Fannin County School System

Elementary School Handbook

2026-2027

The Fannin County School System is committed to graduating all students on time with the skills they need to be successful. We believe this can best be accomplished in a high performing learning environment focused on continuous improvement.

Vision

We are Fannin: Empowering Excellence

Mission

We are Fannin. We are Family.
As a community, we will build a stronger future, one student at a time.

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WELCOME to Our School Family!

Dear Parents/Guardians, Students and Families:

Welcome to Blue Ridge Elementary School! We are excited to begin another school year and are honored to partner with you in your child's educational journey.

At BRES, our focus is always our children. We are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where every student can learn, grow, and thrive. We believe that all children have the ability to succeed when they are challenged, encouraged, and surrounded by caring adults who love and believe in them.

We hold high expectations for our students both academically and personally. Our goal is to help students develop strong skills, a love of learning, and the character traits necessary to become responsible and successful citizens. We encourage students to do their best each day, take pride in their work, and demonstrate kindness and respect towards others.

At the heart of our school culture is our commitment to respectful and responsible behavior, with honesty serving as a cornerstone of everything we do. We believe that integrity, accountability, and positive relationships create a school community where everyone feels valued and supported.

Thank you for trusting us with your child. We look forward to a wonderful year of learning, growth, and success together.

Lisa Rhodes
Blue Ridge Elementary Principal
lrhodes@fannin.k12.ga.us

Emily Adams
Blue Ridge Elementary Assistant Principal
eadams@fannin.k12.ga.us

CONTACT INFORMATION

District Office Contact Information

Board of Education	706-632-3771
Transportation Facility	706-632-7802
Nutrition Office	706-258-2619
Technology Department	706-258-2791

PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

- Exercise care and courtesy when picking up your child from school. Small children may be hard to see. Please have your car tag each day.
- Parent pick up will wrap around to the bus pad area - same as previous year.
- Pre-K - 5th grade students will leave classrooms at 2:45 PM for car/parent pickup

STUDENT SIGN-OUT

- To take a student away from school before the end of the school day, the parent/guardian must come to the office and sign out the student.
- Although occasional early checkouts may be necessary, parents/guardians are encouraged to not pick up students early unless they are sick or have a doctor's appointment.
- Kindergarten through grade 5 will not be counted absent if they stay through 11:00 AM.

SCHOOL HOURS & CLUBS- Blue Ridge

- Blue Ridge Elementary School (BRES) building opens at 7:00 AM. Personnel will be available to assist with car-rider student drop-off from 7:15 AM to 8:00 AM.
- BRES closes at 4:30 PM for students attending the After-School Tutoring Program or an after-school club.
- All elementary students who arrive before 7:30 AM must report directly to the cafeteria until 7:30. They will be dismissed from the cafeteria at 7:30 am and report directly to class (Prek-2nd grades) or the cafeteria (3rd-5th grades) for breakfast.
- All students should be on time for school and should remain for the entire day.
- Please avoid picking your child up early if at all possible. Students who leave before 2:45 PM often miss valuable instruction. A parent or guardian must sign out students who leave early. :
- Students should be picked up by the time the buses leave at 3:25 PM unless they are enrolled in the After School Tutoring Program or an after-school club, or unless specific arrangements have been made with administration.

7:00 AM	School building opens
7:30 AM	Students released from cafeteria for classroom
7:30 - 7:55 AM	K-5th Breakfast in cafeteria
7:55 - 8:15 AM	K - 5th Breakfast - grab and go from the lobby
7:45 - 8:00 AM	Pre-K Breakfast
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Pre-K – 5th Grade instructional day
2:45 PM	Pre-K – 5th Grade parent pickup
3:25 PM	Load buses

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE TEAM

Each school in Fannin County has a School Governance Team, which is made up of the Principal and the following representatives: two school employees, two parent members, and two community members. This team meets monthly at their respective school to discuss matters that are relevant to its school. The representatives are elected or appointed by the school community and serve a two-year term.

Blue Ridge Elementary 2025-26 School Governance Team Members:

Lisa Rhodes	Principal
Tori Arp	School Representative
Hannah Nicholson	School Representative
Beth Dlugokinski	Parent Representative
Kelsey Born	Parent Representative
Gilda Lyon	Community Member
Paige Powell	Community Member (Vice Chairman)

FANNIN COUNTY SCHOOLS ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK

ADMISSIONS (Policy JBC)

I. Definitions - The terms used in this policy shall be defined as such terms are defined in State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.28 Student Enrollment and Withdrawal ("state enrollment rule") or applicable state or federal law or regulation.

II. Age Eligibility for Enrollment – Other than students specifically exempted by law or rule, the following individuals are eligible for enrollment in the Fannin County School System:

1. Students who have attained the age of five by September 1, unless they attain the age of 21 by September 1 or they have received a high school diploma or the equivalent, provided they have not dropped out of school for one quarter or more as prescribed in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150. Students who have dropped out of school for one quarter or more are eligible to enroll unless they attain the age of 20 by September 1.

2. Special education students with IEPs may attend through the end of the semester that they turn 22, unless they receive a regular high school diploma prior to that time.
3. Students who were legal residents of one or more other states or countries for a period of two years immediately prior to moving to Georgia and were legally enrolled in an accredited public kindergarten or first grade may be enrolled if they will attain the age of five for kindergarten or six for first grade by December 31 and are otherwise eligible for enrollment.

III. Authorization to Enroll Eligible Students

1. The student's parent, legal guardian, or other person enrolling the student under the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1 (or the student in the case of an emancipated minor) must be a resident of the school district.
2. A kinship caregiver with a properly executed kinship caregiver affidavit may enroll a child not in the custody of a state agency and serve as the school's point of contact for the child regarding activities for which parental consent is usually required, such as the receipt of educational services; the receipt of medical services directly related to enrollment; participation in extracurricular activities; and, matters related to educational progress, discipline, and truancy; for as long as such affidavit is valid. The affidavit shall not be valid for more than one school year after the date on which it is executed.
3. A non-custodial parent or registering person acting in loco parentis under the authority of a power of attorney properly executed by a parent or guardian serving in the military shall be allowed to enroll a transitioning military child and perform all other actions requiring parental participation and consent. Children of transitioning military families shall be enrolled and placed in accordance with the requirements specified in the state enrollment rule.
4. A grandparent who resides in the school district and who presents a properly executed power of attorney for a minor child may enroll such grandchild, without court approval, if the specific conditions set forth in state law, as it existed before September 1, 2018 are met. The grandparent empowered to enroll the child shall have the same rights, duties, and responsibilities that would otherwise be exercised by the parent, except where limited by the executed power of attorney or federal law.
5. An adult who resides in the school district, and to whom the parent has delegated caregiving authority, and who is the child's grandparent, great-grandparent, step-grandparent, stepparent, former stepparent, aunt or great aunt, uncle or great uncle, cousin or sibling, or a non-relative who is approved by as an agent by a child-placing agency or a nonprofit entity or faith based organization, may enroll such child and have the rights, duties, and responsibilities that would

otherwise be exercised by the parent under state law, except that the delegating parent shall continue to have the right to receive the child's educational records. The enrolling adult must present a properly executed Form for Power of Attorney to Delegate the Power and Authority for the Care of a Child signed under oath before a notary public by the parent and the agent accepting such delegation and filed in the probate court of the county in which the child resides. Such powers of attorney may be granted for a period not to exceed one year, except that those granted to grandparents may have unlimited duration and those granted by military parents may not exceed the period of deployment plus thirty days.

