Muscogee County School District
Student Progression Plan
2017 - 2018

Muscogee County School District

Dr. David F. Lewis
Superintendent

Dr. Angela D. Vickers
Chief of Student Services

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- Our Mission -

TO INSPIRE AND EQUIP ALL STUDENTS
TO ACHIEVE UNLIMITED POTENTIAL

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I. Student Progress Plan Overview

A. Purpose of Student Progression Plan

The Muscogee County School District Student Progression Plan is a document that provides detailed information on a systematic grade-level progression from the time a student enters pre-kindergarten through 12th grade based on Muscogee County School District standard operating procedures, local and state policy and legislative requirements.

B. Mission, Vision, and Values of School District

Mission: To inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.
Vision: The MCSD is a beacon of educational excellence where all are known, valued and inspired.
Values: *MCSD fosters a healthy organization where…*

WE embrace equity and diversity
WE hold ourselves and others to the same high standards
WE commit to continuous learning and improvement
WE treat everyone with dignity and respect
*… as **WE** serve the needs of others.*

C. Nondiscrimination Statement

District Statement Regarding Harassment

TO: Students, Parents, Staff and Faculty of Muscogee County School District

- Muscogee County School District does not tolerate harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation/gender identity and/or age. Muscogee County School District is committed to taking immediate action to eliminate harassment, address its effects, and prevent its recurrence.
- Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment on such basis is encouraged to report the offense to the building administrator. Complaints may also be made to the District's Coordinator of Compliance/Chief of Student Services.

The Muscogee County School District Compliance Coordinator:

Dr. Angela D. Vickers	**Kathy Tessin**
Chief of Student Services	**Chief of Human Resources**
Coordinator of Compliance	**Coordinator of Compliance**
(706) 748-3336	**(706) 748- 2011**
Vickers.Angela.D@Muscogee.k12.ga.us	**Tessin.KathyA@Muscogee.k12.ga.us**

- Students and/ or employees found to have engaged in acts of harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation/gender identity and/or age will be promptly disciplined. Such discipline may include, if circumstances warrant, suspension or expulsion for students or suspension or termination for employees.
- Muscogee County School District strongly encourages students, parents, and district staff to work together to prevent harassment for any reason.

II. Georgia Standards of Excellence

A. Georgia Standards of Excellence

The Muscogee County School District follows the state required Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) as the instructional framework for all core content instruction. On February 19, 2015, the State Board of Education (SBOE) approved to change the former Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) to the new the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. The new GSE for ELA and Mathematics were implemented at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year. On March 31, 2016, the new GSE for Science was approved by the SBOE. The SBOE also approved the new GSE for Social Studies on June 9, 2016. The new Science and Social Studies GSE will be implemented beginning the 2017-2018 school year.

The link below will provide related information to the Georgia Standards of Excellence:

https://www.georgiastandards.org/Georgia-Standards/Pages/default.aspx

B. Provisions for Students with Disabilities

Per the Georgia Department of Education, Georgia's Standards of Excellence (GSE) are intended for all students in Kindergarten through 12th grade in the areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Federal laws require that all students, including students with disabilities, have access to a general curriculum that encompasses challenging academic standards and ensure that all students are assessed for their progress toward meeting academic standards. Effective accommodations and modifications are put in place to support the involvement of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum.

Where appropriate access to grade-level content standards will be tailored for each student, based upon that student's individual strengths and needs. The student's IEP or 504 team[1] will use an individualized analysis of that student to determine how that student will access the Georgia standards.

Students can access Georgia's content standards in many ways, including access through objectives in the Individual Education Program (IEP) that are aligned to Georgia's content standards or in the form of grade-level activities in which the student will practice and use skills and knowledge. Teachers may utilize different types of instructional materials to teach academic content, and students may show understanding using a variety of methods.

Because of the individualized nature of the programming provided for students with disabilities, parents / guardians are encouraged to reach out to building-level administrators or teachers with questions regarding a student's educational programming.

[1] The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act are federal laws requiring that appropriate education and related services are provided to students with disabilities.

III. Overview of Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

A. Response to Intervention in Georgia

Georgia bases its RtI framework in the general education classroom where teachers routinely implement a strong and rigorous standards-based learning environment. In addition, students are screened on a periodic basis to establish an academic and behavioral baseline and to identify students who may need additional support. Teachers provide students with additional leaning supports, monitoring progress, and adding layers of supports as needed.

Georgia's RtI process includes several key components:

- A 4-Tier delivery model designed to provide support matched to student need through the implementation of standards-based classrooms.

http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Documents/RTI%20document%20Full%20Text.pdf

Tier 1	**Standards-Based Classroom Learning**	Students have access to core instruction of the academic and behavior standards, and students are assessed to determine accurate academic and behavioral benchmarks.
Tier 2	**Needs-Based Learning**	Some students will need a little more instruction to build necessary academic or behavioral skills at particular times during the year. This could, at any point in time, include up to 20 percent of the student population therefore involving large or small learning groups. Students often only need this Tier 2 support for a short period of time or to develop a critical skill, and will stop accessing this additional instruction once it is evident that they no longer need it. If this does not seem to be enough support, Tier 3 (SST-Driven Learning) may be necessary. ***Tier 2 adds a layer of support, but students never stop accessing Tier 1 learning***
Tier 3	**Student Support Team (SST)-Driven Learning**	A few students may continue to struggle while receiving Tier 1 and 2 supports. This is typically when a team (SST) will meet to include parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s) and other support staff to problem-solve together. The SST works to decide which specific behavioral or academic skills would most likely bring success for the student and they develop a plan to begin to target those one or two critical skills. At this level teamwork and communication becomes even more important as consistent family, school and sometimes community supports are what is necessary for success. Follow-up SST meetings occur to evaluate how effectively the plan was carried out and if the plan should be altered, intensified or is no longer needed. ***Tier 3 adds another layer of support, but students never stop accessing Tiers 1 and 2***

Tier 4	**Specially-Designed Learning**	A few students may need a specially-designed plan in the Program for Exceptional Students or Special Education if it is evident that the lower three levels of interventions and supports are not enough. ***Tier 4 adds another layer of support, but these students never stop accessing Tiers 1 through 3***

Two ways that students access the continuum or tiers of interventions and supports:

1. **Tiered Approach**: Students gain access to higher level tiers through the typical process described in the table above, starting at Tier 1 and progressing through Tier 4.
2. **Immediate need**: Where it is clear a student needs a higher level support, the layered approach is modified so that the student gets additional support as soon as possible.

The earlier students get the supports they need, the better the outcomes. Therefore, if you notice any signs that a student is struggling academically, socially, behaviorally or emotionally, please contact a teacher, school administrator or school counselor to find out what tiered interventions and supports are available at the school as well as resources in the community that might be helpful.

B. Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

MCSD is working with the Georgia Department of Education to establish a framework for improving student behavior. This initiative is called PBIS [Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports] and is intended to create a positive school climate by focusing on teaching good behavior in the same way that we teach math or science. Although consequences for unexpected behaviors still occur, being proactive and preventative through the use of proven behavioral strategies is the focus and more energy and time is spent recognizing students who exhibit positive behaviors. PBIS is consistent with the core principles of Response to Intervention (RtI) including multiple levels or "tiers" of interventions and supports.

MCSD began implementing PBIS in 2014 and is dedicated to building this framework in all schools. It takes at least three years for a school to fully implement PBIS, and each year approximately ten MCSD schools will begin the PBIS implementation process.

Every school has a unique "PBIS" framework. Parents are encouraged to contact the school administrator or PBIS coach to learn more. The District PBIS Coordinator (Tammi Clarke) may also be contacted at PBIS@muscogee.k12.ga.us, call 706-748-3292 or visit our webpage @ https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/StudentServices/School-WidePBIS/Information.

Double Churches Middle School has fully implemented PBIS, and the following MCSD schools are currently working toward full PBIS implementation:

- Arnold Magnet Academy
- Baker Middle School
- Brewer Elementary School
- Carver High School
- Davis Elementary School
- Dawson Elementary School
- Dimon Magnet Academy
- Double Churches Elementary School
- Double Churches Middle School
- Downtown Magnet Academy
- Early College Academy
- East Columbus Magnet Academy
- Eddy Middle School
- Forrest Road Elementary School
- Fox Elementary School
- Georgetown Elementary School

- Kendrick High School
- Key Elementary School
- Lonnie Jackson Academy
- Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School
- Midland Middle School
- Richards Middle School
- Rigdon Road Elementary School
- Rothschild Leadership Academy
- South Columbus Elementary School
- St. Mary's Road Magnet Academy
- Wesley Heights Elementary School
- Wynnton Arts Academy

C. Project Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education (AWARE)

AWARE stands for *Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education.* Now Is the Time (NITT) Project AWARE is a 5 year federal grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) that was awarded to the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) in September 2014. The purpose of Georgia Project AWARE is to:

- Increase awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth
- Provide training in Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA)
- Connect children, youth, and families who may have behavioral health issues with appropriate services. (SAMHSA, Center for Mental Health Services, 2015).

MCSD was one of three districts in the state to be selected as a partner with Ga DOE to do the work of this grant. Please contact us if you would like to learn more about Project AWARE, need information and resources regarding mental health and wellness or if you would like to be trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) or schedule a course for a particular group/organization.

Email - ProjectAWARE@muscogee.k12.ga.us
Phone - 706-748-3292
Webpage - https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/StudentServices/ProjectAWARE/Information
FB, Twitter & Instagram "ProjectAWARE Muscogee"

IV. General Enrollment Requirements

A. Enrollment Documents for Students

1. Proof of Student's Age & Legal Name (one of the following documents in this order):

- A certified copy of a birth certificate, certified hospital issued birth record or birth certificate
- A military ID
- A valid driver's license
- A passport
- An adoption record
- A religious record signed by an authorized religious official
- An official school transcript
- An affidavit of age sworn to by the parent, guardian, grandparent, or other person accompanied by a certificate of age signed by a licensed practicing physician, which certificate states that the physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is substantially correct.

2. Health/Immunization Requirements

Immunizations	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MMR (one shot)	X													
MMR (two shots)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
POLIO (3–5 doses based on age)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
DTP/DTaP (5 shots based on age)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tdap (one shot)									X	X	X	X	X	X
MCV (one shot)									X	X	X	X	X	X
Hepatitis B Series (3 shots)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hib	X													
Varicella (one shot or signed proof of disease)	X									X	X	X	X	X
Varicella (two shots or signed proof of disease)		X	X	X	X	X	X							
PCV	X													
Hepatitis A Series (2 shots or proof of immunity)	X													

X denotes immunizations required to enroll in the grade listed

- GEORGIA **CERTIFICATE OF IMMUNIZATION** (GA Form 3231)
- GEORGIA **EYE, EAR & DENTAL EXAMINATION FORM** (GA Form 3300)
- Emergency Contact Information
- Students with Disabilities: Please bring a copy of the latest Individual Education Plan (IEP), last psychological and last eligibility determination and/or the last 504 to the school for registration. If you do not have access to a copy, we can request one from the previous district but it will take additional time to process.

If you are not sure what school your child may go to or you have specialized services in the IEP, please bring this information to the Program for Exceptional Students located in the Muscogee County Public Education Center 2960 Macon Road, Columbus, GA. If you need additional assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

B. Verification of Residency

Board Policy JBC - Proof of residence is required when a student initially enrolls in a Muscogee County school, whenever a change of residence occurs, or any time proof of residency is requested by authorized school district personnel.

1. Proof of Address

1st Proof - One of the following documents (must be current & indicate "service address" & parent name):

- Current utility bill, home phone bill (no cell phone bills & no "FINAL bills")
- Proof of government benefits (Medicare, food stamps, Department of Families and Children (DFACS) correspondence)
- Occupancy permit if moving into a newly constructed home

2nd Proof

- A residential lease or rental agreement
- A current property tax statement, property deed, or settlement statement for the home

The chart below identified the required documentation

	Pre-K	**K-12**	**Out of State Transfers for First Time**	**Out of State Transfers NOT First Time**	**Out of County but In State Transfers**	**In County Private, Public or Homeschool**
Proof of Student's Age	X	X	X	X	X	X
Social Security Card	X	X	X	X	X	X

Two proofs of residency – Mortgage or lease AND current utility bill	X	X	X	X	X	X
Withdrawal form from school student previously attended	X	X	X	X	X	X
Must be 5 years old on or before September 1st of the school year		X	X	X	X	X
Child must be 6 years old on or before September 1st of the school year. Student has completed Kindergarten. Student may be admitted any time during the school year		X	X	X	X	X
Child must be 4 years old on or before September 1st of the school year. Student may be admitted any time during the school year if seats are available	X					

2. School Zones

To determine the school of assignment based on your address for this school year, see the School Attendance Zone Locator (https://locator.muscogee.k12.ga.us). The school identified for a particular address reflects the assignment for the current school year. The descriptions and maps of school attendance zones available in the MCSD website, in the Columbus City Planning Division website, or in the local newspapers are intended for general reference only.

C. Enrollment for Out of State and/or District Students

1. Tuition Information

Tuition amounts change from year to year. The amount is determined just prior to the beginning of school. The annual amount of tuition for the 2017-2018 school year is $2,802 for out-of-county students and $8,398 for out-of-state students. When a student enters the school district during the school year an invoice is mailed within about 15 days from enrollment. Tuition amount is prorated per day for number of days remaining in the school year.

2. Military Exceptions

Effective July 1, 2017, school-age children of military service members, who live on Fort Benning, may attend a MCSD school, provided space is available and the student's educational needs can be met at the school. If space is available for additional enrollment Transportation is not provided by the MCSD. The parent or legal guardian is

responsible for transportation of the student(s) to and from school. Schools that are full with waiting lists cannot accept students. As of the time of printing of this information, the five following schools are full, therefore cannot accept students under this provisions: Britt David Magnet Academy, Clubview Elementary, Dorothy Height Elementary, Columbus High, and Rainey-McCullers School of the Arts.

D. Students with Disabilities Entering MCSD for the First Time

Students with disabilities coming into MCSD for the first time are asked to provide a copy of the most recent Individualized Education Program (or Plan) or 504 Plan for the student, as well as the most recent eligibility and psychological evaluation reports.

In order to ensure appropriate enrollment and assignment, students with disabilities will be directed to the Program for Exceptional Students to enroll.

If you need additional assistance with any portion of the enrollment process, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

E. English Leaners

All children and youth who have attained the age of five (5) years by September 1st shall be eligible for enrollment in the appropriate general education programs unless they attain the age of twenty (20) by September 1st, or they have received high school diplomas or the equivalent in their native countries.

A child who is coming from a foreign country where he/she was legally enrolled in public kindergarten or first grade, or a kindergarten or first grade accredited by a country or regional association of said country, shall be eligible for enrollment in the appropriate grade if the child will attain the age of five (5) for kindergarten or six (6) for first grade by December 31st. Foreign born students without valid school transcripts will be placed in an age-appropriate setting, no lower than one (1) year below grade level.

F. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education

Student who qualify as homeless under the definitions in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, require an immediate school enrollment and full participation in all school activities with or without normal registration documents. If a dispute arises over school selection or placement of a student identified as experiencing homelessness, the principal must admit the student to the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent or guardian pending a resolution of the dispute.

When applying any district policy regarding tardiness or absences, any tardiness or absence related to a child's or youth's living situation shall be excused. The Muscogee County School District will follow state procedures to ensure that youth in transition are identified and given equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services. School personnel shall refer children and youth in transition to appropriate health care services, including dental and mental health services. The liaison will assist the school in making referrals, as necessary. School personnel must also inform parents of all educational and related opportunities available to their children and provide parents with meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education. All parent information required by any provision of this policy must be provided in a form, manner and language understandable to each parent.

- Under federal law, McKinney-Vento students must have access to a free appropriate public education, including preschool, and are given an opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards. They must be included in state and district wide assessments and accountability systems.

- Information regarding the rights and services for homeless students will be: distributed to all students and parents in August and January and upon enrollment. Information is posted in every school in the district, as well as other places where children, youth and families in transition receive services, including family and youth shelters, motels, campgrounds, welfare departments, health departments and other social service agencies.

For more information, please see Board Policy JBC-1 and Georgia Department of Education Rule 160-5-1-28.

G. Home School Education and Private/Parochial Schools

1. Approved Accredited School

Students transferring from an **approved accredited** private or home school program and entering grades K – 9 will be assigned a grade placement in accordance with the procedures listed below. See Board Policy JBC (4) 160-1-.15 for a list of approved accrediting agencies.

- Submit an official transcript from the school/program and documentation that the school/program is accredited.
- Students transferring from a home school program must register with Student Services and schedule a conference with the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) before enrolling in a school.
- Students enrolling in the 4th, 6th, or 9th grade, must pass the approved placement test. Students will be assigned to the appropriate grade following completion of the placement test.
- The Department of Research, Accountability, and Assessment will approve a placement test based on recommendations by the Academic Content Specialists.
- Students between the ages of 5 through 8 will be placed in their age appropriate grade based on student documentation. Anytime during the first grading period, the Promotion and Retention Committee may request that the school reviews the student's grade placement. If the Committee recommends a change in grade placement, the Pre K – 12 Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction must approve the recommendation.
- All other students will be placed in the grade assigned by the private school program.

2. Non-Accredited School

Students transferring from a non-accredited private or home school program will be assigned a grade placement in accordance with the procedures listed below.

- Students transferring from a home school program must register with Student Services and fill out a request to return to public education from home school form.
- Students transferring from a home school program must submit a portfolio for each course completed to the CAO. The portfolio must contain the following information: (a) Outline of major concepts studied (b) Titles of textbooks (c) Writing samples (d) Unit tests (e) Standardized test results.
- Students between the ages of 5 through 8 will be placed in their age appropriate grade based on provided student documentation. Anytime during the first grading period, the Promotion and Retention Committee may request that the school reviews the student's grade placement. If the Committee recommends a change in grade placement, the Pre K – 12 Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction must approve the recommendation.
- The CAO will use the portfolio to determine probationary placement in an appropriate grade for students entering grades 3, 5, and 8. If the student does not perform satisfactorily during the first grading period, the Promotion and Retention Committee will recommend grade placement. The Pre K – 12 Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction must approve the Committee's recommendation.
- Students enrolling in the 4th, 6th, or 9th grade must pass a placement test. Students will be assigned to the preceding grade pending successful completion of the placement test.

- The Department of Research, Accountability, and Assessment will approve a placement test based on recommendations by the Academic Content Specialists.
- Students entering high school and seeking a unit of credit must pass the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) End of Course Assessment (EOC) or a teacher-prepared final exam. If the student passes the EOC or teacher-prepared final exam, credit will be awarded for the course. The grades on the EOC or final exam will be the grade for the class listed on the transcript.
- Appropriate grade placement form will be generated by the CAO and distributed to Student Services and the zoned school.

3. Students with Disabilities

Parentally placed private and Home School Students with Disabilities that attend school in Muscogee County may request proportionate share services through contacting the Program for Exceptional Students through the child find process by emailing childfind@muscogee.k12.ga.us or calling 706-748-2225.

Selection of these services are determined through an annual meeting with Private and Home School parents and the district. The decision of services will be determined by the district after the consultation and communicated, as appropriate.

Through the child find process, an evaluation will be provided, if appropriate, and special education services that fall within the services selected may be provided through a service plan.

V. Student Transfers and Withdrawals

A. Transferring Between Muscogee County Public Schools (Grades K-12)

Parents or Legal Guardians requesting a Hardship transfer must provide evidence of a compelling reason for requesting the transfer. Bus transportation is not provided by the school district for hardship/open seat transfers. The deadline for hardship/open seat transfer requests is on the last business day of April, at 5:00 P.M. Parents of students new to the school district for the coming year may request a hardship/open seat transfer application from the Central Registration office at the time of enrollment.

1. Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities who are transferring within the district can register at their zoned school unless they need to request an address change for special transportation, request special education transportation per an IEP team decision or receive a change in placement assignment based on an IEP determination, and any other requests that cannot be processed at the local zoned school. These factors must be addressed by coming to the Program for Exceptional Students at the Muscogee County Public Education Center, 2960 Macon Road, Columbus, GA. If you need additional assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

B. Out of County, State or Country or Private, Home School, or Military Compact

Parents of students that are out of county, state or country or private, home school or military compact for the coming year may request a hardship/open seat transfer application from the Central Registration office at the time of enrollment. Active military personnel living on federal property may request a Fort Benning transfer application at the time of enrollment.

C. Home Schooled Students

Students transferring from **accredited** or **non-accredited** home-school program will be assigned a grade placement in accordance with state and local policy JBC (4) 160-5-1-.15. Students transferring from an accredited home-school program must have official transcripts, register with Central Registration, and schedule an appointment with the Chief Academic Officer to review transcripts.

Students transferring from a non-accredited home school program must register with Central Registration, schedule an appointment with the Chief Academic Officer to determine grade placement.

Students withdrawing from MCSD to homeschool must register at www.gadoe.org.

D. Withdrawal Procedures

- **Due to Absence:** MCSD is authorized to administratively withdraw students 16 years of age or older (not subject to the compulsory attendance law) who have 10 (ten) or more consecutive days of unexcused absences without any extenuating circumstances. School administrators shall document a minimum of three (3) attempts to contact a parent, guardian, or other person for the purpose of holding an attendance withdrawal conference prior to withdrawing a student.

- **Parental Withdrawal:** MCSD procedure requires that where a parent or guardian seeks to withdraw his or her child from school, the parent or guardian who registered the student must fill out a written withdrawal form.

- **Parental Withdrawal of Unemancipated Minor:** Students between the ages of 16 and 18 (emancipated minors) must have parental permission to withdraw from school prior to earning a diploma. The Principal must convene a conference with the parent of child within two (2) days of receiving notice of intent to withdraw.
- **Checking a Student In or Out During the School Day:** Students arriving at school during the school day must be 'checked in' to school. 'Check In' procedures are available in each school's handbook. Students cannot be checked out during the last thirty (30) minutes of the school day.

Individual students who have emergencies necessitating their absence from school for a portion of the school day must have been present for the majority of the school day in order to be included in the average daily attendance count.

E. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education

Students must be allowed to attend their school of origin "to the extent feasible." School of origin is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the student was last enrolled. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(G).

Changing schools significantly impedes students' academic and social growth. The literature on highly mobile students indicates that it can take a student four to six months to recover academically after changing schools. Many studies also have found highly mobile students to have lower test scores and overall academic performance than peers who do not change schools. Therefore, the McKinney-Vento Act calls for school districts to maintain students in their school of origin to the extent feasible, unless that is against the wishes of the parent of guardian. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3). Students have the right to attend the school building of origin; this provides continuity of instruction, teachers, and peers.

Considerations for changing schools, other than as a result of a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth's wishes, must be based on a student-centered, individualized determination. Factors that may be considered include: the age of the child or youth; the impact the commute may have on the student's education; personal safety issues; the students' need for special instruction; length of anticipated stay in temporary shelter or other temporary location; and time remaining in the school year. There may be other student-centered factors not enumerated here that will help determine feasibility. Above all, feasibility is a child-centered decision.

VI. Elementary Education (Pre K - Grade 5)

A. Required Program of Study K-5

TABLE 1 ELEMENTARY REQUIRED PROGRAM OF STUDY					
Grade K	**Grade 1**	**Grade 2**	**Grade 3**	**Grade 4**	**Grade 5**
Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts* (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts* (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics*
Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art
	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music
Georgia Standards of Excellence *Promotion Retention GMAS Georgia Academic Placement and Promotion Policy MCSD Promotion and Retention Policy					

Code 20-2-776 (2009) requires each local school system to provide at least the minimum instruction in physical education required by the State Board of Education in Code 20-2-142. State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.12 (2011) requires local boards to develop and implement an accurate comprehensive health and physical education program" that includes motor skills, physical fitness, and lifetime sports. The rule further requires 90 hours of contact instruction in physical education and health for students in grade K-5

Students with Disabilities on a general education track follow the same criteria and requirements as all other students unless the IEP team makes a student specific change due to an individual student's data and identified needs. Rule 160-3-1-.07

1. English Language Arts

The K-5 Standards define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. Fundamentally, students in grades K through 5 are focused on developing comprehension strategies that will enable them to manipulate grade-level texts of appropriate complexity, and communicate effectively both in writing and in speaking. Students will begin to anchor their inquiries and responses firmly to the text, whether literary or informational, using increasingly specific and relevant evidence to support their claims and inferences. Students' analytical skills will extend to identifying main idea/theme, understanding character and plot

development, and evaluating the impact of word choice. Additionally, students will identify structural elements in text such as scenes and chapters, distinguish narrative voice, understand the impact of aesthetic elements, and make logical connections. A key component of the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) is the expectation of appropriate grade level complexity in text choices. Complexity levels are assessed based upon a variety of indicators.

Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards, to retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in previous grades, and to work steadily toward meeting the more general expectations described by the Standards. Although the Standards are divided into Foundational Skills, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language strands for conceptual clarity, the processes of communication are closely connected. For example the Writing Standards require that students write about what they read. Likewise, Speaking and Listening includes the necessity of presenting findings from research.

2. Math

The Math Georgia Standards of Excellence define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. The Georgia Mathematics Curriculum focuses on actively engaging students in the development of mathematical understanding by using manipulatives and a variety of representations, working independently and cooperatively to solve problems, and estimating and computing efficiently.

There is a shift towards applying mathematical concepts rather than merely following a sequence of procedures. In mathematics classrooms, students will learn to think critically in a mathematical way with an understanding that there are many different ways to a solution. Implementation of the Georgia Standards of Excellence places a greater emphasis on problem solving, reasoning, representation, connections, and communication.

Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards, to retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in previous grades, and to work steadily toward meeting the more general expectations described by the Standards.

3. Science

The Science Georgia Standards of Excellence drive science instruction. Hands-on, student-centered, and inquiry-based approaches should be the emphasis of instruction. The standards are a required minimum set of expectations that show proficiency in science. These standards set a maximum expectation on what will be assessed by the Georgia Milestones Assessment System in 5th Grade.

Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards, to retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in previous grades, and to work steadily toward meeting the more general expectations described by the Standards.

4. Social Studies

The Social Studies Georgia Standards of Excellence drive social studies instruction. Student-centered, inquiry-based approaches should be the emphasis of instruction. The standards are a required minimum set of expectations that show proficiency in social studies. These standards set a maximum expectation on what will be assessed by the Georgia Milestones Assessment System in 5th Grade.

Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards, to retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in previous grades, and to work steadily toward meeting the more general expectations described by the Standards.

