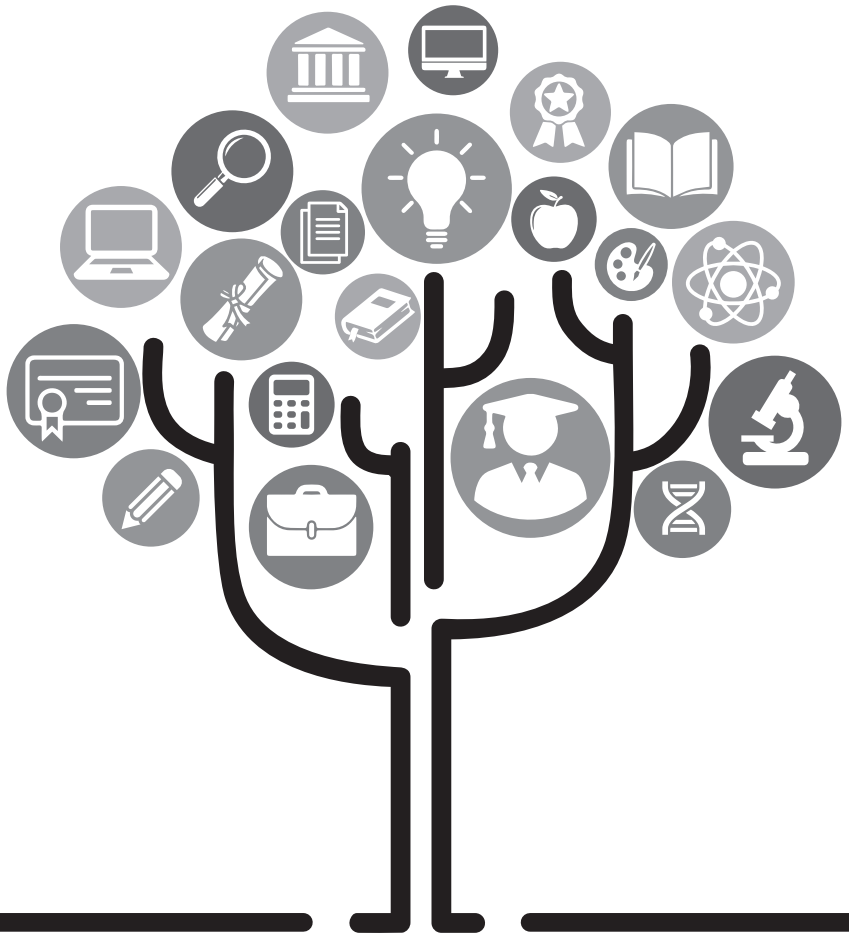
Student Handbook
&
Code of Conduct

2022-2023



Muscogee County School District
Columbus, Georgia

Muscogee County Board of Education

Mrs. Patricia Hugley Green	Board Chair
Mrs. Laurie C. McRae	Vice-Chair
Dr. David F. Lewis	Secretary
Ms. Karen Jones	Executive Assistant
Mrs. Janice Bloodworth	Treasurer
Mrs. Patricia Hugley Green	District 1
Mrs. Nickie Tillery	District 2
Mrs. Vanessa K. Jackson	District 3
Ms. Naomi Buckner	District 4
Mrs. Laurie C. McRae	District 5
Mr. Mark Cantrell	District 6
Mrs. Cathy Williams	District 7
Dr. Philip T. Schley, Sr.	District 8
Mrs. Kia Chambers	At-Large

Administrative Staff

(In alphabetical order)

Dr. David F. Lewis	**Superintendent of Education**
Dr. Travis T. Anderson	Chief Operations and Facilities Officer
Mr. Gregory Arp	Chief of Campus Police Department
Mr. Terry Baker	Regional Chief, West
Mr. Matthew Bell	Regional Chief, Central
Mrs. Janice Bloodworth	Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
Vacant	Chief Human Resources Officer
Mr. Ronald Pleasant	Chief Information and Technology Officer
Mr. Keith Seifert	Chief Academic Officer
Mr. Joseph Slaughter	Director of Internal Audit
Dr. Angela Vickers-Ward	Chief Student Services Officer
Dr. Ronald Wiggins	Regional Chief, East
Ms. Kimberly Wright	Director of Communications

Muscogee County School District
Columbus, GA

P.O. Box 2427
Columbus, GA 31902-2427

Dr. David F. Lewis
Superintendent of Education

Superintendent's Message

Dear Students and Parents of Muscogee County School District:

You and your child are an important part of our school family — a team that includes all school system employees, business partners, community agencies, houses of worship, and volunteers. Each team member is dedicated to supporting the educational growth of our students.