6. Homeless children and unaccompanied youth, as defined in the state enrollment rule and the McKinney-Vento Act, shall be enrolled immediately with the assistance of the district's homeless liaison, as needed, and placed in accordance with the requirements specified in the state enrollment rule.
7. Students in the physical or legal custody of the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), or the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) and students placed by DHS, DJJ, or DBHDD in a residential facility within the school system shall be enrolled immediately in accordance with provisions specified in the state enrollment rule.
8. The school system is not responsible for making determinations regarding students' immigration and visa status. Immigrants, non-visa-holders, and non-immigrant, foreign students on various visas who meet age and residency requirements will be enrolled in accordance with the provisions specified in the state enrollment rule.

IV. Required Enrollment Documentation

1. Age Verification - The school system requires evidence of the student's date of birth and accepts as evidence a certified copy of a birth certificate, a certified hospital issued birth record or an alternate document from the prioritized list in the state enrollment rule.
2. Immunization Certificate – The school system requires proof of immunization as required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-771, which includes an exemption for religious grounds.
3. Nutritional Screening and Eye, Ear and Dental Exam Certificate - The school system complies with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-770 concerning nutritional screening and eye, ear, and dental examinations of students entering the first grade or at other times as public health rules may require.
4. Social Security Number - The school system complies with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150, which requires a person enrolling the student to provide a copy of the student's social security number or to sign a form stating that the person does not wish to provide the social security number.
5. Academic and/or Transfer Records, if applicable – Student enrollment and placement decisions are based on performance in previous schools or programs. A transferring student in a grade higher than the sixth grade must present a certified copy of his or her academic transcript and disciplinary record from the school previously attended.
6. Documentation for Homeless Students - Homeless students, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act, shall be enrolled immediately with full participation in school activities, regardless of whether required documentation can be provided at the time of enrollment. The designated employee responsible for care of homeless students shall assist the person enrolling the homeless student or the unaccompanied youth in acquiring the necessary documents for enrollment in accordance with the requirements of the state enrollment rule and the Act.
7. Proof of Residence (or Eligibility) shall be required in accordance with procedures or regulations developed by the Superintendent or designee.

V. Provisional Enrollment

1. A student shall be enrolled on a provisional basis and allowed to attend a school for 30 calendar days while awaiting evidence of age, residence, or other local requirements, unless enrollment may be properly denied in accordance with a provision of law or the state enrollment rule. If evidence is not provided within 30 days, the Superintendent or designee shall withdraw the student at the end of the 30th day. The 30-day period may be extended for extenuating circumstances in the discretion of the Superintendent or designee.
2. Prior notice of withdrawal to the parent or registering person and, as appropriate, reports to appropriate agencies of non-compliance with attendance laws shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the state enrollment rule.
3. Provisional enrollment will not apply to students who lawfully may be excluded under the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.1 (expulsion for bringing weapons to school), § 20-2-751.2 (subject to disciplinary orders of other school systems), and § 20-2-768 (expulsion or suspension of students for felonies).

ADMISSIONS: MOVING SCHOOLS

If a student moves during the school year, the school should be notified before the day of the move. All school books and library books must be returned and all charges paid. The office will prepare the withdrawal sheet and student record for transfer to your child's next school.

ATTENDANCE

In responding to student attendance issues, the school system shall comply with all requirements of state law, State Board of Education rule, and the Student Attendance Protocol that has been developed by Fannin County Student Attendance Protocol Committee.

Excused Absences

It is the policy of the Board to excuse students from school for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or when attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others.
2. A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. The observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. Registering to vote or voting in a public election, which shall not exceed one day.
7. A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U. S. armed forces or National Guard, and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, will be granted up to 5 days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the parent's leave.
8. Any other absence not explicitly defined in this policy but deemed to have merit based on circumstances as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The principal may in certain circumstances require students to present appropriate medical or other documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused.

School days missed as a result of out of school suspension shall not be counted as unexcused for the purpose of determining student truancy, but shall be counted as unexcused for all other purposes.

Students Counted Present

1. When they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly.

2. A foster care student who attends court proceedings relating to his or her foster care shall be counted present and shall not be counted absent, either excused or unexcused, for any day or portion of a day missed from school.

Grades and Absences

Final course grades of students shall not be penalized because of absences if the following conditions are met:

1. Absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons
2. Make up work for excused absences was completed satisfactorily.

Policies and Procedures to Reduce Unexcused Absences: Notification

1. The school system shall provide to the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student (hereinafter referred to as parent) when the student has five unexcused absences. The notice will outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, the school system will send written notice via first class mail or via certified mail, return receipt requested; and
2. Prior to any action to commence judicial proceedings to impose a penalty on the parent for failing to comply with compulsory attendance law, the school system will notify the parent by certified mail, return receipt requested; and
3. Each school shall provide to the parent of each student enrolled a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment, the parent will be asked to sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1 must sign a statement indicating receipt of written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance with the local board policy.

Homework When Absent

- When your child is absent from school, please call the school office in the morning for his/her homework assignments. The homeroom teacher will be notified, and a packet will be provided for your child. The packet may be picked up at the office or sent home with a sibling, if requested.
- Work should be completed within 5 school days after returning to class.

BOOKBAGS

Students must carry book bags that are made of clear and/or mesh material. The only exceptions permitted are:

- A small, non-transparent pouch for personal hygiene items (5.5" x 8.5").
- School-approved cases for medical equipment.
- School-provided Chromebook case.
- Lunch bags that measure approximately 6"x 9" x 5".

All bags that are not clear or mesh will not be allowed down hallways and must be stored in a specified area. Any bag that does not adhere to this protocol will not be allowed down the hallway.

BEHAVIOR PROGRAM-SCHOOLWIDE

We have a Positive School Climate Behavior System. We encourage good behavior for all students. The school has developed a behavioral program with incentives for good behavior.

BULLYING

The Fannin County Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Bullying is defined in the definition section of the Student Code of Conduct. Teachers, school employees, students, parents, guardians, or other persons may report or otherwise provide information related to bullying activity. The information may be provided by contacting the school administration. If the person wishing to provide information desires to remain anonymous, that person may contact the school electronically or by using the United States mail.

Bullying is specifically defined as an act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:

Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such item is defined in Code in Code Section 16-5-23.1;

Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education or otherwise substantially infringing upon the rights of a student;

Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

<u>Consequences:</u> Grades PK-5

Bullying violations shall result in any of the following consequences or combination of consequences:

- Parent Contact
- Anti-Bullying Contract
- Short Term Suspension
- Long Term Suspension
- Possible Police Action

The first time it is determined by the school administration that a student has been involved in bullying behavior, the student determined to be involved in inappropriate activity shall sign an “Anti-Bullying Contract”. In addition to any appropriate discipline imposed, the student shall receive counseling from the school counselor related to the inappropriateness of the observed behavior.