5. Fine Arts

The Georgia Standards of Excellence for Fine Arts are based on The National Standards for Arts Education as referenced in the National Standards for Arts Education, Copyright ©1994 by MENC: The National Association for Music Education. The National Standards outline what every K-12 student should know and be able to do in the arts. The National Standards were developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Association, through a grant administered by The National Association for Music Education (MENC).
As described in the National Standards for Arts Education, arts education benefits both student and society. The arts cultivate the whole child, gradually building many kinds of literacy while developing intuition, reasoning, imagination, and dexterity into unique forms of expression and communication.
The Georgia Performance Standards support the arts in the "academic" standing in that mere participation is not the same as education. The standards affirm that discipline and rigor are critical to high academic achievement. Performance-based assessment has long been used in the arts that include the practice of portfolio review in the visual arts and the assessment of performance skills through auditions used in dance, music, and theatre. The content of the standards for the arts attends to creating, performing, and responding which is consistent with and informs the perspective of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

The Muscogee County School District (MCSD) Arts and Humanities Department supports more than 120 visual art, music, band, orchestra, chorus, dance and drama teachers and 30,000 students within its 1-12 programs.

Fine arts instruction in MCSD is standards-driven, sequential, substantive and comprehensive. All 1-5 elementary school students receive weekly art and music classes.

6. Physical and Health Educational Requirements

The GADOE requires that students in grade K-5 receive 90 hours of physical and health education throughout the school year. In grades K-5, the school district encourages that recess be offered each day that students do not have PE. GADOE Policy 160-4-2-.12 states that alcohol, drug, and sex education will be taught at an appropriate level for grades K - 12. At the elementary level this is taught through the guidance classes. Parents have the option to opt out of the sex education classes. They may get an opt out form from the counselor. The policy also states that there will be an annual assessment measuring and reporting health related fitness in the areas of aerobic capacity, body composition, flexibility, muscular strength, and muscular endurance. Georgia uses the FitnessGram to administer this assessment. Students in grade 4-12 are assessed annually using all 5 areas. Students in grades 1 - 3 have their height and weight measured.

B. Elementary School Student Assessment Program

The purpose of the Georgia Student Assessment Program is to measure student achievement of the state- adopted content standards and inform efforts to improve teaching and learning. Results of the assessment program are utilized to identify students failing to achieve mastery of content, to provide teachers with feedback about instructional practice, and to assist school districts in identifying strengths and weaknesses in order to establish priorities in planning educational programs. The assessment program includes customized summative criterion-referenced tests at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In addition, Georgia participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress in grades 4, 8 and 12 and administers an English language proficiency test in grades K-12.

1. State and National Assessments

ACCESS for ELLs (ACCESS 2.0) in grades K-12 and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs in grades 1-12
Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking

Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies in grades 5 and 8 and high school English/Language Arts and Mathematics, grades K, 3, 4, 6, and 7

Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) The Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) is a year-long portfolio that tracks student progress towards mastering the state required content standards for Kindergarten. The goal of the assessment program is to provide parents and teachers with information about the level of instructional support needed by individual students entering kindergarten and later moving to first grade. The areas assessed by the GKIDS includes:

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Science
- Approaches to Learning
- Personal and Social Development
- Motor Skills

Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, grades 5 and 8 and high school English/Language Arts and Mathematics, grades 3, 4, 6, and 7

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
National assessments in reading, math and science in grades 4, 8, and 12 for selected schools as determined by the U.S. Department of Education.

2. Expected Performances on the Georgia Milestones Assessment System for Grades 3 and 5

The Georgia Promotion, Placement, and Retention law (O.C.G.A., Section 20-2-282 through 20-2-285) and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11 mandate the following:

- All third grade students must achieve grade level scores on the state-adopted assessment in Reading in order to be promoted.
- All fifth grade students must have achieved grade level scores in Reading and Mathematics on the state-adopted assessment in order to be promoted.

Georgia Milestones will provide a reading grade level designation (Below or Grade Level or Above) for the purpose of determining eligibility for promotion in the area of reading. In mathematics, students who attain the Developing Learner Achievement Level are eligible for promotion to the next grade. The learning of these students should be monitored for progress in that next grade. These students are not required to, nor should they, participate in the retest administration. Students who score in the Beginning Learner achievement level in mathematics are retained under these provisions and should participate in the EOG retest administration.
For more information on the process for Promotion and Retention for 3rd and 5th grade students please see page 22 in this Student Progression Plan.

3. Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities are required to participate in all state and federal assessment requirements. The type of assessment (regular, regular with accommodations or Alternative) is determined through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. Students also receive accommodations and supports through the IEP as guided by the Present levels of performance which outline specific student need. If you need additional assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

4. Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is critical to the overall quality of the district's assessment program and the data it provides. Students who are caught cheating, helping others cheat, or knowingly allowing another student to cheat on a state mandated assessment will be considered to have committed academic dishonesty. The tests of students who are confirmed to have participated in cheating will be invalidated as required by the Georgia Department of Education with no score reported. Students will be rescheduled to retake the exam in the next available re-test window. This may result in a delay of grades or promotion for students requiring the exam for course credit, a portion of the course grade or to meet state promotion requirements.

C. Attendance Requirements

Mandatory attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall be required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma.

D. Early Childhood/Preschool Programs

Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Pre-Kindergarten Programs in Muscogee County School District include Georgia Pre-K, Blended Head Start, and Specialized Training for Exceptional Pre-School Students (STEPS). These programs serve children from age three (3) to age five (5).

1. Admission:

Criteria

Students entering Pre-Kindergarten in the Muscogee County School District must meet the criteria designated for each program. Blended Head Start applicants must apply and meet eligibility criteria which include age, residence and income as defined by the Federal Income Guidelines. All other students must meet the GA Pre-K age and residence criteria. All STEPS students must meet identification criteria set by the state of Georgia and federal guidelines. Students, with the exception of STEPS identified students are awarded a seat via a lottery process. As vacancies occur throughout the academic school year, seats will be filled using the lottery drawn waiting list.

Age

Students entering Pre-Kindergarten must meet the age requirements of the specific program. GA Pre-K eligible students must be four (4) no later than September 2nd of the year of planned attendance. STEPS identified students are eligible for service upon attainment of their third (3rd) birthday.

Documents

In order to be admitted to a Georgia school, a student must provide the following data:

Evidence of Birth

Provide evidence of date of birth in accordance with (one of the following documents in this order):

1. A certified copy of a birth certificate, certified hospital issued birth record or birth certificate
2. A military ID
3. A valid driver's license
4. A passport
5. An adoption record
6. A religious record signed by an authorized religious official
7. An official school transcript

Student's Social Security Card or Waiver Form

Waiver forms may be obtained from the Early Success Center Clerk at each Pre-K site.

Proof of Residency:

TWO (2) PROOFS OF ADDRESS

Board Policy JBCA - Proof of residence is required when a student initially enrolls in a Muscogee County school, whenever a change of residence occurs, or any time proof of residency is requested by authorized school district personnel.

1. The principal or designee shall accept the records as proof of residency:
   a. A lease or rental agreement consisting of written evidence that the agreement is valid and current, and a current utility bill or verification letter from one of the following utility companies: gas, electric, water, sanitation or cable company. Rental agreements must identify the parent as the tenant of record fiscally responsible for the residence listed in the agreement. Parents listed as mere occupants of a stated residence are not considered tenants of the property for purpose of enrollment. All records must include the name and the street address of the parent and service addresses must be plainly visible in any utility document provided as proof; OR
   b. A current residential property tax statement or settlement statement, and one current utility bill or verification letter from either the gas, electric, water, sanitation or cable company. Parents not listed in ownership documents that are willing to provide evidence of their legal relationship to the property owner may submit legal documents for consideration as an authorized representative of the titleholder. All records must include the name and street address of the parent and service addresses must be plainly visible in any utility document provided as proof; OR
   c. A Muscogee County Schools Affidavit of Residency. A parent who resides full time in Muscogee County but is unable to provide the consistent records listed above may complete a Muscogee County Schools Affidavit of Residency. The affidavit shall be completed in the presence of school system personnel and signed by the parent in the presence of a notary public. In addition, the legal owner or authorized tenant of the property where the student and parent reside shall complete and sign the affidavit with school system personnel and provide the documentation required as proof of residence. The affidavit will be in effect until the parent provides proof of residence as required by this policy, but no longer than the end of the current school year.

All such documents must be in the name of the student's parent and must consistently identify that individual with the property address of the residence.

Evidence of Immunization (school may grant deadline waiver in certain circumstances):
Provide evidence of immunization against communicable diseases using the GEORGIA CERTIFICATE OF IMMUNIZATION (GA Form 3231).

Evidence of Ear, Eye and Dental Exams
Provide evidence of a medical examination completed within the last twelve months from the date of entry into school using the GEORGIA EYE, EAR & DENTAL EXAMINATION FORM (GA Form 3300).

Homeless Assistance
Appropriate exceptions and accommodations will be made to minimize the barriers related to student assignment for students identified as eligible for services through the (1) Department of Human Resources (DHR) or under, *(2)* The Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
(https://www2.ed.gov/programs/homeless/legislation.html) and related Georgia Statutes.

Transfer Students
Special needs students transferring from an out-of-state school must meet the entrance criteria for Muscogee County School District Pre-Kindergarten Programs or have a current Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) or Individual Education Plan (IEP) for an Exceptional Student Education Program.

2. Program of Study:

Curriculum
The program of study for Pre-Kindergarten is based on curricula that provides developmentally appropriate instruction and teaching strategies individualized for the age and needs of the student. Research-based curricula and developmentally appropriate resources provide opportunities for student learning in all areas of development. Parents are an integral part of our students' learning process and are invited to share their areas of expertise.

Experiences and Activities
The Muscogee County School District Pre-Kindergarten Program provides students with developmentally appropriate activities and experiences that enhance their cognitive, physical, social and emotional growth. Students develop concepts about themselves, others, and the world around them through observations, experimentation and discovery. Daily activities are planned to provide teacher-directed and child-initiated experiences in small, individual and large group settings.
Readiness goals for student learning are written to align with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). These goals are in the areas of personal/social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts, and physical development/health and safety. Expectations for students are they will be kindergarten ready and develop a love of learning.

Exceptional Student Education (STEPS)
Student's ages three (3) through five (5) requiring special adaptations to the regular Pre-Kindergarten Program shall be admitted through an eligibility staffing and shall maintain a current Individual Education Plan (IEP). An appropriate program of study will be included in each STEPS student's IEP. Pre-Kindergarten STEPS students must have an IEP developed by their third birthday. Muscogee County School District is responsible for all children suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. The Muscogee County School District Program for Exceptional Students works diligently to identify and provide early intervention for young

children with special needs through the SPECIAL TRAINING FOR EXCEPTIONAL PRESCHOOL STUDENTS (STEPS) Program. Programs for all Students with Disabilities are provided in compliance with state and federal guidelines. Parents, doctors, or other interested persons may refer a child birth through five (5), for suspected delays to the STEPS Program. In collaboration with Babies Can't Wait, the district ensures that students Birth to age 3 are identified, located, and evaluated.

Contact the STEPS program at 706-748-2225 or email at Childfind@muscogee.k12.ga.us for additional information. You can also inquire in person at the Muscogee County Public Education Center located at 2960 Macon Road, Columbus, GA 31906. The Columbus Health Department Babies Can't Wait program, provides services for Children birth through age three (3). This agency can be contacted at 706-327-0189.

Equal Access

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School District, except as provided by law.

3. Placement:

Blended Head Start

Placement of Blended Head Start students in the Pre-Kindergarten Program is determined by age, proof of residence, and income eligibility via lottery selection.

Georgia Pre-Kindergarten

Placement in the Georgia Pre-Kindergarten Program is determined by age and proof of residence via a lottery process.

Specialized Training for Exceptional Pre-School Students (STEPS)

Placement of STEPS students in Pre-Kindergarten Programs will be determined by the Individual Education Planning Team and in compliance with the IEP/IFSP providing services in the least restrictive environment with their non-disabled peers.

Dually Enrolled

Placement of STEPS students in Georgia Pre-K (dual enrollment) is determined by an IEP team decision.

4. INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR BLENDED HEAD START, STEPS AND GEORGIA PRE-K

In a spirit of cooperation and mutual support, parents, teachers, staff, administrators and the community work together to inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential where all are known, valued, and inspired. WE embrace equity and diversity. WE hold ourselves and others to the same high standards. WE commit to continuous learning and improvement. WE treat everyone with dignity and respect as WE serve the needs of others.

5. Health

The health and developmental services for the Blended Head Start and Georgia Pre-K programs strive to meet the following goals:

- Provide an ongoing resource of comprehensive health services including; medical, dental, social-emotional and nutrition for all Pre-Kindergarten students.
- Provide an environment to meet the diverse needs of our students and their families. Every effort is made to effectively utilize resources to accommodate students with disabilities or special needs. Promote preventive health services and early intervention.

6. Safety

Child health and safety measures are practiced daily in all of the Muscogee County School District Pre-Kindergarten Programs. Every effort is made to assure a safe and healthy environment for our children, staff, and the public.

7. Nutrition

Nutrition plays an important role for both students and their families within Muscogee County School District Pre-Kindergarten programs. The nutrition service area strives to assist families in meeting each student's nutritional needs and establish good eating habits that nurture healthy development while promoting life-long well-being. The nutritional staff works diligently to plan and prepare nutritious menus that meet current USDA guidelines, ensure food safety and sanitation. Nutritious meals are offered daily to students, school staff and any visiting parent/guardian.

8. Social Emotional Development

SECOND STEP helps our littlest learners harness their energy and potential by teaching them to listen, pay attention, control their behavior, and get along with others. When students enter kindergarten with the self-regulation and social-emotional skills taught in the research-based SECOND STEP program, they're set up for success. All Pre-K teachers have been trained to use the SECOND STEP curriculum in the classroom. Thanks to a partnership with Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health), each teacher has a SECOND STEP classroom kit.

9. Parent Involvement

Parent and family engagement in Pre-K is about building relationships with families that support family well-being; supporting strong relationships between parents and their children; and nurturing ongoing learning and development for both parents and children. Parents immediately become involved in their child's Pre-K education at parent orientation. Parent trainings, workshops and conferences are planned to assist families in gaining knowledge in the area of child development, self-sufficiency and personal growth. Fatherhood initiatives are offered to promote the involvement of fathers in all aspects of the student's development and well-being.

10. Education

The Muscogee County School District Pre-Kindergarten Programs believe in a strong comprehensive program that nurtures and educates students. The program allows students and families to learn new skills and receive support and guidance from staff and community agencies. Students learn best through active learning experiences that have a purpose and are meaningful to them. Teachers assess and make observations to plan for and guide students based on their individual needs. Parent input is crucial in planning for student success. Classroom environments are nurturing where students learn how to get along with others, solve problems, and acquire the academic skills needed for school success.

11. Screening/Assessment

Universal Childhood Screenings

Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) offers free early childhood screenings to measure social, emotional, behavioral and developmental skills and provide results based on established developmental milestones. The Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) is designed to help parents check their child's development. This questionnaire will not determine eligibility or access to programs such as special education. The goal is early detection and assistance for families who want to learn about helpful services in the community.

Work Sampling Online

All Georgia Pre-K classrooms use a formative assessment called Work Sampling System to measure children's progress across 69 indicators in seven domains of learning. All indicators are aligned with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). Teachers assess children throughout the year and use the data to individualize instruction and provide guidance to families. In addition, DECAL and the Georgia Department of Education have partnered to make sure the assessment data is transferred at the end of the Pre-K year and is available to the child's teacher at the beginning of Kindergarten.

12. Completion

Pre-Kindergarten: Transition to Kindergarten

Students in Pre-Kindergarten who attain the age requirement for kindergarten will automatically transition to the Muscogee County School District's kindergarten program.

STEPS Transition to Kindergarten

Recommendations regarding the transition of students in the STEPS Pre-Kindergarten Program will be the responsibility of the IEP Team. Consideration for an additional year shall be for the purpose of continued development and will not be considered retention. Transition meetings will be held for all students transitioning from STEPS Pre-K to kindergarten.

13. Attendance

Attendance

When a student in Muscogee County School District Pre-K has been absent repeatedly, the Director/Principal or designee may ask the parent/guardian to provide verification for reason of absence. Students absent 10 (ten)

consecutive days without a medical exemption will be withdrawn from the program and the child's seat will be offered to a student on the waiting list. Students absent for a total of 15 days or more may be withdrawn from the program and the child's seat will be offered to a student on the waiting list.

Tardiness

When a Pre-K student is repeatedly tardy, the Director/Principal may recommend the student be unenrolled from programming and their seat offered to a student on the waiting list. With the exception of students who may have a shortened or customized schedule made by an IEP team.

E. Advanced Learning and Gifted Programs

***For eligibility criteria for gifted identification, please see section **XI. Other Programs and Requirements** in this manual.*

1. Gifted Services

Gifted students in grades kindergarten through 5th will be served using the **Resource Model** through St. Elmo Center for the Gifted. Students are served once a week through a pull-out program for five hours of the day. Individual elementary schools are assigned a specific day of the week that their gifted identified population is transported to St. Elmo Center for the Gifted from their home school for gifted program services. Students attending the center are excused from the classwork and homework assigned in their regular classroom on the day they attend St. Elmo Center for the Gifted. The Resource Model implements integrated units where all subject areas are covered to serve all students' talents and strengths. Students will attend the gifted program following state regulations for a minimum of five segments.

2. Resource Model – K-5

- All students must have been identified as gifted by GaDOE criteria. **Refer to eligibility criteria in section **XI. Other Programs and Requirements** in this manual.
- The curriculum must have an academic content foundation <u>based</u> on the Georgia curriculum standards, but it <u>should focus on interdisciplinary enrichment activities using the gifted standards and not any one content area.</u>
- The content, pacing, teaching strategies and expectations of student mastery should be differentiated to appropriately meet the needs for gifted students.
- Gifted students may receive no more than 10 gifted FTE segments per week of resource class service.

Many of the Georgia Standards of Excellence will be embedded and/or compacted and taught at an accelerated pace, along with the State Gifted Standards and Goals. Students will develop advanced research strategies and problem solving skills. They will also enhance their creativity and become more proficient with communication skills. Creativity and logical problem solving will be addressed throughout all subject areas.

3. Elementary Continuation Criteria

Below are the criteria for Muscogee County School District which follow SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38.

Criteria for evaluation of gifted classroom performance:

- Satisfies performance requirements for gifted education courses
- Satisfactory Attendance
- Appropriate Classroom Conduct

When a student fails to fulfill any criteria for evaluation, his/her performance shall be deemed unsatisfactory. The teacher of record should notify their principal and the Regional Gifted Facilitator at the end of each semester with a list of gifted students who do not complete the above criteria. The Regional Gifted Facilitator will initiate the following plan of action.

Consequences of unsatisfactory performance:

- At the end of the first semester, all gifted students' performances are evaluated. The student must satisfy performance requirements in their gifted courses. If performance is deemed satisfactory, services are continued.
- If performance is deemed unsatisfactory, student performance will be under review for nine weeks (in compliance with SBOE probationary period).
- If at the end of this review period, the student's performance is satisfactory, services will no longer be under review.
- If at the end of the review period, the student's performance is unsatisfactory, the services will be discontinued.

Continued Participation—Elementary School:

Resource Model

- Student satisfies performance requirements for gifted education courses as assessed by a rubric designed and developed by the teacher with student input as part of Inquiry-based learning.
- Student maintains satisfactory attendance: Elementary gifted resource students will be under review after three consecutive unexcused absences.
- Student maintains appropriate classroom conduct with minimal chronic disciplinary problems or out of program suspensions and no more than three behavior incidents resulting in disciplinary action by the Director.

The gifted resource teacher must notify the student and the parent/guardian if achievement, attendance, and/or behavioral data indicates a review is a possibility. The student will have an Individual Gifted Plan where areas of strength, weakness, and strategies as well as interventions will be noted. The gifted resource teacher must also coordinate with the appropriate Regional Gifted Facilitator.

Gifted Cluster Model:

- Student satisfies performance requirements for gifted education courses: Elementary gifted students served through the gifted cluster model will receive classroom grades from their teacher (Progress reports and Report cards) and should maintain a minimum of a 75 or 2.5 GPA in gifted cluster courses.
- Student maintains satisfactory attendance: Student attendance must remain in good standing without loss of credit in any course due to more than 15 absences.
- Student maintains appropriate classroom conduct with minimal chronic disciplinary problems or out of program suspensions and no more than three behavior incidents that result in referral.

The gifted teacher must notify the student and the parent/guardian if achievement, attendance, and/or behavioral data indicates a review is a possibility. The student will have a Gifted Review Plan where areas of strength, weakness, and strategies as well as interventions will be noted. The gifted teacher must also coordinate with the appropriate Regional Gifted Facilitator.

Please reference section XI. Other Programs and Requirements in this manual for continuation procedures.

For more information regarding gifted services at the elementary level, please visit our website at: http://sites.muscogee.k12.ga.us/stelmo/

E. Promotion Placement and Retention

1. General Requirements for Promotion and Retention

The Muscogee County School District Promotion and Retention Policy IHE authorizes the district administrative staff to develop procedures or regulations that specify how the state-adopted assessments and what local promotion criteria will be used in making decisions concerning promotion, placement or retention of students in Grades K-8.

a) REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES K – 8

- Each school principal shall distribute student data from the Georgia Milestones Assessment System End-of-Grade test, or comparable assessments, to teachers prior to the beginning of each school year. Each teacher shall use data to focus instruction on identified student academic performances in grades K-8.
- Each school principal or designee shall establish a Placement Committee for each student who does not meet the standards established for academic achievement in the classroom and/or standardized test scores in grades other than 3, 5, or 8. The Placement Committee shall:
  - Determine whether each student shall be retained or promoted based on a review of the overall academic achievement of the student;
  - Develop an accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction plan for each student who does not achieve at grade level and;
  - Develop a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student.
- Prior to the time that a student is retained, a parent conference must be scheduled for the purpose of informing the parent of the review team and principal's decision.
- A student who fails two yearly courses in grades 6th, 7th, or 8th will be retained. Students, based on the recommendation of their school's administration, shall be offered an opportunity to enroll in a course recovery program during the summer as a means of meeting promotion requirements.
- Students shall be tested in accordance with requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.

At the elementary and middle school levels, Promotion and Placement decisions are determined by the student IEP team on an individualized basis upon review of the district and state policy and procedures of promotion and placement. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

b) Additional Requirements for Grades 3 and 5

Promotion of a student shall be determined as follows:

- Based provision in Georgia State law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and State Board Rule 160-4-2-.11, no third or fifth grade student shall be promoted to the fourth or sixth grade if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and attain an achievement level of "Developing Learner", "Proficient Learner", or "Distinguished Learner" on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

- When a student does not perform at grade level in grades 3 or 5 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments the following shall occur:
  - Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing the parent or guardian.
  - The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and the student shall be retested with appropriate section(s) of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments.
  - Those students who do not earn a passing score after taking the test again will be retained (repeat their current grade level) as the law requires.
  - Parents, teachers, or principals have the right to appeal on behalf of the student who is not promoted to the next grade level.
  - All schools across the district follow the same appeals process, which requires a unanimous decision from the placement committee to place the student in the next grade.
  - The placement committee shall provide for a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student.
  - A Student Plan for Improvement for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction must be developed and be uploaded to the Student Information System for each student who does not achieve grade level performance in grades 3 or 5 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade.
- A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in language arts and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) shall take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in language arts and/or mathematics on the retest administration day(s).
  - Placement or promotion of these students shall follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.
- A student's failure to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment in grades 3 or 5 in language arts and/or mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s) shall result in the student being retained. The option of the parent or guardian or teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student shall follow the procedure set forth in this rule.
- For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee shall serve as the placement committee.

c) Retention of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who are following the general education program, take the state assessment, and are pursuing a standard diploma are affected by the same guidelines for retention as are students in general education. These students will follow the same process outlined in the Retention and Promotion policy for elementary students with the exception that the IEP team will act as the placement team for decision making purposes and an IEP will be written to reflect the data, supports, services and accommodations needed to support the student for the upcoming year.
Retention decisions for students with disabilities who are following a functional curriculum and are participating in alternate assessment are made based upon the recommendation of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team.

d) English Learner (EL)

English Learners (ELs) should receive the same consideration any other student receives when determining any type of program eligibility available to all students. The ELs in the mainstream classroom will need language development and other types of support that must be included in general classroom instruction. For ELs, that

includes accommodations to the instructional activities, tasks and assessments. Eligibility for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services and placement in an ESOL class automatically is considered a Tier 4 intervention. In the mainstream classroom, ELs should receive Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions to successfully access and comprehend instruction. As the student progresses in language and academic proficiency, the level of interventions needed to support him or her should decrease accordingly.

Retention committees (including the ESOL teacher) should review all data for a particular EL student and determine whether the lack of content knowledge is an academic issue or a lack of language proficiency. According to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA, 1974), identified ELs cannot be penalized with retention for their lack of language proficiency.

F. Grading and Reporting Student Progress

1. Progress Reports

Each student is provided a Progress Report near the midpoint of each nine weeks grading period, with specific dates listed on the official MCSD School Calendar available at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Calendar/Full. The report includes data on the student's current grade in each class as well as attendance and optional teacher comments. Progress Reports should be reviewed closely by parents and students for information on how well the student is meeting academic goals prior to the end of the grading period so that additional instructional assistance, if necessary, can be obtained.

Students with disabilities receive progress reports within the same guidelines for educational performance. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

2. Report Cards

Each student is provided a Report Cards at the end of each nine weeks grading period, with specific dates listed on the official MCSD School Calendar available at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Calendar/Full. The Report Card includes data on the student's final grade in each class for that nine weeks grading period as well as attendance and optional teacher comments. Report Cards should be reviewed closely by parents and students for information on how well the student is meeting academic goals for each course so that additional instructional assistance, if necessary, can be obtained.

Students with disabilities receive report cards on the same schedule as typical peers for educational performance. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

3. Grading System

Students are given a numerical grade, from 0 to 100, in each class. These grades appear on report cards and on permanent records.

Grade Distribution

90 -- 100	A (excellent)
80 -- 89	B (above average)
70 -- 79	C (average)

69 and below	F (unsatisfactory/failure)

Students with disabilities are graded based on the required grading process by the district and state as directed through the IEP. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

4. Parent/Student Portal

The Muscogee County School District provides parents and students with a secure electronic interface to access student information. Information provided includes: student attendance, student schedule, assignments and grades earned, and reports. Information is accessible to parents in real-time. To create a Parent Portal account, you will need to visit your child's school to verify all data is accurate in the system and show a picture ID. You will then receive a letter with your unique Activation Key. There is also a mobile app with notifications that you can use with mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets.