This handbook is designed to provide valuable information that will assist both students and parents in many of our policies and requirements. Please take the time to read this document as it can be used for a variety of resources for all students to be successful.

The policies explain many of the rules and regulations that students and parents need to know, including the student code of conduct and guidelines for student discipline. Please remember that you are completely responsible for adhering to the rules, procedures, and expectations identified in this Handbook. This information will be reviewed with the students at the beginning of each school year.

Our entire staff and I look forward to helping make the 2022-2023 school year a successful one for all of our students.

Sincerely,

David F. Lewis

Dr. David F. Lewis
Superintendent of Education

Phone (706) 748-2018/748-2019 • Fax (706) 748-2001
E-mail: Lewis.David.F@muscogee.k12.ga.us • Web address: www.muscogee.k12.ga.us

BEMON G. MCBRIDE, III

CHIEF JUDGE OF SUPERIOR COURTS

11TH FLOOR, GOVERNMENT CENTER
P.O. BOX 1340
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA 31902-1340

TELEPHONE
706/225-4275
FACSIMILE
706/653-4269

August 1, 2022

Dear Parent or Guardian,

On behalf of the Superior Courts of Chattahoochee, Harris, Marion, Muscogee, Talbot and Taylor Counties, I wish to welcome you to a new school year and confirm that school attendance is mandatory in the State of Georgia. Regular student attendance is a basic requirement for academic progress, as we all know. Attendance is linked closely to lifelong learning and productivity. It is well established that frequent or chronic absences, late arrivals and truancy place a child at a severe disadvantage, both in school and in endeavors later in life.

With these considerations in mind, you should know that your child's school is legally required to report students with excessive absences or late arrivals to your school's social worker for follow up and possible legal action.

Should such a referral occur, efforts will be made to help the family resolve attendance problems. If such efforts are unsuccessful, it shall be the duty of the school social worker to file proceedings in Juvenile Court or take other legal steps to ensure compliance with Georgia's compulsory attendance laws.

Your child's school realizes that occasional absences or tardiness are necessary or even unavoidable because of illness or family emergencies; however, your student will be responsible for all assignments and homework covered during the absence. If a student needs the teacher's assistance to understand missed material, the teacher will usually be glad to assist the student at a pre-arranged time before or after regular class hours. Generally, it will not be possible for the teacher to stop class or interrupt instruction to accommodate students who are absent or tardy as this would be unfair to other students.

I hope that you and your student have a good academic year and that you will call upon your school with any questions or concerns.

With sincere best wishes,

Bemon G. McBride, III

Bemon G. McBride, III
Chief Judge,
Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit

BGM,III/ljj

Muscogee County School District Mission and Vision Statement

Mission: Our mission is to inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.

Vision: The Muscogee County School District is a beacon of educational excellence where all are known, valued, and inspired.

Preface

The Muscogee County School District (MCSD) Student Handbook provisions of this booklet are a general reference guide only and are designed to be in harmony with Board policy and the Student Code of Conduct, which is in Section X of this booklet. Please be aware that this booklet is not a complete statement of all policies, or procedures that may be applicable in any given circumstance.

In case of conflict between Board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the provisions of Board policy and the Student Code of Conduct are to be followed. The most updated version of the board policies is available through Ms. Karen Jones or online at:
https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Policy/PolicyListing.aspx?S=4121

Additional note: Due to COVID-19 or any State of Emergency issued in the State of Georgia, certain laws, rules, and regulations outlined herein may be revised; the District may create an addendum to this document accordingly and provide appropriate notice of the same in collaboration with its Communications Division.

Student Academic Progression Information

Additional detailed information regarding the systematic grade-level progression from the time a student enters pre-kindergarten through 12th grade based on MCSD standard operating procedures, local and state policy and legislative requirements is available through the District's Division for Teaching and Learning, and online, at the MCSD Student Progression Plan. The Student Progression Plan is the best and most accurate source of information regarding academic courses, credits, and curriculum.

MCSD Anti-Bullying Statement

MCSD is committed to providing a safe learning environment and to promptly addressing any bullying behaviors. Bullying is prohibited, and all stakeholders are encouraged to report any bullying behaviors.

