Parking/Driving Violation:** Students who drive to school must follow all safety rules and procedures established by the principal, including obtaining a parking permit. Violation of safety rules and procedures related to parking and/or driving to school may result in revocation of parking privileges and/or other disciplinary action. (24)

L1.21 **Miscellaneous Violations:** Violating other Board of Education or school rules, including, but not limited to, failing to report to detention and/or violating rules of the In-School suspension program. (30)

*Committing a Level L1.21 Violation (violating the rules of In-School Suspension program) may result in the remainder of days being assigned as Out-of-School Suspension.*

*Refer to Chronic Disciplinary guidelines for students with four or more Code of Conduct violations. After four level one Code of Conduct violations, a Chronic Discipline Meeting must be held, and a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan devised. Chronic discipline forms can be found on the Student Success & Accountability Hub*

*After a student has reached (7) seven level 1 violations, with proper documentation and supporting evidence of restorative practices and interventions administrators may recommend a Waiver Conference or Tribunal*

**LEVEL 1 VIOLATIONS**

| Level 1 Violations                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Elementary                                                                                       | Middle & High                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Consequences                                                                                     | Consequences                                                                                             |
| Warning Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Verbal Warning and Parent notification                                                           | Verbal Warning and Parent notification                                                                   |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                               | One (1) day Timeout/ISS                                                                          | In School Suspension for (1-3 Days) One-Three days                                                       |
| 2nd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Three to Five (3-5) day ISS Referral to MTSS                                                     | In School Suspension for (3-5 Days) Three-Five days                                                      |
| 3rd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                               | One (1) day OSS                                                                                  | OSS Three-Five days (3-5)                                                                                |
| 4th Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Three (3) day OSS/and Chronic Discipline Conference and MTSS Data review                         | OSS Three-Five Days (3-5) and Chronic Discipline meeting                                                 |
| 5th Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                               | After five referrals all code of conduct infractions will be disciplined from the level 2 matrix | OSS (5) Five days                                                                                        |
| 6th Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                  | Short Term Out-of-School Suspension for (7) Seven days Consider Follow- Up to Chronic Discipline Meeting |
| 7th Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                  | Refer for Waiver Conference or Tribunal                                                                  |
| After a middle and high school student has reached (7) level 1 violations, with proper documentation and supporting evidence of restorative practices and interventions administrators may recommend a Due Process Hearing |                                                                                                  |                                                                                                          |

## Level 2 Violations with Consequences

**L2 Bullying (2<sup>nd</sup> Violation):** Bullying/Cyberbullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-751.4), is strictly prohibited. The Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system expressly prohibits bullying. Bullying is one of two Level 2 violations that has an alternate progression.(29)

**L2.1 Disruption of School:** Causing or contributing to the disruption and interference of school operations but not posing an immediate threat to the health or safety of others. It is unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of a public school under Georgia Code § 20-2-735. Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to, causing, participating in, contributing to, or encouraging a food fight; elopement from campus that poses a danger to self or others; running from school personnel; refusing to comply with a search when the student is reasonably believed to be in possession of an illegal or inappropriate item or substance; organizing, participating in, or encouraging planned walkouts, protests, demonstrations, or group actions that result in students leaving assigned areas without authorization or otherwise interrupting the instructional day; or any disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment. Incidents that create significant disruption to the school day, involve large groups of students, create safety concerns, or involve refusal to comply with staff directives may be elevated and addressed as a Level 3 infraction in accordance with the Code of Conduct. (06)

**L2.2 Violation of Electronics and Technology Policy:** Unauthorized possession, displaying or using a cell phone, or other electronic communication device during the school day without the consent of the principal or his/her designee. This includes, but is not limited to, headphones, earphones, earbuds, ocular and other listening devices. Misuse of electronic or technological resources or devices, including, but not limited to, filming and/or posting images without the permission of the individual(s) being depicted, unauthorized access to the system network, creating or using the email or messaging account of another without permission to send communications, and disrupting a virtual classroom, this includes videoing fights/physical altercations, Refusal to give electronic devices to school personnel (33)

**L2.3 Giving False Information:** Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior or ethics violations by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student. (48)

**L2.4 False Representation of Substances:** False representation of a substance as a drug for which the student has no valid prescription or false representation of a substance as an illegal drug as defined under the laws of the State of Georgia. (34)

**L2.5 Gang Affiliation:** Exhibiting gang affiliation, as evidenced by a common identifying sign, symbol, tattoo, graffiti, attire, or other distinguishing characteristic. Exhibiting, gang affiliation and/or engaging in any gang-related activity is not permitted. For this handbook, a gang is defined as any group or association of three (3) or more persons, whether formal or informal, as evidenced by a common name or common identifying sign, symbol, tattoo, graffiti, attire, or other distinguishing characteristic, that encourages, solicits, promotes, condones, causes, assists, or abets any illegal or disruptive activity. Students shall not use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang-related activity, including, but not limited to: (35)

1. Soliciting others for membership in a gang.
2. Requesting any person to pay for protection, bullying, or otherwise intimidating or threatening or physically harming any person.
3. Inciting other students to engage in any gang-related activity; and,
4. Defacing any school property with any kind of gang graffiti.

**L2.6 Non-Dangerous Use and/or Possession of Hazardous Objects:** Displaying, using, or otherwise exhibiting intent to use a hazardous object in such a manner that is neither dangerous nor threatening to the student,

other students, personnel or any other person. If the hazardous object is displayed or used in a dangerous or threatening manner, or the student exhibits an intent to use the object, in such a way that the object could be considered a dangerous weapon, refer to Level 4 violation below. This includes sharp objects and pepper spray/mace when non-dangerously used. (34)

- **Hazardous Object:** Any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight- edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, thermoplastic cup, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal gun replica, air gun, any stun gun or taser, and pepper spray, also known as capsaicin spray or capsicum spray, and commonly referred to as Mace, or any other lachrymatory agent meant to cause irritation to the eyes, pain and temporary blindness.

**L2.7 Fighting:** For this violation, fighting shall include, but not be limited to, mutually and/or intentionally participation in aggressive behavior, hitting, kicking, punching, slapping, intentional spitting or use of other bodily fluids, or other physical contact with another student or person that is not school personnel, including but not limited to any other physical contact intended to cause bodily harm or injury.(08)

Fighting does not include:

- Incidental physical contact;
- Acts of self-defense, as determined through administrative investigation; **Self-Defense** is defined as the reasonable use of force by a student to protect himself or herself from an immediate threat of unlawful physical harm, when the student: Did not provoke, initiate, or willingly participate in the confrontation; Used only the amount of force reasonably necessary to protect against the imminent harm; and Ceased the use of force when the threat of harm ended.

Self-defense shall be determined based on the totality of the circumstances following an administrative investigation. A claim of self-defense does not automatically exempt a student from disciplinary consequences. Students are expected, when possible, to avoid physical confrontation and to seek assistance from school personnel. Behaviors that meet the statutory definition of bullying under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4 may also be addressed under the District's bullying policy. Participation in a fight, whether as the primary aggressor or as a mutual combatant, may result in disciplinary consequences in accordance with the progressive discipline process outlined in this Code of Conduct and does not rise to the level of Excessive Physical Contact as defined under Level 3. Fighting is subject to a separate disciplinary progression; please refer to the Fighting progression for applicable consequences.