More information can be found by clicking the Infinite Campus Parent Portal link found on the "Families & Students" section of the Muscogee County School District website at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Families.

Students with disabilities and their parents have the same access to the parent and student portal information. If you need assistance, please contact your local school to obtain the required portal information.

VII. Middle School (Grades 6-8)

A. Program of Study: General Requirements for Grades 6, 7 & 8

1. Language Arts

Three completed successful years of language arts are required for promotion to high school:

6th grade ELA Course:	7th grade ELA Course:	8th grade ELA Course:
Language Arts 6 or Advanced Language Arts 6	Language Arts 7 or Advanced Language Arts 7	Language Arts 8 or Advanced Language Arts 8

- **6th grade Language Arts**: This course focuses on oral and written language, as well as media and technology for expressive, informational, argumentative, critical, and literary purposes. The course enables students to become skilled readers of more sophisticated literature by learning how to study and analyze literature through voice and style. The student will compose writing in a variety of genres: argumentative, informative/explanatory, narrative. The student will analyze and edit his or her writing by focusing on conventions, voice, and style. There is an increase in writing, editing, and proofing. Research becomes a critical component of this course. The student will also engage in viewing, listening, and speaking activities.
- **7th grade Language Arts:** This course focuses on an appreciation of written and spoken language, as well as media and technology for expressive, informational, argumentative, critical, and literary purposes. The course enables students to study and analyze compelling literature and to explore author's craft. The student expands his or her choices of writing modes and the students explores different types of sentence structure and more complex convention techniques. The student will compose writing in a variety of genres: argumentative, informative/explanatory, narrative) and increase abilities in writing, editing, and proofreading. The student will engage in oral presentations and dramatic interpretation; the student will explore the effects of media images, texts, and sounds. The student will continue learning the components of research. The student will also engage in viewing, listening, and speaking activities.
- **8th grade Language Arts**: This course focuses on extending the reading experience through a more complete study and analysis of compelling literature. The student will refine his or her skills in production of quality essays and narratives. Writing focuses on writing styles, a study of conventions will build on previous instruction and extend beyond. The student will continue with research. The student will also engage in viewing, listening, and speaking activities.

2. Mathematics

Students will take mathematics courses each year while enrolled in middle school, each aligned with the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) for mathematics and utilizing the Georgia Department of Education Frameworks.

The following table illustrates the various mathematics course sequence options that lead to meeting the mathematics course credit requirements for graduation.

MCSD Mathematics Sequence Options for 6-8				
Grade	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
		Advanced	*Accelerated*	*Accelerated*
6	Grade 6 Mathematics	Advanced Grade 6 Mathematics	Compacted 6/7th Grade Mathematics	Compacted 6/7th Grade Mathematics
7	Grade 7 Mathematics	Advanced Grade 7 Mathematics	Compacted 7/8th Grade Mathematics	Compacted 7/8th Grade Mathematics
8	Grade 8 Mathematics	Advanced Grade 8 Mathematics	Algebra I	Accelerated Algebra I/ Geometry A

Course descriptions:

- **Grade 6 Mathematics**: In Grade 6, instructional time should focus on four critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking.
- **Grade 7 Mathematics:** In Grade 7, instructional time should focus on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples.
- **Grade 8 Mathematics:** In Grade 8, instructional time should focus on three critical areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.
- **Algebra I:** Algebra I is the first course in a sequence of three required high school courses designed to ensure career and college readiness. The course represents a discrete study of algebra with correlated statistics applications.
- **Accelerated Algebra I/ Geometry A:** Accelerated Algebra I/Geometry A is the first course in a sequence of mathematics courses designed to ensure that students are prepared to take higher-level mathematics courses during their high school tenure, including Advanced Placement Calculus AB, Advanced Placement Calculus BC, and Advanced Placement Statistics.

To participate in the Compacted 6/7th or 7/8th Mathematics courses, students should satisfy the following requirements:

Sixth Grade Students - *6/7 Compacted Mathematics*
REQUIRED:

- Georgia Milestones Assessment (GMAS) 5th grade score of "Distinguished"
- Student Plan for Grades 6-12 Mathematics Coursework completed prior to participation
- Student signed agreement
- Parent signed agreement
- 90% or better mastery of previous grade-level mathematics GSE as indicated by 5th grade yearly average (report card grade for mathematics) (middle school magnet programs may require higher scores for participation)
- Teacher recommendation
- Principal recommendation

Seventh Grade Students - *7/8 Compacted Mathematics*
REQUIRED:

- Georgia Milestones Assessment (GMAS) 6th grade score of "Distinguished".
  (middle school magnet programs may require higher scores for participation)
- Student Plan for Grades 6-12 Mathematics Coursework completed prior to participation
- Student signed agreement
- Parent signed agreement
- 90% or better mastery of previous grade-level mathematics GSE as indicated by 6th grade yearly average (report card grade for mathematics)
- Teacher recommendation
- Principal recommendation

3. Science

- **Science (Grade 6):** The middle school earth science course is designed to give all students an overview of common strands in earth science including, but not limited to, meteorology, geology, astronomy, oceanography, resources, and human impact on the earth. Sixth grade students observe and explain how an aspect of weather can affect a weather system. They use different models to represent systems such as the solar system and the sun/moon/earth system. They use what they observe about the earth's materials to infer the processes and timelines that formed them. Sixth graders write instructions, describe observations, keep and analyze the data they collect, and show information in graphical form. When analyzing the data they collect, sixth graders can recognize relationships in simple charts and graphs and find more than one way to interpret their findings. The students replicate investigations and compare results to find similarities and differences.
- **Science (Grade 7):** The middle school life science course is designed to give students the necessary skills for a smooth transition from elementary life science standards to high school biology standards. The purpose is to give all students an overview of common strands in life science including, but not limited to, diversity of living organisms, structure and function of cells, heredity, ecosystems, and biological evolution. Students will develop the skill necessary to keep records of their observations and use those records to analyze the data they collect. They observe and use observations to explain diversity of living organisms and how the organisms are classified. They use different models to represent systems such as cells, tissues, and organs. They use what they know about ecosystems to explain the cycling of matter and energy. They use the concepts of natural selection and fossil evidence in explanations. Seventh graders write instructions, describe

observations, and show information in graphical form. When analyzing the data they collect, seventh graders can recognize relationships in simple charts and graphs and find more than one way to interpret their findings.

- **Science (Grade 8):** The middle school physical science course is designed to give students the necessary skills for a smooth transition from elementary physical science standards to high school physical science standards. The course provides an overview of common strands in physical science including, but not limited to, the nature of matter, laws of energy, matter, motion and forces, and energy transformation. The eighth grade physical science students work conceptually to develop understanding the concepts of conservation of matter, conservation of energy, physical change, chemical change, motion, forces, and energy transformation. Eighth grade students keep records of observations and analyze the data they collect. They describe observations and show information in graphical form. When analyzing data eighth graders can recognize relationships in simple charts and graphs and find more than one way to interpret their findings. This curriculum is NOT intended in any way to take the place of the high school physical science curriculum.

4. Social Studies

- **Sixth Grade Social Studies:** Sixth Grade Social Studies is the first year of a two year World Area Studies course. Sixth grade students study Latin America, Canada, Europe, and Australia. The goal of this two year course is to acquaint middle school students with the world in which they live. The geography domain includes both physical and human geography. The intent of the geography domain is for students to begin to grasp the importance geography plays in their everyday lives. The government/civics domain focuses on selected types of government found in the various areas so as to help students begin to understand the variety of governments in the world. The economics domain builds on the K-5 economics; however, the focus shifts from the United States to ways in which other countries answer the basic questions of economics. The history domain focuses on major events in each region during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.
- **Seventh Grade Social Studies:** Seventh Grade Social Studies is the second year of a two year World Area Studies course. Seventh grade students study Africa and Asia. The goal of this two year course is to acquaint middle school students with the world in which they live. The geography domain includes both physical and human geography. The intent of the geography domain is for students to begin to grasp the importance geography plays in our everyday lives. The government/civics domain focuses on selected types of government found in the various areas so as to help students begin to understand the variety of governments in the world. The economics domain builds on the K-5 economics, however, the focus shifts from the United States to ways in which other countries answer the basic questions of economics. The history domain focuses primarily significant events in each region from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.
- **Eighth Grade Social Studies:** Eight Grade Social Studies is the study of Georgia's geography, history, government, and economics. While the four strands are interwoven, ample opportunity is also provided for in-depth study of the geography of Georgia and the government of Georgia. U.S. historical events are included, as appropriate, to ensure students understand Georgia's role in the history of the United States.

5. Physical and Health Educational Requirements

The GADOE requires that each school containing any grade 6-8 shall make available instruction in health and physical education. GADOE Policy 160-4-2-.12 states that alcohol, drug, and sex education will be taught at an appropriate level for grades K - 12. At the middle school level this is taught through the health classes. Parents have the option to opt out of the sex education classes. They may get an opt out form from the teacher or counselor. The policy also states that there will be an annual assessment measuring and reporting health related fitness in the areas of aerobic capacity, body composition, flexibility, muscular strength, and muscular endurance. Georgia uses the FitnessGram to administer this assessment. Students in grade 4-12 are assessed annually using all 5 areas.

6. Connection Courses

Connection Courses are elective courses designed to provide middle school students with the opportunity to explore careers, the fine arts, and languages. Career, Technical and Agricultural Education programs in the middle schools vary at each school. However, each includes career development activities allowing students to make the connection between class work and workforce.

B. High School Courses Taken in Middle School

****NOTE:** *Any middle school student who makes at least a B in Algebra I, Physical Science, or Spanish I is not eligible to retake the class high school. Any student who makes a C or below will be eligible to retake the class in high school.*

1. Mathematics:
To enroll and earn credit in High School courses while in middle school, students should have completed the grade 6 through 8 curriculum, usually by completing the 6/7th and 7/8th Compacted Mathematics courses. Placement criteria for a middle school student to enroll in either Algebra I or Acc. Algebra I/ Geometry A is as follows:

MCSD Middle School Courses	
GSE Algebra I ● Algebra (high school level) standards ● High school level course ● Students are planning for GSE Geometry as a sophomore (Students previously completed 8th grade GSE course)	**REQUIRED** ❑ Previous year's GMAS Score: Distinguished ❑ Student Plan of Coursework ❑ Signed Agreement: Student and Parent ❑ Yearly Math Average: 90-94 ❑ Principal's recommendation
Accelerated GSE Algebra I/Geometry A ● All high school algebra standards and a portion of the high school geometry standards ● High school level course (Students previously completed 8th grade GSE)	**REQUIRED** ❑ Previous year's GMAS Score: Distinguished ❑ Student Plan of Coursework ❑ Signed Agreement: Student and Parent ❑ Yearly Math Average: 95-100 ❑ Principal's recommendation

Middle school students taking the high school course must meet all requirements required for high school credit, to include taking the Georgia Milestones End-of-Course test for the applicable course. The Georgia Milestones End-of-Course test score will count as 20% of the student's final grade for the course. Additionally, middle school students must pass the Georgia Milestones End-of-Course test to receive high school credit for the course.

2. Science:
Qualified 8th graders in MCSD middle schools may be provided the opportunity to complete the High School Physical Science course. Below details the requirements for admittance to this course:

Advanced Content **MCSD Middle School Course Descriptions:**	**Requirements: Meets 3 of 4**
GSE 9th Grade Physical Science *(for 8th Grade)* § GSE Standards, 9th grade Physical Science § Inquiry-Based Learning § Critical Thinking Skills application § CCGSE Science Literacy integration § Students are planning enrollment in AP/ Physics in 11th or 12th grade ** 7th grade students are identified by April 1st for possible enrollment. The tentative identification is based on mathematics and science course averages. Final identification is made with CRCT scores.)*	- 2016-2017 GMAS Score: Distinguished or ***high*** proficient for math. - Yearly Science Average for 7th Grade: 90-100 - Yearly Mathematics Average for 7th Grade: 90-100 - Teacher Recommendation from **advanced content 7th Grade Mathematics** Course (example: Compacted 7/8 Mathematics. Advanced course identification does not apply.)

Assessment Requirements:
End-of-Course-Test:

- End-of-Course (Milestones) is required for the Physical Science high school course
- MCSD requires that any students enrolled in this course, during the 8th Grade, meet or exceeds standards and receive a passing score on the EOC Milestones test **to receive high school credit**.
- Students not meeting or exceeding standards and receiving a passing score on the EOC Milestones test will be required to meet all four (4) science course requirements while attending a MCSD high school for grades nine (9) through (12).

3. Spanish:

MCSD offers Spanish I to approved 8th grade students. The chart below details the course sequence beginning with Spanish I:

SPANISH SEQUENCE OPTIONS FOR GRADES 6-12

Grade	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
6	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish Connections**
7	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish Connections**
8	**Spanish Connections**	**Spanish 1 -** Student earns an 80 average or higher	**Spanish 1 –** Student earns a 70-79 average	**Spanish 1 –** Student earns a 70-79 average	**Spanish 1 –** Student earns a failing grade 69 or below.
9	**Spanish 1**	**Spanish 2**	**Spanish 2** with parent permission	**Spanish 1**	**Spanish 1**
10	**Spanish 2**	**Spanish 3**	**Spanish 3 (optional)**	**Spanish 2**	**Spanish 2**
11	**Spanish 3 (optional)**	**Spanish 4**	**Spanish 4 (optional)**	**Spanish 3 (optional)**	**Spanish 3 (optional)**
12	**Spanish 4 (optional)**	**Advance Placement Spanish**	**Advance Placement Spanish**	**Spanish 4** (optional)	**Spanish 4** (optional)

Option 1: This option includes grade level standards and tasks for middle school students and grade level standards and task for high school students.

Option 2: This option includes grade level standards with enhanced and more complex tasks for middle school students. Students who earn an 80 average or higher in Level 1 Spanish in the eighth grade will be placed in Level 2 Spanish his/her ninth grade year of high school.

Option 3: This option includes grade level standards with enhanced and more complex tasks for middle school students. Students who earn a 70-79 average in Level 1 Spanish in eighth grade **will not be** placed in Level 2 Spanish in ninth grade unless the parent gives specific permission for the student to take Level 2 Spanish as a ninth grade student in high school.

Option 4: This option includes grade level standards with enhanced and more complex tasks for middle school students. Students who earn a 70-79 average in Level 1 Spanish in eighth grade **will not be** placed in Level 2 Spanish in the ninth grade. The student will take Level 1 Spanish in the ninth grade.

Option 5: This option includes grade level standards with enhanced and more complex tasks for middle school students. Students who earn a 69 or below average in Level 1 Spanish in the eighth grade will not be placed in Level 2 Spanish in the ninth grade. The student will take Level 1 Spanish in the ninth grade.

C. Attendance Requirements

Mandatory attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall be required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma.

D. Middle School Student Assessment Program

The purpose of the Georgia Student Assessment Program is to measure student achievement of the state- adopted content standards and inform efforts to improve teaching and learning. Results of the assessment program are utilized to identify students failing to achieve mastery of content, to provide teachers with feedback about instructional practice, and to assist school districts in identifying strengths and weaknesses in order to establish priorities in planning educational programs. The assessment program includes customized summative criterion-referenced tests at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In addition, Georgia participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress in grades 4, 8 and 12 and administers an English language proficiency test in grades K-12.

1. State and National Assessments

ACCESS for ELLs (ACCESS 2.0) in grades K-12 and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs in grades 1-12 Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking

Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies in grades 5 and 8 and high school English/Language Arts and Mathematics, grades K, 3, 4, 6, and 7

Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, grade 8 English/Language Arts and Mathematics, grades 6 and 7

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) National assessments in reading, math and science in grade 8 for selected schools as determined by the U.S. Department of Education.

2. Required Georgia Milestones Assessment Systems for Grade 8

The Georgia Promotion, Placement, and Retention law (O.C.G.A., Section 20-2-282 through 20-2-285) and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11 mandate the following:

All eighth grade students must have achieved grade level scores in Reading and Mathematics State-adopted assessment in order to be promoted.

Georgia Milestones will provide a reading grade level designation (Below or Grade Level or Above) for the purpose of determining eligibility for promotion in the area of reading. In mathematics, students who attain the Developing Learner Achievement Level are eligible for promotion to the next grade. The learning of these students should be monitored for progress in that next grade. These students are not required to, nor should they, participate in the retest administration. Students who score in the Beginning Learner achievement level in mathematics are retained under these provisions and should participate in the EOG retest administration.
For more information on the process for Promotion and Retention for 8th grade students please see page 35 in this Student Progression Plan.

3. "Testing Out" for Course Credit

As provided for in State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.15 (AWARDING UNITS OF CREDIT AND ACCEPTANCE OF TRANSFER CREDIT AND/OR GRADES) adopted by the Board in April 2013, the opportunity exists for students to demonstrate subject area competency ("test-out") for any course for which there is an associated End of Course (EOC) and earn credit for the course through that process. Students who reach the **Distinguished Learner** achievement level will have reached the required threshold for the awarding of course credit.

Under the provisions of the Rule and guidelines, the Muscogee County School District will award course credit to students who reach a designated performance level on an EOC taken prior to taking the course. For example, a student may attempt the Biology EOC prior to taking the course. If the student reaches the *Distinguished Learner achievement* level, the student will be awarded the Biology course credit. A student may test-out of any course that has an associated EOC. As stated in this Rule, students may earn no more than three units of credit by demonstrating subject area competency in this fashion.

Students must meet the following eligibility requirements to exercise this option:

- Not currently or previously enrolled in the course;
- Have earned a grade of B or better in the most recent course that is the same content area of the course for which the student is attempting the EOC;
- Received a teacher recommendation from the teacher of the most recent course in the same content area (or, if not available, a teacher in the same content area with knowledge of the student's academic achievement) for which the student is attempting the EOC; and
- Received parent/guardian permission if the student is less than 18 years of age.

Your student's school will carefully consider which students would benefit from such an opportunity and advise accordingly. As part of the advisement process, schools will consider the likelihood for success in future courses that may require knowledge and skills that are inherent within the course. In addition, the student's post-secondary plans and needs will be considered. The test-out option will not be exercised for students without deliberation and clear evidence of the likelihood of student success both on the test itself and in future

coursework/endeavors. Students who do not meet the eligibility criteria above must not be assessed for this purpose.

When allowing students to attempt to earn course credit through testing out the Muscogee County School District will:

- Allow eligible students **only one opportunity per course** to demonstrate subject area competency.
- Require students who do not reach the designated achievement level of *Distinguished Learner* when attempting to test-out to enroll in and complete the associated course when applicable. The student would again take the EOC at the conclusion of that course experience regardless of their score during their attempt to test-out. The scores are not "banked" for use with the course later.
- As stipulated in the Guidelines previously issued for this rule, the district cannot allow students who are currently enrolled, or who have previously been enrolled, in a higher- level course to attempt to earn credit by testing out. For example, a student taking AP Physics may not earn credit for Physical Science through this process.
- Conduct testing for the test-out option during the summer testing window of the academic year prior to the expected enrollment for the course. See the district testing calendar for more details.
- Charge $50.00 per test in advance for each test. Those students who meet the eligibility criteria and achieve at the *Distinguished Learner* achievement level will receive a refund. For those students not meeting the required achievement level to test-out will be charged the $50.00 to cover the cost of testing charged to the district by the state.

For more information about testing-out please contact your school's guidance department.

4. Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities are required to participate in all state and federal assessment requirements. The type of assessment (regular, regular with accommodations or Alternative) is determined through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. Students also receive accommodations and supports through the IEP as guided by the Present levels of performance which outline specific student need. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

5. Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is critical to the overall quality of the district's assessment program and the data it provides. Students who are caught cheating, helping others cheat, or knowingly allowing another student to cheat on a state mandated assessment will be considered to have committed academic dishonesty. The tests of students who are confirmed to have participated in cheating will be invalidated as required by the Georgia Department of Education with no score reported. Students will be rescheduled to retake the exam in the next available re-test window. This may result in a delay of grades or promotion for students requiring the exam for course credit, a portion of the course grade or to meet state promotion requirements.

E. Advanced Learning Gifted Programs

For eligibility criteria for gifted identification, refer to section **XI. Other Programs and Requirements in this manual.

1. Gifted Services Middle School

The primary gifted delivery model for gifted students in the middle school grades is the advanced content model in core content areas for grades six, seven, and eight wherein students are served in their core content classrooms with differentiated coursework for acceleration, extension, and/or amplified depth of exploration. Students will attend their gifted classes five days a week in content areas designated as their gifted strength. Students will master the Georgia Standards of Excellence in language arts/literacy, mathematics, science and social studies at an accelerated/compacted pace, along with State Gifted Standards and Goals. Students will develop advanced research skills and problem solving skills. They will also enhance their creativity and develop more advanced skills in the content areas.

Gifted middle school students who qualify according to the placement criteria for available high school level courses may opt to take these classes during their middle school years. Students who are enrolled in these courses must maintain the criteria listed below to continue to receive gifted services in these courses.

Middle School Continuation Criteria

The Muscogee County School District Gifted Education Program requires that middle school students meet specific performance standards as specified by the following:

- **Advanced Content, Honors, IB, Cluster, Collaboration models**
- Acceptable progress is determined separately for each content area in which a student is served and is defined as:
  - Maintaining a semester grade average of 80 or higher in the advanced content class (excluding Honors and AP) for which gifted service is provided.
  - Maintaining a semester grade average of 75 or higher in Honors courses and 70 and higher in AP courses for which gifted service is provided.
  - Maintaining an End-of-Semester and End-of-Year Grade Point Average of 2.5 or higher.
  - Meeting standards on the state required competency test in the content area for which gifted service is provided
- The student's attendance should remain in good standing without the loss of any credits while under review.

The student will have an **Individual Gifted Plan** where areas of strength, weaknesses, and strategies as well as interventions will be noted.

Please reference section XI. Other Programs and Requirements in this manual for continuation procedures.

F. Promotion Placement and Retention

1. General Requirements for Promotion and Retention

The Muscogee County School District Promotion and Retention Policy IHE authorizes the district administrative staff to develop procedures or regulations that specify how the state-adopted assessments and what local promotion criteria will be used in making decisions concerning promotion, placement or retention of students in Grades K-8.

a) Requirements for Grades K – 8

- Each school principal shall distribute student data from the Georgia Milestones Assessment System End-of-Grade test, or comparable assessments, to teachers prior to the beginning of each school year. Each teacher shall use data to focus instruction on identified student academic performances in grades K-8.

- Each school principal or designee shall establish a Placement Committee for each student who does not meet the standards established for academic achievement in the classroom and/or standardized test scores in grades other than 3, 5, or 8. The Placement Committee shall:
  - Determine whether each student shall be retained or promoted based on a review of the overall academic achievement of the student;
  - Develop an accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction plan for each student who does not achieve at grade level and;
  - Develop a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student.
- Prior to the time that a student is retained, a parent conference must be scheduled for the purpose of informing the parent of the review team and principal's decision.
- A student who fails two yearly courses in grades 6th, 7th, or 8th will be retained. Students, based on the recommendation of their school's administration, shall be offered an opportunity to enroll in a course recovery program during the summer as a means of meeting promotion requirements.
- Students shall be tested in accordance with requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.

b) Additional Requirements for Grade 8

Promotion of a student shall be determined as follows:

- Based provision in Georgia State law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and State Board Rule 160-4-2-.11, no third or fifth grade student shall be promoted to the fourth or sixth grade if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and attain an achievement level of "Developing Learner", "Proficient Learner", or "Distinguished Learner" on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.
- When a student does not perform at grade level in grade 8 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments the following shall occur:
  - Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing the parent or guardian.
  - The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and the student shall be retested with appropriate section(s) of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments.
  - Those students who do not earn a passing score after taking the test again will be retained (repeat their current grade level) as the law requires.
  - Parents, teachers, or principals have the right to appeal on behalf of the student who is not promoted to the next grade level.
  - All schools across the district follow the same appeals process, which requires a unanimous decision from the placement committee to place the student in the next grade.
  - The placement committee shall provide for a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student.
  - A Student Plan for Improvement for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction must be developed and be uploaded to the Student Information System for each student who does not achieve grade level performance in grade 8 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade.
- A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in language arts and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) shall take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in language arts and/or mathematics on the retest administration day(s).

- Placement or promotion of these students shall follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.

- A student's failure to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment in grade 8 in language arts and/or mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s) shall result in the student being retained.
  - The option of the parent or guardian or teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student shall follow the procedure set forth above.

For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee shall serve as the placement committee.

c) Students with Disabilities

Retention of Students with Disabilities - Students with disabilities who are following the general education program, take the state assessment, and are pursuing a standard diploma are affected by the same guidelines for retention as are students in general education. These students will follow the same process outlined in the Retention and Promotion policy for Middle School students with the exception that the IEP team will act as the placement team for decision making purposes and an IEP will be written to reflect the data, supports, services and accommodations needed to support the student for the upcoming year.

Retention decisions for students with disabilities who are following a functional curriculum and are participating in alternate assessment are made based upon the recommendation of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

d) English Learner (EL)

English Learners (ELs) should receive the same consideration any other student receives when determining any type of program eligibility available to all students. The ELs in the mainstream classroom will need language development and other types of support that must be included in general classroom instruction. For ELs, that includes accommodations to the instructional activities, tasks and assessments. Eligibility for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services and placement in an ESOL class automatically is considered a Tier 4 intervention. In the mainstream classroom, ELs should receive Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions to successfully access and comprehend instruction. As the student progresses in language and academic proficiency, the level of interventions needed to support him or her should decrease accordingly.

Retention committees (including the ESOL teacher) should review all data for a particular EL student and determine whether the lack of content knowledge is an academic issue or a lack of language proficiency. According to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA, 1974), identified ELs cannot be penalized with retention for their lack of language proficiency.

2. Summer Course Recovery

The Middle School Summer Course Recovery Program will be coordinated and conducted at each middle school site. Teachers will use the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) curriculum for instruction in each course. Instruction will be based upon the same grade level and course offerings as those identified in the regular school program. Course recovery is designed to extend the learning time for students who have not made sufficient progress in core academic subjects during the regular school year. Parents will need to contact their student's assigned school for more information.