MCSD Police Department

The Muscogee County School District Police Department (MCSDPD) was formed by Board of Education resolution in 2018 and is currently staffed with police officers certified by the Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training Council. MCSDPD is charged with the responsibility of supporting and facilitating the educational process by providing a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning. MCSDPD is committed to the creation of a collaborative relationship between its officers and our students, parents, school district employees, and community stakeholders.

MCSDPD promotes community policing, which allows officers to continuously operate in the same physical area in order to create a stronger bond with the citizens in that area, thus promoting mutual positive engagement and crime prevention. MCSDPD's goal is to create a partnership with the community with the shared goal of safe and secure school communities. If you would like to contact the MCSDPD with a non-urgent matter or question, please contact Chief Greg Arp at (706) 748-2743.

Muscogee County School District - 2022-2023 Calendar

DATE	EVENT
Monday–Friday, August 01-05	Teacher Planning/Staff Professional Development Days
Wednesday-Friday, August 03-05	**System-Wide Verification Days**
Friday, August 05	In-Person Grades Pre-K-2 (Phase-In)
Monday, August 08	1st Day of School; 1st Semester Begins
Monday, September 05	Labor Day (No School for Teachers and Students)
Wednesday, September 07	Progress Reports
Monday, October 10	Teacher Planning Day - Staff Professional Development Day (No School for Students)
Friday, October 14	Report Cards (All Grades)
Thursday, November 10	Virtual learning Day (No School Pre-K-2 Grades)-Progress Reports
Friday, November 11	Veterans Day (No School for Teachers and Students)
Monday-Friday, November 21-25	Thanksgiving Break
Tuesday, December 20	1st Semester Grading Period Ends
December 21-January 03	Winter Break
Wednesday, January 04	Teacher Planning Day- Day/Staff Professional Development Day (No School for Students)
Thursday, January 05	2nd Semester Begins
Tuesday, January 10	Report Cards (All Grades)
Monday, January 16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (No School for Teachers and Students)
Tuesday, February 07	Progress Reports
Friday, February 17	Staff Development Day (No School for Students)
Monday, February 20	Presidents' Day (No School for Teachers and Students or Inclement Weather Make-up Day)
Friday, March 16	Report Cards (All Grades)
Monday-Friday, April 03 – April 7	Spring Break
Thursday, April 20	Progress Reports
Thursday-Saturday, May 18-20	Graduations
Tuesday, May 23	Last Day of School - Report Cards- Elementary
Wednesday-Thursday, May 24-25	Teacher Post-Planning
Thursday, May 25	Report Cards - Secondary
Monday, May 29	Memorial Day

School Meal Prices	
Breakfast	
Elementary, Paid	$ 1.00
Middle/High, Paid	$ 1.25
Reduced	$ .30
Adult, MCSD Staff	$ 1.75
Adult, Outside MCSD	$ 2.00
Lunch	
Elementary, Paid	$ 2.50
Middle/High, Paid	$ 2.75
Reduced	$ .40
Adult, MCSD Staff	$ 4.00
Adult, Outside MCSD	$ 4.50
Free and reduced-priced meals for breakfast and lunch are available for eligible students. Applications can be picked up at the School Nutrition Office.	

Table of Contents

I. General Information for Students and Parents 3
District Phone Numbers 4
School Phone Numbers 4
Schools by Region and Repeal Clause 6
Forms that Should Be Reviewed and Returned to School 7
Accessing Student Grades and Information Online: The Infinite Campus Portal 7
Attendance and Withdrawal 7
Mandatory Attendance Law 7
Absences, Truancy, and Make-up Work 8
Withdrawal Procedures 9
Students Who Are Late to School or Class: Tardiness 10
Teenager and Adult Driver Responsibility Act (TAADRA) 10
Students Driving Automobiles to School 10
Valuables at School 11
Athletics and Extracurricular Activities-Parental Opt-Out Information 11

II. Behavior Expectations and Procedures 14
Authority of School Leadership 14
Introduction to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) 14
Progressive Discipline Information 14
Definitions: Detention, Suspension, and Expulsion 15
Enrollment of Students Suspended or Expelled from Other Systems 15
Student Discipline Tribunal Hearing and Appeal Procedures 15
When MCSD Rules Apply/Off-Campus Behavior 16
Student Due Process Generally 17
Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students 17
Bus Behavior Expectations & Safety Requirements 18
Corporal Punishment is Prohibited 20
Return to School After Conviction of a Crime/Pleading Guilty to a Crime and/or Incarceration 20
Alternative Education – A.I.M. Program at Marshall Success Center 20