**FIGHTING VIOLATIONS**

| Fighting Violations Progression | Elementary                                                                                                                                                   | Middle School                                                                                                                                    | High School                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                 | Consequences                                                                                                                                                 | Consequences                                                                                                                                     | Consequences                                                                                                                                     |
| 1st Referral                    | Short term Out of School Suspension One (1)-Three (3) days Building Level Restorative Resolution Practice, Re-entry Parent Conference                        | Short Term Out of School Suspension for Five (5) days/ Re-entry Parent Conference/ Building Level Restorative Resolution Practice, MTSS Referral | Short Term Out of School Suspension up to Ten (10) days reentry parent meeting and MTSS Referral <b>or</b> Administration may refer for Tribunal |
| 2nd Referral                    | Short term Out of School Suspension Three (3)- Five (5) days Building Level Restorative Resolution Practice, Re-entry Parent Conference and Referral to MTSS | Short Term Out of School Suspension for Ten (10) days <b>or</b> Administration refer for Waiver Conference/Tribunal                              | Ten (10) day Waiver Conference/Tribunal                                                                                                          |
| 3rd Referral                    | Short term Out of School Suspension Five (5)- Seven (7) Days Building Level Restorative Resolution Practice, District Level Re-Entry Meeting                 | Repeat of Second Referral                                                                                                                        | Repeat of Second Referral                                                                                                                        |

**L2.8 Inappropriate Activity of a Sexual Nature:** Such conduct which does not rise to the level of severity of a Level 3 violation and may include selling, buying or transmitting sexually explicit or sexually exploitative materials (that do not depict a minor or a student or Staff member), public displays of affection including but not limited to, groping on school property; sexual harassment that does not involve physical contact such as lewd gestures, or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature; horseplay with inadvertent physical contact of student's or another's intimate body parts/genitals, such as "pantsing" or horseplay that does not include intentional indecent exposure; unwelcomed sexual advances; "sexting"; requests for sexual favors; gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment. Note: May also involve a separate sexual harassment investigation (15) if sexual harassment (16)

**L2.9 Medicine being used as a drug:** The possession, use, distribution, or attempted distribution of any prescription or over-the-counter medication (including but not limited to pills, cough syrup, or other substances) for the purpose of achieving a high or any non-medical use. This includes medications not prescribed to the student or taken in a manner inconsistent with the prescribed or intended use. (34)

1. Possessing or ingesting cough syrup or cold medicine in excessive quantities to induce intoxication.
2. Taking another student's prescription medication (e.g., ADHD medication, painkillers).
3. Distributing or offering pills, syrups, or other medications to peers.
4. Bringing medication to school without proper authorization/documentation.

*All prescription medicine must be kept in the clinic or school office unless authorized in writing by a physician and approved by the principal in accordance with regulation JGCD-R (1): Medication Procedures. Students are subject to*

*disciplinary action, including but not limited to, short-term suspension, long term suspension, or expulsion, if they possess medicine at school without the principal's consent, distribute the medicine to other students, or use the medicine in a manner that is not prescribed or per label directions.*

L2.10 **Viewing Obscene Materials:** Accessing or viewing obscene or vulgar materials when such conduct does not involve another person. (34)

L2.11 **Entering areas Designated for the Opposite Sex:** Entering, directing, or soliciting another student to enter into an area designated for the opposite sex only. (33)

L2.12 **Theft (Less than \$500):** Theft including, but not limited to, attempted theft, extortion, bribery, theft by deception, and/or possession of stolen property. For theft greater than \$500, refer to Level 3.8 ((11)

L2.13 **Verbal Abuse:** Verbally abusing others, including but not limited to, threats or intimidation, use of profanity towards others including students and school personnel (Georgia law prohibits the upbraiding, disrespecting, insulting, or directing vulgar or profane language towards any teacher, administrator, or bus driver upon the premises of any school in the presence and hearing of a student). Use of slurs or acts of bigotry related to or directed toward another person's race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical characteristics or disability. This includes, but is not limited to, harassing or taunting in person, on the Internet, in writing, or other modes of electronic communications. (17)

L2.15 **Unintentional/Intentional Physical Contact with Students that Causes Harm:** Unintentional, but inappropriate, physical contact or action with students that causes harm. (03)

L2.16 **Attempting to Make Harmful Contact with Another Student; Attempting to Start a Fight:** This includes but is not limited to situations where fighting words are exchanged with possible posturing to inflict physical harm and/or verbal altercations and yelling but no contact is made.(06)

L2.17 **Trespassing:** Entering or remaining on a public-school campus, school bus, or school board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry. (19)

L2.18 **Unintentional Physical Contact with School Personnel:** Unintentional, but inappropriate, physical contact or action with school personnel. (03)

L2.19 **Vandalism or Damage to Property:** Vandalizing or damaging school or personal property, regardless of whether there is a monetary loss of value. For vandalism greater than \$500, refer to Level 3.9 (20)

L2.20 **Damaging or Setting Off a Fire Alarm or attempting to start a fire: (Elementary Only)** Willfully damaging or destroying a school fire alarm; setting off a school fire alarm with no reasonable belief that a fire exists on the school premises. This violation shall also include refusing to evacuate the building when a fire alarm sounds, or an evacuation of a school is ordered. Attempting to start a fire on school grounds or at school events. (33)

**LEVEL 2 VIOLATIONS**

| Level 2 Violations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Elementary                                                                                                     | Middle & High                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (Excludes Fighting)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Consequences                                                                                                   | Consequences                                                                                                                  |
| 1st Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Out of school suspension (1) One Day-(3) Three Days/ Reentry Parent Conference/ Building Level intervention    | Short Term Out of School Suspension for Three (3) days-Five (5) Days/ Reentry Parent Conference/ Building Level intervention  |
| 2nd Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Out of school suspension (3) Three Days-(5) Days / Reentry Parent Conference/ Building Level intervention      | Short Term Out of School Suspension for Five (5) days-Seven (7) days/ Reentry Parent Conference/ Building Level intervention  |
| 3rd Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Out of school suspension (5) Five Days-(7) Seven Days / Reentry Parent Conference/ Building Level intervention | Short Term Out of School Suspension for seven (7) days-Ten (10) days/ Reentry Parent Conference/ Building Level interventions |
| <i>After a student has reached (3) level 2 violations excluding fighting, with proper documentation and supporting evidence of restorative practices and interventions administrators may recommend a Due Process Hearing or Long Term suspension not to exceed 10days with behavior contract if infractions are of non violent nature</i> |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                               |

### Level 3 Violations and Consequences (Mandatory Hearing Offenses)

*A student who has committed a Level 3 violation may receive a consequence of long-term suspension or expulsion at a disciplinary hearing.*