G. Grading and Reporting Student Progress

1. Progress Reports

Each student is provided a Progress Report near the midpoint of each nine weeks grading period, with specific dates listed on the official MCSD School Calendar available at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Calendar/Full. The report includes data on the student's current grade in each class as well as attendance and optional teacher comments. Progress Reports should be reviewed closely by parents and students for information on how well the student is meeting academic goals prior to the end of the grading period so that additional instructional assistance, if necessary, can be obtained.

Students with disabilities receive progress reports within the same guidelines for educational performance. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

2. Report Cards

Each student is provided a Report Cards at the end of each nine weeks grading period, with specific dates listed on the official MCSD School Calendar available at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Calendar/Full. The Report Card includes data on the student's final grade in each class for that nine weeks grading period as well as attendance and optional teacher comments. Report Cards should be reviewed closely by parents and students for information on how well the student is meeting academic goals for each course so that additional instructional assistance, if necessary, can be obtained.

Students with disabilities receive report cards on the same schedule as typical peers for educational performance. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

3. Grading System

Students are given a numerical grade, from 0 to 100, in each class. These grades appear on report cards and on permanent records.

Grade Distribution	
90 -- 100	A (excellent)
80 -- 89	B (above average)
70 -- 79	C (average)
69 and below	F (unsatisfactory/failure)

Students with disabilities are graded based on the required grading process by the district and state as directed through the IEP. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

4. Parent/Student Portal

The Muscogee County School District provides parents and students with a secure electronic interface to access student information. Information provided includes: student attendance, student schedule, assignments and grades earned, and reports. Information is accessible to parents in real-time. To create a Parent Portal account, you will need to visit your child's school to verify all data is accurate in the system and show a picture ID. You will then receive a letter with your unique Activation Key. There is also a mobile app with notifications that you can use with mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets.

More information can be found by clicking the Infinite Campus Parent Portal link found on the "Families & Students" section of the Muscogee County School District website at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Families.

Students with disabilities and their parents have the same access to the parent and student portal information. If you need assistance, please contact your local school to obtain the required portal information.

H. Middle School BRIDGE Law Requirements

BRIDGE Law and CCRPI Comparison Chart for Grades K-8.

Grade	BRIDGE Law Requirements	College and Career Ready Performance Index
1-5		3 lessons per grade level on career awareness aligned to Georgia's 17 Career Clusters
		5th graders to complete a career portfolio
6	Set-up electronic College and Career portfolio accounts using GTID as username **Complete 1 career assessment/inventory** and save in Georgia Career Information Center (GCIC)	
7	**Complete 1 career assessment/inventory** and save in Georgia Career Information Center (GCIC) Explore 3 career clusters/save in Georgia Career Information Center (GCIC)	
8	Explore 3 occupations /record in Georgia Career Information Center (GCIC) **Complete Pre-IGP** Made aware of Dual Enrollment by February 1	**Complete Pre-IGP and 2 or more career related assessments/inventories by end of 8th grade** Informed about Dual Enrollment by February 1

Implementation of the Bridge Law/CCRPI for Students on a functional curriculum (GAA)

The College and Career Readiness Performance Accountability Team determined that based on the reporting process, special education case managers will **ensure verbally** that students with disabilities that require an alternative assessment (GAA) **have completed by the end of 8th grade:**

- 2 Career interest inventories
- And Individual Graduation Plan (IGP)

Assessments for students unable to complete the GaFutures assessments/inventories with appropriate accommodations/modifications will use two of the bold print assessments listed in the Transition Chapter of the Program for Exceptional Students Manual to fulfill the interest inventories requirements. The case manager and school counselor will collaborate to assure that all BRIDGE Law requirements are met by student's taking the GAA.

The career assessments and the IGP will be kept by the case manager in the student's Special Education files as documentation for the principal to use when completing state reporting on these indicators. **These documents are to also be used when developing the IEP/Transition Plan.**

It is not required that student's taking the GAA have an Individual Graduation Plan in Georgia Career Information Center to meet the requirements of the BRIDGE Law.

VIII. High School (Grades 9-12)

A. Areas of Study: General Requirements for Grades 9-12

1. English Language Arts:

Below is the suggested progression of high school English Language Arts courses:

Freshmen	Ninth Grade Literature and Composition or Honors Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
Sophomores	Tenth Grade Literature and Composition or Honors Tenth Grade Literature and Composition or Honors American Literature
Juniors	American Literature and Composition or AP English Language and Composition or AP English Language and Composition/American Literature or Dual Enrollment (see Dual Enrollment section)
Seniors	Multicultural Lit and Composition or AP English Literature and Composition or Dual Enrollment Courses

9th grade Literature and Composition: (1 credit required) This course focuses on a study of literary genres and informational texts; the students develop initial understanding of both the structure and the meaning of a literary work. The students explore the effect of the literary form in regards to interpretation. The students will read across the curriculum to develop academic and personal interests in different subjects. The students will also demonstrate competency in a variety of writing genres: argumentative, expository, and narrative. The students will engage in research, timed writings, and the writing process. Instruction in language conventions will occur within the context of reading, writing, and speaking, rather than in isolation. The students demonstrate an understanding of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes. THIS COURSE MUST REFLECT THE GEORGIA STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE.

10th grade Literature and Composition: This course focuses on a study of literary genres and informational texts; the student develops understanding that theme is what relates literature to life and that themes are recurring in the literary world. The students explore the effect of themes in regard to interpretation. The students will read across the curriculum to develop academic and personal interests in different subjects. While the focus is writing argument in tenth grade literature, the student will also demonstrate competency in expository and narrative writing genres. The student will engage in research, timed writings, and the writing process. Instruction in language conventions will occur within the context of reading, writing, and speaking, rather than in isolation. The students

demonstrate an understanding of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes. THIS COURSE MUST REFLECT THE GEORGIA STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE.

American Literature and Composition: (1 credit required) This course focuses on the study of American literature and informational texts, writing modes and genres, and essential conventions for reading, writing, and speaking. The student develops an understanding of chronological context and the relevance of period structures in American literature. The students develop an understanding of the ways the period of literature affects its structure and how the chronology of a work affects its meaning. The students read a variety of informational and literary texts in all genres and modes of discourse. Reading across the curriculum develops students' academic and personal interests in different subjects. While expository writing is the focus in American literature, the students will also demonstrate competency in argumentative and narrative genres. The students will engage in research, timed writing, and the writing process. Instruction in language conventions will occur within the context of reading, writing, and speaking. The students demonstrate an understanding of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes. THIS COURSE MUST REFLECT THE GEORGIA STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE.

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition/American Literature and Composition: This course focuses on the study of American literature and informational texts, embracing its rhetorical nature and recognizing the literature as a platform for argument. It also emphasizes a variety of writing modes and genres and the essential conventions of reading, writing, and speaking. The students will develop an understanding of how historical context in American literature affect its structure, meaning, and rhetorical stance. The course will enable students to become skilled readers of prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts. The students will encounter a variety of informational, literary, and non-print texts from across the curriculum and read texts in all genres and modes of discourse, as well as visual and graphic images. Instruction in language conventions and essential vocabulary will occur within the context of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The students will demonstrate an understanding of listening and speaking for a variety of purposes. This course will focus on the consideration of subject, occasion, audience, purpose, speaker, and tone as the guide for effective writing, as well as the way generic conventions and resources of language contribute to writing effectiveness. The students will compose a variety of writing, including expository, analytical, and argumentative writings which support the academic and professional communication required by colleges; and personal and reflective writings which support the development of writing facility in any context. The students will produce responses to timed writing assignments, as well as writing that proceeds through several stages or drafts, which include opportunities for revision guided by feedback from teacher and peers. Students will analyze primary and secondary sources and develop the research skills needed to effectively synthesize these sources for their writing. An AP syllabus must be submitted and approved by the College Board. (This literature module must be taught in the 11th grade and is recommended as a designated substitute for American Literature.) THIS COURSE MUST ALSO REFLECT THE GEORGIA STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE.

Multicultural Literature and Composition: The course focuses on world literature and informational texts by and about people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Students explore themes of linguistic and cultural diversity by comparing, contrasting, analyzing, and critiquing writing styles and universal themes. The students write argumentative, expository, narrative, analytical, and response essays. A research component is critical. The students observe and listen critically and respond appropriately to written and oral communication. Conventions are essential for reading, writing, and speaking. Instruction in language conventions will, therefore, occur within the context of reading, writing, and speaking rather than in isolation. The students understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly in reading, writing, and speaking. THIS COURSE MUST REFLECT THE GEORGIA STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE.

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition: The course focuses on an intensive study of representative works from various literary genres and periods. The focus is on the complexity and thorough analysis of literary works. The students will explore the social and historical values that works reflect and embody. The textual detail and historical context provide the foundation for interpretation: the experience of literature, the interpretation of literature, and the evaluation of literature. Writing to evaluate a literary work involves making and explaining

judgments about its artistry and exploring its underlying social and cultural values through analysis, interpretation, and argument (e.g. expository, analytical, and argumentative essays). The writers will develop stylistic maturity: strong vocabulary, sentence variety, and effective use of rhetoric to maintain voice. An AP syllabus will be submitted and approved by College Board.

2. Mathematics

Based upon State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.48 requirements, students must earn four units of core credit in mathematics, including Coordinate Algebra or Algebra I or the equivalent; Analytic Geometry or Geometry or the equivalent; and Advanced Algebra or Algebra II or the equivalent. Additional core courses needed to complete four credits in mathematics must be chosen from the list of GSE/AP/IB/dual enrollment designated courses.

Each mathematics course is aligned with the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) for mathematics. The mathematics graduation requirements associated with the graduation rule, along with state curriculum standards and assessments, will ensure that more students finish school ready to thrive in our knowledge-based, high-skills economy.

The following table illustrates the various mathematics course sequence options that lead to meeting the mathematics course credit requirements for graduation.

MCSD Mathematics Sequence Options for 9-12					
Grade	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
	This sequence option requires specific criteria be met for enrollment into Foundations of Algebra and assumes student will need significant support for success in high school mathematics.	This sequence option requires student to have taken Grade 8 mathematics as a prerequisite.	*This sequence option assumes student was enrolled in middle school advanced mathematics.*	*This sequence requires student has earned high school Algebra I credit in middle school.*	*This sequence requires student has earned credit for Acc. Algebra I/ Geometry A in middle school.*
9	Foundations of Algebra	Algebra I	Accelerated Algebra I/ Geometry A	Geometry	Accelerated Geometry B/ Algebra II
10	Algebra I	Geometry	Accelerated Geometry B/ Algebra II	Algebra II	Accelerated Pre-Calculus
11	Geometry	Algebra II	Accelerated Pre-Calculus	Accelerated Pre-Calculus	Fourth Mathematics Course Options*; IB Courses**; Dual Enrollment Courses
12	Algebra II	Fourth Mathematics Course Options*; IB Courses**; Dual Enrollment Courses	Fourth Mathematics Course Options*; IB Courses**; Dual Enrollment Courses	Fourth Mathematics Course Options*; IB Courses**; Dual Enrollment Courses	Fourth Mathematics Course Options*; IB Courses**; Dual Enrollment Courses

a) Students with Disabilities modified Math Sequence

Students with Disabilities modified Math Sequence: All students with disabilities work towards obtaining a regular diploma. Students with Disabilities on a regular curriculum but with identified Math needs, services and supports can participate in a modified High School Math sequence based on an IEP driven decision. If you have questions, please contact your local school and speak with the case manager to discuss these considerations.

Course descriptions:

Foundations of Algebra: This Course is a first year high school mathematics course option for students who have completed mathematics in grades 6 – 8 yet will need substantial support to bolster success in high school mathematics. The course is aimed at students who have reported low standardized test performance in prior grades and/or have demonstrated significant difficulties in previous mathematics classes.

Algebra I: **(1 credit required)** This course is the first course in a sequence of three required high school courses designed to ensure career and college readiness. The course represents a discrete study of algebra with correlated statistics applications.

Geometry: **(1 credit required)** This course is the second course in a sequence of three required high school courses designed to ensure career and college readiness. The course represents a discrete study of geometry with correlated statistics applications.

Algebra II: **(1 credit required)** This course is the third course in a sequence of three high school courses designed to ensure career and college readiness. It is designed to prepare students for fourth course options relevant to their career pursuits.

Accelerated Algebra I/ Geometry A: This course is the first course in a sequence of mathematics courses designed to ensure that students are prepared to take higher-level mathematics courses during their high school tenure, including Advanced Placement Calculus AB, Advanced Placement Calculus BC, and Advanced Placement Statistics

Accelerated Geometry B/Algebra II: This course is the second course in a sequence of mathematics courses designed to ensure that students are prepared to take higher-level mathematics courses during their high school tenure, including Advanced Placement Calculus AB, Advanced Placement Calculus BC, and Advanced Placement Statistics.

Accelerated Pre-Calculus: This course is the third course mathematics in a sequence of mathematics courses designed to ensure that students are prepared to take higher-level mathematics courses during their high school tenure, including Advanced Placement Calculus AB, Advanced Placement Calculus BC, and Advanced Placement Statistics.

Pre-Calculus: This course is a fourth mathematics course option designed to follow the completion of Algebra II, which prepares students for calculus and other higher-level mathematics courses.

AP Calculus (AB/BC): AP Calculus includes two courses, AP Calculus AB and AP Calculus BC, which were developed in collaboration with college faculty. The curriculum for AP Calculus AB is equivalent to that of a first-semester college calculus course devoted to topics in differential and integral calculus. AP Calculus BC is roughly equivalent to both first and second semester calculus courses; it extends the content learned in AB to different types of equations and introduces the topic of sequences and series.

Mathematics of Finance: This course is a fourth course option which concentrates on the mathematics necessary to understand and make informed decisions related to personal finance. The mathematics in the course is based on many topics in prior courses; however, the specific applications will extend the student's understanding of when and how to use these topics.

Statistical Reasoning: This course is a fourth mathematics course option for students who have completed Algebra II which offers opportunities to strengthen the understanding of the statistical method of inquiry and statistical simulations.

AP Statistics: The purpose of the AP course in statistics is to introduce students to the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data. Students are exposed to four broad conceptual themes:

1. Exploring Data: Describing patterns and departures from patterns
2. Sampling and Experimentation: Planning and conducting a study
3. Anticipating Patterns: Exploring random phenomena using probability and simulation
4. Statistical inference: Estimating population parameters and testing hypotheses

College Readiness Mathematics: This course is a fourth mathematics course option for students who have completed Algebra II, but are still struggling with high school mathematics standards essential for success in first year postsecondary mathematics courses required for non-STEM majors. The course is designed to serve as a bridge for high school students who will enroll in non-STEM post-secondary study.

Multivariable Calculus: This course is a mathematics option for students who have completed AP Calculus BC. It includes three-dimensional coordinate geometry; matrices and determinants; eigenvalues and eigenvectors of matrices; limits and continuity of functions with two independent variables; partial differentiation; multiple integration; the gradient; the divergence; the curl; Theorems of Green, Stokes, and Gauss; line integrals; integrals independent of path; and linear first-order differential equations.

3. Science

Four units of credit in science shall be required of all students, including one full unit of Biology; one unit of either Physical Science or Physics; one unit of either Chemistry, Earth Systems, Environmental Science or an AP/IB course; and one additional science unit. The fourth science unit may be used to meet both the science and elective requirements. Any AP/IB science course may be substituted for the appropriate courses listed above.

High School Science Courses Currently Offered:

Biology I: (1 credit required) The Biology curriculum is designed to continue student investigations of the life sciences that began in grades K-8 and provide students the necessary skills to be proficient in biology. This curriculum includes more abstract concepts such as the interdependence of organisms, the relationship of matter, energy, and organization in living systems, the behavior of organisms, and biological evolution. Students will investigate biological concepts through experience in laboratories and field work using the processes of inquiry.

Advanced Placement Biology: This course is designed to be the equivalent of a two semester college introductory biology course usually taken by biology majors during their first year. The AP Biology course is designed to be taken by students after the successful completion of a first course in high school biology and on in high school chemistry. It aims to provide students with the conceptual framework, factual knowledge, and analytical skills necessary to deal critically with the rapidly changing science of biology. The topics covered on the course are molecules and cells, heredity and evolution, and organisms and populations. (College Board course description September 2007)

Physical Science: (1 credit required Physical Science or Physics) The Physical Science curriculum is designed to continue student investigations of the physical sciences that began in grades K-8 and provide students the necessary skills to have a richer knowledge base in physical science. This course is designed as a survey course of chemistry and physics. This curriculum includes the more abstract concepts such as the conceptualization of the structure of atoms, motion and forces, and the conservation of energy and matter, the action/reaction principle, and wave behavior. Students investigate physical science concepts through experience in laboratories and field work using the processes of inquiry.

Environmental Science: **(1 credit required Chemistry, Earth Science, Environmental Science, or AP/IB course)** The Environmental Science curriculum is designed to extend student investigations that began in grades K-8. This curriculum is extensively performance, lab and field based. It integrates the study of many components of our environment, including the human impact on our planet. Instruction should focus on student data collection and analysis. Some concepts are global; in those cases, interpretation of global data sets from scientific sources is strongly recommended. It would be appropriate to utilize resources on the Internet for global data sets and interactive models. Chemistry, physics, mathematical, and technological concepts should be integrated throughout the course. Whenever possible, careers related to environmental science should be emphasized.

Advanced Placement Environmental Science: AP Environmental Science is designed to provide students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world, to identify and analyze environmental problems both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them. The following themes provide a foundation for the structure of the AP Environmental Science course: (1) Science is a process, (2) Energy conversions underlie all ecological processes, (3) The Earth itself is one interconnected system, (4) Humans alter natural systems, (5) Environmental problems have a cultural and social context, and (6) Human survival depends on developing practices that will achieve sustainable systems. (Advanced Placement Course Description, May 1997. The College Board.)

Earth Systems: (1 credit required Chemistry, Earth Science, Environmental Science, or AP/IB course) Earth Systems Science is designed to continue student investigations that began in K-8 Earth Science and Life Science curricula and investigate the connections among Earth's systems through Earth history. These systems – the atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere, and biosphere – interact through time to produce the Earth's landscapes, ecology, and resources. This course develops the explanations of phenomena fundamental to the sciences of geology and physical geography, including the early history of the Earth, plate tectonics, landform evolution, the Earth's geologic record, weather and climate, and the history of life on Earth. Instruction should focus on inquiry and development of scientific explanations, rather than mere descriptions of phenomena. Case studies, laboratory exercises, maps, and data analysis should be integrated into units. Special attention should be paid to topics of current interest (e.g., recent earthquakes, tsunamis, global warming, price of resources) and to potential careers in the geosciences.

Chemistry I: (1 credit required Chemistry, Earth Science, Environmental Science, or AP/IB course) The Chemistry curriculum is designed to continue student investigations of the physical sciences that began in grades K-8 and provide students the necessary skills to be proficient in chemistry. This curriculum includes more abstract concepts such as the structure of atoms, structure and properties of matter, characterization of the properties that describe solutions and the nature of acids and bases, and the conservation and interaction of energy and matter. Students investigate chemistry concepts through experience in laboratories and field work using the processes of inquiry.

Advanced Placement Chemistry: This course is designed to be the equivalent of the general chemistry course usually taken during the first college year. Students should attain a depth of understanding of fundamentals and a reasonable competence in dealing with chemical problems. AP chemistry students should study topics related to the structure and states of matter (atomic theory, atomic structure, chemical bonding, nuclear chemistry, gases laws, kinetic molecular theory, liquids and solids and solutions), chemical reactions (reaction types, stoichiometry, equilibrium, kinetics, and thermodynamics), and descriptive chemistry (chemical reactivity, products of chemical reactions, relationships in the periodic table, and organic chemistry). To develop the requisite intellectual and laboratory skills, AP Chemistry students need adequate classroom and laboratory time. It is expected that a minimum of 290 minutes per week will be allotted for an AP Chemistry course. Of that time, a minimum of 90 minutes per week, preferably in one session, should be spent in the lab. The AP Chemistry course is designed to be taken after the completion of a first course in high school chemistry. In addition, the recommended mathematics prerequisite for an AP Chemistry class is the successful completion of a second-year algebra course. It is highly desirable that a student have a course in secondary school physics and a four-year college preparatory program in mathematics. (College Board course description September 2007)

Physics I: (1 credit required Physical Science or Physics) The Physics curriculum is designed to continue student investigations of the physical sciences that began in grades K-8 and provide students the necessary skills to be proficient in physics. This curriculum includes more abstract concepts such as interactions of matter and energy, velocity, acceleration, force, energy, momentum, and charge. This course introduces the students to the study of the correction to Newtonian physics given by quantum mechanics and relativity. Students investigate physics concepts through experience in laboratories and field work using the processes of inquiry.

Advanced Placement Physics 1: AP Physics 1 is an algebra-based, introductory college-level physics course that explores topics such as Newtonian mechanics (including rotational motion); work, energy, and power; mechanical waves and sound; and introductory, simple circuits. Through inquiry-based learning, students will develop scientific critical thinking and reasoning skills.

Zoology: This is a laboratory based course that will survey the nine major phyla of the Kingdom Animalia. Morphology, taxonomy, anatomy, and physiology of porifera, cnidaria, platyhelminthes, nematode, rotifer, annelid, bryozoa, mollusca, arthropods, echinodemata, hemichordate, chordat, agnatha, chondrichthyes, osteichthyes, amphibian, reptilian, aves, and mammalian will be investigated through comparative studies done during laboratory observations and dissections. Furthermore, students will compare and contrast methods used by organisms from different phyla to accomplish basic life processes.

Human Anatomy/Physiology: The human anatomy and physiology curriculum is designed to continue student investigations that began in grades K-8 and high school biology. This curriculum is extensively performance and laboratory based. It integrates the study of the structures and functions of the human body, however rather than focusing on distinct anatomical and physiological systems (respiratory, nervous, etc.) instruction should focus on the essential requirements for life. Areas of study include organization of the body; protection, support and movement; providing internal coordination and regulation; processing and transporting; and reproduction, growth and development. Chemistry should be integrated throughout anatomy and not necessarily taught as a standalone unit. Whenever possible, careers related to medicine, research, health-care and modern medical technology should be emphasized throughout the curriculum. Case studies concerning diseases, disorders and ailments (i.e. real-life applications) should be emphasized.

Forensic Science: In this course students will learn the scientific protocols for analyzing a crime scene, how to use chemical and physical separation methods to isolate and identify materials, how to analyze biological evidence and the criminal use of tools, including impressions from firearms, tool marks, arson, and explosive evidence.

Applications of Biotechnology: This course further introduces students to the fundamentals of biotechnology. Included in this course are additional techniques in biotechnology. Additionally, a deeper level of laboratory safety and applications in biotechnology is emphasized. The knowledge and skills gained in this course will provide students with a greater understanding of biotechnology and prepare students for skill application in a workplace setting.

Essentials of Biotechnology: This is the second course in the career pathway that introduces students to the broad understanding of the fundamentals of biotechnology and the impact on society. The knowledge and skills in this course provides a basic overview of current trends and careers in biotechnology, with an emphasis on basic laboratory skills, along with the business, regulatory, and ethical aspects of biotechnology. The prerequisite for the course is Introduction to Healthcare Science Technology.

4. CTAE Fourth Science Course Options

CTAE Fourth Science Course Options: There are several CTAE courses that count towards completing a CTAE pathway requirement, satisfying the fourth science requirement for high school graduation, and have been approved by the Board of Regents as a fourth science for university admission. The full list of courses can be found on the CTAE page on the Muscogee County School District website at: https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/TeachingandLearning/CTAE/Information and on the Georgia Department of Education website at http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/CTAE/Documents/Fourth-Science-Options-2017-2018.pdf.

5. Social Studies

Three and one-half (3.5) units of credit in social studies shall be required of all students. One unit of credit in United States History, one full unit of credit in World History, one-half unit of credit in American Government and one full unit of credit of economics are required.

American Government/Civics: (.5 credit required) This course is an in-depth study of the American political system. This course focuses on the foundation, principles and structure of the American system of government, examines the role of political parties, social factors as they relate to the role of the citizen, and analyzes the decision-making processes that are a part of the system of American political behavior. This course meets the state's Citizenship requirement for graduation.

Advanced Placement American Government/Civics: This course conforms to College Board topics for the Advanced Placement Comparative Government and Politics Examination. Covers sources of public authority and political power, society and politics, citizen and state, political framework, political change and an introduction to comparative politics.

United States History: (1 credit required) This course examines the history of the United States beginning with the British settlement of North America. The course's main focus is the development of the United States in the 20th and 21st centuries. The course includes topics related to Colonization through the Constitution; New Republic to Reconstruction; Industrialization, Reform, and Imperialism; Establishment as a World Power; and the Modern Era.

Advanced Placement United States History: This course conforms to College Board topics for the Advanced Placement United States History Examination. Covers discovery and settlement, Colonial Society, the American Revolution, Constitution and the New Republic, Age of Jefferson, Nationalism, Sectionalism, Territorial Expansion, Civil War, Reconstruction, Industrialization, Progressive Era, World War I, Depression, New Deal, World War II, The Cold War, through modern times.

World History: (1 credit required) This course is a survey course beginning with the earliest civilizations and highlighting important developments throughout the world until the early 21st century. The course includes topics related to Early Civilizations and Classical Empires; Growth, Expansion, and the Emergence of the Modern World; Global Interaction and Conflict; and the Contemporary World.

Advanced Placement World History: This course conforms to the College Board topics for Advanced Placement World History. Includes study of cultural, political, social and economic history. Stresses research and writing skills.

Economics: (1 credit required) This course is an introductory course into the principles of economics. The course includes topics related to Fundamental Economic Concepts, Microeconomics Concepts, Macroeconomics Concepts, International Economics, and Personal Finance Economics.
Advanced Placement Macroeconomics: This course conforms to College Board topics for the Advanced Placement Macroeconomics Examination. Covers basic economic concepts, measurement of economic performance, national income and price determination and international economics and growth.

Advanced Placement Microeconomics: This course conforms to College Board topics for the Advanced Placement Microeconomics Examination. Covers basic economic concepts, the nature and functions of product markets, factor markets and efficiency, equity and the role of government.

6. Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE)

Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE): The CTAE program is designed for students to experience the relevance to the workplace of what they are learning in the classroom. The curriculum includes national standards, CTAE standards, and Georgia Performance Standards, in addition to career development activities allowing students to make the connection between class activities and the workforce. CTAE courses are available to any student in grades 9-12. Students are encouraged to complete a Career Pathway, which is a sequential program of study that allows students the opportunity to gain industry-recognized career credentials. The Career Pathway programs provides students with skills and knowledge through a variety of curriculum choice and possible college credits.

a) Work Based Learning

Work Based Learning: Work-Based Learning placements represent the pinnacle of the Career-Related Education experience. To qualify for a WBL placement, a student must be in grades 11 or 12 and at least 16 years old. Students must also have a defined Career Pathway in order to participate in a Work-Based Learning placement. This is especially important for successful completion of a student's Career Pathway in that their job placement is directly related to the curriculum of the pathway classes they have completed or in which they are concurrently enrolled. There are several opportunities for students to participate in work-based learning. These opportunities include employability skill development, Cooperative Education, Internship, Youth Apprenticeship, and Clinical Experiences.

The benefits of WBL include:

- Exposing students to professional adult role models
- Improving scholastic student motivation
- Applying classroom learning

- Exploring career options
- Helping students make better decisions and plans
- Improving post-secondary prospects
- Helping students understand workplace expectations
- Exposing students to state-of-the-art practices and technology

Students are encouraged to have a quality work-based learning experience directly related (to the extent possible) to the student's area of interest and/or elective courses. CTAE supports schools in providing these experiences through Regional Work-Based Learning Specialists.

b) CTAE Fourth Science Course Options

There are several CTAE courses that count towards completing a CTAE pathway requirement, satisfying the fourth science requirement for high school graduation, and have been approved by the Board of Regents as a fourth science for university admission. The full list of courses can be found on the CTAE page on the Muscogee County School District website at: https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/TeachingandLearning/CTAE/Information and on the Georgia Department of Education website at http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/CTAE/Documents/Fourth-Science-Options-2017-2018.pdf.

7. Modern Language/Latin

Students have the opportunity to take a foreign language in middle school and then continue taking foreign language classes in high school. In middle school, students have the opportunity to take Spanish. Muscogee County Schools offer the following Foreign Languages: Spanish, French, Latin, and Japanese (course offerings may differ at each high school). While in high school, students have the opportunity to receive two seals on their diploma for their achievements in the Modern Languages; they are:

The Georgia Seal of Biliteracy recognizes high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English.

The purposes of the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy are as follows:

(1) To encourage pupils to study foreign languages;
(2) To certify attainment of biliteracy;
(3) To provide employers with a method to identify people with language and biliteracy skills;
(4) To provide universities with a method to recognize and give academic credit to applicants seeking admission; and
(5) To recognize and promote foreign language instruction in public schools.

In order to qualify for the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy, a high school graduate shall meet the following criteria:

(1) Completion of all English language arts requirements for graduation with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or above in those classes; and
(2) Proficiency in one or more languages other than English, demonstrated by passing a foreign language advanced placement examination with a score of 4 or higher or an international baccalaureate examination with a score of 5 or higher; provided, however, that for languages in which an advanced placement examination is not available, the Department of Education may provide a listing of equivalent summative examinations that local school systems may use in place of such an advanced placement examination.

(1) A local school system participating in the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy program shall maintain appropriate records in order to identify pupils who have earned a Georgia Seal of Biliteracy and shall affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma or transcript of each pupil who earns such seal.

(2) Local school system participation in the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy program shall be voluntary. No local school system shall be required to expend additional resources or hire additional personnel to implement the provisions of this Code section.

The Department of Education shall prepare and deliver to participating local school systems an appropriate insignia to be affixed to the diploma or transcript of the pupil indicating that such pupil has been awarded a Georgia Seal of Biliteracy.

International Skills Diploma Seal:
a.) At least three credits in the same world language and/or ESOL
b.) At least four credits in courses determined to have an international focus, such as international economics, world/non-US history, world geography, etc.
c.) At least four extracurricular activities and experiences with global themes and/or in global contexts (e.g., exchange programs, international and language clubs, travel abroad)
d.)Twenty hours of community service involving a global/cross-cultural public service project
e.)Capstone presentation on the knowledge gained in the courses and activities listed above

For a further list of approved courses for the International Skills Diploma Seal - click here: Georgia Department of Education

Description of Modern Language/Latin Courses:

Spanish I: Introduces the Spanish language; emphasizes all skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. Includes how to greet and take leave of someone, to ask and respond to basic questions, to speak and read within a range of carefully selected topics and to develop an understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Spanish II: Enhances Level One skills in Spanish and provides opportunities to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. Provides continued practice in how to greet and take leave of someone, to ask and respond to basic questions, to speak and read within a range of carefully selected topics and to increase understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Spanish III: Enhances Level Two skills in Spanish and provides further opportunities to increase listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. Provides continued practice in previous topics and introduces new topics; offers further opportunities to increase understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Spanish IV: Enhances Level Three skills in Spanish and provides further opportunities to increase listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. Provides continued language development through exploration of familiar and unfamiliar topics and provides opportunities for a broader and more extensive understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Advanced Placement Spanish Language: Conforms to College Board topics for the Advanced Placement Spanish Language Examination. Emphasizes the ability to comprehend formal and informal spoken Spanish, to acquire the vocabulary and grasp of structure to read newspapers, magazines and Hispanic literature, to compose expository passages and to speak accurately and fluently.

French I: Introduces the French language; emphasizes all skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an integrated way. Includes how to greet and take leave of someone, to ask and respond to basic questions, to speak and read within a range of carefully selected topics and to develop an understanding of French-speaking cultures.

French II: Enhances Level One skills in French and provides opportunities to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. Provides continued practice in how to greet and take leave of someone, to ask and respond to basic questions, and to speak and read within a range of carefully selected topics. Provides opportunities to increase understanding of French-speaking cultures.

French III: Enhances Level Two skills in French and provides further opportunities to increase listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. Provides continued practice in previous topics and introduces new topics; offers further opportunities to increase understanding of French-speaking cultures.

French IV: Enhances Level Five skills in French and provides opportunities to increase levels of proficiency in all skill areas and to deepen understanding of French-speaking cultures. Offers further opportunities to study French literature and advanced level topics.

Japanese I: Introduces the Japanese language; emphasizes all skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an integrated way. Includes how to greet and take leave of someone, to ask and respond to basic questions, to speak and read within a range of carefully selected topics and to develop an understanding of Japanese culture.

Japanese II: Enhances Level One skills in Japanese and provides opportunities to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. Provides continued practice in how to greet and take leave of someone, to ask and respond to basic questions, to speak and read within a range of carefully selected topics and to increase understanding of Japanese culture.

Japanese III: Enhances Level Two skills in Japanese and provides further opportunities to increase listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. Provides continued practice in previous topics and introduces new topics; offers further opportunities to increase understanding of Japanese culture.

Latin I: Introduces students to the Latin language and ancient Roman civilization. Emphasizes the ability to write simple Latin phrases and to understand simple Latin passages presented orally and in writing.

Latin II: Enhances Level One skills and provides opportunities to translate longer, more challenging passages. Emphasizes how ancient Roman language and civilization has influenced Western language and civilization.

Latin III: Enhances previously learned skills and introduces original works by Latin authors. The works of the authors may be selected in any order for courses designated at the third, fourth, and fifth year levels. The authors whose works are studied are Catullus, Cicero, Horace, Ovid, and Vergil. Selected works from authors such as Aulis Gellius, Juvenal, Livy, Martial, Cornelius, Nepos, Plautus, Sallust, Pliny, as well as authors from later Latin, can be included. Explores the political, economic, social characteristics represented in the works studied and examines the various writing styles of the authors.

8. Fine Arts

The Georgia Standards of Excellence for Fine Arts are based on The National Standards for Arts Education as referenced in the National Standards for Arts Education, Copyright ©1994 by MENC: The National Association for

Music Education. The National Standards outline what every K-12 student should know and be able to do in the arts. The National Standards were developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Association, through a grant administered by The National Association for Music Education (MENC).
As described in the National Standards for Arts Education, arts education benefits both student and society. The arts cultivate the whole child, gradually building many kinds of literacy while developing intuition, reasoning, imagination, and dexterity into unique forms of expression and communication.
The Georgia Performance Standards support the arts in the "academic" standing in that mere participation is not the same as education. The standards affirm that discipline and rigor are critical to high academic achievement. Performance-based assessment has long been used in the arts that include the practice of portfolio review in the visual arts and the assessment of performance skills through auditions used in dance, music, and theatre. The content of the standards for the arts attends to creating, performing, and responding which is consistent with and informs the perspective of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

The Muscogee County School District (MCSD) Arts and Humanities Department supports more than 120 visual art, music, band, orchestra, chorus, dance and drama teachers and 30,000 students within its 1-12 programs.

Fine arts instruction in MCSD is standards-driven, sequential, substantive and comprehensive. All 1-5 elementary school students receive weekly art and music classes.

Middle school students have the opportunity to explore visual arts, band, chorus, orchestra and theatre. At the high school level there are several fine arts elective choices that fulfill the GA Career Pathway requirements and culminate in five Advanced Placement courses.

9. Physical Education/Health

As a part of the GADOE graduation requirements each student must have at least one semester of health education (.5 credit required). As a part of the health education course students will take a CPR Awareness class. They will also take the Georgia Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program through their health class. Each student is also required to have at least one semester of physical fitness (.5 credit required). GADOE Policy 160-4-2-.12 states that alcohol, drug, and sex education will be taught at an appropriate level for grades K - 12. At the high school level this is taught through the health classes. Parents have the option to opt out of the sex education classes. They may get an opt out form from the teacher or counselor. The policy also states that there will be an annual assessment measuring and reporting health related fitness in the areas of aerobic capacity, body composition, flexibility, muscular strength, and muscular endurance. Georgia uses the FitnessGram to administer this assessment. Students in grade 4-12 are assessed annually using all 5 areas.

10. Graduation Unit Requirements

The MCSD graduation requirements are based on local rule IHF (6) and state board rule 160 - 4-2-.48. Special programs such as Magnet, Performance-Based, and Special Education may have different requirements as dictated by program criteria.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STUDENTS	
Areas of Study	**Units Required**
English/Language Arts	4
Mathematics	4
Science (4th science requirement may be used to meet both the science and elective requirements)	4
Social Studies	3.5

Health	.5
Personal Fitness	.5
CTAE **and/or** Modern Language/Latin **and/or** Fine arts	3
Electives	3.5
TOTAL	**23**

A total of 23 Carnegie Units are required by the Muscogee County School District.

* Core Courses include mathematics, English/language arts, science, social studies and modern language.
* CTAE designated courses may be used to meet the fourth science unit.
* Core Area Electives may include fine arts, CTAE, and/or modern language/Latin. Two units of one selected modern language/Latin are required of students with intentions to enter a University System of Georgia institution. A total of three (3) units are required from CTAE **and/or** modern language/Latin **and/or** fine arts for all students. Students are encouraged to choose electives that support their future academic and career goals. A wide range of courses are available.
* Students with Disabilities will be eligible to earn a regular diploma by meeting the requirements outlined in the rule and in their Individualized Education Program.

B. Attendance Requirements

Mandatory attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall be required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma.

Students are eligible for enrollment in the appropriate general education program, if they have reached the age of five by September 1st and have not reached the age of 21 by September 1 or received a high school diploma or equivalent. Students with Individualized Education Plans may be eligible for enrollment until they reach the age of twenty-two.

C. High School Assessment Program

The purpose of the Georgia Student Assessment Program is to measure student achievement of the state- adopted content standards and inform efforts to improve teaching and learning. Results of the assessment program are utilized to identify students failing to achieve mastery of content, to provide teachers with feedback about instructional practice, and to assist school districts in identifying strengths and weaknesses in order to establish priorities in planning educational programs. The assessment program includes customized summative criterion-referenced tests at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In addition, Georgia participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress in grades 4, 8 and 12 and administers an English language proficiency test in grades K-12.

1. State and National Assessments

ACCESS for ELLs (ACCESS 2.0) in grades K-12 and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs in grades 1-12 Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking

Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies in grades 5 and 8 and high school English/Language Arts and Mathematics, grades K, 3, 4, 6, and 7

Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) End of Course for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) National assessments in reading, math and science in grade 8 for selected schools as determined by the U.S. Department of Education.

GAA in High School

The instructional program for students with significant cognitive disabilities includes courses that align with the general education courses associated with the Georgia Milestones End of Course (EOC) measures. This ensures that content from each EOC-assessed course is included in the GAA portfolio. In this manner, the GAA in high school serves as the alternate assessment for the high school assessment program. The assessment shall be administered for the first time in grade 11 and submitted for scoring in March as are all portfolios for the program.

A total of 8 entries are required in grade 11:

- Two entries will be required in English Language Arts
- Two entries will be required in Mathematics. One entry must cover a standard from Coordinate Algebra or Algebra I; one entry must cover a standard from Analytic Geometry or Geometry.
- Two entries will be required in Science. One entry must cover a standard from Biology; One entry must cover a standard from Physical Science.
- Two entries will be required in Social Studies.

A student who is retained in/is repeating grade 11 is NOT required to be assessed a second (or more) time using the GAA.

End of Course Assessments in High School

Students enrolled in any of the ten core courses identified by the State Board of Education are required to participate in the Georgia Milestones EOC measure at the end of each course. The core course include: Ninth Grade Literature and Composition, American Literature and Composition, Algebra I, Coordinate Algebra, Geometry, Analytic Geometry, Biology, Physical Science, United States History, and Economics/Business/Free Enterprise. The Georgia Milestones EOC measures are administered multiple times annually to accommodate students completing courses, entering from systems out of state and completing credit recovery courses at various stages during the school year. The EOC also serves as 20% of a student's final grade and is required to receive course credit.

2. "Testing Out" Option

"Testing Out" for Course Credit
As provided for in State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.15 (AWARDING UNITS OF CREDIT AND ACCEPTANCE OF TRANSFER CREDIT AND/OR GRADES) adopted by the Board in April 2013, the opportunity exists for students to demonstrate subject area competency ("test-out") for any course for which there is an associated End of Course (EOC) and earn credit for the course through that process. Students who reach the Distinguished Learner achievement level will have reached the required threshold for the awarding of course credit.
Under the provisions of the Rule and guidelines, the Muscogee County School District will award course credit to students who reach a designated performance level on an EOC taken prior to taking the course. For example, a student may attempt the Biology EOC prior to taking the course. If the student reaches the Distinguished Learner achievement level, the student will be awarded the Biology course credit. A student may test-out of any course that has an associated EOC. As stated in this Rule, students may earn no more than three units of credit by demonstrating subject area competency in this fashion.

Students must meet the following eligibility requirements to exercise this option:

- Not currently or previously enrolled in the course;

- Have earned a grade of B or better in the most recent course that is the same content area of the course for which the student is attempting the EOC;
- Received a teacher recommendation from the teacher of the most recent course in the same content area (or, if not available, a teacher in the same content area with knowledge of the student's academic achievement) for which the student is attempting the EOC; and
- Received parent/guardian permission if the student is less than 18 years of age.

Your student's school will carefully consider which students would benefit from such an opportunity and advise accordingly. As part of the advisement process, schools will consider the likelihood for success in future courses that may require knowledge and skills that are inherent within the course. In addition, the student's post-secondary plans and needs will be considered. The test-out option will not be exercised for students without deliberation and clear evidence of the likelihood of student success both on the test itself and in future coursework/endeavors. Students who do not meet the eligibility criteria above must not be assessed for this purpose.

When allowing students to attempt to earn course credit through testing out the Muscogee County School District will:

- Allow eligible students only one opportunity per course to demonstrate subject area competency.
- Require students who do not reach the designated achievement level of Distinguished Learner when attempting to test-out to enroll in and complete the associated course when applicable. The student would again take the EOC at the conclusion of that course experience regardless of their score during their attempt to test-out. The scores are not "banked" for use with the course later.
- As stipulated in the Guidelines previously issued for this rule, the district cannot allow students who are currently enrolled, or who have previously been enrolled, in a higher- level course to attempt to earn credit by testing out. For example, a student taking AP Physics may not earn credit for Physical Science through this process.
- Conduct testing for the test-out option during the summer testing window of the academic year prior to the expected enrollment for the course. See the district testing calendar for more details.
- Charge $50.00 per test in advance for each test. Those students who meet the eligibility criteria and achieve at the Distinguished Learner achievement level will receive a refund. For those students not meeting the required achievement level to test-out will be charged the $50.00 to cover the cost of testing charged to the district by the state.

For more information about testing-out please contact your school's guidance department.

3. Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is critical to the overall quality of the district's assessment program and the data it provides. Students who are caught cheating, helping others cheat, or knowingly allowing another student to cheat on a state mandated assessment will be considered to have committed academic dishonesty. The tests of students who are confirmed to have participated in cheating will be invalidated as required by the Georgia Department of Education with no score reported. Students will be rescheduled to retake the exam in the next available retest window. This may result in a delay of grades or promotion for students requiring the exam for course credit, a portion of the course grade or to meet state promotion requirements.

4. National Standardized Assessments

SAT- The SAT is administered by College Board to meet the entrance requirements for many Colleges and Universities. Some Muscogee County School District schools may serve as testing sites but do not enroll or register

students for the exam. For more information about registering to take the SAT see the College Board SAT site at: https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register

ACT- The ACT exam is administered by ACT to meet the entrance requirements for many Colleges and Universities. Some Muscogee County School District schools may serve as testing sites but do not enroll or register students for the exam. For more information about registering to take the SAT see the College Board SAT site at: http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/registration.html

Students with Disabilities are required to participate in all state and federal assessment requirements. The type of assessment (regular, regular with accommodations or Alternative) is determined through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. Students also receive accommodations and supports through the IEP as guided by the Present levels of performance which outline specific student need. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

D. Maximum Age for High School Students

Students are eligible for enrollment in the appropriate general education program, if they have reached the age of five by September 1st and have not reached the age of 21 by September 1 or received a high school diploma or equivalent.

1. Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities can attend school until they earn a regular education high school diploma or up to their 22nd birthday.

E. Class Rank and Weighted Courses

Class rank is based on student's Numerical Grade Point Average (GPA) of all grades earned through the end of the third nine weeks of their senior year.

Weighted courses are based on the rigor and depth of content knowledge advanced level coursework. The following course titles are weighted:

- Honors and Pre-IB courses receive 0.5 quality points
- Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) receive 1.0 quality points.

F. Valedictorian and Salutatorian

The following criteria will determine Valedictorian and Salutatorian at all district high schools. All high schools are required to follow the selection criteria, post in their student/parent handbook and on their school website.

- Student must have been in attendance within the Muscogee County School District their full junior and senior year
- Students enrolled in Dual Enrollment (full or part-time) must be considered for Valedictorian and Salutatorian selection.
- Dual enrollment students who move into the district after their sophomore year and do not take any courses on site at their home high school will not be considered for Valedictorian or Salutatorian.
- Student with the highest calculated Weighted Academic GPA - Numeric GPA
- If tied, student with the highest calculated Weighted Numeric GPA – Hope GPA

- If tied, student with the highest number of Advance Placement, and/or International Baccalaureate and/or Dual Enrollment courses
- If tied, student with the highest number of Advance Placement, and/or International Baccalaureate, and/or Dual Enrollment courses plus the highest number of Honors courses
- If tied, student with highest Weighted Academic GPA (quality points)
- Final determination will be calculated at the end of third nine weeks

G. Individual Graduation Plan

1. High School BRIDGE Law Requirements

BRIDGE-Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia's Economy

The purpose of the BRIDGE Law is to provide 6th through 12th grade students with career guidance and awareness, along with information to assist students in evaluating their academic skills and career interests to include career exploration, career interest inventories and Individualized Graduation Plans to prepare for a seamless transition to postsecondary study, further training, or employment.

Explore 3 additional occupations/record in Georgia Career Information Center (GCIC) **Student/family conference** **Participate in regular Teacher As Advisors (TAA) advisement sessions** Made aware of Dual Enrollment by February 1	Informed about Dual Enrollment by February 1
Student/family conference **Participate in regular TAA advisement sessions** Made aware Dual Enrollment by February 1	Informed about Dual Enrollment by February 1
Explore and save 3 possible choices of postsecondary institutions that match IGP **Participate in regular advisement sessions** Made aware Dual Enrollment by February 1	Informed about Dual Enrollment by February 1
Identify the next step after graduation in Georgia Career Information Center (GCIC) (i.e., college, military, tech school, workforce, etc…)	**Complete Career Capstone Senior Project**

2. Senior Exit Interviews

A required meeting to provide senior parents and students support and guidance to finalize individual graduation plans and postsecondary options.

Scheduling and Notification of Meeting(s)
Scheduling and notification of Senior Meetings may be scheduled after final grades for the current school year have posted to the transcript. Parents of all rising seniors must be notified of their scheduled time to attend the mandatory Senior Meeting. Notification of the meeting(s) may be done in several ways to include, mailed letter, Remind.com, email, letter sent home with student, etc. Each school must schedule and conduct meetings with

senior/parent guardians in either individual conferences or in small groups not to exceed fifteen parents/guardians. If meetings are conducted in small group, parent/guardians must be given the opportunity to conference individually at a later date if requested. Students that have not reached 12th grade status by the end of the current year that may potentially meet graduation requirements by May of the next school year may be scheduled only for an individual parent meeting given their "at risk" status. Senior meetings must be held by October of each year.

Meeting Agenda

The following information must be covered in every Senior Exit Interview Meeting:

- Review graduation requirements
- Review Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) for each student
- Explain HOPE GPA Calculation
- Provide overview of Gafutures.org to include transcript requests, HOPE Scholarship, Hope Grant, and Zell Miller Scholarship requirements. It may be necessary to give an overview of other programs that students may have access to at your school in the college application process (Ex: Common Application, Naviance)
- Provide parents with Financial Aid/Scholarship resources
- Provide overview of the college application process to include types of admissions deadlines (Early Decision, Early Action, Regular Decision, and Rolling Admission), requests for letters of recommendation, transcript requests, and standardized test score requests
- Explain Georgia Bridge Law Requirement
- Verify that each senior's name is spelled correctly and will appear on their diploma as desired
- Explain what it means to be a first generation college student. Establish a method in which parent/guardians may self-identify as parents of a first generation college student
- Establish methods of communication with parents/students in regards to activities and opportunities available to seniors (Ex: Scholarships opportunities will be sent through our Guidance Remind.com account)

HELPFUL COLLEGE AND CAREER WEBSITES

College and Career Interest Inventories

www.Gafutures.org
www.gcic.peachnet.edu
www.gadoe.org

General College Admissions Information

www.theadmissionsgame.com
www.makingitcount.com
www.GAfutures.org
www.princtonreview.com
www.collegesearch.collegeboard.com
www.collegeweeklive.com

ACT/SAT Information and Prep Sites

www.collegeboard.org
www.gcicpeachnet.org
www.GAfutures.org
https://www.actstudent.org
www.number2.com
www.kaplan.com
www.princetonreview

Financial Aid

http://studentaid.ed.gov/
http://www.scholarships.com/resources/parents-practical-guide-to-college/parents-guide-to-college-financial-aid/loans-vs-grants-vs-scholarships/
http://collegecost.ed.gov/catc/
http://www.gsfc.org/gsfcnew/index.cfm
http://www2.ed.gov/programs/fpg/index.html
http://www.debt.org/students/
http://www.debt.org/students/college-budgeting-101/
http://www.debt.org/students/loan-forgiveness/
https://fafsa.ed.gov
http://www.uaspire.org
http://www.ticas.org
http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/higher-education/college-score-card
http://www.collegecost.ed.gov/netpricecenter.aspx
https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org
https://www.mycollegeprice.com
http://www.finaid.org
http://www2.ed.gov/finaid
http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0082-scholarship-and-financial-aid-scams
www.ed.gov

Scholarship Search Engines

http://www.scholarships.com/Scholarships.com
http://collegerealitycheck.com/en/CollegeRealityCheck
www.fastweb.com
www.GAfutures.rg
www.zinch.com
www.collegeboard.com

Summer Resources

http://getgeorgiareading.org/georgia-summer/

3. Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Students with significant cognitive disabilities served on a functional curriculum and assessed on the Georgia Alternative Assessment per the IEP may graduate and receive a regular high school diploma when the student's IEP team determines that the student has:

- (I) Completed an integrated curriculum based on the CCGPS that includes instruction in Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies as well as career preparation, self-determination, independent living and personal care to equal a minimum of 23 units of instruction, and
- (II) Participated in the GAA during middle school and high school and scored on the high school GAA in Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies, and
- (III) Reached the 22nd birthday OR has transitioned to an employment/education/training setting in which the supports needed are provided by an entity other than the local school system.

H. Advanced Learning and Gifted Programs

**For eligibility criteria for gifted identification, refer to section XI. Other Programs and Requirements in this manual.

1. Gifted Services High School

Gifted students in the high school grades will be served for gifted through the Advanced Content model in Advanced Placement (AP) and Honors classes. Students will attend their classes on the seven period schedule and will be served a minimum of 5 segments per week. Each local school has a specific set of criteria for students for entry into such courses. Please check with the school's Guidance Department regarding their criteria for admittance.

Students will master the Georgia Standards of Excellence (mathematics and ELA), State Gifted Standards and Goals for Gifted Education in the subject areas of their gifted classes. Students will develop advanced research skills and problem solving skills. They will also enhance their creativity and become more proficient with their communication skills.

Advanced Content Class (9-12) -- Students are homogeneously grouped on the basis of achievement and interest in a specific academic content area. The district may elect to include students who are not identified as gifted but who have demonstrated exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area.

High School Continuation Criteria
The Muscogee County School District Gifted Education Program requires that high school students meet specific performance standards as specified by the following:

- Advanced Content, Honors, Advanced Placement IB, Cluster, Collaboration models
- Acceptable progress is determined separately for each content area in which a student is served and is defined as:
  1. Maintaining a semester grade average of <u>80 or higher</u> in the advanced content class (excluding Honors and AP) for which gifted service is provided.
  2. Maintaining a semester grade average of <u>75 or higher in Honors courses and 70 and higher in AP courses</u> for which gifted service is provided.
  3. Maintaining an End-of-Semester and End-of-Year Grade Point Average of <u>2.5 or higher</u>.
  4. Meeting standards on the state required competency test in the content area for which gifted service is provided
- The student's attendance should remain in good standing without the loss of any credits while under review.

The student will have an **Individual Gifted Plan** where areas of strength, weaknesses, and strategies as well as interventions will be noted.

Please reference section XI. Other Programs and Requirements in this manual for continuation procedures.