III. Prevention and Intervention Practices 20
Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students (MTSS) 20
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) 21

IV. Student Health 21
Medicine at School 21
Students with Severe Food or Other Allergies 22
Serious Infectious Illnesses 22
Students who are Hospitalized or Homebound 23
Suicide/Self Harm/Homicidal Prevention Safety Protocol 23
Student Insurance 23
School and Student Safety 23

V. Where to Go for Help 25
Students Experiencing Homelessness: McKinney-Vento 25
Helpful Community Resources 26
MCSD Prohibits Harassment and Discrimination 26
Discrimination/Harassment Complaints 28
MCSD Prohibits Bullying 30
How to Make a Silent (Anonymous) Report of Bullying 31

VI. Students with Disabilities **31**
Students Eligible for Special Education Supports and Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education 32
Act/Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) 32
Section 504 32
Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) 33

VII. Technology and Devices at School **34**
Technology at School or School Events 34
Responsible Use Guidelines 34
Chromebook and Google Workspace for Education Agreement & Permission Form 37

VIII. Career Technical & Agricultural Education **38**

IX. What Parents and Students Can Expect **39**
Valuables at School 39
Searches of Students or Property and Questioning of Students 39
FERPA: Student Education Records 40
MCSD Video/Audio Recordings 42
Demonstrations and Strikes 42
Visitors to School 42
Student Dress code and Uniform Information 42

X. Code of Conduct **43**
Teacher and Principal Removal of Student 44
Rule 1 – Verbal Assault, Physical Assault, Disrespectful Conduct of Students 44
Rule 2 – Alcohol, Narcotics, Stimulants, & Other Dangerous Drugs and Controlled Substances 44
Rule 3 – Weapons; Hazardous Objects; Unauthorized Items 46
Rule 4 – Bullying 46
Rule 5 – Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students 47
Rule 6 – Sexual Misconduct or Inappropriate Display of Affection 48
Rule 7 – Gangs 48
Rule 8 - Sexual Harassment 48
Rule 9 – Disruption and Interference with School 49
Rule 10 - Off-Campus Misconduct 49
Rule 11 – Disregard of Directions or Commands 49
Rule 12 – Bus Conduct 49
Rule 13 – Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices in the Schools 50
Rule 14 – Damage or Destruction or Theft of School Property 50
Rule 15 – Damage or Destruction or Theft of Private Property 50
Rule 16 - Dress and Grooming 50
Rule 17 – Leaving School or Assigned Area without Permission 51
Rule 18 - Unexcused Absences 51
Rule 19 – Trespassing and Loitering on School Property is Prohibited 51
Rule 20 – Incitement of Student. 51
Rule 21 – Falsifying Reports of Alleged Inappropriate Behavior by Teacher/School Personnel 51
Rule 22 – Acts of Misconduct 51
Rule 23 – Gambling 52
Rule 24 – Academic Integrity 52
Rule 25 – Counterfeit Currency 52
Rule 26– Recording Student Fights or Other Misbehavior is Prohibited 52
Teacher and Principal Removal of Student 52

I. General Information for Students and Parents

Parents/guardians are asked to raise all building-level concerns to the Principal or Building Leader.

If a parent or guardian seeks additional assistance after the Principal or Building Leader has addressed the concern, the below information may be useful in directing inquiries.

The District is divided into three regions; a Region Chief for each region supervises the building level school Principals. Your school's Region Chief is your first point of contact once the Principal or Building Leader has had the opportunity to address your concern.

School Specific Region Chiefs: (706) 748-3289 [this handbook contains a chart showing which Chief corresponds to each school] See page six.

- West Region: Mr. Terry Baker
- Central Region: Mr. Matthew Bell
- East Region: Dr. Ronald Wiggins

Division of Students Services: (706) 748-3336

- Issues concerning discipline, attendance, school residential zones, school transfers, bullying, and Section 504.

Programs for Exceptional Students: (706) 748-2230

- Questions concerning students with disabilities, students who may have disabilities or are in the evaluation process, and questions regarding Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 Plans.

Division of Teaching and Learning: (706) 748-2109

- Issues concerning student grades, academic credits, curriculum, academic competitions, and homeschool re-entry

Lighthouse Virtual Academy Program : (706) 748-5453

- The procedures, rules, and guidance contained in this Handbook and Code of Conduct apply whether a student is utilizing a traditional or virtual learning model. For additional information specific to the virtual learning model, or to the Lighthouse Virtual Academy Program, please contact your school's Administrator, the Division of Student Services, or Ms. Stacy Martin, the Director of the Lighthouse Virtual Academy Program.