**L3 Failure to provide notification of charge, adjudication, or conviction of a felony:** Upon any enrolled student being charged, adjudicated, or convicted of a felony violation as defined in Level 4, Rule 3, or Rule 4, the student shall immediately notify the Principal and the Superintendent of said charges, adjudication, or conviction and shall provide to the Principal and Superintendent a copy of all documents received by the student concerning said charges, adjudication, or conviction, including any probation terms. This includes any violation held in abeyance or given first offender status. Failure to provide the required documents shall be grounds for disciplinary action. (24)

**L3.1 Gang Related Activity:** Engaging in a gang-related activity that encourages, solicits, promotes, condones, causes, assists, or abets any illegal or disruptive act. (35)

**L3.2 Excessive Physical Contact:** The use of excessive physical force resulting in harmful contact with a student or person other than school personnel referenced in Level 4. This includes, but is not limited to, fights that are beyond a Level 2 fight, that are violent and advance planning is evident, cause a major disruption to the school operational environment or educational process, group fights of three (3) or more individuals, and/or fights that cause harm. Harm may include, but is not limited to, significant injuries such as swelling, bleeding, concussions, broken bones, sprains, and/or where medical attention was sought for a significant injury. (08)

**L3.3A Sexual Misconduct:** Any inappropriate act of a sexual nature that involves physical contact or that rises above a Level 2 offense; any intentional act of indecent exposure of the intimate body parts/genitals, including “flashing,” “mooning,” or “streaking” as those terms are commonly understood, any act of indecent fondling, groping or touching of the student’s own intimate body parts or the intimate body parts of another; any act of viewing or possessing of any materials which depict a minor or any student in a sexual manner; any act of recording images of intimate body parts, whether of oneself or of another person. Note: May also involve a separate sexual harassment investigation under Sexual Harassment Title IX Policy JCAC: Sex-Based Discrimination. (16)

**L3.3B Sexual Misconduct/Non-Consensual Intimate Imagery:** The creation, possession, sharing, or threat to share intimate images or videos of another person without their clear and voluntary consent is strictly prohibited. Non-Consensual Intimate Imagery includes: Nude or sexually explicit images or videos shared without permission, Images originally shared privately but redistributed without consent, AI-generated, altered, or “deepfake” images, Threats to release intimate images to embarrass, harass, or blackmail someone. Note: May also involve a separate sexual harassment investigation under Sexual Harassment Title IX Policy JCAC: Sex-Based Discrimination. (15) or If sexual harassment (16)

**L3.4 Attempting to make inappropriate physical contact or action with school personnel or Physical Violence Against Personnel, No Physical Harm:** Committing acts of physical violence against teachers, school bus drivers, or other school officials or employees, is prohibited. For the purposes of this rule, physical violence is defined as intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature or posturing to inflict physical harm with school personnel that does not result in physical harm (Could include resisting a School Resource Officer). (08)

**L3.5 Alcoholic Beverages:** Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, receiving, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage at school, at any school-related activity, prior to attending school, or prior to a school-related activity. (01)

**L3.6 Prescription Medication:** Prescription Medication: Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, distributing, or receiving any prescription drug not prescribed to the student in possession; wrongfully possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, distributing, or receiving any prescription drug that is prescribed to the student; or the use of any substance represented to be a prescription drug prior to or after attending school or a school related activity that was not prescribed for the student. When students must take medicine at school,

parents must bring all medicine and related equipment to the school nurse or his/her designee and complete a Medication Permission/Authorization Form. Medicine cannot be given without written permission and instructions from the parent. Please do not send medicine to school with students. (07)

All prescription medications must be stored in the school clinic or designated school office unless the student has written authorization from a licensed healthcare provider and approval from the principal or designee in accordance with Georgia law and local board policy regarding self-administration of medications.

Students found in possession of medication on school grounds without appropriate authorization may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary consequences may include, but are not limited to, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion. This includes possession of medication without approval, sharing or distributing medication to others, or using medication in a manner inconsistent with the healthcare provider's orders or manufacturer's label instructions.

**L3.8 Theft Greater than \$500:** Theft, including but not limited to, attempted theft, extortion, bribery, theft by deception, and/or possession of stolen property when the value of the property is greater than \$500, as estimated by school Officials. (11)

**L3.9 Vandalism or damage to property greater than \$500:** Vandalizing school or personal property, with the cost of damages being greater than \$500, as estimated by school officials. This includes, but is not limited to, unlawful or unauthorized forceful entry into a school building or vehicle (with or without intent to commit theft). (20)

**L3.10 Damaging or Setting Off a Fire Alarm or attempting to start a fire:** Willfully damaging or destroying a school fire alarm; setting off a school fire alarm with no reasonable belief that a fire exists on the school premises. This violation shall also include refusing to evacuate the building when a fire alarm sounds, or an evacuation of a school is ordered. Attempting to start a fire on school grounds or at school events. (06)

**L3.11 Terroristic Threats:** A terroristic threat is any threat through written or verbal language or act which creates a fear of harm and/or conveys a serious expression of intent to harm, to commit any act of violence or to burn or damage property. Terroristic threats shall also include, but are not limited to, bomb threats, making false calls to 911 which have the effect of causing a lock-down of a school building, the evacuation of a school building, or the search of a school building, or any bus, property, or building belonging to the school district by the school resource officer or any other public safety officer or agency, or the use of electronic communication to convey text, video, images or spreading false rumors which have the effect of causing a disruption of the school. (17)

**L3.12 Possession of Pepper Spray:** Possession of, Use or discharge of pepper spray by any student when regardless of intent shall be prohibited. The level of disruption by the discharge or use may determine the severity of the consequence. (34)

**L3.13 Non-lethal Weapons:** Possession or use of a gun replica, toy gun/splat gun/water gun/airsoft gun that is portrayed as a weapon or could reasonably be mistaken for a weapon. (34)

**LEVEL 3 VIOLATIONS**

| Level 3 Violations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Elementary                                                                                              | Middle & High                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Consequences                                                                                            | Consequences                                                               |
| 1st Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | OSS (5) Five Days/ Altered School Day A.M./P.M./ Re-Entry Plan/ Referral to MTSS/Discipline Conference  | Long Term (10) Ten Day Out of School Suspension Waiver Conference/Tribunal |
| 2nd Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | OSS (7) Seven Days/ Altered School Day A.M./P.M./ Referral to MTSS/District Level Discipline Conference | Long Term (10) Ten Day Out of School Suspension Waiver Conference/Tribunal |
| 3rd Violation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Recommendation for Long-Term Suspension or other sanctions as approved by the Board of Education        | Long Term (10) Ten Day Out of School Suspension Waiver Conference/Tribunal |
| <i>All level 3 infractions are subject to long-term suspension followed by Waiver Conference/Tribunal, with proper documentation and supporting evidence of restorative practices and interventions administrators may recommend a Waiver Conference/Tribunal</i> |                                                                                                         |                                                                            |

***Before a student who is in preschool through third grade is assigned more than five days of out of school suspension, whether consecutive or cumulative, the student must receive a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). If the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act or a Section 504 Plan under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, then the student's IEP or Section 504 Team must meet to review appropriate supports provided to the student under the plan.***