2. Advanced Placement Courses

More than 90 percent of four-year US colleges give students credits and/or advanced placement on the basis of AP Exam scores. AP courses can help students acquire the skills and habits needed to be successful in college. Students have the opportunity to improve writing skills, sharpen problem-solving abilities, and develop time

management skills, discipline, and study habits. Research shows that students who take AP are much more likely than their peers to complete a college degree on time.

Greater course depth
Students have the opportunity to dig deeper into subjects that interest them, develop advanced research and communication skills, and learn to tap their creative, problem-solving, and analytical potential.

Preparation for college-level work
AP courses give students access to rigorous college-level work. AP students build confidence and learn the essential time management and study skills needed for college and career success.

Competitive advantage in college admissions
Eighty-five percent of selective colleges and universities report that a student's AP experience favorably impacts admission decisions.

Take the next steps together
Talk to peers, counselors, and teachers to learn more about the benefits of AP courses and the specific process for enrolling in their school's AP program.

****Each high school in MCSD has its own slate of Advanced Placement courses. Check with the Guidance Department of each individual school for their specific course offerings.**

3. Georgia's Dual Enrollment Program

In 2015, the Georgia General Assembly passed a law that streamlined the existing dual-enrollment programs. As a result, Accel, Dual HOPE Grant, and the original Move On When Ready were combined into one program entitled Move On When Ready (MOWR). The name was changed back to Dual Enrollment in August of 2017. This is a state program in which high school students may earn high school credit and college credit simultaneously. Students may attend college classes on the college campus (full-time) or pursue those courses while still on a high school campus (part time**). Georgia's dual-credit program** is available to any Georgia student in grades 9-12 enrolled in a public school, private school, or home-study program operated pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-690 in Georgia.

Dual Enrollment Facts

- Eligible students may participate part-time or full-time at multiple post-secondary institutions, but applications for Dual Enrollment must be completed every term (semester or quarter).
- College courses must be selected from the approved Dual Enrollment/Georgia Futures directory.
- Once all high school graduation or home-study requirements are met, students are no longer eligible to participate in the dual-credit program.

Quick Points to Remember
Below are a few points of interest to help students and parents understand the Dual Enrollment program.

- The eligible student and parent/guardian should schedule the **required, mandatory** Dual Enrollment advisement session with the school counselor to discuss the dual-credit program options.
- Completion of the Dual Enrollment Georgia Student Finance Commission application is required each semester or quarter.
- The student must apply and be accepted to a participating eligible post-secondary institution (University System of Georgia, Technical College System of Georgia or private institutions).

- The student and parent/guardian must sign required paperwork during a follow-up advisement session with the high school counselor as well as the **District Dual Enrollment Agreement Form**.
- College courses taken must count toward local and/or state high school graduation requirements.
- The Georgia Student Finance Commission will manage funding and payments to the post-secondary institutions provided by annual state appropriations.
- The dual-credit program is not available for coursework exempted or given credit by examination, testing, training, or prior experience.
- Dropping a course or not following program rules and regulations may result in students being removed from the program; thus, affecting their high school graduation requirements as well as their permanent college transcript.
- Students must make annual progress towards graduation and completion of their Individual Graduation Plan to participate in the dual-credit program.
- Students participating in Dual Enrollment are considered college students in those courses and have officially begun their college transcript which is a permanent academic record.

More details about Georgia's Dual Enrollment program may be found at www.gafutures.org.

I. Promotion Placement and Retention

1. General Requirements for Promotion and Retention

a) Grades 9-12 Promotion and Retention Policies

Graduation requirements are determined by the year the student enters the ninth grade for the first time. The graduation Policy IHF(6) outlines the required courses and/or core courses to be taken and the number of units required to receive a diploma from the Muscogee County School District.

Grade level classification is determined by the number of units earned. The Muscogee County School District graduation is based on 23 units. Students will be promoted from grade to grade as follows:

- 9th grade: promotion from 8th grade
- 10th grade: one year in high school and 5 units
- 11th grade: two years in high school and 11 units
- 12th grade: three years in high school and 16 units

Adjustments may be made by the administration with regard to students who enter from a school not under "block scheduling" but never below the state requirements of 23 units. **Policy IHE Promotion and Retention**

1) Retention and Promotion of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who are following the general education program, take the state assessment, and are pursuing a standard diploma are affected by the same guidelines for retention as are students in general education. These students will follow the same process outlined in the Retention and Promotion policy for high school students with the exception that the IEP team will act as the placement team for decision making purposes and an IEP will be written to reflect the data, supports, services and accommodations needed to support the student for the upcoming year.

Retention decisions for students with disabilities who are following a functional curriculum and are participating in alternate assessment are made based upon the recommendation of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

2) English Learner (EL)

English Learners (ELs) should receive the same consideration any other student receives when determining any type of program eligibility available to all students. The ELs in the mainstream classroom will need language development and other types of support that must be included in general classroom instruction. For ELs, that includes accommodations to the instructional activities, tasks and assessments. Eligibility for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services and placement in an ESOL class automatically is considered a Tier 4 intervention. In the mainstream classroom, ELs should receive Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions to successfully access and comprehend instruction. As the student progresses in language and academic proficiency, the level of interventions needed to support him or her should decrease accordingly.

Retention committees (including the ESOL teacher) should review all data for a particular EL student and determine whether the lack of content knowledge is an academic issue or a lack of language proficiency. According to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA, 1974), identified ELs cannot be penalized with retention for their lack of language proficiency.

J. Grading and Reporting Student Progress

1. Progress Reports

Each student is provided a Progress Report near the midpoint of each nine weeks grading period, with specific dates listed on the official MCSD School Calendar available at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Calendar/Full. The report includes data on the student's current grade in each class as well as attendance and optional teacher comments. Progress Reports should be reviewed closely by parents and students for information on how well the student is meeting academic goals prior to the end of the grading period so that additional instructional assistance, if necessary, can be obtained.

Students with disabilities receive progress reports within the same guidelines for educational performance. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

2. Report Cards

Each student is provided a Report Cards at the end of each nine weeks grading period, with specific dates listed on the official MCSD School Calendar available at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Calendar/Full. The Report Card includes data on the student's final grade in each class for that nine weeks grading period as well as attendance and optional teacher comments. Report Cards should be reviewed closely by parents and students for information on how well the student is meeting academic goals for each course so that additional instructional assistance, if necessary, can be obtained.

Students with disabilities receive report cards on the same schedule as typical peers for educational performance. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

3. Grading System

Students are given a numerical grade, from 0 to 100, in each class. These grades appear on report cards and on permanent records.

Grade Distribution

90 -- 100	A (excellent)
80 -- 89	B (above average)
70 -- 79	C (average)
69 and below	F (unsatisfactory/failure)

Students with disabilities are graded based on the required grading process by the district and state as directed through the IEP. IEP goal performance is provided through a progress report each 9 weeks of the annual IEP. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.

4. Parent/Student Portal

The Muscogee County School District provides parents and students with a secure electronic interface to access student information. Information provided includes: student attendance, student schedule, assignments and grades earned, and reports. Information is accessible to parents in real-time. To create a Parent Portal account, you will need to visit your child's school to verify all data is accurate in the system and show a picture ID. You will then receive a letter with your unique Activation Key. There is also a mobile app with notifications that you can use with mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets.

More information can be found by clicking the Infinite Campus Parent Portal link found on the "Families & Students" section of the Muscogee County School District website at https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Families.

Students with disabilities and their parents have the same access to the parent and student portal information. If you need assistance, please contact your local school to obtain the required portal information.

IX. Special Provisions for English Learners (ELs)

A. Eligibility for English Learners Services

1. Placement for Services

Under Federal law, schools must identify and screen all minority students of international origin in grades K-12 who have a primary or home language other than English within 30 days of enrollment. When a student enrolls in an MCSD school, the Home Language Survey (HLS), required by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), is administered as part of the enrollment process (embedded in the MCSD student assignment and registration form). Once identified, the Kindergarten WIDA ACCESS Placement Test or the WIDA Screener are administered to the student for eligibility purposes. A score of below 28 on Speaking and Listening, below 11 on Reading, below 12 on writing portions of the Kindergarten W-APT qualify a student for ESOL services. Any composite score of below 5.0 qualifies students in grades 1-12 for ESOL services. Once students have been evaluated, the law requires parental notification of program eligibility within two weeks.

2. ESOL Service Locations

- Allen Elementary School
- Blanchard Elementary School
- Brewer Elementary School
- Dorothy Height Elementary School
- Eagle Ridge Academy
- Key Elementary School
- Midland Academy
- MLK, Jr. Elementary School
- North Columbus Elementary School
- Reese Road Leadership Academy
- River Road Elementary School
- South Columbus Elementary School

- Arnold Middle School
- Baker Middle School
- Blackmon Road Middle School

- Shaw High School
- Spencer High School

3. Class Scheduling

- Kindergarten – 3rd Grade = 45 minutes daily
- 4th & 5th Grade = 50 minutes daily
- 6th – 8th Grade = 60 minutes daily
- 9th – 12th Grade = 60-90 minutes for beginning ESOL students
- 9th – 12th Grade = 55 minutes (sheltered English core classes)

4. Delivery of Instruction

School districts provide English language support to all ELs. Such assistance is provided through the state-funded ESOL program approved by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE).

Approved instructional delivery models for MCSD:

- Pull-Out Model – Students are taken out of a general education class for the purpose of receiving small group language instruction from an ESOL teacher
- Push-In Model – Students remain in their core academic class where they receive content instruction from their content area teacher along with targeted language instruction from an ESOL teacher (not co-teaching)
- Scheduled Class Period – Students at the middle and high school levels receive language assistance and/or core content instruction in a class composed only of ELs

B. Accommodations for ELs on the Administration of Statewide Assessments

Accommodations are permissible alterations in the administration of an assessment when they are clearly documented in an EL's Testing Participation Plan. Accommodations assist ELs in accessing and participating in assessments and allow them the opportunity to show what they know and are able to do.

C. Exemption from Statewide Assessments

Identified ELs, within the first 12 months of US school attendance, may be deferred from English Language Arts (ELA) and Social Studies portions of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) once if they have taken the ACCESS 2.0 during the same school year.

Starting with the 2017–2018 school year, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) will provide two options of which the State must select one or provide procedures for school districts to choose one:

- Continue the above option
- Administer all GMAS tests to new ELs, making the first year a "baseline" year with no accountability. The next year, ELs will be held to growth targets only for accountability purposes. The following year, those ELs will be held to growth and proficiency/achievement targets

D. ACCESS for ELs Testing

The World-Class Instructional Design Assessment Consortium (WIDA) is a consortium of 38 states dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational opportunities for ELs. Georgia joined the consortium in 2005. The WIDA Consortium developed English language development standards and an English language proficiency assessment, the ACCESS 2.0 which aligned with those standards. A second assessment, the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, is an assessment for English language proficiency for ELs in grades 1-12 with significant cognitive disabilities that prevent meaningful participation in the ACCESS 2.0.

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is administered annually to all identified ELs in Georgia. It is a standards based, criterion-referenced English language proficiency test designed to measure ELs' social and academic proficiency and progress in English. It assesses social and instructional English as well as the language associated with Language

Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies within the school context across the four language domains of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

E. Promotion and Retention of English Learners (ELs)

English Learners (ELs) should receive the same consideration any other student receives when determining any type of program eligibility available to all students. The ELs in the mainstream classroom will need language development and other types of support that must be included in the general classroom instruction. For ELs, that includes accommodations to the instructional activities, tasks and assessments. Eligibility for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services and placement in an ESOL class automatically is considered a Tier 4 intervention. In the mainstream classroom, ELs should receive Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions to successfully access and comprehend instruction. As the student progresses in language and academic proficiency, the level of interventions needed to support him or her should decrease accordingly.

Retention committees (including the ESOL teacher) should review all data for a particular EL student and determine whether the lack of content knowledge is an academic issue or due to the lack of language proficiency. According to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA, 1974), identified ELs cannot be penalized with retention for their lack of language proficiency.

F. Grading Policy

Kindergarten-5th Grade - There are no grades assigned for ESOL classwork
6th-12th Grade - Follows the MCSD grading policy for all students

G. Student Progression Monitoring

Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs)
Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), school districts receiving Title III funds are required to annually report ELs' progress and proficiency in the English language, while the state is required to monitor school districts' implementation of Title III program requirements as well as expenditures of Title III funds. Title III AMAOs are reported to the US Department of Education (US ED) at the district and state levels.

To comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements and protect the privacy of our students, the minimum reporting size for the EL sub-group is set at ten (10). Ten has been the established minimum reporting size based on FERPA for all public data. School districts with fewer than ten (10) ELs enrolled are members of the Georgia statewide Title III Consortium. The consortium and school districts are held accountable for achieving the AMAOs. Therefore, Georgia is accountable for the achievement of every EL enrolled in any school district that accepts Title III funds.

1) AMAO-1: PROGRESS
Progress refers to the percentage of students that demonstrate Annual Progress in English Language Acquisition (APLA). APLA will be defined as EL students who move in a positive direction from one cohort performance band to another annually as measured by *ACCESS for ELLs*, Georgia's test for English Language Proficiency. Georgia has established performance bands as follows:

Performance Bands for PROGRESS		
Performance Band	ACCESS Composite Score	Performance Point Range
I	1.0 – 2.2	1.3
II	2.3 – 3.3	1.1
III	3.4 – 3.9	0.6
IV	4.0 – 4.3	0.4
V	4.4 – 4.6	0.3
VI	4.7 – 4.9	0.3
VII	5.0 – 5.2	0.3
VIII	5.3 – 5.5	0.3
IX	5.6 and above	N/A

PROGRESS for All ELs & Annual Targets	
School Year	Target
2006 – 2007	47%
2007 – 2008	47%
2008 – 2009	48%
2009 – 2010	49%
2010 – 2011	50%
2011 – 2012	51%
2012 – 2013	52%
2013 – 2014	53%
2014 – 2015	54%
2015 – 2016	55%
2016 – 2017	56%

2) AMAO-2: ATTAINMENT of PROFICIENCY

Attainment of Proficiency refers to the percentage of ELs that attain proficiency in English. Georgia has defined Proficiency as obtaining an ACCESS composite score of 4.3 or higher on the Tier B or C version of the test in grades 1-12. Kindergarten students who score an ACCESS composite score of 4.3 and scores of 4.3 or higher in all language domains (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) are deemed English proficient.

As with AMAO-1, the school district minimum reporting size was set at 10. School districts with EL populations of fewer than ten will be held accountable for achieving the AMAO through their membership in the statewide Title III Consortium. The Title III Consortium and the independent Title III school districts are held accountable for achieving the Title III AMAOs.

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2) AMAO-2: ATTAINMENT of PROFICIENCY	2) AMAO-2: ATTAINMENT of PROFICIENCY
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As with AMAO-1, the school district minimum reporting size was set at 10. School districts with EL populations of fewer than ten will be held accountable for achieving the AMAO through their membership in the statewide Title III Consortium. The Title III Consortium and the independent Title III school districts are held accountable for achieving the Title III AMAOs.	As with AMAO-1, the school district minimum reporting size was set at 10. School districts with EL populations of fewer than ten will be held accountable for achieving the AMAO through their membership in the statewide Title III Consortium. The Title III Consortium and the independent Title III school districts are held accountable for achieving the Title III AMAOs.

3. AMAO-3: LEA SUBGROUP MADE ANNUAL PROFICIENCY TARGETS (Now Title I)

The reporting of AMAO-3 reflects the accountability measures implemented in the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI). AMAO-3 accountability is measured based on the academic content goals set for the EL subgroup. The academic content areas to which school districts are held accountable for AMAO-3 are:

- 3rd–8th Grade – GMAS end of grade (EOG) assessments in Language Arts and Math
- 9th–12th Grade – GMAS end of course (EOC) assessments in American Literature and Composition and Analytic Geometry/Math II

(changes to Title III under ESSA: AMAO 1, 2, 3 -no longer Title III; language proficiency and content goals will be found in Title I, Section 1111(b)(4)(1)(ii))

H. ESOL Program Exit Procedures

In order to exit language assistance services, a Kindergarten student must score an Accountability Overall/Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) of 4.3 or higher with no individual language domain score less than 4.3. In this case he/she is no longer eligible for ESOL services.

Students in grades 1-12 with a CPL of 4.3 will be deemed English proficient and are no longer eligible for ESOL services.

English Learners (ELs) who meet the criteria for proficiency are no longer eligible for language assistance services through ESOL and must be exited. Title III law under ESSA requires that school districts monitor ELs for four (4) calendar years following exit from language assistance services. The district must maintain documented evidence that the student is being monitored during the four (4) year monitoring phase.

ELs who are in the four (4) year monitoring phase following their exit from language assistance services will be coded as EL-Monitored (EL-M) in Infinite Campus, the school district's student information system. They will also be coded as EL-M (SRC 19) on state assessments and continue to be eligible for appropriate standard accommodations as outlined on their EL/TPC plans. After the monitoring phase, EL-M students are no longer eligible for any testing accommodations. At this time, the student's coding for data collection and student record purposes will change from EL-M to EL-F (former EL) and remain as such for as long as he/she is enrolled.

X. Special Provisions for Students with Disabilities

A. Parent Rights and Contact Information

The Muscogee County Program for Exceptional Students is committed to making all of our information fully accessible for users with disabilities. Please contact us at parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 7067482225 if there is an issue with accessibility of resources so that we may assist you with finding the appropriate accommodation.

COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS RELATED TO SPECIAL SERVICES

AAC = Alternative Augmentative Communication	LRE = Least Restrictive Environment
ADA = American with Disabilities Act	MCSD = Muscogee County School District
ADHD = Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder	MID = Mild Intellectual Disability
ALJ = Administrative Law Judge	MoID = Moderate Intellectual Disability
ASD = Autism Spectrum Disorder	OCD = Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
ASL = American Sign Language	ODD = Oppositional Defiant Disorder
AT = Assistive Technology	OHI = Other Health Impaired
BCW = Babies Can't Wait	OI = Orthopedic Impairment
BIP = Behavior Intervention Plan	O&M = Orientation and Mobility
CA = Chronological Age	OSS = Out of School Suspension
CBA = Curriculum Based Assessment	OT = Occupational Therapy or Therapist
CP = Cerebral Palsy	PBIS = Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support
D/HH = Deaf/Hard of Hearing	PEI = Plan Educativo Individualizado (IEP)
DOB = Date of Birth	PES = Program for Exceptional Students
DX = Diagnosis	PID = Profound Intellectual Disability
EBD = Emotional Behavior Disorder	PT = Physical Therapy or Therapist
ELA = English Language Arts	PWN = Prior Written Notice
ESY = Extended School Year	RTI = Response to Intervention
FAPE = Free Appropriate Public Education	SDD = Significant Developmental Delay
FBA = Functional Behavior Assessment	SI = Speech/Language Impairment
FERPA= Family Educational Rights Privacy Act	SID = Severe Intellectual Disability
GAA = Georgia Alternate Assessment	SLD = Specific Learning Disability
GaDOE = Georgia Department of Education	SLP = Speech Language Pathologist
HI = Hearing Impaired	SPED = Special Education
ID = Intellectual Disability	SST = Student Support Team
IDEA = Intellectuals with Disabilities Act	ST = Speech Therapy
IEE = Independent Educational Evaluation	STEPS = Specialized Training Exceptional Preschool Students

IEP = Individualized Education Program	SOP = Summary of Performance
IFSP = Individualized Family Service Plan	TBI = Traumatic Brain Injury
IQ = Intelligence Quotient	VI = Visual Impairment
ISS = In School Suspension	VR = Vocational Rehabilitation
LEA = Local Education Agency	

The Muscogee County School District Program for Exceptional Students recognizes and values parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of a student with a disability as they are necessary participants in the development of the full students with disability process. It is important that the parents provide information about their views of the student's progress or lack of progress, as well as express any concerns or praise about the overall educational development of the child. Parents provide important knowledge about how the student behaves and performs outside the school setting.

For more information about the Program for Exceptional Students and the Muscogee County School district, please review the information on the MCSD website: https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/

MCSD website: Program for Exceptional Students:
https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentsWithDisabilities/Information

Below is a list of possible contacts to ensure that you have access to individuals to assist with your specific questions, comments or concerns. We ask that you begin by speaking with individuals at the school level as they are the most familiar with the situation and your child. If assistance is needed beyond that, we will gladly work with the family and the school to address any concerns or questions.

- Each student with a disability is assigned a case manager. Please ensure that you know who your child's case manager is and that you and your child know how to contact them. These individuals work directly with all IEP team members to ensure all members have input and a plan is written to address the student specific needs.
- Each school has a Lead Teacher and LEA Facilitator. Most of these are located at the school but a few serve multiple schools so it is vital to ensure that you know who serves your school and how to contact them. These individuals work to assist parents and students directly at the school level. They work to address concerns or questions as soon as possible to ensure that the collaboration and implementation is successful. They are part of the district level team but are located within the local schools for easier access and accountability.
- The school administration is a valuable resource for parents. Please ensure that you speak with them about concerns and questions as they may be able to assist you in finding a resolution. They are the instructional leaders in each school and come to the table with a wealth of knowledge and supports. Please visit the Muscogee County website to find a list of school and administrator information. https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/Public
- Parent Mentors: The Program for Exceptional Children employs two part-time Parent Mentors who are available to work with individual parents or to provide training to groups of parents, administrators and/or teachers on topics of interest and concern. Parents may request contact information or schools may refer parents to the Parent Mentors by informing them to contact the Program for Exceptional Students, 706-748-2214 or by emailing parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us.
- At the district level, there are individuals who work in various disability areas or instructional areas and provide support to schools and parents. These individuals are experts in their fields and are here to support teams, students, staff and families. For more information about who to contact, please email the parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 7067482225 to schedule an appointment.

- The Program Specialist works within the district office to complete assignments, request transportation, assist families and schools with questions and concerns and provide follow up and guidance in a variety of areas. Please call 7067482225 to schedule an appointment or visit us at the Program for Exceptional Student, Muscogee County Public Education Center 2960 Macon Road, Columbus, GA
- The Executive Director for the Program for Exceptional Students works with families, schools and district staff to ensure that areas of concern are addressed, create a global growth plan for the department to meet student and district needs, provide support and guidance if relationships have broken down between teams and provide guidance on possible solutions to address specific situations. If you find that you are not able to get answers or your concerns have not been addressed, please contact 706-748-2225 to schedule a phone conference or email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us.
- Muscogee County School District Department of Education Website: https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/
- Email addresses to obtain assistance for a child needing a possible educational evaluation: Childfind@muscogee.k12.ga.us
- Email to notify the district that you have questions or concerns: parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us
- Georgia Department of Education Website: http://www.doe.k12.ga.us

For additional parent information in terms of rights, appeals, processes and resources, please review the Muscogee County parent rights. If you do not have a copy, they are available at each school, the Program for Exceptional Students Office at the Muscogee County Public Education Center or on the Muscogee County website. You may also request a copy by emailing parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us.

B. Tips For Parents

In our efforts to create "We" between the district and community, we strive to build a relationship between all families, schools and the district. We may not always agree but please know that we encourage parent, family and student input, participation and desire for every parent and student to be a successful part of the team.

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- Be involved in every possible meeting for your child. You are a vital part of the team and can provide information that is crucial to your child's educational planning.
- If you cannot participate in person, please consider participating by phone.
- If you have obstacles that prevent you from attending meetings, please let us know by contacting the case manager, emailing parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or calling 706-748-2225 so we can try and work with you to overcome any issues. Participation in this process is invaluable to student success.
- Know your rights as a parent of a student with a disability. The State of Georgia provides videos explaining your rights in simple terms. Those videos can be accessed at: http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Parent-Rights.aspx
- Encourage your child to know their IEP and be part of the team.
- Get to know the individuals at your school and district staff assigned early in the year.
- Communicate concerns and questions promptly so they can be addressed.
- Share praises with the staff and encourage your child to work to build a relationship with the staff.
- Create a file to keep up with important special education paperwork. If you need assistance with this, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will work with you on the process.
- Watch for copies of report cards, IEP's, Progress Reports, etc. If you do not receive them, please contact the case manager and request the information. If you need assistance, please email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or call 706-748-2225.
- Students with Disabilities can attend school until they earn a regular education high school diploma or up to their 22nd birthday.

C. Requesting Records

Parents, guardians and adult students at age 18 or above can request to inspect and review any educational recordings related to their child or themselves that are collected, maintained, or used by the district. We will gladly comply with any request without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP, due process hearing or resolution session, and in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made.

AMENDMENT OF RECORDS AT PARENT'S REQUEST - Parents who believe that information contained in the education records collected, maintained, or used is inaccurate or misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of the student may request MCSD amend the information. The district will review the request and make a determination which will be provided to the parent in writing. Please visit the Program for Exceptional Students in the Muscogee County Public Education Center at 2960 Macon Road Columbus GA or email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us for additional information.

FERPA for Students - http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/students.html

D. The Special Education Process

Each special education area of disability has specific eligibility requirements. To qualify for special education placement, each student must meet eligibility requirements for at least one area. As the parent or guardian, you will be invited to meet with qualified professionals to create an eligibility team which will review assessment data and other information to determine the student's program eligibility and complete or update and eligibility report.. Please check the Georgia Department of Education Website for specific eligibility information.
http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/default.aspx

A student is typically referred for an evaluation by a Student Support Team (SST) when there is belief that a disability may be the primary cause of the student's learning or behavior problem(s). Various interventions and supports are used to find a satisfactory solution to the concerns through the tiers of intervention and a Professional Learning Plan.

An evaluation may also be requested. After the request, the School level team should email the appropriate evaluators, get vision and hearing screening completed and the consent for evaluation signed. The team, including parents, should meet to review information and create a Professional Learning Plan to implement during the 60 day testing window after the request. The school will complete the referral packet and submit to the Program for Exceptional Students Department (PES) in the Muscogee County Public Education Building (MCPEC). As the parent, you will receive a copy of the parental rights before testing and they are available on the Muscogee County Website and the Georgia Department of Education website.
https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentsWithDisabilities/Information

1. Eligibility for Services

Each special education area of disability has specific eligibility requirements. To qualify for special education placement, each student must meet eligibility requirements for at least one area. As the parent or guardian, you will be invited to meet with qualified professionals to create an eligibility team which will review assessment data and other information to determine the student's program eligibility and complete or update and eligibility report. Please check the Georgia Department of Education Website for specific eligibility information.
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https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentsWithDisabilities/Information

a) Independent Educational Evaluations (IEE)

If the parent, or guardian, or the adult student at age 18, disagrees with the results of a completed evaluation provided by the district, you may request an outside independent educational evaluation (IEE) paid for by the district.