District Phone Numbers

If you need help with:

Switchboard	706-748-2000
Bully Hotline/Report Bullying	706-748-2267
Registration/Enrollment Information: Main Number	706-748-2219
Registration/Enrollment Information	706-748-2220
Registration/Enrollment Information	706-748-2223
Registration/Enrollment Information	706-748-2224
Transportation (Mr. Godfrey Jackson)	706-748-2876
Transportation after Hours (Security)	706-748-2860
Office of the Superintendent (Dr. David Lewis)	706-748-2019
School Counselors/School Social Workers (Dr. Trikella Nelson)	706-748-2226
Homeless Resources –McKinney-Vento (Dr. Trikella Nelson)	706-748-3226
Testing, Assessment & Accountability (Mr. Patrick Knopf)	706-748-2020
Human Resources/Personnel	706-748-2011
Student Discipline –Tribunal (Mr. Kevin Scott)	706-748-2211
Student Services- Parent Complaints (Mr. Kevin Scott)	706-748-3217
Programs for Exceptional Students (Dr. Cincrystal Poythress)	706-748-2225
School Psychology Department	706-748-2230
MTSS/Student Support Teams/Section 504 (Dr. Nikki Sutton)	706-748-2196
Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) (Mrs. Lachrista Thornton)	706-748-3166
Regional Chiefs: (See page 6 for designated school names)	
West Region: Mr. Terry Baker	706-748-2105
Central Region: Mr. Matthew Bell	706-748-3279
East Region: Dr. Ronald Wiggins	706-748-3294
Student Services/Central Registration Main Number	706-748-2219
Students who are Hospitalized or Homebound	706-748-3217
Federal Programs (Dr. Tim Smith)	706-748-2154
Military Family Assistance – (Mr. Kevin Scott)	706-749-3217
Title VI & Title IX – Harassment and Discrimination Complaints/Concerns (Dr. Angela Vickers-Ward)	706-748-3336
ESOL (English to Speakers of Others Languages)	706-748-2120
Student Services/Coordinator of Compliance (Dr. Angela Vickers-Ward)	706-748-3336
Human Resources/Personnel Complaint	706-748-2011
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) (Dr. Kenya Gilmore)	706-748-3339
Sports Equity/Title IX Coordinator (Mr. Jeffrey Battles)	706-748-2595
School Nutrition (Mrs. Kelli McKenzie)	706-748-2386
MCSD Police Department (Chief Greg Arp)	706-748-2743
MCSD Technical Support	706-748-2271
Lighthouse Virtual Academy (Stacy Martin)	706-748-5453

School Phone Numbers

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Allen Elementary School	706-748-2418
Blanchard Elementary School	706-748-2461
Brewer Elementary School	706-748-2479
Britt David Elementary Magnet Academy	706-748-2617
Clubview Elementary School	706-565-3017
Davis Elementary School	706-748-2638
Dawson Elementary School	706-683-8732
Dimon Elementary Magnet Academy	706-683-8772
Dorothy Height Elementary School	706-683-8871
Double Churches Elementary School	706-748-2660
Downtown Elementary Magnet Academy	706-748-2702
Eagle Ridge Academy	706-569-3746
Forrest Road Elementary School	706-565-3061
Fox Elementary School	706-748-2723
Gentian Elementary School	706-569-3625
Georgetown Elementary School	706-565-2980
Hannan Elementary Magnet Academy	706-748-2744
Johnson Elementary School	706-748-2795
Key Elementary School	706-683-8797
Lonnie Jackson Academy	706-565-3039
Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School	706-683-8815
Mathews Elementary School	706-569-3656
Midland Academy	706-569-3664
North Columbus Elementary School	706-748-3183

Reese Road Leadership Academy 706-569-3684
Rigdon Road Elementary School 706-565-2989
River Road Elementary School 706-748-3072
South Columbus Elementary School 706-683-8833
St. Mary's Road Magnet Academy 706-683-8841
Waddell Elementary School 706-569-3722
Wesley Heights Elementary School 706-569-3733
Wynnton Arts Academy 706-748-3147