## Level 4 Violations (Mandatory Hearing Offenses)

*If a preschool through third grade student commits a Level 4 offense, specifically if the student possesses a weapon, illegal drugs or other dangerous instrument, or the student's behavior endangers the safety of other students or school personnel, then school administration or a hearing officer may assign age-appropriate consequences without first referring the student to the MTSS process.*

***A student who has committed a Level 4 violation will have a mandatory Due Process Hearing that may result in a consequence of expulsion or up to permanent expulsion***

**L4 Possession of a Firearm, Dangerous Weapon, or Explosive Compound:** Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, or exchanging any firearm, dangerous weapon, explosive compound, or an object that can reasonably be considered and/or used as a weapon. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §20-2-751.1, a violation of this rule has a mandatory minimum one-year of expulsion, but may result in permanent expulsion, at the discretion of the Disciplinary Hearing Officer. It is unlawful for any person to carry, or to possess, or have under his/her control while within a school safety zone or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the district any dangerous weapon, firearm, or explosive compound. Any person violating this rule will be reported to the appropriate authorities for prosecution. (28)

- **Dangerous Weapon:** Includes any weapon or object that could reasonably be used in a manner that may inflict bodily harm to another. Examples include, but are not limited to, sharp objects that are used or pepper spray that is discharged or used with intent to cause harm or injury, a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifles, mortar, hand grenade, or other similar weapon designed to explode.
- **Explosive:** Includes any bomb, firebomb, Molotov cocktail, firecracker, fireworks, stink bomb, bullet, shell, gun powder, grenade, missile, or any other type of explosive device and/or substance, including a set fire. A student in possession of any such item will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Code of Conduct, with the matter being reported to law enforcement authorities.
- **Firearm:** Includes, but is not limited to, a handgun, rifle, shotgun, or other weapon, which will or can be converted to expel a projectile.

**L4.1 Physical Violence Against Personnel with Physical Harm:** It is prohibited for any student to intentionally make physical contact which causes physical harm to teachers, school bus drivers, or other school officials or employees. Harm may include, but is not limited to, significant injuries such as swelling, bleeding, concussions, broken bones, sprains, or where medical attention was sought for a significant injury. (08)

**L4.2 Charge, Adjudication, or Conviction of Felony (All Others):** This includes any conduct (on campus or off campus) which results in the student being criminally charged with an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult. This includes, but is not limited to, the adjudication or conviction of a student of a violation that is designated as a felony if committed by an adult under the laws of the State of Georgia, or under the laws of the United States of America, and which makes his/her continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process. (49)

**L4.3 Charge, Adjudication, or Conviction of a Felony ("Seven Deadly"):** Being charged with or adjudicated or convicted of one or more of the following violent criminal violations, and which makes his/her continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school, or which disrupts the educational process: a. **Murder (O.C.G.A. §16-5-1); Voluntary Manslaughter (O.C.G.A. §16-5-2); Rape (O.C.G.A. §16-6-1); Aggravated Sodomy (O.C.G.A. §16-6-2); Aggravated Child Molestation (O.C.G.A. §16-6-4); Aggravated Battery (O.C.G.A. §16-5-24); and Aggravated Armed Robbery (O.C.G.A. §16-8-41)** (49)

**L4.4 Sexual Acts:** It is prohibited to engage in sexual acts on school campus or during school activities. This includes, but is not limited to, any act of sexual intercourse, oral sex, or sodomy as the term is defined by the laws of the State of Georgia. This includes sexual battery and sexual harassment involving physical contact. (16)

## DISCIPLINARY PROTOCOL AND PROCEDURE

### A. TYPES OF CONSEQUENCES OR CORRECTIVE ACTION

In-School Suspension, Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, or Expulsion may be imposed on a student for any violation of the Student Behavior Code.

1. **In-School Suspension:** In-school suspension is the isolation of a student during the school day from the regular classrooms and activities of the school with a continuation of the student's progress **with classroom assignments and additional support**.

2. **Short-Term Suspension:** Short-term, out-of-school suspension as defined in O.C.G.A. §20-2-751(3) means the denial to a student of the right to attend school and take part in any school-related functions for a period not to exceed ten (10) consecutive school days. The principal and assistant principal of any school shall have the discretionary power to impose a short-term suspension.

3. **Long-Term Suspension:** Long-term as defined by O.C.G.A. §20-2-751(2) means the denial and suspension of a student of the right to attend school and take part in any school-related functions for more than ten (10) consecutive school days but not beyond the current academic term. A student may receive long-term suspension only as a result of a student disciplinary hearing before a Disciplinary Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel. A student shall be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion for violation of the rules for student behavior, conduct and discipline as set forth in these policies but only after a hearing or opportunity for a hearing in accordance with the rules and procedures hereafter set forth.

4. **Expulsion:** Expulsion as defined by O.C.G.A. §20-2-751(1) means the denial to a student of the right to attend school and take part in any school-related functions beyond the current academic term, and any greater duration deemed appropriate by the Disciplinary Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel including but not limited to the remainder of the current semester, school year, an entire school year or years, or permanently. Expulsion may only be imposed by action of the Disciplinary Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel after the student has been afforded notice, opportunity for hearing, and other procedural rights prior to such expulsion becoming effective.

### B. GENERAL DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

All violations of the Student Behavior Code shall be investigated, and punishment imposed as warranted by the nature and circumstances of the violation. A principal in his/her discretion may (but is not compelled) administer appropriate disciplinary action such as in-school suspension or short-term suspension for certain violations at the school level without referral to a disciplinary hearing for students committing violations of the Student Behavior Code.

However, a principal does not have the authority to impose and must refer a student to a disciplinary hearing for the imposition of long-term suspension, expulsion, or assignment to an alternative education program. A principal at his/her discretion may refer to any violation of the Student Behavior Code for a disciplinary hearing.

When a violation of the Student Behavior Code involves a non-mandatory hearing offense, the same procedure shall be followed as in investigations of any alleged mandatory hearing offense provided hereafter.

At the beginning of each school year, the principal or other designated administrator shall conduct such convocations in the first 20 school days, student assemblies or other proceedings with all students enrolled in each school to explain with particularity, the Student Behavior Code and the disciplinary protocol followed to include Mandatory Hearing Offenses.

### **C. DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS IN GRADES PK-5 AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students in grades K-5 are subject to and shall abide by the Student Disciplinary Code. However, the disciplinary hearing processes including the mandatory hearing offenses shall not apply to students in grades PK-3. The Superintendent shall determine the disciplinary actions or proceedings for students in grades PK-3. Students in grades 4 and 5 who commit a mandatory hearing offense will not normally be brought before a Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel. However, the principal of each elementary school in consultation with the Superintendent may treat an offense committed by a student in grades 4 and 5 as a mandatory hearing offense based upon the nature and circumstance as well as the student involved and refer the student to a disciplinary hearing.