The district will either agree to pay for the IEE or begin the due process procedure to support that the district's evaluation is adequate. If you are requesting an IEE, please submit your request in writing to the school or the Program for Exceptional Students by:

Emailing: parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us,
Mailing: Program for Exceptional Students
Muscogee County Public Education Center
2960 Macon Road - Columbus, GA 31906
or calling 706-748-2225 to schedule an appointment.

2. Placement for Services

Once the student is evaluated, an eligibility meeting will be held to review all current student information, any current evaluation information and student data to determine if the student meets Georgia eligibility requirements for a disability. If the eligibility team determines that the student is eligible, the team, including the parent if possible, will write an IEP for initial services and placements within 30 days of completing the eligibility. At that time, the parent can refuse services, sign consent for the student to receive the IEP placement or file for Due Process as outlined in the Parental Rights. At any time between the annual IEP's, a parent or staff member can request an IEP Amendment to discuss the IEP.

Parentally placed private and Home School Students with Disabilities that attend school in Muscogee County may request proportionate share services through contacting the Program for Exceptional Students through the child find process by emailing childfind@muscogee.k12.ga.us or calling 706-748-2225.
Selection of these services are determined through an annual meeting with Private and Home School parents and the district. The decision of services will be determined by the district after the consultation and communicated, as appropriate.

Through the child find process, an evaluation will be provided, if appropriate, and special education services that fall within the services selected may be provided through a service plan.

3. ESL Service Locations

Muscogee County offers a variety of services and supports across the district which are driven by an IEP or Service Plan for Private or Home School students. Many students receive services at their home schools but specific programming may require an assignment to a school with a specialized program. The district strives to ensure that all students receive services in their least restrictive environment based on individualized strengths and needs. Participation with typical peers is vital to the success of all students with disabilities and is addressed through the IEP team. If you have questions about services, LRE or want a specific assignment, please contact your local school or come to the Program for Exceptional Students located inside the Muscogee County Public Education Center at 2960 Macon Road, Columbus, GA or email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us for assistance.

4. Assessment Participation for Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities are required to participate in all state and federal assessment requirements. The type of assessment (regular, regular with accommodations or Alternative) is determined through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. Students also receive accommodations and supports through the IEP as guided by the Present levels of performance which outline specific student need.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities will be considered for the Georgia Alternative Assessment by the IEP team. The GAA is a portfolio of student work that enables the demonstration of achievement and progress relative to selected skills that are aligned to the Georgia curriculum. The focus is on academic content and skills.

- Kindergarten and Grades 3,4,6, and 7 assemble a portfolio in English Language Arts and Mathematics
- Grades 5, 8 and 11 assemble a portfolio in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies

5. Retention or Promotion of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who are following the general education program, take the state assessment, and are pursuing a standard diploma are affected by the same guidelines for retention as are students in general education. These students will follow the same process outlined in the Retention and Promotion policy for all students with the exception that the IEP team will act as the placement team for decision making purposes and an IEP will be written to reflect the data, supports, services and accommodations needed to support the student for the upcoming year.

Retention decisions for students with disabilities who are following a functional curriculum and are participating in alternate assessment are made based upon the recommendation of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team.

6. Revocation of Services

As the Parents, guardians and adult students at age 18 or older, you have the right to revoke special education consent for services at any time. Please contact the Program for Exceptional Students by emailing parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us or by calling 706-748-2225 to set up an appointment to discuss the revocation process and receive assistance. You may also provide your request in writing and we will work with you to ensure that all processes are completed.

7. Class Scheduling

Classes and instruction for students with disabilities are based on the requirements of the IEP driven services and any regular services which were not addressed in the IEP. Schools schedule students in appropriate courses to meet the state guidelines and course expectations and review to ensure that they meet the IEP requirements.

Based on student need and difficulty making progress in the regular curriculum with services, accommodations and supports, IEP's may specify the need for specialized instruction. In this case, the school will work with the PES department to ensure that the materials and supports are provided. If you have questions about specialized instruction, please contact the case manager or LEA Facilitator at your school and request an amendment meeting. If you need additional assistance or have questions, please come to the Program for Exceptional Students located inside the Muscogee County Public Education Center at 2960 Macon Road, Columbus, GA or email parenthelp@muscogee.k12.ga.us for assistance.

8. Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities have been defined as club, intramural, or interscholastic (e.g., freshman, junior varsity, varsity) athletics at all education levels. Muscogee County believes that these are an important part of all educational programs and ensures that students with disabilities have equal opportunities to participate in available extracurricular activities.

Please ensure that you request information from the school concerning what activities are available and all requirements for participation or try out criteria annually as they may change. It is vital that the IEP team has this criteria information in order to discuss which extracurricular activities are available and appropriate for the student. While the IEP team can address supports and services needed by the student to participate, they cannot change the requirements or criteria for the activity as long as the selection or competition criteria are not discriminatory. For more information, please contact your local school.

XI. Other Programs and Requirements

A. Alternative Education Programs

1. AIM Program

The Edgewood Student Services Center was designed for students in grades 3-12 who have violated school district rules and have been temporarily removed from their home school. The goal of the program is to ensure the students continue their education, complete their assigned days at the alternative school and learn how to make better choices by attending a structured/supported learning environment.

2. Catapult Academy

Catapult Academy is owned and operated by Catapult Learning Academy, Inc., serves students ages 16-20 who have dropped out of the district's high schools and are in need of an alternative solution to a regular high diploma. The program provides a combination of small-group, teacher-led instruction, virtual learning, flexible scheduling, college admission guidance and career coaching. Educators and district leaders at the Catapult Academy of Muscogee County School District (MCSD) work closely to market and enroll students. You must be a former student from one of Muscogee County High Schools, be between the ages of 16 and 20 years old, have a minimum of 12 credits and complete an application for enrollment.

B. Credit Recovery Programs

The Muscogee County School District's (MCSD) provides credit or course recovery opportunities for students to retake a course in which they were previously unsuccessful in earning credit or passing course. This allows students who have already completed seat time to potentially earn credit or meet course requirements. The following programs are designed to allow students to complete coursework using the following credit or course recovery options:

- Georgia Virtual Credit Recovery
- Georgia Virtual School
- Extended Semester or Year
- Apex Learning Online
- Summer Credit Recovery

C. Dual Enrollment

In 2015, the Georgia General Assembly passed a law that streamlined the existing dual-enrollment programs. As a result, Accel, Dual HOPE Grant, and the original Dual Enrollment were combined into one program entitled Dual Enrollment. The name was changed back to Dual Enrollment in August of 2017. This is a state program in which high school students may earn high school credit and college credit simultaneously. Students may attend college classes on the college campus (full-time) or pursue those courses while still on a high school campus (part time).

Georgia's dual-credit program is available to any Georgia student in grades 9-12 enrolled in a public school, private school, or home-study program operated pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-690 in Georgia.

Dual Enrollment Facts

- Eligible students may participate part-time or full-time at multiple post-secondary institutions, but applications for Dual Enrollment must be completed every term (semester or quarter).
- College courses must be selected from the approved Dual Enrollment/Georgia Futures directory.
- Once all high school graduation or home-study requirements are met, students are no longer eligible to participate in the dual-credit program.

Quick Points to Remember

Below are a few points of interest to help students and parents understand the Dual Enrollment program.

- The eligible student and parent/guardian should schedule the **required, mandatory** Dual Enrollment advisement session with the school counselor to discuss the dual-credit program options.
- Completion of the Dual Enrollment Georgia Student Finance Commission application is required each semester or quarter.
- The student must apply and be accepted to a participating eligible post-secondary institution (University System of Georgia, Technical College System of Georgia or private institutions).
- The student and parent/guardian must sign required paperwork during a follow-up advisement session with the high school counselor as well as the **District Dual Enrollment Agreement Form**.
- College courses taken must count toward local and/or state high school graduation requirements.
- The Georgia Student Finance Commission will manage funding and payments to the post-secondary institutions provided by annual state appropriations.
- The dual-credit program is not available for coursework exempted or given credit by examination, testing, training, or prior experience.
- Dropping a course or not following program rules and regulations may result in students being removed from the program; thus, affecting their high school graduation requirements as well as their permanent college transcript.
- Students must make annual progress towards graduation and completion of their Individual Graduation Plan to participate in the dual-credit program.
- Students participating in Dual Enrollment are considered college students in those courses and have officially begun their college transcript which is a permanent academic record.

More details about Georgia's Dual Enrollment program may be found at www.gafutures.org.

D. Gifted Eligibility

Assessment and eligibility for the gifted program for students (kindergarten through the twelfth grade) is based on multiple criteria as determined by the state of Georgia. Data for each child will be gathered in four domains: **Mental ability, creativity, achievement and motivation**. When the information has been gathered, all data is reviewed by the local education agency (LEA) Eligibility Committee to determine eligibility. The Eligibility Committee may be comprised of Regional Gifted Facilitators, gifted certified teachers, and/or the Director of Advanced Learning and Gifted Programs.

SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students allows local education agencies (LEA) to use two methods for determining students' eligibility for gifted education services. MCSD uses both methods in the Determination of Eligibility:

- Option A: The student must meet eligibility requirements in both Mental Abilities and Achievement:
  - Mental Ability: 99th percentile (K-2) or 96th percentile (3-12) on a standardized test of mental ability - Composite Score only
  - Achievement: 90th percentile in total battery, total reading, or total math section of a standardized achievement battery
- Option B: The student must meet eligibility requirements in three of the four following areas:
  - Mental Ability: 96th percentile on a standardized test of mental ability –approved component or composite score
  - Achievement: 90th percentile in total battery, total reading, or total math section of a standardized achievement battery
  - Creativity: 90th percentile / 90 percent on a creativity assessment or rating scale**
  - Motivation: 90th percentile / 90 percent on a motivation evaluation or rating scale** OR for grades 6-12 only, a GPA equivalent to a 3.5 on a 4.0 scale

**A rating scale can only be used to establish eligibility in one area

The eligibility process includes four steps:

1. Nomination of students for formal evaluation or automatic referral from existing assessment scores
2. Review of nominations to determine if referral for formal evaluation is warranted
3. Formal evaluation to identify students who qualify for placement for gifted services utilizing the SBOE Criteria
4. Analysis of data collected during the identification process by the Eligibility Team to determine students' advanced learning needs and areas of gifted strengths

Referral Process

- Nomination for consideration may be made by teacher referrals (including classroom teachers, special area teachers, counselors and administrators), parent referrals, peer referrals, and/or others with knowledge of student ability or through a self-referral. Referral forms are completed by individuals wishing to nominate the student and include a rating scale to provide information about the student in the domain of motivation. The nominations are submitted to the Regional Gifted Facilitators to begin the evaluation process. The parent referral form serves as permission to test; therefore, nominated students will not be assessed until the parent referral form is received.
- **Automatic Referrals:** Automatic consideration is determined by an eligible score on a district-wide norm-referenced test of mental ability or achievement. The list of possible testing instruments may change annually based on MCSD availability. Currently used automatic referral instruments include: Kindergarten (fall testing) NNAT, 8th and 9th grades (October testing) PSAT. Students who score a 90th percentile or higher are considered automatic referrals. Screening tests such as GMAS (Distinguished Learner in math and/or reading) can be used to filter students who may need to be referred for testing; however, this testing instrument cannot be used as one of the qualifying scores.

The determination of ineligibility does not preclude reconsideration at a future date. Assessment data is considered current for a period of two years. Re-evaluation usually does not occur within the two-year span; however, exceptions can be made upon the recommendation of the Gifted Eligibility Committee and the Director of Advanced Learning and Gifted Programs.

Appeals by parents regarding the Eligibility Team decision can be made in writing to the Director of Advanced Learning and Gifted Programs in accordance with Rule 160-1-3.-04 (Code BCAEA).

Gifted Reciprocity

The Eligibility Committee is responsible for making determination whether each transferring student meets Georgia eligibility requirements and makes recommendations for gifted service.

Transfer Students:

- In-State Transfers: Any student who meets the SBOE eligibility criteria for gifted education services in any school system in Georgia is considered reciprocally eligible to receive gifted education services in Muscogee County upon verification of records. If the student is reported gifted in another school system, but records do not support original placement by SBOE criteria from previous school system, then the student will become a new referral and follow MCSD new referral procedures.
- Out-of-State Transfers: There is no mandated reciprocity between states for gifted eligibility. Outside data must be considered when determining eligibility but does not automatically supplant school-generated data.
- Military Transfers: Based on the Military Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children, students who have been identified as gifted will receive the same level of services as they received in the sending school district until initial Georgia eligibility can be established. If the student does not meet the eligibility criteria for Georgia, gifted services will be discontinued upon completion of assessment. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2140 et. Seq)

Testing and Evaluating Kindergarten Students

- Kindergarten students are tested system-wide in the fall semester with the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test 3 (NNAT3). This test is used as an automatic referral for all kindergarten students.
- Teachers or parents may refer a kindergarten student for the Gifted Education Program beginning in the student's kindergarten year. These students will undergo further assessment by the Eligibility Team beginning in January of that school year.

The referral packets for both teachers and parents can be found on the St. Elmo Center for the Gifted website at http://sites.muscogee.k12.ga.us/stelmo/forms/.

Review of Gifted Eligibility

Elementary: When the student's performance does not meet the Muscogee County criteria for continued participation, a student may be placed under review. The student's review status remains in effect for a minimum of 9 weeks for elementary. Continuation past 9 weeks requires a parent/guardian and Gifted Resource teacher consultation with the Regional Gifted Facilitator. A gifted review may carry over from one grade to the next with the exception of school level changes (elementary resource class to middle school AC course).
Secondary: For secondary school, a student's review status remains in effect for a minimum of one semester; continuation past one semester or into the next school year requires Regional Gifted Facilitator consultation.

The Regional Gifted Facilitator should follow these procedures as part of the Eligibility Committee:

1. Notify the Principal, the student's teachers of record for applicable courses, and gather information.
2. Observe the student in the classroom.
3. Notify parent/guardian and student in writing of the review status.
4. Complete the Individual Gifted Plan. Communicate with parent(s) and student to review student performance and to revise the intervention plan, if needed.

5. Monitor student progress, adjust interventions, and update the intervention plan as needed during the grading period.
6. Maintain and document communication with parents and teachers throughout the intervention process.

At the end of each grading period in which the student is under review, the Eligibility Team will determine if:
1. Interventions were successful for one grading period. Review is discontinued;
2. Review continues with updated interventions, if necessary, or
3. Services are to be discontinued.
    a. Elementary – Student no longer receives service in resource class.
    b. Middle & High
        - Student no longer receives service in the gifted class in which review occurred OR
        - Student is no longer enrolled in any gifted classes; therefore, the student no longer receives any gifted service.

**Note for elementary resource model: The Gifted Resource teacher may place a student on review for the following year if the student did not meet standards on a state competency test and the lack of performance can be linked to missed regular education instructional hours while in the gifted resource class. A record of intervention should be completed for any child receiving gifted services who does not meet standards on any portion of the Georgia Milestones.

Discontinuation of Gifted Services
Services may be discontinued due to student performance or by parent request.

Due to performance:
All levels: A student's progress and performance during review will determine if gifted service is discontinued. There must be documented evidence of an implemented intervention plan.
- Elementary School: Gifted service must be discontinued for a minimum of 18 weeks before any reconsideration of service can occur.
- Middle School: Discontinuation of service occurs only when a student no longer demonstrates a need for any gifted course or gifted services within an advanced content course based on performance criteria as previously established.
- High School: Discontinuation of service occurs only when a student no longer demonstrates a need for any gifted course or gifted services within an advanced content course based on performance criteria as previously established. Gifted students not receiving gifted service through AP, Honors, gifted resource class, IB, or dual enrollment for more than two consecutive semesters must be discontinued from service.

Parent Request/Voluntary Discontinuation
A parent may request a student be removed from gifted services at any time by providing written notification. Gifted service in elementary resource must be discontinued for a minimum of 18 weeks before any reconsideration of service can occur, barring extenuating circumstances.

Re-Entry
Once identified eligible for gifted service in the state of Georgia, students will always be considered gifted yet their services for re-entry into the program must be assessed by the Eligibility Team. A re-entry request requires a parent Change in Gifted Status Form to be completed by the parent in order to initiate the review of the student.

Breaks in service occur when:

- A student has been removed from gifted service due to academic performance.
- A student has been removed from gifted service due to parent request.
- A student has a change in enrollment status (i.e. residence, private school, etc.).
- Academic performance during the break in service will be considered in the re-entry decision.

1. Students whose enrollment changes from one school to another within the district will be provided continuous service.
2. Any student that has been identified and continuously served for gifted services in another district within Georgia will have reciprocity provided supporting documentation from the prior school district and parent consent to serve are received.
3. If a student is previously identified in Georgia and there is a break in gifted service (less than two years), the Eligibility Committee will examine student data to determine the next steps in establishing re-entry into gifted services.
   - If the Eligibility Committee finds the student in good standing, then the parent will be notified and must submit parent consent to serve.
   - The student's progress will be monitored at the end of the semester after re-entry.
   - If the Eligibility Committee determines the student is not in good standing (i.e. not making satisfactory academic progress, GPA is less than 2.5, and/or is scoring less than Proficient on end-of-year assessments), then steps may be taken in order to serve the student under review and monitor progress at the end of the semester after re-entry.
4. If the break in service is longer than two years, a new parent referral must be submitted and current test scores (less than two years old) can be utilized. If test scores are not current, the student will be reassessed.

All re-entry decisions are made on an individual basis by the Eligibility Committee. Local schools may not schedule a student for gifted services until written confirmation is received from Department for Gifted Education.

E. Foreign Exchange

1. Sponsors

Muscogee County does accept foreign exchange students for limited period of time. Usually it's from a 45 to 180 day placement. The foreign exchange students must have gone through Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET).

2. Eligible Students

Any student who lives abroad and meets the standards of CSIET Exchange Company.

3. Procedures for Admissions

CSIET sets the standards for admission into the program.

4. Required Registration Documents

CSIET registration process will collect all required documentation needed to attend our schools.

5. Athletic Eligibility

Students may be eligible for to play sports, however final decision rest with GHSA. Guidelines for the Athletic Eligibility of Foreign Exchange Students. The student must be involved in a foreign exchange program that is approved and published on the "Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs" published by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). This list is found on the GHSA web site.

(1) The student shall be considered eligible for a maximum period of one calendar year.
(2) The student shall not be a graduate of a secondary school in his home country.
(3) The student must maintain eligibility requirements at the member school.
(4) The foreign exchange program must randomly assign students to schools by a method that insures that no student, school, or another interested party may influence the assignment for athletic purposes. "Direct Placement" foreign exchange students must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible.
(5) All eligibility forms (Form B) for foreign exchange students must be accompanied by documentation from the CSIET-approved foreign exchange program showing that the student has been placed according to the normal procedures for that agency.

6. Student Transfers

Once accepted into our school system a host family can apply for a student transfer. The request must follow all normal guidelines and meet the MCSD criteria for transferring students.

7. Financial Support

Host families are responsible for the student in every way.

8. Compliance with Policies and Supervision

Once accepted into our school system. The student will be expected to follow all required policies and supervision as outlined in our MCSD handbook.

F. Magnet/Charter School Program Description

Muscogee County School District offers magnet and charter programs within schools that offer a wide variety of concentrated studies.

Elementary School

Each of the elementary school magnets within the district has a unique instructional emphasis. Students must meet eligibility requirements to enroll in any of the magnet academies. The magnets are designed to provide an enriched learning experience for students in addition to the traditional elementary school curriculum. To remain in the magnet programs, students must meet expectations of good behavior and academic progress.

Middle School

There are four Middle School Magnet programs within the Muscogee County School District. In order to enter a middle school magnet you will be required to meet minimum academic and behavioral standards. If you participate in a program of excellence, you will be expected to maintain sound academic performance and exhibit outstanding behavior. The school you choose may require you to sign a contract. Individual schools will publish standards for remaining in their program.

High School

Each of the High School Magnet and Academy Programs is designed to provide an enriched learning experience for students in addition to the traditional high school curriculum. For more information on entrance requirements and space availability please contact the magnet schools directly.

1. Admission Criteria

Open House sessions for Middle School and High School academy/magnet programs are scheduled throughout the fall. Parents and students have the opportunity to learn about the different magnet programs, the application process, and requirements. All prospective students are required to apply and complete entrance criteria.

Out-of-county and out-of-state students are not eligible to attend Britt David Magnet Academy or Columbus High School Liberal Arts Magnet. There is an exception for Muscogee County School District employees.

Contact the Magnet program at the school for information regarding the application process and program requirements.

2. Course of Study in the Magnet Schools

For a list of all magnet schools and their offerings, please visit the school district website at https://public.muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/TeachingandLearning/MagnetAndCharterSchools/Information

3. Magnet Dismissal

Procedures for withdrawing students from magnet programs:

- Parent must be notified in writing of the potential withdrawal from program with concerns identified.
- Conference must be held with parent and student concerning actions/behaviors needing improvement.
- A contract will be developed outlining actions/behaviors needed to remain in program. Contract will include timeline for improvement and will be signed by student, parent and administrator.
- If the contract is violated by student, school administration will contact parent to inform them of the withdrawal from the program at the end of the semester.
- A letter stating the reason(s) for the withdrawal will be sent to the parent. A copy of this letter, along with documentation of all meetings with parent and/or student held to discuss actions/behaviors and the contract will be sent to Director of Student Services.
- At the end of the semester, the student will be withdrawn and returned to home school.

G. Student Attendance

1. Compulsory Attendance Law

The Compulsory Attendance Law O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1 continues to be in effect for the current academic year, which pertains to every school district in Georgia. The compulsory attendance law states “children between their sixth and sixteenth birthday shall enroll and attend a public school, a private school, or a home study program”. If a child is under 6 years of age and has attended more than 20 days in a public school, he/she is then subject to this law. The law also provides “penalties for parent(s), guardian(s), or other person residing in Georgia who are in violation of O.C.G.A §20-2-690.1; which are imposed at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction”. Each day's violation of this law, after the school district has notified the parent, guardian, or other person in charge of a child having five unexcused absences from school, shall constitute a separate offense subjecting the person notified to the following measures:

* Fine of not less than $25 and not greater than $100
* Imprisonment not to exceed 30 days
* Community service
* Any combination of the above penalties

The school district is charged with responsibility for enforcing the Compulsory Attendance Law. The school social worker (listed as visiting teacher in the law) must investigate, monitor, and follow-up with student attendance problems. While the school social worker may be required to file charges in State Court or Juvenile Court for chronic attendance problems, we are primarily dedicated to working with the family to improve student attendance. Children may be temporarily excused from:

A. when personally ill and when attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others
B. when in their immediate family there is a serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school
C. on special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith
D. when mandated by order of governmental agencies (examples: armed forces physical exam or court order)
E. when prevented from attendance due to conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety
F. if they are 12 or older and serving as a page in the Georgia General Assembly
G. to register to vote or to vote in a public election.
H. a student whose parent/guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent/guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five (5) school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his/her parent/guardian prior to such parent/ guardian’s deployment or during such parent/guardian’s leave.
I. as otherwise required by Georgia law and/or the State Board of Education.

The parent/guardian must write a note to the school explaining the reason for the absence within 3 days of the student’s return to school, or the absence will be marked as unexcused.

The District wants to work with you in partnership concerning your child’s school attendance and education because poor attendance is associated with low and/or failing grades, deficits in understanding important learning concepts, discipline problems, low self-esteem, and school dropout. State law allows drivers licenses or permits to be issued only to students who are enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school.

You hold an important key to your child's education by valuing learning and making this apparent to your child. Daily school attendance, unless your child has a legitimate excuse, is a good habit to start. If you need additional information or assistance, feel free to contact the social worker at your child's school.

Compulsory Attendance at Alternative Schools
The provisions of the State's mandatory attendance law shall apply to a child between his or her sixth and sixteenth birthdays who has been assigned an alternative public school program established by the Board. This provision shall apply regardless of whether such child has been suspended or expelled from another public school by that local board of education or its delegate, and to the parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of such child.

Truant
A truant student is any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences.

Truancy is a serious offense that requires stern corrective action on the part of the school and the parents. All unexcused absences will be reported to parents/guardians.

2. Excused Absences and Make-up Work

Students may be temporarily excused from school (1) who are personally ill and whose attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others; (2) in whose immediate family there is a serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school; (3) on special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith; (4) when mandated by order of governmental agencies (e.g. court order), (5) when registering to vote or voting in a public election, (6) when visiting with parents on or home from deployment (see Absences related to Military Parents), or (7) upon principal's approval based on the merit of the request in advance.
It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school in writing of the date and reason for the absence within three (3) school days of the absence. The parent/guardian must note the student's name, the date(s) of absence(s), and the reason for the absence. If a student is being checked-in or checked-out for a doctor's appointment, a physician's note or appointment card may be required to be considered excused.
Students will be deemed excused for any other absence not explicitly defined here but deemed by the local school board of education to have merit based on circumstances.
Students may be excused from school attendance when prevented from such attendance due to conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety.

Students who are at least 12 years of age and are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly shall be credited as present by the school in which they are enrolled for days missed from school for this purpose.

Students participating in the Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) shall be credited as present by the school in which they are enrolled for day(s) missed from school for this purpose, not to exceed two (2) days per school year.

Potential consequences for excessive unexcused, excused, and/or OSS absences for students 16 years or older include:

* Loss of credit (Students are allowed 15 days of non-consecutive absences)
* Students may be withdrawn after being absent from school for 10 consecutive unexcused days

3. Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences to include from failure to attend school for reasons other than those specifically excused by the administration. Unexcused absences shall include but not be limited to the following: (1) oversleeping; (2) missing the bus; (3) baby-sitting; (4) family vacation; (5) skipping school and cutting classes.

4. Students Who are Late to School: Tardiness

Students who arrive on school property after the school start time designated by the Board of Education are tardy. Any student who is on school property but is not in his or her assigned classroom or other authorized area following the ringing bell, chime, or other audible signal indicating the beginning of instructional time will be considered tardy.

Tardiness Protocol

* Three unexcused tardy days, school contacts parent/guardian.
* Five unexcused tardy days, referral to School Administrator (Principal) or designee and a mandatory parent conference and counselor referral.
* Ten unexcused tardy days, referral to School Social Worker and to support agencies outside of the district, as Principal deems appropriate (DFCS, Juvenile, et al).