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Aaron Cohn Middle School 706-569-3801
Arnold Magnet Academy 706-748-2436
Baker Middle School 706-683-8721
Blackmon Road Middle School 706-565-2998
Double Churches Middle School 706-748-2678
East Columbus Magnet Academy 706-565-3026
Eddy Middle School 706-683-8782
Fort Middle School 706-569-3740
Midland Middle School 706-569-3673
Rainey-McCullers School of the Arts 706-748-3304
Richards Middle School 706-569-3697
Rothschild Leadership Academy 706-569-3709
Veterans Memorial Middle School 706-748-3203

HIGH SCHOOLS

Carver High School 706-748-2499
Columbus High School 706-748-2534
Hardaway High School 706-748-2766
Jordan High School 706-748-2819
Kendrick High School 706-565-2960
Northside High School 706-748-2920
Rainey-McCullers School of the Arts 706-748-3304
Shaw High School 706-569-3638
Spencer High School 706-683-8701

CENTERS

Marshall Success Center-AIM 706-748-2900
St. Elmo Center for the Gifted 706-748-3115
Therapeutic Day Program 706-887-5559
Woodall Center 706-748-3166

Region: **WEST** Mr. Terry Baker Region Chief	Region: **CENTRAL** Mr. Matthew Bell Region Chief	Region: **EAST** Dr. Ronald Wiggins Region Chief
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS		
AIM Alternative School Allen Elementary Britt David Magnet Academy Davis Elementary Double Churches Elementary Downtown Magnet Academy Fox Elementary Hannan Magnet Academy Johnson Elementary North Columbus Elementary River Road Elementary Wynnton Arts Academy	Blanchard Elementary Brewer Elementary Clubview Elementary Dorothy Height Elementary Eagle Ridge Academy Gentian Elementary Key Elementary MLK, Jr. Elementary Rigdon Road Elementary South Columbus Elementary	Dawson Elementary Dimon Magnet Academy Forrest Road Elementary Georgetown Elementary Lonnie Jackson Academy Mathews Elementary Midland Academy Reese Road Leadership Academy St. Marys Road Magnet Academy Waddell Elementary Wesley Heights Elementary
MIDDLE SCHOOLS		
AIM Alternative Center Arnold Magnet Academy Double Churches Middle Veterans Memorial Middle	Baker Middle Blackmon Road Middle Eddy Middle Rainey-McCullers School of the Arts Richards Middle	Aaron Cohn Middle East Columbus Magnet Academy Fort Middle Midland Middle Rothschild Leadership Academy
HIGH SCHOOLS		
AIM Alternative Center Hardaway High Jordan High Northside High	Carver High Columbus High Rainey-McCullers School of the Arts Shaw High	Kendrick High Spencer High

STUDENT SERVICES DIVISION

Dr. Angela Vickers-Ward, Chief

Anne Elizabeth Shepherd Home Catapult Academy	Sara Spano Clothing Bank	Therapeutic Day Program Woodall GNETS Program

TEACHING & LEARNING DIVISION

Keith Seifert, Chief

St. Elmo Center for the Gifted

Board of Education Policies can be accessed through the school website at:
www.muscogee.k12.ga.us
PATH: Our District >Board of Education>Board Docs>Public>Policies>

Repeal Clause

Please be advised that the Board of Education may revise or create policies over the course of the school year. Any policy or regulation currently in effect or enacted after the publication of this handbook shall supersede.

Forms that Should Be Reviewed and May Need to be Returned to School

Please visit with your school administrator for the following forms which must be reviewed, signed, and in some cases, returned prior to enrollment. Some of these forms may be consolidated into a single document by your school:

- Bess (Behavioral and Emotional Screening System) Parental Opt-Out Form
- BESS Parent Informational Letter
- Acknowledgement of Receipt of MCSD Student Handbook and Code of Conduct
- Assistance with Homelessness McKinney-Vento
- Behavior Contract
- Compulsory Attendance Law
- DIS Chromebook Form
- Ga. Student Wellness-Student Health Survey Parental Permission Form
- GHSA Physical Form Fillable
- Lead Nurse Letter to Parents
- Permission to allow student to participate in Media relations or interviews
- Permission to post student images on MCSD website and social media
- Special Dietary Needs Prescription Form
- Student Health Record
- Telephone Consumer Protection Act
- Parent and Student Notification – Returned Checks
- Parental Opt-Out of Club Participation/Event Activities
- Parents Right to Know (Title I)
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)
- Student Title IX Annual Notice

Accessing Student Grades and Information Online: The Infinite Campus Portal

MCSD uses the "Infinite Campus Portal" System to electronically store and provide access to student information. Information on how to access this Portal (Infinite Campus Portal Guide) is available at: https://campus.muscogee.k12.ga.us/campus/portal/muscogee.jsp. If you need help accessing the Portal, please reach out to a teacher or building administrator. Teachers may also keep individual class websites, all information about those will be provided directly by teachers.