Students with disabilities will be disciplined in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. The procedures set forth in this regulation may or may not apply to a student with disabilities depending on the circumstances and as determined by the appropriate team of teachers and administrators. If you have questions about the disciplinary process as it relates to a student with a disability and those questions cannot be answered at the school level, please contact the Executive Director of Exceptional Education and Support Services.

### **D. MANDATORY HEARING OFFENSES**

The Troup County Board of Education believes that certain violations of the Student Behavior Code outlined herein cannot be tolerated under any circumstances and because of the nature and consequences of the violations immediate school and judicial intervention is required. Those offenses shall hereafter be defined and referred to as Mandatory Hearing Offenses. The following violations of the Student Behavior Code shall be classified as Mandatory Hearing Offenses:

1. **Mandatory Hearing Offenses:** All Level 3, Level 4, and Multiple Level 2 Infractions will result in Mandatory Hearing
2. **Elementary Schools:** There shall be no Mandatory Hearing Offenses for Grades PK-5. However, the principal of each elementary school in consultation with the Superintendent may treat an offense as a Mandatory Hearing Offense based upon the nature and circumstance of the offense and the student involved. Unless specifically stated in the policy, discipline for students in grades PK-5 will be at the discretion of the principal; however, discipline determinations by Discipline Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel also apply to students in PK-5 if the principal deems it to be necessary. In grades PK-5, students' unstructured time may be withheld for violation of general school discipline or for specific violation of any school rule. A PK-5 student may be assigned to the Sandbox program to address specific discipline issues.

### **E. DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

1. Upon reasonable suspicion that a student has committed an offense warranting a Disciplinary Hearing or Tribunal, the principal or administrator in charge of discipline at each school shall immediately separate the student from the rest of the student body while the investigation of the conduct is being conducted. The principal or administration in charge of discipline shall advise the student that evidence exists that the student may have committed an offense warranting a Disciplinary Hearing or Tribunal.
2. The school administrator shall advise the student that (1) the offense which the student is alleged to have committed carries the consequences of a mandatory referral to a Disciplinary Hearing of the Troup County Board of Education with short term suspension pending the hearing of the charges by the Disciplinary Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel; and (2) if the circumstances warrant it, that the alleged violation of the Student Behavior Code is being reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency in which the school is located and to the Juvenile Court of Troup County.

3. Upon completion of the investigation of a Mandatory Hearing Offense and a determination that grounds exist for charging a student with an offense, the principal shall first, make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parents, and then if appropriate, the Juvenile Court of Troup County and the appropriate law enforcement agency.

4. **Informal Review.** Where a disciplinary hearing is required by law or when a Principal recommends a long-term out of school suspension/expulsion (More than 10 school days of out of school suspension) and a disciplinary hearing is scheduled, a parent conference will be offered within three (3) school days of the first suspension. Legal counsel/Student Advocate for students and/or parents is not allowed. The principal designee should be prepared to offer and discuss the investigation completed by the school, the discipline procedures afforded and any witness/student statements; as well as the current status of the student's conduct and academic status. Please Note: A parent conference is not required before a discipline matter proceeds to a discipline hearing and failure of school administration to offer such conference shall not disqualify the hearing in any manner or the results of any hearing.

5. **Imposition of Pre-Hearing Placement.** For Mandatory Hearing Offenses, the principal or school administrator may impose short term suspension upon the student by removing the student from the general school population for not more than ten school days pending hearing before a Disciplinary Hearing Officer or Tribunal panel. Short term suspension may include placement of the student in an In-School Suspension program in addition to Out of School Suspension. Out of School Suspension should be considered and used only in situations which would place other students at risk of injury or would result in the disruption of the educational mission of the class or school in which the student is enrolled or placed pending the Disciplinary Hearing. If Out of School Suspension is imposed pending the Disciplinary Hearing Tribunal, the Juvenile Court shall be notified of the Out of School Suspension.

6. **Written Notice of Hearing.** When a discipline hearing is required, the school will provide written notice of the relevant procedures to the student's parent/guardian/student age 18 or older. Delivery of Notification: The notice of hearing shall be delivered to the student and his/her parent/guardian either in person, by electronic mail, or by standard mail to the last known address or email listed in Infinite Campus of the parent or guardian.

7. **Referral to a Disciplinary Hearing.** Following the commission of a Mandatory Hearing Offense, the student shall be referred to a Disciplinary Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel of the Troup County Board of Education. If you receive Special Education or Section 504 Services, a District Special Education and/or Section 504 representative, Special Education teacher and/or regular education teacher will be part of a manifestation determination review meeting to be scheduled prior to the hearing. The IEP or 504 team will determine if the alleged behavior is a manifestation of your disability based on the evidence presented. If the IEP or 504 team determines that the alleged behavior is a manifestation of your disability, the IEP or 504 team will determine the appropriate action to address your behavior. If the IEP or 504 Team determines that the alleged behavior is not a manifestation of your disability, the scheduled hearing will proceed at the scheduled date where a Disciplinary Hearing Officer/Tribunal Panel will decide whether you violated the Student Code of Conduct. If it is determined that you violated the rule(s), the disciplinary Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel will also decide the appropriate disciplinary action. The hearing of the disciplinary charges before a Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel shall be within ten (10) school days of the day on which short term suspension is imposed and removed from the general student population. Where extenuating circumstances exist, the hearing by the Disciplinary Hearing Officer/Tribunal Panel may be held more than ten school days following notification of charges; provided however, that the student must be returned to the general school population at the end of the short-term suspension unless an extension has been requested by the parent/guardian and such extension has been granted. Such an extension can only be requested in writing by the parent/guardian/or retained legal counsel for the student.

8. **Juvenile Court:** If warranted by the circumstances, the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled shall consult with and, to the extent and in the manner allowed by law, provide to the education protocol officer of the Troup County Juvenile Court such educational records on the student to include attendance, grades, standardized test scores,

and disciplinary record as may be needed for an evaluation of the student by the Juvenile Court.

**9. Cooperation with Law Enforcement:** It shall be the further policy by the Troup County School System that all school administrators and personnel shall work together with law enforcement officials and Juvenile Court officials to provide counseling, joint supervision, school-based community service, educational assistance, and anything necessary to prevent violence and provide for conflict resolutions and other interventions designed to address needs to a student who violates a provision of the Student Behavior Code where such offense also carries potential criminal consequences.

## **F. PROTOCOL AND MANDATORY PUNISHMENTS FOR OFFENSES AGAINST SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

**1. Procedure** - Any student who is alleged to have committed any act of physical violence as defined in Level 3 (L3.4) or Level 4 (L4.1) violence against another school official or employee, or school bus driver shall be referred to a disciplinary hearing officer or tribunal panel of the Troup County Board of Education. The student alleged to have committed such an act of physical violence shall be suspended out of school pending a hearing. The Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel shall be appointed in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.15 and applicable Board policy. When a Tribunal Panel is convened, it shall consist of three (3) impartial teachers or certified education personnel. The Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel shall hear the evidence, determine all issues of fact and intent, and render written findings and a recommendation to the Troup County Board of Education regarding the appropriate disciplinary action if the student is found to have committed the alleged offense(s). The findings and recommendation shall include a determination as to whether the student shall be permitted to return to the regular school program and, if so, the conditions and timing of such return. The Troup County Board of Education shall review the record and may adopt, reject, or modify the recommendation of the Hearing Officer or Tribunal Panel, including the imposition of a more or less severe disciplinary consequence than that recommended.