BUS TRANSPORTATION/BUS CONDUCT

While the law requires the school district to furnish transportation, it does not relieve parents of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the student boards the bus in the morning and after the student leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once a student boards the bus – and only at that time – does he/she become the responsibility of the school district. In view of the fact that a bus is an

extension of the classroom, the board shall require students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. When a student does not conduct himself/herself properly on a bus, the bus driver of that school will bring the incident to the attention of the building principal. The building principal will inform the parents immediately of the misconduct and request their cooperation in correcting the student's behavior. A student can be suspended or expelled from school for misbehaving on the bus.

A student who becomes a serious disciplinary problem on the bus may have his/her riding privileges suspended or revoked. In such cases the parents of the students involved become responsible for seeing that their child gets to and from school safely.

THE FANNIN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM ADHERES TO THE FOLLOWING RULES FOR RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS:

1. Stand off the roadway while awaiting the bus.
2. Keep your seat at all times when the bus is moving.
3. Keep your arms and head inside windows.
4. Walk ten feet in front of the bus. Wait for the driver's signal before crossing the road.
5. Unnecessary conversations with the driver are dangerous. Please remain quiet.
6. Outside of ordinary conversations, classroom conduct is to be observed.
7. Absolute silence is required at all railroad crossings.
8. The driver is in full charge of the bus and students. Students must obey the driver.
9. The driver has the right to assign students to certain seats if necessary to promote order on the bus.
10. Students are not to leave the bus at any place along the route except for necessary bus transfers unless he/she presents a request by his/her parents that has been approved by the principal.
11. Students are not to use tobacco in any form on the bus.
12. Students must be on time; the bus cannot wait for those who are tardy.
13. Riding the bus is a privilege and should not be abused.

CAFETERIA

The Fannin County School System is excited to announce that all enrolled students will be provided breakfast and lunch at no cost for the 2026-2027 school year. The District will participate in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a U.S. Department of Agriculture service. CEP eliminates the need for household meal applications for free and reduced meals. All enrolled students receive meals at no cost; however, a second meal has the following price: Breakfast $3.00/Lunch $5.75.

Nondiscrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.
In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: **https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf**, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: 1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or 2. fax:(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or 3. email: program.intake@usda.gov This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

NO OUTSIDE LUNCHES are allowed to be delivered to students. Students are not permitted to check out of school for lunch and return to campus.

CAFETERIA CHARGES

SP 46-2016 requires all School Food Authorities operating the Federal school meal programs to have in place a written and clearly communicated system to address meal charges. Students will be allowed to charge meals. School Nutrition cashiers/managers will send home charge notices via email on a regular basis. If a family does not have an email address on file, the contact will be made through phone contact. School Nutrition Office will send low balance and negative balance emails to those accounts where email addresses are imported automatically through the point of sale software and the student information software on a regular basis.

Prepayment for lunches and à la carte items is encouraged. Students may present cash or checks to cashiers at breakfast or lunch. Parents may also pay online at www.myschoolbucks.com. To complete this process, parents will need to know the student identification for their child (it begins with 655 and contains 9 to 11 digits).

CAFETERIA -COMPETITIVE FOODS/WELLNESS PROGRAM (Policy EEE)

The Board of Education recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects student wellness, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

To the extent practicable, all schools in the district shall participate in available federal school meal programs. All foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day shall be consistent with the minimum requirements of federal law and regulations and state requirements. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the U.S. Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as those regulations and guidance apply to schools.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a wellness committee consisting of school system and community representatives from areas designated in federal law to participate in the development, implementation and periodic review of school wellness policies. Such policies shall contain, at a minimum: 1. Specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness; 2. Standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages available on campus during the school day that: a. are consistent with federal meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards; b. prohibit the sale to students on the school campus during the school day of competitive foods

that do not meet the federal criteria; and, c. adhere to the federal and state requirements regarding exempt fundraisers. 3. Identification of the position of district or school official(s) responsible for the oversight to ensure each school's compliance with the wellness policy; 4. A description of the manner in which parents, students, and representatives of school food service, physical education teachers, school health professions, the school board, school administrators, and the general public are provided an opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review of the wellness policy; and 5. A description of the plan for measuring the implementation of the wellness policy and for reporting to the public its content and implementation issues.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that each participating school complies with the wellness policy; that periodic assessments and progress reports are conducted in accordance with state and federal timelines and other requirements; and, that appropriate updates or modifications are made as needed.

Parents and community members are encouraged to participate in the wellness program. Contact the Director of Nutrition & Wellness at the District office for more information.

CALENDAR

The most current Fannin County School System 2026-2027 School Calendar can always be found on the FCSS website: http://www.fannin.k12.ga.us/

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

O.C.G.A. 20-2-705: The Georgia General Assembly requires schools to notify parents of student clubs and organizations, including the name of the club, its mission and purpose, and faculty advisor, so that parents may choose whether to consent for their child to participate.

*See individual school information for club listings.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Communication - Online

Fannin County Elementary Schools use the following outlets to communicate with parents and the community.

- Automated Phone Alerts
- Communication App (i.e. Class Dojo, School Status)
- Infinite Campus Parent Portal, an online information service for parents/guardians, is available at https://campus.fannin.k12.ga.us/campus/portal/fannin.jsp. Infinite Campus allows registered parents/guardians to view their child's grades online after the grades are entered into the electronic grade book by the child's teacher. Please come by the office to sign up if you do not have an account. This is also where student information is maintained. If your address or phone number changes, please notify the school immediately. The school must be able to contact you in the event your child has an accident, becomes ill at school, school is dismissed early, or for other reasons.
- School websites can be found through www.fannin.k12.ga.us
- Social Media

Weather/Emergency Closings

Occasionally, unexpected circumstances arise that require Fannin County Schools to delay opening, dismiss early, or close due to weather or other emergencies.

- Closures will be announced through our automated phone system, social media (Facebook & Instagram), the Fannin County call-in hotline 706-946-FCSS (3277), as well as local radio stations.
- Parents/guardians should have a form on file at school with alternative places for their child to be sent in the event they cannot be reached. Students should be aware of this procedure.

Communication-In The School

A parent information bulletin board is located in the front lobby with the following information:

1. Calendars
2. Committee Meeting Calendars
3. Up-Coming Event Information
4. Monthly School Menu
5. Homeless Liaison Information
6. Fundraising Information
7. Parent Portal Registration Forms

Parties/Holidays

- On certain occasions, parties are permitted. Traditionally, these celebrations occur at Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day.
- Parties are left to the discretion of the classroom teacher and should be coordinated between the teacher and the room parent volunteers.
- All parties require approval from the administration.

CONFERENCES (Parent/Teacher)

A conference with your child's teacher is your best means of learning how your child is performing in school.

- Teachers may contact parents/guardians at any time to schedule a phone or in person conference.
- Parents may schedule a conference at other times simply by contacting the teacher. The teacher will set up a time convenient for both parties.
- "Drop-in" (unscheduled) conferences should be avoided, since this interferes with instructional time and other teacher duties.

COUNSELOR

School personnel or parents/guardians may request the services of the Counselor to help children deal with personal, social, or behavioral problems.