5. Protocol for Students <u>Under</u> the Age of 16

Step one -Parent receive notification of the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law at the beginning of the school. All signed parent notification forms are kept at the school for one school year.

Step two -Student attendance is recorded daily.

Step three -All students who are absent will receive an automated Blackboard Connect-ed call.

Step four - Three unexcused absences, school will mail notification letter to parent/guardian and the student is referred to the school counselor.

Step five - Five unexcused absences, School Social Worker will mail truancy letter to parent/guardian. At five unexcused absences, the child is considered truant under Georgia law.

Step six - If student accumulates two additional unexcused absences, School Social Worker will send another notification. Conferences may occur with students to discuss absences.

Step seven -A minimum of two additional unexcused absences, the School Social Worker will schedule a conference with the parent/guardian to complete an Attendance Agreement.

Step eight – The School Social Worker shall monitor the daily attendance of students declared “habitually truant”. If attendance concerns are not resolved, the School Social Worker may refer the parent/guardian to Muscogee County Attendance Panel (MCAP) or file a truancy complaint in Municipal Court or Juvenile Court.
If case is staffed for Municipal or Juvenile Court, a warrant is issued by Law Enforcement to Parent/Guardian to appear in court.

6. Attendance Protocol for Students Over the Age of 16

Step one -Parent receive notification of the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law at the beginning of the school. All signed parent notification forms are kept at the school for one school year.

Step two -Student attendance is recorded daily.

Step three -All students who are absent will receive an automated Blackboard Connect-ed call.

Step four - Three (3) unexcused or excused absences, school will mail notification letter to parent/guardian and the student is referred to the school counselor.

Step five - Five (5) excused, unexcused, and/or OSS (out of school suspension) absences, School Social Worker will mail truancy letter to parent/guardian and may request a parent conference, where an Attendance Agreement may be initiated. At five unexcused absences, the child is considered truant under Georgia law.

Step six - If student accumulates two (2) additional unexcused and/or OSS absences, the student/parent will confer with the Principal or Assistant Principal regarding potential consequences.

Potential consequences for excessive unexcused, excused, and/or OSS absences for students 16 years or older:

- **Loss of credit (at more than fifteen [15] excused, unexcused, and/or OSS absences)**
- **Students may be administratively withdrawn from school for ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences.**

7. Muscogee County Attendance Panel

MCAP aims to connect students and families to school and community resources to decrease the incidence of truancy in Muscogee County School District. Enhance school attendance. MCAP hears truancy and excessive tardiness cases and extends recommendations once a month beginning in September of each school year.

a) HB 984 – Absences Related to Military Parents

Excused absences for students to visit with parents preparing for, on leave from, or returning from overseas deployment in a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted. A maximum of five (5) excused days per school year are permitted, provided such absences do not exceed the maximum number of allowed absences per school year.

b) Participating in Extracurricular Activities

To participate in an extracurricular activity the student should be present for one half of the school day. School approved trips are not viewed as an absence, in terms of extracurricular activities.

H. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education

Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; and are abandoned in hospitals are identified as McKinney-Vento students.

- Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings are supported by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and Migratory children who qualify as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Homeless Liaison – Local Educational Agency (LEA) staff responsible for ensuring the identification, school enrollment, attendance, and opportunities for academic success of students in homeless situations. Some of these activities may be performed by the local liaison himself or herself, while others are accomplished by coordinating the efforts of other staff. Homeless Liaisons are an important factor contributing to the success of a school district's homeless education program; therefore, the McKinney-Vento Act now requires every LEA to appoint a local homeless education liaison and specifies his or her legal responsibilities. By linking students and their families to school and community services, local liaisons play a critical role in stabilizing students and promoting academic achievement at the individual, school, and district level.

Unaccompanied Youth (UY) - McKinney-Vento students who are not in the custody of a biological mother or father.

Student Residency Questionnaires – Tool used to assist in the identification of students experiencing homelessness.

Immediate Enrollment – Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, parent/guardians or UY have the right to immediate enrollment with standard documentation. Students may remain in his or her school of origin regardless of temporary residence.

School of Origin - The school of origin is the school they attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled.

Formal Dispute Resolution – A formal dispute resolution ensures that each party's views are represented, enables the facts of the case to be considered objectively, and allows students to attend school while bringing the disagreement to closure.

MCKINNEY-VENTO DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

When a dispute arises under the McKinney-Vento Act, the law requires the following minimum procedures:

1. The child or youth "shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute" [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E)(i)]. In disputes involving unaccompanied homeless youth, the local liaison must ensure that unaccompanied homeless youth are immediately enrolled in school [42 U.S.C. § 11432 (g)(3)(E)(iv)].
2. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) emphasizes the importance of the requirement for enrollment during the dispute process in the 2004 Non-Regulatory Guidance: When enrollment disputes arise, it is critical that students not be kept out of school.

3. Students are permitted to enroll immediately in the school of choice pending resolution of disputes.
4. While disputes are pending, students have the right to participate fully in school and receive all services which they would normally receive. This includes transportation services, as indicated by the Non-Regulatory Guidance: The McKinney-Vento Act's transportation requirements apply while disputes are being resolved [2004, H-5].
5. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth must be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the right of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision any time the student is denied enrollment in a requested school [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E)(ii)]. In the case of an unaccompanied homeless youth, the notice explaining the decision and the right to appeal are provided directly to the youth [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(B)(iii)].
6. The child, youth, parent, or guardian must be referred to the local liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution process as quickly as possible [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E)(iii)]. The local liaison must be familiar with the state's McKinney-Vento dispute resolution process and follow all procedures outlined therein.

McKinney-Vento students shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including:

- Transportation to and from school
- Title I services
- Educational services for which the student meets eligibility criteria, including special education and related services and programs for English Language Learners
- Vocational and technical education programs
- Gifted and talented programs
- School nutrition programs
- Before and after school programs
- School Uniforms
- School Supplies
- Senior Cap and Gown
- Link to Community Resources
- Summer Enrichment Programs
- Tutoring
- Parent Training/Informational Workshops
- Student Training/Informational Workshops

I. Migrant Students

Services for Migrant students are determined and managed through Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) with assistance from the Muscogee County School District Title I Program Specialist for Migrant Students. At the time of any student's initial enrollment/registration, parents/guardians of ALL enrolling students will complete an Occupational Survey. This survey is forwarded to the Title I Program Specialist for Migrant programs. Based on the results of this survey, the Program Specialist will forward the information to the Migrant Consortium Specialist located at ABAC. The Migrant Consortium Specialist and a Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Migrant Education Program Recruiter will conduct an interview with any qualifying family (ies) to determine program eligibility.

J. Neglected and Delinquent Students

Each year, the Title I Program Specialist for Neglected and Delinquent (N&D) students verifies N&D facility eligibility for services under Title I guidelines. Title I tutoring services are provided for qualifying N&D facilities and

are determined by student needs. Once a facility is determined to be eligible for services, there will be ongoing consultation between the Title I Program Specialist and qualifying N&D facilities to review student records, determine student needs and appropriate tutoring services.

XII. Interscholastic Extracurricular Student Activities – Middle School Guidelines

There are currently 12 middle schools in the Muscogee County School District that field athletic teams. At the middle school level, there are 5 sports for boys and 6 sports for girls.

- **Fall Middle School Athletic Activities**
  Football
  Volleyball
  Spirit Cheerleading
  Cross Country
- **Winter Middle School Athletic Activities**
  Basketball (Boys and Girls)
  Spirit Cheerleading
- **Spring Middle School Athletic Activities**
  Track (Boys and Girls)
  Soccer (Boys and Girls)

*Information regarding Club Sports can be obtained from each individual school

A. Middle School Student Athletic Eligibility

A student is eligible to represent his/her school in interscholastic competition who meets the requirements listed below, unless otherwise noted:

The student must be an assigned student in his/her member school and have the following information on file:

- Current pre-participation physical exam.
- Parental Permission Form which includes insurance information.

The student has not attained his/her 15th birthday prior to August 1st of the current school year.

The official transcript is the only means of determining academic eligibility.

- Promotion into 6th grade makes student eligible for the 1st semester of 6th grade.
- Student must pass 5 out of 6 classes at the end of first semester to be eligible for second semester. Eligibility for the first semester for students in grades 7 and 8 is based on passing 5 out of 6 classes for the year during the previous school year.

Students that participate in the Muscogee County School District Middle School Sports League are restricted to middle school athletic participation only.

1. Transfer Students

If a student transfers from one Muscogee County Middle School to another during the school year they are eligible to participate in athletics as soon as the next sport season begins. For example, if student at School A tryouts out

and/or plays soccer at that school, then transfers to School B, they are eligible for other sports at School B as soon as the soccer season is over.

A student has three (3) years of eligibility beginning the day he/she is enrolled in the sixth grade for the first time and terminates at the end of the third year.
A student must attend at least ½ of the school day in order to practice or compete that day. School attendance will not effect Saturday eligibility.

A student who enters a regular middle school from Alternative School with appropriate previous semester grade averages has no waiting period for eligibility. The student is considered eligible provided:

- The student has passing semester averages (at Alternative School) in three (3) out of four (4) subjects when language arts, math, science, and social studies, but PE was not taught.
- The student has passing semester averages (at Alternative School) in four (4) out of five (5) subjects when language arts, math, science social studies, and PE were taught.

B. Student Insurance

MCSD does not carry accident insurance coverage on students who are injured at school and, in most cases, is not liable. MCSD Board Policy: Descriptor Code JGA.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians of middle school student-athletes to make sure their children are covered by some form of medical insurance. In addition, it is School Board Policy that all participants must subscribe to some form of insurance plan in order for the student-athlete to participate in tryouts and/or contests.

As a convenience to you, the school district has third party vendors that provide accident policy plans available to parents. If you do not have other insurance, these plans may be a resource to consider. If needed, contact the MCSD Risk Management Department at (706) 748-2000.

C. Annual Physical Examinations/Permission to Treat/Hold Harmless Agreement Forms

Each year, every student that participates in an extracurricular activity must fill out certain paperwork before they can begin participation. To participate students/parents must complete and turn in the following paperwork:

- Pre-participation Physical (good for up to one calendar year)
- GHSA Concussion Form
- MCSD Permission to Participate Form

There may also be some forms that individual schools will require.

XIII. Interscholastic Extracurricular Student Activities – High School Guidelines

A. Eligibility Overview

Students gain eligibility to practice or compete for the school in which they are enrolled after they have been certified by the principal of that school, after the eligibility forms have been processed by the GHSA office, and after the students have met the standards of:

- Academic requirements
- Age
- Semesters in high school
- Residence in school's service area
- Transfer rules note: Students establishing eligibility as entering 9th graders are automatically eligible for the first semester.

The certification of eligibility shall be submitted initially in each sport or activity no later than the date set by the GHSA for the first practice in that sport or activity.

- This due date does not consider the date of the first contest scheduled.
- EXCEPTION: Literary, One-Act Play and Riflery certification is due twenty (20) calendar days prior to the first scheduled contest.

B. Student Eligibility Guidelines

To be eligible to participate and/or try-out for a sport or activity, a student must be enrolled full time in grades 9-12 inclusive at the school seeking eligibility for that student.

Enrollment is defined as follows:

- Fall Semester: when the student participates in a practice or contest before classes begin, or the student attends classes.
- Spring Semester: when the student attends classes.
- A student may be enrolled in only one high school at a time.
- The student must be in regular attendance.
- The student must be taking courses that total at least 2.5 Units that count toward graduation.

NOTE: If an eligible student transfers from a school on a block-schedule format to a school using a traditional format (or vice versa) and cannot get a full schedule of classes with equivalent credit, the school may petition the Executive Director for a waiver of this rule for the semester the transfer occurs.

All or part of the course load of a student may be taken online through a virtual school as long as the student's grades are being kept at the school in which the student is enrolled. Grades from virtual school courses must be on file at the school by the first day of the new semester in order for the student to be eligible.

C. Limits of Participation

Students must have a certificate of an annual physical examination on file at the school prior to participating in any athletic try-outs, practices, voluntary workouts or games that indicate the students are physically approved for participation.

- Physical examinations will be good for twelve (12) months from the date of the exam. EXCEPTION: Any physical examination taken on or after April 1 in the preceding year will be accepted for the entire next GHSA school year.
- The physical exam must be conducted by a licensed medical physician, doctor of Osteopathic medicine, nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant.
- The exam must be signed by an M.D., D.O., or by a Physician's Assistant, or an Advance Practice Nurse who has been delegated that task by an M.D., or D.O.
- The GHSA requires that member schools use the latest edition of the pre-participation physical evaluation form approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics, et. al., found on the GHSA web site. This form can also be found on the MCSD website under Athletics.

A student has eight (8) consecutive semesters or four (4) consecutive years of eligibility from the date of entry into the ninth grade to be eligible for interscholastic competition.

- A student is not considered to have entered the 9th grade when high school level courses are taken if the student is regularly enrolled in a school in a grade below the ninth grade.
- Credits earned toward high school graduation which are taken below the ninth grade may be used when considering high school eligibility.
- The provisions of the eight (8)-semester rule can only be waived in the case of an individual student by the State Executive Committee upon timely application by a member school for placement on the Spring or Fall agenda.

Sub-varsity competitors must meet all eligibility requirements with the exception of the migratory rule.

Students in grade 9 and higher may participate on both the varsity and one (1) sub-varsity team in the same sport with the following limitations:

- Football – a player may not participate in interscholastic competitions more than six (6) quarters per week, beginning with the varsity game.
- Basketball – a player may not participate in interscholastic competition more than five (5) quarters per calendar day.
- Soccer – a player may not participate in interscholastic competition more than three (3) halves per calendar day.
- All other sports - the combination of games or play days (varsity and sub-varsity) in which the student participates may not be greater than the limit allotted to the varsity in that sport.

D. Age Restriction

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic activities, a student must not have reached his 19th birthday prior to May 1st, preceding his year of participation.

E. Scholastic Standing/Scholarship

To be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities, a student must be academically eligible. A student is required to pass classes that carry at least 2.5 Units counting toward graduation the semester immediately preceding participation.

Exception 1: First semester ninth grade students.
Exception 2: A cheerleader who is academically ineligible for the spring semester may try out if she is passing ALL classes at the time of the tryout. The window of opportunity to try out under these conditions is available only during the ten (10) consecutive school days set aside for tryouts that the school chooses.

- Passing in all GHSA member schools is a grade of seventy (70).
- Students participating in junior varsity or "B" team competition must meet all scholastic requirements.
- If an eligible student transfers from a school that uses a block-schedule format to a school using a traditional format (or vice versa) and that student cannot get a full schedule of classes with equivalent credit in the semester of the transfer, the school may petition the Executive Director for a waiver of this rule for the first semester after the transfer occurs.
- For schools offering courses with yearlong grading, eligibility must be computed for each semester.
    - At the end of the first semester, the school must determine that the student has a grade of 70% or higher in classes carrying at least 2.5 Units.
    - The second semester grade will be the grade given for the entire course and shall include the end-of-course test grade.
    - Remediation programs designed to bring the student's first semester grade up to 70% or higher may be used (in accordance with GHSA guidelines) if the school allows such programs for all students.

Students gain or lose eligibility on the first day of the subsequent semester. The first day of the Fall semester shall be interpreted as the first date of practice for the first sport.

- Exception: Students who successfully complete summer school to maintain eligibility become eligible the last day of summer school.
- Summer school is an extension of the previous semester and courses may be:
    - Remedial in nature where a previously-taken course is repeated in its entirety with a new grade being given.
    - Enrichment in nature where a new course is taken that results in new credit being earned.
- A maximum of two (2) unit credits earned in summer school may be counted for eligibility purposes.

NOTE: Additional credits may be earned in credit recovery programs or make-up programs after the start of the new semester.

- Summer school credits earned in non-accredited home study programs or non-accredited private schools may not be used to gain eligibility. Accreditation recognized under the rule shall be from the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) or a regional accreditation agency (such as SACS) or the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council (GAPSAC).
- An independent study course taken in summer school must be regionally accredited and accepted by the school system for graduation credit.
    - Courses completed after the beginning of a new semester may not be used to gain eligibility for that semester. Example: night school classes, correspondence courses, etc.
    - Independent study courses taken during the school year must meet the criteria

Students must accumulate units towards graduation according to the following criteria:

- First-year students (entering 9th grade) are eligible academically. Second semester first-year students must have passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units the previous semester in order to participate.
- Second-year students must have accumulated five (5) total units in the first year, AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units in the previous semester.
- Third-year students must have accumulated eleven (11) units in the first and second years, AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units in the previous semester.
- Fourth-year students must have accumulated seventeen (17) units in the first three years, AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units in the previous semester.
- Students may accumulate the required units for participation during the school year and eligibility will be reinstated at the beginning of the next semester.

F. School Service Areas/Transfer/Migrant Students/Migratory Waiver

School service areas for member public schools are those attendance boundaries established by local boards of education from which a school normally draws its students. The school service area for a member private school is the county in which the private school is located. The school service area for a startup or converted charter school will be the same as the school from which the charter school draws its students.

A transfer student who has established eligibility at a former school in grades 9-12 shall be immediately eligible at the new school if:

- The student moved simultaneously with the entire parental unit or persons he/she resided with at the former school, and the student and parent(s) or persons residing with the student live in the service area of the new school. This is known as a "bona fide move."
    - The student may choose the public or private school serving that area.
    - It must be apparent that the parent(s) or the persons residing with the student and the student have relinquished the residence in the former service area and have occupied a residence in the new service area.
    - The following factors, although not conclusive, may be evidence of relinquishment of the former residence: Selling the residence and vacating it; OR vacating the residence and listing it for sale at a fair market value; OR vacating the residence and leasing it to another (other than a relative) at fair market value; OR abandoning the residence and shutting off the unnecessary utilities. NOTE: When a family claims multiple residences, the residence for which they apply for a homestead exemption will be declared the primary residence provided the family spends the majority of their time at this residence.
    - The bona fide move is validated when the student's family maintains the new residence for at least one calendar year. A return to the previous service area within that year renders the student to be a migrant student. All hardship appeal processes are available.
- The student was enrolled in a private school or a magnet school and has a bona fide move from one public school service area to another public school service area. A student in this situation may attend either the public school or a private school serving his area of residence. NOTE: Students who have a bona fide move within a service area that has multiple private schools must file a hardship to seek eligibility if they wish to enroll in a different private school.
- The student was enrolled in a non-member private school in Georgia and, without a bona fide move, transferred to a GHSA member school that serves his area of residence as long as:

- It is the initial move of the student from a non-member school to a member school serving his area of residence, AND
- The student was enrolled at the high school serving his area of residence in grades 9-12 before attending the non-member school, OR
- The student has not yet established eligibility at grades 9-12 at a member school serving his area of residence.
- A student who transfers from a GHSA member school to an independent school entering the GHSA in the next school year must be enrolled at the entering independent school by January 31 of the year preceding their becoming a GHSA member school in order to be eligible. NOTE: Rules about joint custody transfers have control over the one-time transfer restriction in this by-law.

- The student transfers from a non-member home school and the receiving school grants credit so that the student has accumulated sufficient units. At the time such credit is given, the student must also have passed a minimum of at least 2.5 units the previous semester. The student becomes eligible when credit is awarded officially.
- The student is involved in a foreign exchange program that is approved and published on the "Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs" published by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). This list is found on the GHSA web site.
  - The student shall be considered eligible for a maximum period of one calendar year.
  - The student shall not be a graduate of a secondary school in his home country.
  - The student must maintain eligibility requirements at the member school.
  - The foreign exchange program must randomly assign students to schools by a method that insures that no student, school, or other interested party may influence the assignment for athletic purposes. "Direct Placement" foreign exchange students must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible.
  - All eligibility forms (Form B) for foreign exchange students must be accompanied by documentation from the CSIET-approved foreign exchange program showing that the student has been placed according to the normal procedures for that agency.
- If one of his/her parents or the custodial parent is a certified teacher or administrator teaching at the receiving school. This opportunity is available one time only at any given school. (NOTE: Rules about joint custody transfers overrule the one-time transfer restriction in this by-law.)
- The student has one of the following family related circumstances which shall constitute a waiver of the "bona fide move" rule:

  There is a Superior Court Final Order changing permanent physical custody of the student from one parent to the other parent and the student moves to the residence of the parent receiving custody in a new service area and attends the member school serving that service area.
  - There is a Superior Court Final Order awarding permanent joint physical custody to the parents and the student elects to move from the residence of one parent to the residence of the other parent in a new service area and attends the member school serving that area of residence. Provided, however, that such an election can be made only once during a 12-month period beginning the date of the transfer and the Final Order must have specifically awarded the parents "joint physical custody" of the student. An award of "joint legal custody" shall not suffice for purposes of this paragraph.
  - There is a death of the custodial parent with whom the student resided and the student moves to live with the other parent in a new service area and attends the member school serving that area of residence.
  - There is a military transfer of one or both custodial parents that requires a change of residence of the student to a new service area and the student attends the member school serving that area of residence.

- Students who are U.S. citizens and who have been enrolled and attended a high school in a foreign country, upon return to the U.S., shall be eligible to participate at a GHSA member school provided the student lives in the new school's service area and is otherwise eligible under GHSA age, eight-semester, academic and other eligibility rules.
- Students who are transferred from one school attendance area to another school attendance area by a mandate of the local board of education maintain their eligibility.
- Married students setting up a household (domicile) shall be eligible in the school of their residence provided they meet all other requirements of eligibility.
- Students entering a school as an "unaccompanied youth" under the conditions of the McKinney-Vento Act must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible.
- Students enrolled in a magnet school can only compete in activities at the magnet school they are enrolled. They cannot participate in activities at their home school.

A "migrant student" is a student who transfers into a GHSA school without a bona fide move or without one of the exceptions listed. The student may practice or compete at the sub-varsity level, but may not compete at the varsity level for one calendar year from the date of his entry into the new school.

A student who is not eligible because of GHSA rules at the former school, and then transfers to a new school, cannot regain eligibility by the transfer. Ineligible students cannot gain eligibility by being adjudicated to YDC and subsequently returning to their resident school with earned credit.

Students whose transfers from member school to member school have been approved by the GHSA office after the end of regular season play or during postseason play are not eligible for participation in GHSA sponsored tournaments and/or playoffs in that particular sport for the school year of transfer.

A student who is not eligible at one school because of suspension or expulsion and then transfers to a member school cannot regain eligibility by such a transfer, for the length of the suspension or one calendar year, whichever is less.

A permissive transfer is defined as an allowance by a local board of education for students and/or their parents to choose a school to attend without regard to the location of residence.

- A student transferring from member school to member school on a permissive transfer is considered a migrant student.
- A student transferring to or from a school housing a system-wide, singular academic or vocational program or a magnet program on a permissive transfer is considered a migrant student.
    - The offering of an individual course or series of courses by one school in a system does not provide inherent justification to grant GHSA eligibility.
    - Special options offered by a school system that allow students to attend a school outside their area of residence do not provide inherent justification to grant GHSA eligibility.
    - Any such permissive transfer issue may be brought before the GHSA Hardship Committee.
- Students transferring under the provisions of Federal or State academic accountability regulations must be processed through the normal hardship appeals process.
- When a military base is located in two school districts, a student moving onto the base for the first time may choose to attend either school district, and that district will place the student appropriately. Any transfer after the initial move will be subject to standard eligibility regulations.

Hardship Applications may be filed by an administrator at a member school when a student does not meet the standards of eligibility outlined in bylaws (academic issues) and (transfer issues).

- The GHSA Constitution (Art. IV; Sec. 5; Subsection B4) specifies that the hardship issues must be beyond the reasonable control of the persons involved.
- The process of appealing a decision of the Hardship Committee is outlined in the GHSA Constitution (Art. IV, Sec. 9, Subsection C & D).

G. Students with Disabilities

Extracurricular activities including athletics have been defined as club, intramural, or interscholastic (e.g., freshman, junior varsity, varsity) athletics at all education levels. Muscogee County believes that these are an important part of all educational programs and ensures that students with disabilities have opportunities to participate in available extracurricular athletics equal to those of other students.

Please ensure that you request information from the school concerning what activities are available and all requirements for participation or try out criteria annually as they may change. It is vital that the IEP team has this information in order to discuss which extra-curricular activities are available and appropriate for the student. While the IEP team can address supports and services needed by the student to participate, they cannot change the requirements or criteria for the activity as long as the selection or competition criteria are not discriminatory. For more information, please contact your local school.

- A student with disabilities who is enrolled in a special education program which is not physically located at the parent school (example: psycho-education center, regional occupation center, community-based instruction class, etc.) shall be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities at the parent school if IEP (Individual Education Program) requirements are met.
- Schools with students having to meet only IEP requirements for course credit must establish an accounting process for the number of courses passed each semester, and for the awarding of units. Requirements for the date of entry into the ninth grade and for age apply to students with IEPs without variation.
- Competitive interscholastic activities administered through local special education programs shall follow Georgia Department of Education guidelines and procedures for special education, and are exempt from GHSA requirements.

H. Pre-Enrollment Requirement for 8th Graders

Before participating in any activity with any high school, a student must have a letter of verification from the MCSD office stating where a student is enrolled for high school. The student may only participate in activities at that high school. Students may attend spring tryouts (during their 8th grade year) at the school where they are assigned in Cheerleading, Softball, and Volleyball. In all other sports, the student may start participation beginning the first day of the summer. Again, the student may only participate at the school which they are assigned.

I. Annual Physical Examinations/Permission to Participate/Permission to Treat/Hold Harmless Agreement Forms

Forms

Each year, every student that participates in an extracurricular activity must fill out certain paperwork before they can begin participation. To participate students/parents must complete and turn in the following paperwork:

- Pre-participation Physical (good for up to one calendar year)
- GHSA Concussion Form
- MCSD Permission to Participate Form
- There may also be some forms that individual schools will require.

J. Home School Participation in Extracurricular Activities

The GHSA does not allow Home School students to participate in extracurricular activities.

K. Student Insurance

MCSD does not carry accident insurance coverage on students who are injured at school and, in most cases, is not liable. MCSD Board Policy: Descriptor Code JGA.
It is the responsibility of parents/guardians of high school student-athletes to make sure their children are covered by some form of medical insurance. In addition, it is School Board Policy that all participants must subscribe to some form of insurance plan in order for the student-athlete to participate in tryouts and/or contests.

As a convenience to you, the school district has third party vendors that provide accident policy plans available to parents. If you do not have other insurance, these plans may be a resource to consider. If needed, contact the MCSD Risk Management Department at (706) 748-2000.