**2. Punishment for Violation of Level 3 L3.4 Attempting to make inappropriate physical contact or action with school personnel or Physical Violence Against Personnel, No Physical Harm** - Any student found by a Disciplinary Hearing Officer/ Tribunal Panel to have committed an act of physical violence by intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature against a teacher, administrator, school personnel or employee, or bus driver may be disciplined by expulsion, long term suspension or short-term suspension as those terms are defined in the Official Code of Georgia and Troup County Board of Education Policies.

**3. Punishment for Violation of Level 4 L4.1 Physical Violence Against Personnel with Physical Harm** - A student found by a Disciplinary Hearing Officer/ Tribunal Panel to have committed an act of physical violence by making physical contact, which causes physical harm as defined in Level 3 & 4 against a teacher, administrator, school personnel or employee, or a bus driver shall be expelled from the Troup County Schools. The expulsion shall be for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public schools pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-150. The Troup County Board of Education, at its discretion, may permit the student to attend an alternative school program for the period of the student's expulsion. If the student who commits an act of violence by making physical contact which causes physical harm is in Kindergarten through Grade 8, then the Troup County Board of Education, at its discretion, and on the recommendation of the hearing officer/tribunal panel may permit such student to re-enroll in the regular public-school program for Grades 9 through 12. If Troup County Board of Education does not operate an alternative education program for students in Kindergarten through Grade 6, the Troup County Board of Education, at its discretion, may permit a student in Kindergarten through Grade 6 who has committed an act of physical violence against a teacher, administrator, school personnel or employee, or bus driver to re-enroll in the public school system.

**4. Juvenile Court Referral** - Any student found by a Disciplinary Hearing Officer/ Tribunal Panel to have committed an act of physical violence as defined in Level 3.4 & 4.1 against a teacher, administrator, school personnel or employee, or bus driver shall be referred to Juvenile Court.

**G. MANDATORY CONSEQUENCES** – The following punishments shall also be mandatory as required by federal or state law or policy:

1. **Firearms** - A student found to have violated Level 4 L4 shall be expelled from the Troup County schools for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. On a case-by-case basis, a Disciplinary Hearing Officer/Tribunal Panel or the Superintendent are authorized to place a student determined to have brought a firearm to school in the Troup County alternative school program if extenuating circumstances are found to exist.

2. **Bullying and Cyberbullying** - Any student in grades 6-12 who has committed and been punished twice for the offense of bullying and cyberbullying as defined in L1 & L2 Bullying/Cyberbullying who is alleged to have committed a third act of bullying or cyberbullying within a school year shall be referred to a hearing before a Disciplinary Hearing Officer/Tribunal Panel. If the student is found guilty of a third offense by the hearing officer/tribunal panel of the offense of bullying or cyberbullying, the student shall be assigned to the Troup County alternative school program for such time as deemed appropriate; provided however, this shall not prohibit the expulsion or long-term suspension of the student for the third offense. At the discretion of the school administration, a student may also be referred to a disciplinary hearing/tribunal for a first or second offense of bullying or cyberbullying.

3. **Bus Conduct** - If a student is found to have committed any level of Battery, Fighting, and/or Bullying on a public-school bus, in addition to any punishment imposed, a meeting between the parent or guardian of the student and appropriate officials from the Troup County School District shall be held to form a school bus behavior contract for the student. Such a contract shall provide for progressive age, appropriate discipline, penalties and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Contract provisions may include, but shall not be limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed so as to limit the incidences wherein a student bus behavior contract may be required.

### **I. Alternative Placement Parental Option Policy**

When a student is assigned to The Hope Academy for an alternative educational placement as a result of a disciplinary decision, the parent or legal guardian maintains the right to seek and enroll the student in an outside educational setting during the duration of the assigned placement period.

#### **Alternative Placement Assignment**

1. A student may be assigned to The Hope Academy in accordance with district policies related to student discipline.
2. The length of the alternative placement will be clearly communicated to the parent/guardian in writing, including a start and end date.

#### **Parent/Guardian Educational Choice**

1. During the alternative placement period, the parent or legal guardian may choose to withdraw the student from the district and enroll them in another educational program or institution, including private or virtual settings.
2. The parent/guardian must notify the district in writing of their intent to pursue an external educational option, and must assume all costs associated with that choice.

#### **Return to District**

If the student returns to the district before the external placement requirement has been completed, they must fulfill any remaining days of the originally assigned alternative placement at The Hope Academy before re-entering their home school, unless otherwise determined by district administration.

### **Student Records and Status**

1. The student will remain coded as "assigned to alternative placement" in district records for the duration of the assigned term, regardless of whether an external educational option is pursued.
2. Completion of the assigned placement period is required before full reentry into the student's home school can be considered.

### **Special Education Considerations**

For students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, any decision to change educational setting must be in compliance with federal and state special education laws, including the requirement to convene an IEP or Section 504 team meeting, as appropriate.

### ***(Previously Policy JCDAD)***

### **Bus Conduct**

Bus drivers under the supervision of the principal and/or the director of transportation shall be responsible for the conduct and safety of children on the bus. Students whose conduct is not acceptable should be corrected by the driver in an appropriate manner. Drivers may leave a child either at home or at school in cases of extreme misconduct. However, no child may be put off the bus for misconduct between school and the point at which the child normally boards the bus.

The authority for controlling bus behavior rests with the driver. However, drivers are instructed to consult with the principal for serious cases. Pupils may be suspended from the bus for continued misbehavior. The driver may seat the children in any arrangement.

While riding a school bus:

- Students shall not engage in acts of physical violence, bullying, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior.
- Students shall not use any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and other unruly behavior
- Students shall not use mirrors, lasers, flash camera, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus. If a student is found to have engaged in physical acts of violence, the student shall be subject to the severe penalties.

A meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and appropriate school district officials must be held to form a student bus behavior contract whenever:

- A student is found to have engaged in bullying; or
- A student is found to have engaged in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus.

The school bus behavior contract shall provide for age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Provisions may include, but are not limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement,

and suspension from riding the bus.

## **Student Dress Code (Previously Policy JCDB)**

The Troup County School System is committed to fostering a conducive learning environment that respects each student's individuality. To support safety, positive behavior, and community standards, students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for the educational setting. Research indicates a connection between student attire and behavior, attitude, and academic achievement. Clothing and personal appearance must not be disruptive or interfere with the welfare of any student.

### **Coverage**

- Clothing must fully cover the chest, back, stomach, and midriff. See-through or transparent fabrics do not count as coverage.
- Pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, and dresses must be long enough to cover the mid thigh.
- Undergarments must remain fully covered at all times. Outer clothing must provide complete coverage; see-through or transparent fabrics do not qualify. Blankets may not be worn as clothing or used as cover-ups.