Attendance and Withdrawal

Entry Age for Public Kindergarten and First Grade: A child must be five years old on or before September 1 to enter public kindergarten; a student must be six years old on or before September 1 to enter first grade.

Mandatory Attendance Law

Georgia law requires children between the ages of six and 16 must enroll in a private, public, or homeschool program. Children under age seven are subject to the law after they are enrolled in a Georgia school for 20 days or more. The school district is charged with responsibility for enforcing the Mandatory 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. Students may be temporarily excused from school in keeping with MCSD Board Policy. [see MCSD Board Policies JB, JBA, JBC, and JBCD]. These provisions also apply to students assigned to attend an alternative public school program established by the Board.

Note: Georgia law requires that the MCSD will, if not given appropriate information within 45 days of a parental withdrawal, make notifications to the appropriate authorities to ensure a withdrawn student has been enrolled in an educational program.

Recording Attendance

Elementary School: The homeroom teacher records attendance daily at the beginning of the school day.
The absence remains unexcused until documentation is provided in keeping with MCSD Board Policies JB and JBA.

Middle and High School: The teacher records attendance at the beginning of each period throughout the school day. The absence remains unexcused until documentation is provided in keeping with MCSD Board Policies JB and JBA.

Block Scheduling: If a student attends a school utilizing block scheduling, please contact the Principal to ensure a full understanding of how the scheduling variation impacts attendance matters and checking a student in late or checking a student out early. As of the date of printing, the schools on block scheduling are Jordan High School, and Rainey-McCullers School of the Arts.

Absences, Truancy, and Makeup Work

A student who participates in an activity or program sponsored by 4-H shall be credited as present by the school in which enrolled in the same manner as an educational field trip, and such participation in an activity or program sponsored by 4-H shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused, for any day, a portion of a day or days missed from school.

Excused Absences and Makeup Work

MCSD recognizes the below as valid reasons for an excused absence, where appropriate documentation is provided. [MCSD Board Policy JB.] Additional reasons may be recognized where they do not conflict with the below; for further information, please contact the Principal or Building Leader.

Principals and Building Leaders have the discretion to require official documentation where a student seeks an excused absence; please discuss any questions with the student's Principal or Building Leader.

Excused Absences per MCSD Board Policy:

- Personal illness or attendance in school that endangers a student's health or the health of others, note that students may be asked to present appropriate medical documentation upon return to school;
- A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school;
- In the event of a serious illness in a student's immediate family, note that documentation regarding the family member upon returning to school;
- An Order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school;
- Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school;
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety;
- Students whose parent is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences up to a maximum of five school days per school year to visit with their parents prior to parent's deployment or during parent's leave;
- Students serving as pages with the Georgia Legislature;
- Students in foster care attending foster care-related Court proceedings, and
- Voting, for a period not to exceed one day.

Excused Absences and Final Course Grades

Final course grades of students shall not be penalized because of absences if the following conditions are met: absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons and make-up work for excused absences was completed satisfactorily.

Makeup Work: Makeup work is allowed when an absence is excused in keeping with MCSD Board Policies JB and JBA. Please note that schools are not required to provide make-up work for unexcused absences; for more information about this, please contact the Principal or Building Leader.

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, not to exceed the maximum number of allowed absences per school year.

Truancy: When a child is absent, parents, guardians, or other persons who have control of a child enrolled in the District must comply with MCSD Board Policies JB and JBA and school guidelines to report reasons for absences in order for the absences to be excused. Any child that is subject to compulsory attendance who, during the school calendar year, has more

than five (5) days of unexcused absences is considered truant. The law states the following: "Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of a child or children and who violates this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine of not less than $25.00 and not greater than $100.00, or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school in violation of this part after the child's school system notifies the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of five unexcused days of absence for a child shall constitute a separate offense."

- MCSD shall implement a progressive discipline process and a parental involvement process for truant students before referring the students to the juvenile or other court having jurisdiction.

- Schools will notify parents/guardians when a student has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences.