- When necessary, parents/guardians may be contacted by the Counselor to offer assistance in dealing with certain issues.
- Conferences with the Counselor should be prearranged whenever possible.

DESTRUCTION OF SPECIAL STUDENT RECORDS NOTICE

In compliance with state and federal regulations and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), this notice informs you that the Fannin County School System intends to destroy special education records after the student has graduated or reaches the age of twenty-five. This information is destroyed annually in July. Records to be destroyed may include Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Evaluations and/or Reports, Data Summaries, Notices, and other personally identifiable information within the special education file.

Parents and students should be aware that these records may be needed for Social Security, post secondary school enrollment, or other reasons. *Positive identification will be required before records can be released to the individual.* If you wish to obtain these records prior to destruction or for more information, contact the district registrar at 706-946-2004.

The district may maintain a permanent record, without time limitation, of other school-related information for students.

DESTRUCTION OF SECTION 504 STUDENT RECORDS NOTICE

This notice informs you that the Fannin County School System intends to destroy Section 504 education records after five years of the student exiting high school.

Parents and students should be aware that these records may be needed for reference in post secondary schools. *Positive identification will be required before records can be released to the individual.* If you wish to obtain these records prior to destruction or for more information, contact the district registrar at 706-946-2004.

The district may maintain a permanent record, without time limitation, of other school-related information for students.

DISCIPLINE

- Teachers have the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline in the classroom.
- When misbehavior occurs, the teacher may…
    - Talk to the student or give the student a 'time-out' to reflect on making a better choice.
    - Request a parent conference
    - Place the child on a behavior contract
    - Place the child in detention for recess
    - Refer the situation directly to school administrators, in which case the parent will be notified
- Major offenses or behaviors (e.g. weapons on school campus, terroristic threats, etc.) are subject to the consequences outlined in the FCSS Code of Conduct.
- The FCSS Code of Conduct is located in the appendix at the end.

STATE AND COUNTY DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

- The Georgia General Assembly has amended Code section 20-2-735 to require language be placed in the student code of conduct to "encourage parents and guardians to inform their children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, or underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult."

- A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicants of any kind while on school property or participating in any school activity. The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule. All medication must be submitted to the Principal's office upon arriving at school, otherwise, the student will be subject to receive discipline as described under the code of conduct (this includes aspirin and cold medicine). Medicine must be in the prescribed container at school.

- A student shall not possess, use, or transmit cigarettes of any kind on the school grounds.

DRESS CODE

Appropriate dress for school is important. Elementary students will be expected to comply with the following clothing standards:

- Clothing items which display inappropriate language or gestures, advertise illegal substances (drugs, tobacco, alcohol) or weapons, and/or promote gang-related activities are strictly prohibited.
- Clothing accessories that present a disruption to the school environment are prohibited.
- No bare midriffs
- No hats worn in the building. (Except on announced special occasions.)
- No garments with holes which are deemed offensive or in poor taste.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. No cleats or shoes with wheels allowed.
- Tennis shoes are recommended for gym class and recess.
- Low-waisted pants must fit appropriately. Short, skort, and skirt hem length must be at least halfway down the thigh from the knee.

The administration has the authority to determine inappropriate dress not covered by the above mentioned guidelines. Penalty for violation of the dress code may include the following: warning and parental conference, detention, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.

The school administrator should first address all violations of the dress code during the first period of the student's attendance and notify parents of any violation. Suspected violations should be reported to the administration throughout the day.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

Every elementary school has an Emergency Operations Plan. You may review this plan by requesting it from the school office.

- In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians will be contacted through the automated phone system.
- Depending on the type of emergency, parents/guardians will be given specific instructions on how and where to pick up their child.

FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS

- Students regularly participate in fire and tornado drills to ensure their preparedness in the event of an actual emergency situation.
- Students are expected to listen and obey their teacher's directions during the drill. Students will move quickly and quietly to their designated area.
- All classrooms have an emergency evacuation plan posted.

GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Fannin County Board of Education requires the development and operation of programs of gifted education for students in grades K-12 attending the Fannin County Schools. The Gifted Education Program is designed to provide an enriching and challenging alternative to the regular curriculum program. A cluster model is used to provide services for students in Grades K-5. A teacher certified in gifted education will oversee the implementation of these services.

Students are referred for consideration for the gifted program by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. Identification and eventual placement decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. In order to qualify for placement, students must meet three of the four components established by the State Board of Education. These include: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. If a student does not qualify for gifted placement, then they cannot be tested again for two school years.

If parents/guardians wish to review operational details of the gifted program, please contact the school principal or the county gifted coordinator located at the Fannin County School System Central Office.

HARASSMENT (POLICY JCAC)

It is the policy of this School District to prohibit any act of harassment of students by other students or employees based upon race, color, national origin, sex, or disability at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace or at any school event or activity. Any such act by a student or employee shall result in prompt and appropriate discipline, including the possible termination of employment or suspension or expulsion of the student.

Sexual harassment may include conduct or speech which entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, demands or physical contact which creates a hostile environment. There may be other speech or conduct which employees or students experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment which should also be reported; harassment can take many forms and it is not possible to itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by this policy.

Any student, parent, employee, or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the School District as prohibited by this policy should promptly report the same to the principal of his or her school or to the appropriate coordinator designated in policy JAA, who will implement the Board's discriminatory complaints procedures as specified in that policy. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor or any administrator. Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. If at any point in the investigation of reported sexual harassment of a student, the coordinator or designee determines that the reported harassment should more properly be termed abuse, the reported incident or situation shall be referred pursuant to the established protocol for child abuse investigation.

It is the duty of all employees to promptly report harassment forbidden by this policy. All supervisors will instruct their subordinates as to the content of this policy and, through appropriate professional learning activities, enlighten employees as to the varied forms or expression of prohibited harassment. The principals of all schools shall ensure that students and parents are informed through student handbooks and verbally that such harassment is strictly forbidden, how it is to be reported and the consequences for violating this policy.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Purpose: The purpose of hospital/homebound instruction is to provide an educational program for students who are unable to attend school due to a serious health or orthopedic impairment where the student will be absent for a minimum of ten (10) consecutive school days.

Eligibility: Any school-age child enrolled in a Fannin County school is eligible for homebound instruction provided the following conditions are met:

1. A licensed physician signs the medical form stating that the student is unable to attend school because of a physical condition, but will benefit from instruction.
2. The student is expected to be absent from school due to the medical condition for at least two weeks after being certified by a physician for home instruction.
3. The student has no contagious disease, which would endanger the health of the teacher or for which contagious disease precautions (e.g., quarantine) have been taken.
4. If the student is confined to a hospital and the above conditions are met, instruction will be provided in the hospital and will be continued when the student goes home, if needed.
5. Students must obtain a homebound request form from the school.

Program:

- The homebound teacher, in collaboration with the classroom teacher(s), will develop the instructional program for the homebound or hospitalized student.
- The homebound teacher will evaluate the student's progress and provide grades for the term of home or hospital instruction to the school administrator.
- The student on homebound may not be employed.
- Attendance at homebound services will be reported to the Attendance Office. The homebound teacher must be notified if the student must be absent.
- Parent/Legal guardian must be present during homebound instruction.
- Parent/Legal guardian will give sufficient notice to the homebound teacher if the student is unable to meet for scheduled instruction. Homebound may be discontinued after two (2) canceled sessions or "no shows", unless sufficient excuse is provided.