### **Tops and Straps**

- Shoulders and straps must be covered by clothing at all times.
- Tops with thin straps (e.g., spaghetti or halter straps) must be layered with an opaque garment such as a jacket or cardigan.

### **Leggings, Tights, and Form-Fitting Pants**

- Leggings, tights, or similar form-fitting garments must be worn with a top that fully covers the hips, buttocks, and genital area. This requirement applies to all students.

### **Footwear**

- For safety, shoes must provide safe support for walking and physical activity.
- Shoes with wheels or rollers are prohibited.

### **Safety and Prohibited Items**

- Students may not wear clothing or accessories that could be used to harm others, including chains, chokers, or hanging straps.
- Bonnets, wave caps, ball caps/hats, hoodies and blankets may not be worn in the building or used as clothing layers.
- For safety and identification purposes, a student's face must remain visible at all times during the school day. Bona fide religious attire is permitted provided it does not fully cover the face.

### **Prohibited Clothing Content**

- Clothing, accessories, or items that display profanity, hate speech, sexual content, or depictions of alcohol, drugs, weapons, or other sexually suggestive, obscene, or disruptive content are not permitted on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.

### **Sleepwear and Professional Attire**

- Pajamas, slippers, and other clothing intended for sleep or lounging are not permitted.
- Students are expected to wear attire that reflects a professional and work-ready standard.

## **Consequences**

### **First Offense: Non-Punitive**

Parents/guardians are contacted to bring appropriate clothing/shoes, or a change of clothes will be provided. The student returns to class. If the student refuses the provided clothing, they will be placed in ISS for the remainder of the day.

### **Second Offense: Non-Punitive**

Parents/guardians are contacted to bring appropriate clothing/shoes, or a change of clothes will be provided. The student returns to class after an administrative conference. If the student refuses the provided clothing, they will be placed in ISS for the remainder of the day.

### **Third Offense: Consequential**

Parents/guardians are contacted to bring appropriate clothing/shoes, or a change of clothes will be provided. Parent and Student conference with administration. Students remain in ISS for a duration determined by the building administrator.

### **Fourth Offense: Consequential**

Parents/guardians are contacted to bring appropriate clothing/shoes, or a change of clothes will be provided. Students receive a referral for willful disobedience/defiance.

*\*Bona fide religious attire refers to clothing or head coverings that are sincerely worn as part of a student's religious beliefs or practices, rather than for fashion, personal preference, or style trends.*

*\*Administrative discretion may be used when a parent/guardian is unavailable to bring appropriate clothing. The student may be placed in isolation for the remainder of the day.*

*\*Administration will determine whether attire is appropriate. Clothing must not be extreme or disruptive to the educational environment.*

*\*Administration reserves the right to address dress code violations on a case-by-case basis and may deem clothing inappropriate even if not explicitly stated in this policy.*

## Interviews and Searches of Students (Previously Policy JCAB)

### A. Student Searches

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school administrators may search student vehicles, student desks, student learning devices, and student lockers at any time. In addition, a student's person and/or personal effects (e.g. purse, bookbag, etc.) may be searched if administrators have reason to believe the student is in possession of an article or substance, which is illegal, prohibited by school rules, or dangerous. Students are given the opportunity to produce the item sought, or to voluntarily empty their pockets, purses, or book bags. Students may be asked to remove their jacket, vest, shoes, or socks. A School Resource Officer will be called if search yields illegal substances or other illegal materials. **Where administrators have reasonable suspicion to search a student who refuses to allow an administrator to search him/her will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or a disciplinary hearing.**

### B. Student Questioning by Officials

**School Administrators:** Principals and Assistant Principals have the responsibility and authority to question students for the purpose of maintaining a safe and orderly school environment. **Though it is important to inform parents about issues of concern, parental consent is not required prior to the questioning of students.**

**Department of Family and Child Services (DFCS):** DFCS officials investigating suspected child abuse are permitted to conduct reasonable interviews and inspections of children. Notice to parents is neither required nor desirable when the object of that investigation may be the parents. If the investigation involves suspected child abuse by individuals other than those residing in the child's household, parents will be informed that such interviews are being requested, if prior notification is possible.

**Guardian Ad Litem:** The Guardian Ad Litem is a trained professional appointed by the court to represent the best interests of minor children in court cases. Any request to interview a student or to inspect the student's school record should be submitted, in writing, along with court documentation establishing the Guardian Ad Litem relationship with the child.

**Law Enforcement:** School Resource Officers, as well as Probation Officers of the Juvenile Court, are permitted to question students at school without prior parental approval and notification.

### C. Student Vehicle Searches

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school administrators may search student vehicles at any time. As a condition of parking on premises owned by the Troup County Board of Education, students consent to a search of their vehicles. Students must have an approved parking permit application on file to park on school premises. Such application provides notice to the consent to search. If school authorities have a reasonable belief that a student's vehicle, which is parked on school premises, contains an article or substance which is illegal, prohibited by school rules, or dangerous, school authorities may initiate a search of the vehicle. Failure of any student to comply with school authorities' search of their vehicle may subject the student to disciplinary actions. If a search yields illegal or contraband materials, said contraband material shall be deemed to be constructively possessed by the student who owns, possesses, and parks the searched vehicle onto premises owned by Troup County Board of Education, and said student will be subject to school disciplinary actions for violation of the Code of Conduct. Illegal or contraband items recovered from the search of a student vehicle shall be turned over to proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition. If recovered items are not illegal but are in violation of Board policies, the items will be held by the school until claimed by the student's parents or guardian.

**D. Locker Searches**

Student lockers are school property and always remain under the control of the school; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. Periodic general inspections of lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

**E. Seizure of Illegal Materials**

If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

**D. Video Incident Footage Access**

The school district is committed to protecting the privacy and safety of students and staff. Requests from parents, guardians, students, or other individuals to view video recordings maintained by the district will be handled in accordance with district procedures and applicable law, including FERPA, the Georgia Open Records Act, and other privacy requirements. Access to video recordings may be limited or denied when disclosure would compromise the privacy rights of students, staff, or other individuals; expose sensitive safety or security information; or otherwise fail to meet FERPA requirements and related privacy protections.

**Parent/Guardian Viewing Requests**

- The district generally does not preserve surveillance or video footage unless it is required to be maintained by law, regulation, or as part of a specific investigation or proceeding. Routine surveillance recordings are not considered education records under FERPA and are typically overwritten or deleted in the ordinary course of system operation. Recordings used by the district to make disciplinary decisions may be retained as part of the educational record of each student whose conduct is at issue. Such records may be stored in the student's file, Department of Student Success, Human Resources, or Curriculum and Instruction.

**Classroom Camera Footage**

- Video footage from cameras located inside classrooms is considered confidential and is not available for viewing or request by parents, guardians, or legal representatives under this policy.
- This restriction is in place to protect the privacy and instructional integrity of classroom environments.

**Recordings Used at Tribunal Hearing:**

- The District need not obtain parental/guardian consent to use a video or audio recording in a student tribunal hearing. Recordings available to the District, whether or not created by the District, may be offered as evidence in disciplinary or other hearings. Students and parents/guardians of students coming before a disciplinary tribunal will be permitted the opportunity to view recordings used as evidence.

**E. Appeal Rights**

Parents or guardians shall be afforded due process rights as provided by Georgia law. Any student who is subject to a disciplinary hearing or tribunal pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751 and related provisions shall have the right to reasonable notice of the charges, the opportunity to present and respond to evidence, the right to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and the right to be represented by legal counsel at the student's or parent's expense.

Following the conclusion of a disciplinary hearing, the disciplinary officer, panel, or tribunal shall render a written decision based solely upon the evidence presented. Written notice of the decision shall be provided to the parties in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-754.

Any party aggrieved by the decision of the disciplinary officer, panel, or tribunal may appeal such decision to the Board of Education by filing a written notice of appeal within twenty (20) calendar days from the date the decision is rendered. The Board of Education shall review the record of the proceedings and issue a written decision based solely upon the record. The Board may affirm, reverse, modify, or take any other action authorized by law.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160, any party aggrieved by a final decision of the Board of Education rendered on a contested issue after a hearing shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Georgia State Board of Education. Such appeal must be filed in writing with the Superintendent within thirty (30) days of the local Board's decision and shall distinctly set forth the issue in dispute, the decision being appealed, and the reasons for the appeal. The Superintendent shall transmit the appeal and the record of the proceedings to the Georgia State Board of Education as required by law. The parent is also responsible for the financial obligation to transcribe the record for appeal at any level.

The Georgia State Board of Education may affirm, reverse, or remand the decision of the local Board of Education. Any party aggrieved by the decision of the Georgia State Board of Education may further appeal to the Superior Court of the county in which the local Board of Education is located, as provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160.

Unless otherwise ordered by the Superintendent, Board of Education, or other reviewing authority, disciplinary consequences imposed by the disciplinary officer, panel, tribunal, or Board shall remain in effect during the pendency of any appeal.

## **General Student Discipline Guidelines (Previously Policy JD)**

### **A. Perspective**

The professional staff of the school is expected to ensure student conduct conducive to an orderly educational program, to maintain an effective learning atmosphere both in and outside the classroom, and to help students achieve the self-discipline necessary for responsible use of freedom.

In maintaining proper discipline, all persons connected with the school have a double obligation to promote the legitimate objectives of the school in ways appropriate to the individual's respective role and to recognize and defend the rights of others.

While the methodology of discipline varies, each school will develop and maintain administrative procedures which:

1. Consistently enforce the discipline policies stated in the "Guidelines for Student Behavior."
2. Require and support sound principles of classroom management and ensure the proper authority of each of its teachers.
3. Clearly define the student's rights, as well as the student's obligations and responsibilities in the area of student discipline in the local school setting.

It is expected that each school's administrative procedures will result in students, teachers, administrators, and parents sharing responsibility for the learning environment in an atmosphere of mutual support and success.

### **B. Teacher's Rights and Responsibilities**

The teacher has a right to appropriate behavior by all students, and failing to get it, the teacher has the responsibility to take corrective measures including, but not limited to enlisting parental assistance, imposing detention, revoking

privileges, referring students and providing input in any referral case. The teacher has a right to receive a report of any action taken. The teacher's responsibilities include conducting a well-planned and effective program, establishing and enforcing regulations within the school's educational environment that will facilitate learning, and maintaining written records of the conduct of students who may later be referred to others for help and/or disciplinary action.

A teacher shall have the authority, consistent with board policy, to manage his or her classroom, discipline students, and refer a student to the principal or his designee to maintain discipline in the classroom. Any teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior which violates the student code of conduct and repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his/her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn shall file a report of such behavior with the principal or his designee. The principal and the teacher shall thereafter follow the procedures set forth in Georgia law, specifically O.C.G.A. 20-2-737-738.

### **C. Administration's Responsibilities**

The administration has an obligation to impose necessary disciplinary measures including, but not limited to enlisting parental support, imposing detention, revoking privileges, removing a student from class, in-school suspension, suspending a student up to ten days, and recommending expulsion.

The administration is responsible for supporting teachers and insisting that they meet their obligation to maintain discipline, being alert to and correcting situations likely to promote poor citizenship, notifying parents of serious student offenses, creating an atmosphere conducive to student self-direction and self-regulation, and defending every individual within the school against arbitrary and unfair treatment.

The school superintendent shall fully support the authority of principals and teachers to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-738.

### **D. Parental Responsibilities**

The parent is expected to cooperate with the school, support its corrective measures, and to notify the school of any unusual behavior pattern on the part of the child that might lead to serious difficulties. Board Policy Manual Troup County Schools.

### **E. Options in Disciplinary Actions**

Both the teacher and principal have various options in imposing disciplinary measures for student misconduct and infraction of school rules. The teacher or principal may and should consult with parents on disciplinary measures that might prove most effective instances.

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in consortium with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of discipline violations not covered by prescribed disposition, the principal may enact corrective measures which he/she feels is in the best interest of the school and the student(s) involved.

### **F. Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

Students who have been identified as disabled and are receiving special education under the provisions of the Individuals The Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) must be viewed differently in determining what discipline is appropriate.

Before long-term suspension or expulsion may occur, it must first be determined whether the misconduct of the student in issue is a manifestation of the disabling conditions of the students. The decision of whether the misbehavior of disabled students is a manifestation of their disabling conditions must be determined by a school committee (IEP) comprised of professionals in the school system. The committee shall determine whether a causal relationship exists between the disability or disabling condition of the students involved and their misconduct. If the disciplinary committee finds that the misbehavior is not a manifestation of the students' disability (ies), then these students may be expelled or

suspended for longer than ten days. However, complete cessation of special education services mandated by federal law during the time the students are suspended or expelled from school is not permitted.

Long-term suspension or expulsion of disabled students is limited by court rulings that require continuation of some educational services during the expulsion/ suspension period. Short-term suspension or temporary suspensions not in excess of ten days is permitted and does not require the same protection for students as mandated by *SI v. Turlington*.

The use of short-term suspensions may be an appropriate disciplinary technique and will not constitute a change in placement unless the cumulative of short-term suspensions constitute a long-term suspension or expulsion.

In cases involving disabled students who are discipline problems, particularly those students who have behavior disorders or are severely and emotionally disturbed, and the usual procedure is for a placement committee to review the appropriateness of the student's current placement and determine whether a more restrictive placement is advisable. The placement committee has the responsibility for deciding what appropriate discipline for disability related behavior is. But when a student's behavior poses a threat to the safety of other students, such as the sale of illegal drugs to students on campus, it may be appropriate to consider those students for long-term suspension and expulsion, and follow the procedures required by the courts. A disabled student can be temporarily removed from the classroom prior to a hearing where such action is deemed necessary to protect the student, other students or the teacher, but the hearing should be held as soon as possible thereafter.