HOMELESS STUDENTS MC/KINNEY VENTO ACT

The McKinney Vento Act requires homeless liaisons to provide public notice of the education rights of homeless students disseminated in places where homeless students receive services under the Act, such as in homeless shelters. If you have any questions or concerns regarding student homelessness, please contact FCSS Homeless Liaison, Tara Cantrell, at 706-632-2081.

The Homeless Liaison will contact the District's transportation department personnel to discuss transportation needs. If applicable, the Homeless Liaison will contact the school of origin to discuss transportation needs. The parent/guardian will be informed of transportation services, including to and from the school of origin, and that appropriate assistance to access transportation is provided.

HOUSE BILL 147

OCGA 20-2-1185 (e)(2)
This bill requires every public school to conduct an "Intruder Alert" drill by October 1 of each school year. This drill is for students, school administrators, teachers, and other school personnel based upon the guidance from the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency.

INSURANCE RESPONSIBILITY

The Fannin County School System DOES NOT provide free accident insurance at school. Information on purchasing low cost school insurance is provided at the beginning of the school year. This insurance covers accidents that might happen at school or while going to or from school. 24-hour coverage is also available.

LOST-AND-FOUND

- Students may come to the lost and found area located outside of the cafeteria to look for lost items. Small items such as jewelry, watches, keys, etc. are returned to the office.
- For easy identification, please write your child's name on all personal items.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Georgia state law mandates a moment of silence be observed each school day.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS of SUPPORT / STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM (MTSS/SST)

MTSS/SST is a method of academic intervention designed to provide early, effective assistance to children experiencing difficulties in academic areas.

NEEDS BASED INSTRUCTION

During this segment, instruction is provided to strengthen various academic skills. This instruction can serve as remediation or enrichment.

NURSE

Each Fannin County School is very fortunate to have the service of a full-time school nurse.

A health form MUST be completed annually online for each child by a parent/guardian during census verification/student record update. Students with Food & Allergy Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, or Seizures must have a physician-signed action plan on file and updated annually. Forms and other important health information (including Diabetes I and II and Water Safety) are located at: https://www.fannin.k12.ga.us/nurses

NURSE: HEAD LICE

- School-wide head checks may be conducted on all students periodically.
- In the event that your child is found to be positive for lice, you will be contacted by the school nurse. The nurse will explain treatment processes and requirements for the student to return to school.
- If you (parent/guardian) discover head lice on your child, please notify the school nurse so he/she may implement individual classroom checks in an attempt to prevent outbreaks.

NURSE: ILLNESS or ACCIDENT AT SCHOOL

- If a child becomes ill during the school day and needs to go home, the school will notify the parent/guardian.
- Should the child need emergency medical attention, the child's welfare will come first. Appropriate steps will be taken to get medical services started while an effort is made to contact the parent/guardian.
- If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted during an emergency, the other person(s) listed by the parent/guardian during census verification/student record update will be contacted.
- If your child has a fever (100°F or higher), then your child must stay at home until there is no fever, without using fever-reducing medications, for 24 hours.
- If your child is vomiting or has diarrhea, then your child must stay at home until he or she is symptom free, without using medications, for 24 hours.

NURSE: IMMUNIZATION & HEALTH RECORDS

Fannin County Schools will adhere to GA Code §20-2-771 in regard to vaccination requirements. No child shall be admitted to or attend any school or facility in this state unless the child shall first have submitted a certificate of immunization to the responsible official of the school or facility. The responsible official of any school or facility may grant a 30 calendar day waiver of the certification requirement for a justified reason. The waiver may be extended from the date of first admittance or of first attendance, whichever is earlier, for up to 90 calendar days provided documentation is on file at the school or facility from the local health department or a physician specifying that an immunization sequence has been started and that this immunization time schedule can be completed within the 90 day waiver period, provided confirmation is received during the waiver period from the health department or physician that immunizations are being received as scheduled, and provided the student under waiver is a transfer student, who is defined as a student who moves from an out-of-state school system to a Georgia school system, or a student entering kindergarten or first grade from out of state. The waiver may not be extended beyond 90 calendar days; and upon expiration of the waiver, the child shall not be admitted to or be permitted to attend the school or facility unless the child submits a certificate of immunization.

Fannin Schools will adhere to GA Code § 20-2-770 which utilizes GA Rules & Regulations 511-5-6-.02 regarding Department of Public Health Form 3300 (1) The parent or guardian of a child being admitted for the first time to a public school shall furnish to the school authorities a properly executed Department of Public Health Form 3300: Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Screening. The Certificate shall be subject to audit by the Department and by the local Health Department. (2) The vision, hearing, dental, and nutrition screenings reported on the Certificate must have been conducted within one year prior to the time that the child is admitted for the first time to a public school. (3) Any child admitted to a public school without a Certificate shall present a Certificate within three months following admission. (4) When a child transfers to another school within Georgia, the Certificate and any related follow-up documentation must be forwarded to the new school.

PARENT RESOURCE ROOM

A Parent Resource Room (in the Parent Liaison's office) is located at every elementary school. This room contains resources to help your child learn at home as well as internet access, a computer, a printer, etc. for parent use. The Parent Resource Room is available for parents to access Monday through Friday from 7:30 am - 3:30 pm.

PERSONAL ITEMS

In an effort to reduce the opportunity for property to be stolen, we recommend certain items not be brought on school campuses. School personnel will not be held responsible for items reported stolen. Personal items may be confiscated by school personnel and will be returned to the parent/guardian. Repeated violations may result in more serious disciplinary action.

Toys

- Toys include toy guns, knives, trinkets, electronic games, dolls, equipment, cards, etc.
- Toys are to be left at home.
- Banned items will be taken up by the teacher and held at his/her discretion. Playground equipment (footballs, etc.) may be brought only with prior permission from the teacher.
- Students are not allowed to trade or sell items brought from home such as baseball cards, etc.

PETS/ANIMALS

Animals are not permitted on school property with the exception of specially-trained service animals (e.g. Seeing-Eye Dogs) and specific animals that serve an educational purpose. The Principal and Assistant Principal must be notified of the presence of any animals on campus.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Promotion and retention decisions at all levels will be made based on student grades, attendance, and achievement as measured by various assessments which may include but are not limited to the Georgia Milestones Assessments.

Retention decisions will be a joint decision made by teachers, parents/guardians, and school administrator(s). Promotion, retention, and/or appeals for grade placement decisions may be made in writing to the Superintendent of the School System within 30 calendar days of the decision.

PARENT ADVISORY GROUP (PAG)

Our Parent Advisory Group (PAG) is an important part of the success we have experienced at Blue Ridge Elementary School. The PAG works to provide resources and parent input to the school in order to support the overall educational mission. They also serve as a sounding board for decisions, ideas and questions that shape the future of our school. The PAG supports learning at our school and encourages parents to become involved with his/her child's educational experience. We hope that you will become an active member in this group by attending our meetings and volunteering to help with the many activities and fundraisers during the year.

Notes home and posts on social media will be sent concerning meeting dates, times, and locations.

RECESS

- Students are to remain in the designated area during outdoor recess.
- Tackle football or any activity that results in a student falling or being knocked to the ground is not permitted.
- Dangerous activities such as rock throwing, fighting or rough play are not permitted.
- Unsafe use of playground equipment will not be tolerated.
- Recess during very cold, damp, or hot weather may be shortened.
- The decision to have outside recess during cold weather will depend on the temperature and wind chill factor and is based on administration discretion.

REPORT CARDS

- Report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period and are available on the Parent Portal.
- Mid-term progress reports will be available on the Infinite Campus Parent Portal and sent home.

REPORTING OF ACTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Any student *(or parent or friend of a student)* who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- Students are expected to come to school with paper and pencil and all other supplies necessary for doing their schoolwork.
- Additional supplies may be requested throughout the school year.
- If you are in need of assistance with school supplies for your student, please contact the parent liaison for help.

SCHOOL TELEPHONES

School telephones are business phones and are not to be used by students except in emergencies or unless permission has been granted by a teacher or administrator.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education services are available for eligible students.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

- Kindergarten: The Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program (GKIDS 2.0) is administered throughout the school year to all Kindergarten students. The GKIDS 2.0 assesses a student individually in five areas: communicative skills, logical-mathematical skills, physical skills, personal skills, and social skills. This assessment aids in determining readiness for first grade.
- Grades 1-2: Students will be tested at the school and local levels based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE).
- Grades 3-5: The Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) is a comprehensive summative assessment program spanning grades 3 through high school. The GA Milestones Assessment System measures how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Grades 3-5 will take language arts and mathematics. Fifth grade students will also take science.

TEXTBOOKS AND LIBRARY BOOKS

- Textbooks and library books are furnished to your child by the school system on a loan basis, and should be treated as borrowed property.
- Students must pay for the loss or abuse of textbooks or library books.

TUTORING (AFTER-SCHOOL)

Free tutoring is offered during the school year. Notes will be sent home with information about the program.

- Teachers will refer students to the program based on those that did not meet the minimum requirement on the Georgia Milestones and/or are having difficulty in the classroom performing in reading/language and/or math.
- Students are tutored by a certified teacher.
- Tutoring in Reading/ELA and Math is offered from 3:30-4:30 PM.
- Students must be picked up at 4:30 PM.
- If students are not picked up by 4:30 PM or have behavior issues three or more times, they will be dismissed from tutoring.

UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE (POLICY JBCCA(2))

It shall be the policy of the Fannin County Board of Education that the School District shall comply with the requirements of State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16 Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO).

The Superintendent and appropriate staff are authorized to develop a process that:

1. Facilitates the transfer of a student within ten school days of the School District's determination by official action that a student has been the victim of a violent criminal offense, if the student wishes to transfer to another school. To the extent possible, victims of violent criminal offenses shall be allowed to transfer to a school that is in compliance with current state and/or federal accountability requirements.

2. Notifies the parents/guardians of students enrolled in a school that has been identified as a persistently dangerous school within ten (10) school days of such notification to the School District by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). The parental notification shall explain the process for requesting a transfer to a safe public school, including a charter school, either within the School District or to one in another school district with which the School District has an agreement.

3. Provides for the development and submission to the GaDOE of a corrective action plan for each school identified as a persistently dangerous school within twenty (20) school days after notification to the School District by the GaDOE that a school has been so identified.

VISITORS

- All visitors are required to enter through the front door, scan their drivers license, receive a visitor's tag (which must be worn at all times) and walk through the weapon detection system. Visitors will then be escorted to their desired location. All other doors in the school building will remain locked for security reasons.
- Before leaving the building, all visitors must return to the office, sign out, and return the visitor's tag. We must account for everyone in the building if an emergency situation arises, and failure to sign out may result in danger for those looking for someone who has already left the building.
- Visitors will be escorted by a staff member to and from their destination within the school.

VOLUNTEERS

- A Parent Volunteer program is in place at Blue Ridge Elementary and training is conducted annually with additional training available as needed throughout the year.
- Volunteers must complete an annual FERPA training. In addition, volunteers must complete mandated reporter training. House Bill 1176 - Child Abuse Reporting Revisions: O.C.G.A. 19-7-5, which now holds volunteers in schools, hospitals, social agencies, or similar facilities responsible for the same child abuse reporting requirements as employees.
- Volunteers are always welcome at Blue Ridge Elementary School; however, for security purposes, all visitors are required to enter through the front door, scan their drivers license, receive a visitor's tag (which must be worn at all times) and walk through the weapon detection system. Visitors will then be escorted to their desired location.
- Before leaving the building, all volunteers must return to the office, sign out, and return the visitor's tag. We must account for everyone in the building if an emergency situation arises, and failure to sign out may result in danger for those looking for someone who has already left the building.

VISITOR PROTOCOL

All individuals arriving at the school as guests, volunteers, or for the purpose of student check-in or check-out are required to present a valid driver's license or government-issued photo identification. This identification must be scanned at the main office upon arrival.

Your cooperation in adhering to this protocol is greatly appreciated as we work together to maintain a secure learning environment.

STUDENT HANDBOOK STATEMENTS

ASBESTOS STATEMENT

This is to certify that the Fannin County School System has fully complied with Federal Regulation HOCFR763 – Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). All school buildings have been inspected for asbestos by an EPA certified inspector. A Management Plan for each school is on file at the Fannin County Board of Education. The Management Plan is available to the public during regular business hours. Copies may be obtained for a fee of $.25 per

page.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE

In accordance with the **Georgia Distraction-Free Education Act** and related state legislation, students are prohibited from using personal electronic devices during the school day. This **bell-to-bell** expectation applies from the beginning of the instructional day until dismissal.

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to:

- Cell phones and smartphones
- Smartwatches
- Tablets
- Wireless earbuds, headphones, and similar audio devices

To comply with state law, students must keep these devices stored as directed by the school throughout the school day. Each school will implement procedures for storing personal electronic devices, which may include the use of lockers, designated storage areas, or approved storage pouches.

Students who do not follow this policy will be subject to school disciplinary procedures in accordance with district guidelines.

Students using electronic devices must abide by the Internet Acceptable Use Agreement signed upon enrollment.

Students are prohibited from using electronic devices on school buses in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's safe operation of the school bus.

Any use of electronic devices during the instructional school day without permission of the administrative staff shall be considered a disciplinary violation and will be subject to disciplinary action as specified in the student code of conduct.

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE (POLICY IFBG)

The Fannin County School District will enforce its Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Guidelines. Upon reading the guidelines, each student must sign an approved Internet Network Access Agreement before they will be given the opportunity to enjoy Internet access at school. If a student is under the age of 18, his or her parents or legal guardians must also read and sign the agreement. The school district will not provide access to
any student who fails to obtain the required signature on an approved agreement.

A. INTERNET SAFETY AND EDUCATION

A. Individual Responsibility of Parents and User: All users and their parents or guardians are advised that due to the nature of the Internet, it is extremely difficult for the Board of Education to completely regulate and monitor the information received or sent by students. Students will be required to make independent decisions and use good judgment in their use of the Internet.

B. Personal Safety: Be safe. When using the computer network and Internet, users should not reveal personal information such as name, home address or home telephone number without authorization from the school.

C. Users should not arrange an in-person meeting with someone they "meet" on the computer without their parent's permission.

D. In order to promote the safety and security of students when accessing the Internet and any online communication programs, the school district will provide age-appropriate education regarding appropriate online behavior, including interacting with others on social networking websites and in chat rooms, as well as cyberbullying awareness and response.

E. "Hacking" and Other Illegal Activities: It is a violation of these guidelines to use the school's computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access.

F. Active Restriction Measures: The school district, either by itself or in combination with the Data Acquisition Site providing Internet access, will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are (i) obscene, (ii) child pornography, or (iii) harmful to minors. The school will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technical means, to ensure that the students are not accessing such depictions or any other materials which are inappropriate for minors.

B. PRIVACY

Electronic devices, as well as access to the network and Internet, are provided as a tool for education. The school district reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by a user. Therefore, privacy is not guaranteed. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the school district and no user shall have the expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

FAILURE TO FOLLOW GUIDELINES

The use of the computer network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Anyone violating these guidelines shall be subject to having their privileges revoked and face potential disciplinary or legal actions.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal Law, requires that the Fannin County School District obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education record unless a certain exception is met. One exception is Directory Information. Directory information is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The primary purpose of Directory Information is to allow the Fannin County School System to include student information in certain school publications or school-related activities such as:

- Yearbooks
- Honor Roll or other recognition lists
- Graduation programs
- Athletic and other extracurricular programs
- Class ring manufacturing companies
- Military recruiters

The Fannin County School District has designated the following information as "Directory Information:

- Student's name, address and telephone number;
- Student's date and place of birth;
- Student's email address;
- Student's participation in official school activities and sports;
- Weight and height of members of an athletic team;
- Dates of attendance at schools within the district;
- Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in the district's schools;
- Photograph; and
- Grade level

You have the right to limit or refuse the disclosure of "Directory Information". If you do not want the Fannin County School District to disclose any or all the above information as directory information, you must notify the principal of the school the student attends in writing within 10 days of receipt of this notice/handbook to opt out of having your child's information included as Directory Information. The written notice must: (1) include the name of the student; (2) include a statement that the parent/guardian or eligible student is opting out of the disclosure of Directory Information under FERPA; and (3) be signed and dated by the parent, guardian, or eligible student (a student age 18 or older). Please note that your written notice will be effective for the current year only and must be renewed on an annual basis should you wish to continue to opt out of the release of Directory Information.

ESSA RIGHT TO KNOW

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the Fannin County School System would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher—
    - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
    - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
    - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/ or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the Principal at your child's school.

MINDSET PROGRAM

FCSS has adopted the Mindset Program in order to facilitate insight, raise awareness, enhance skills and certify response teams in preventing and managing crisis or aggressive behavior. FCSS uses physical restraint only in circumstances where the student is harming themselves, harming others, or there is imminent danger. If a student has to be restrained under the preceding circumstances, a written report will be given to the parent/guardian within one school day.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

It is the policy of Fannin County School System to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, creed or disability in admission to its programs, services, and activities in access to them, in treatment of individuals, or in any aspect of their operations to also include but not be limited to additions, modifications, or alterations to the physical plan of any school facility.

PARENT/ELIGIBLE STUDENT DATA PRIVACY COMPLAINT POLICY (JRA)

It is the policy of the Board of Education that the School District ("District") shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act, which are designed to ensure that education records and student data are kept confidential and secure from unauthorized access and disclosure.

For the purposes of this policy, a "parent" is defined as a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. An "eligible student" is defined as a student who has reached 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

Any parent or eligible student ("Complainant") may file a complaint with the District if that individual believes or alleges that a possible violation of rights under the above laws has occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date the complaint is received by the District.

Complaints shall be handled in accordance with the following procedures.

All complaints shall be directed to the Superintendent's Designee:
FCSS Director of Communications and Information Services
130 Rebel Circle
Blue Ridge, GA 30513
706-258-2791
technologyhub@fannin.k12.ga.us

Upon the receipt of a request from a Complainant, a complaint form will be provided within 3 business days, which is also available on the District's website.
A written response shall be provided to the Complainant within 10 business days of the Designee's receipt of the completed complaint form.
The Complainant may file an appeal with the Superintendent within 10 business days of receipt of the Designee's response.
The Superintendent shall provide a written response to the Complainant within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal.
The Complainant may file an appeal to the Board of Education within 10 business days of receipt of the Superintendent's response.
The Board of Education shall render a final decision within 10 business days of receipt of an appeal.

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE

A. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:
1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Fannin County School System receives a request for access.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Fannin County School System to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

B. The Georgia Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act afford parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") the right to file a complaint with their local school system regarding a possible violation of rights under O.C.G.A. 20-2-667 or under other federal or state student data privacy and security laws. Direct complaints to:

Fannin County School System
Gini Tipton
FCSS Director of Communications and Information Systems
130 Rebel Circle
Blue Ridge, GA 30513
706-258-2791
gtipton@fannin.k12.ga.us

C. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –
1. To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
2. To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure Model Annual Notification is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))

3. To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
4. In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
5. To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
6. To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
7. To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
8. To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
9. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
10. To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10)
11. Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, requires the Fannin County School District to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your child out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas ("protected information surveys"):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents
2. Mental or psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and his/her family
3. Sex behavior and attitudes
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or ministers
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parents
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and certain physical exams and screenings. Following is a schedule of

activities requiring parental notice and consent or opt-out for the upcoming school year. This list is not exhaustive, and for surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, the Fannin County School District will provide parents, within a reasonable period of time prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, notification of the surveys and activities and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys. (Please note that this notice and consent/opt-out transfers from parents to any student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.)

If you wish to review any survey instrument or instructional material used in connection with any protected information or marketing survey, please submit a request to your child's principal. He or she will notify you of the time and place where you may review these materials. You have the right to review a survey and /or instructional materials before the survey or instruction is administered to a student.

Planned Annual Surveys:

Georgia Student Health 2.0 Survey Consent: The Georgia Student Health Survey is administered between October and March each school year. If you do not wish for your child to participate in this survey, please send a letter stating that you do not want your student to participate with your signature and phone number by September 30th of each school year.

RIGHT TO REVIEW INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS § 20-2-1017

You may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for your student. Request to review instructional materials should be directed to the Fannin County School System
Director of Curriculum
6145 Old Hwy 76
Blue Ridge, GA 30513
706-632-3771

TITLE I

Fannin County Elementary Schools are school-wide Title I Schools. Federal funds received by our schools are spent to help close the achievement gap and to help students meet challenging state standards. Research shows that parental involvement is a key factor in the academic success of students. Parents are encouraged to learn about our school's educational program, as well as our educational goals and objectives. Parents are also encouraged to stay informed about their child's progress at school. As Title I schools, our schools provide access to educational materials and resources to help parents learn more and be involved in the educational process. Parents are invited to access information available in the parent resource room. These materials are made available for parents to learn strategies and techniques to help their child(ren) improve academically and be as successful as possible at school. A Parent Involvement Policy is in place. Copies are available in the office. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The school improvement plan is located on the school website.

STUDENT COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS

From time to time, if conditions arise within the school or school system that need to be addressed, parents and students have the right to appropriately and respectfully express concerns. These concerns shall be resolved in an orderly manner. Complaints and grievances shall be approached in the following manner:

1. The opportunity shall be provided any student or his/her parents to first discuss with his/her teacher a decision or situation which he/she considers unjust or unfair;

2. If the matter remains unresolved after discussing it with the teacher involved, the student or his/her parents, or the teacher, may then bring the matter to the Principal's attention for his/her consideration. Official grievances to the Principal may be made in writing.
3. If the matter remains unresolved after discussing it with the Principal, it may then be brought to the Superintendent or a designee for his/her consideration.
4. Complaints that remain unresolved following any action of the Superintendent may then be referred to the Fannin County Board of Education.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (POLICY JAA)

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin, sex or disability in any student program. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations.

Any student, parent or other person who believes he or she or any student has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy must make a complaint in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints made to the School District regarding alleged discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin in violation of Title VI, on the basis of sex in violation of Title IX or on the basis of disability in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act will be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Any student, employee, parent or other person with a complaint or report alleging a violation as described above shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, either the principal for his/her school or the appropriate coordinator designated from time to time by the Board of Education [or by the principal]. If the complaint is oral, either the coordinator or school principal to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to him or her by the complainant and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement if it accurately reflects the complaint made. If the complaint is made to a school principal, he or she shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate coordinator of the complaint.

2. If the alleged offending individual is the coordinator or the principal, the complaint shall either be made by the complainant to the Superintendent or, if the complaint is initially made to the school principal, reported by the principal to the Superintendent. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complaint shall be made to the designated coordinator, who shall, without further investigation, report the complaint to the Board chairperson.

3. The coordinator or his or her designee shall have fifteen work days to gather all information relevant to the complaint made, review the information, determine the facts relating to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved. The coordinator or designee shall prepare a written response to the complaint detailing any action to be taken in response to the complaint and the time frame in which such action will be taken and copies of this response shall be furnished to the complainant, the appropriate coordinator and the principal or his or her designee.

4. If the complaint is not resolved at the conclusion of this fifteen-day period or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant shall have the right, within five work days of receiving a copy of the written response, to have the complaint referred to the Superintendent of Schools. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complainant may have the complaint referred to the Board of Education, rather than the Superintendent.

5. The Superintendent shall have fifteen work days to review the complaint and the response of the coordinator or designee and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent shall furnish to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action recommended by the coordinator or designee or the action to be taken by the School District in response to the complaint in lieu of that recommended by the coordinator or designee and the time frame in which such action shall be taken.

6. This policy is not intended to deprive any student or parent of any right they may have to file a complaint under any other applicable policy of the local board or to contact the Office of Civil Rights or other appropriate state or federal agency with regard to any allegations that the School District has violated the statutes described above.

7. The School District shall be responsible for distributing and disseminating information relevant to this policy and procedure to students, parents and employees through appropriate procedures.

8. No reprisal shall occur as a result of reporting unlawful discrimination or harassment under this policy, and any attempt to retaliate against a complainant shall be disciplined as is appropriate.

9. The confidentiality of any individual making a complaint or report in accordance with this policy, to the extent it is reasonably possible and complies with the law, shall be protected, although the discovery of the truth and the elimination of unlawful harassment shall be the overriding consideration.

TITLE IX (POLICY IDFA)

It shall be the policy of the Fannin County Board of Education to prohibit discrimination based on gender in any interscholastic or intramural athletics offered by the Fannin County School District. The District shall undertake all reasonable efforts to provide equal athletic opportunities for members of both genders. In accordance with the Georgia Equity in Sports Act, the District's high school shall not participate in, sponsor, or provide coaching staff for interscholastic sports events which are conducted under the authority of, conducted under the rules of, or scheduled by any athletic association unless the charter, bylaws, or other governing documents of such athletic associations comply with the Georgia Equity in Sports Act.

The Superintendent shall designate an individual known as the Title IX Coordinator, to coordinate compliance with the Georgia Equity in Sports Act. The school system shall annually notify all its students of the name, office address, and office telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator.

The Title IX Coordinator shall investigate any complaint received by the local school system alleging noncompliance with the Georgia Equity in Sports Act. The investigation shall be in accordance with the grievance procedures provided by administrative regulation to this Policy.

COMPACT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The School-Parent Compact of student, parent/guardian, and school personnel responsibilities will come home during the month of September each year. You are welcome to provide input on the School-Parent Compact at any time. Please contact the school Parent Liaison to provide input.

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

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

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

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

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

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

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

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

AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER

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

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Student vehicles brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, desks, and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any

time without prior notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers, or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus, at the discretion of administrators.

BEHAVIORS WHICH WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel: (1) Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher or other school personnel**;** Expulsion for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public schools for acts of physical violence found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contact or physical harm was in defense of himself or herself, as provided in Code Section 16-3-21; or the Board may authorize the student to attend alternative school for the period of the expulsion; provided, however, that such student is in kindergarten through grade six, then the Board, upon the recommendation of the Tribunal, may permit the student to re-enroll in regular programs for grades 9 through 12; and provided further that if the Board does not operate an alternative education program for grades kindergarten through grade six, then the Board may permit the student in kindergarten through grade six who commits such an act to re-enroll in the public school system. The student shall be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior. (2) Possible punishments may include expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension for students found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another.

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

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

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

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

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

Possession or use of tobacco in any form

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

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

Theft

Extortion or attempted extortion

Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive

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

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

Classroom and school disturbances

Violation of school dress code

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

Inappropriate public displays of affection

Gambling or possession of gambling devices

Moving and non-moving driving violations

Giving false information to school officials

Cheating on school assignments

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

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

Hazing

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

Willful and persistent violation of the student Code of Conduct

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

DISRUPTIVE PRESENCE

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

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

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

DEFINITION OF TERMS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

orders of private schools and other public schools/school systems as outlined in O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.2.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Weapon: The term weapon is defined as any object that is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well-being. The following may be defined as dangerous weapons: Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade, OR any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of

two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

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UNSAFE SCHOOLS

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

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES

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

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Internal Guideline Statement:

Internal Guideline Statement: It is the internal guideline of the Fannin County School District to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of all students, staff, and visitors. To maintain a state of readiness for emergency situations, each school within the district is required to develop, update, and submit an Emergency Preparedness Plan to the Superintendent (or designee) on an annual basis.

Key Requirements

- Annual Submission: Every school principal or designated campus administrator must submit an updated Emergency Preparedness Plan prior to the start of each academic year.
- Plan Components: Individual campus plans must align with district-wide emergency management guidelines and address key hazard protocols (including prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery).
- Review & Verification: The Superintendent (or designee) and GEMA / HS shall review each submitted plan for compliance, completeness, and alignment with district policies before granting final approval.
- Confidentiality: Due to sensitive security information contained within school safety plans, individual campus EOPs are exempt from public disclosure to the extent permitted by law.