Reduction of Unexcused Absences: The MCSD shall adopt policies and procedures to reduce unexcused absences that shall include but are not limited to the following:

1. The MCSD will notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of the student when such student has five (5) unexcused absences. The notice shall outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence shall constitute a separate offense.
2. After two (2) reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of the student, the school system shall send written notice via first-class mail or certified mail with return receipt requested; and
3. MCSD will provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in public school a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance.
4. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the school system, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1 shall sign a statement indicating receipt of a written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to the local system's policy.

Withdrawal Procedures

Administrative Withdrawal Due to Extended Absence: MCSD is authorized to administratively withdraw students 16 years of age or older 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 and submit a written withdrawal form. With a few exceptions for health or safety emergencies, the non-registering parent or guardian may not withdraw a student. Where a parent/guardian withdraws a student with intent to homeschool, the parent/guardian must file a Notice of Intent to Homeschool with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) within thirty (30) days. Please note: Georgia law requires the MCSD to notify the Department of Family and Children Services where a student is withdrawn to homeschool but GaDOE has not received a filed Declaration of Intent.

Parental Withdrawal of Unemancipated Minor: Students between the ages of 16 and 18 (unemancipated minors) that have not earned a diploma must have parental permission to withdraw from school. The Principal or designee must convene a conference with the parent of child within two (2) days of receiving notice of intent to withdraw.

Withdrawal as Discipline: The MCSD does not recognize or authorize administrative withdrawal from school as an appropriate disciplinary consequence.

Checking a Student In or Out During the School Day

Students arriving at school after the school day has started (after the first bell) must be 'checked in' to school; documentation regarding the reason for the late check-in may be required. Students who are removed from classes and leave the school prior to the official end of the school day with a parent or legal guardian are "checking out early." A parent or legal guardian may be required to bring appropriate documentation showing the necessity of an "early checkout" at the time the student is released from school. Students should not be checked out during the last thirty (30) minutes of the school day.

To be considered "in attendance" for a school day, a student must be present for at least one-half of the school day, excluding the lunch period. Students leaving school before meeting that requirement will be considered absent for the day. Please contact the Principal or Building Leader at your child's school for additional information.

Students Who are Late to School or Class: Tardiness

Tardy to School - Any student arriving at school following the ringing bell, chime, or other audible signal established by the Principal and intended to indicate the start of the school day. Any student who is on school property but is not in his or her assigned classroom or other authorized area following the bell, chime, or other audible signals will be considered tardy to school.

Tardy to Class - A student is "tardy to class" when the student arrives to class following the ringing bell, chime, or other audible signal indicating the beginning of the instructional time**.**

Excused Tardy - A tardy resulting from events beyond a student's control, such as an accident, road closed due to an accident, area power outage, late bus, or other excuses determined by the Principal or Building Leader as acceptable. Documentation is required to excuse a tardy if it is for an appointment.

Unexcused Tardies - Students accumulating three (3) days of unexcused tardies will receive a phone call from the teacher or office staff/automatic call system to the parent.

Continued Tardies – After the fifth tardy, the Principal or designee will contact the parent or guardian for a mandatory parent conference and counselor referral. Consequences may include detention, in-school suspension, or other actions in accordance with local school system policy.

10 or More Days - Referral to the school social worker and to support agencies outside the school system, as the Principal deems appropriate. Among these agencies are the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), law enforcement, Juvenile Court, Family Connection, or other external agencies**.**

Elementary and Middle School Tardy Walk-In Procedure
The parent or guardian who brings the student to school must report to the front office in person with the student(s) to check the student(s) in when arriving to school after the bell or chime.

High School Tardy Procedure
The student must report to the attendance/front office to check-in when arriving to school after the tardy bell.

Guidance for Virtual School Attendance

Additional information specific to attendance procedures for students utilizing the virtual model is available at the District Division of Student Services Website, under Student Services, Social Work Services.

Teenager and Adult Driver Responsibility Act (TAADRA)

Students who are under the age of 18 and seek a driver's license or permit must first obtain a Certificate of School Enrollment Form from MCSD pursuant to state law. State law allows licenses or permits to be issued only to students who are enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school. The Certificate of School Enrollment form satisfies this requirement. The Certificate of Enrollment form is posted on the GaDOE website: https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/TAADRA.aspx

Students Driving Automobiles to School

Students who wish to drive to school and park at school must register with the Principal and provide written authorization from a parent or guardian in order to obtain a permit. This permit is subject to revocation by the Principal at any time. Students who are permitted to drive vehicles to school shall not be allowed to drive home for lunch or at any other time during the school day without prior permission from the Principal or designee. Students are subjected to the rules below regardless of whether they obtain a parking permit.

Student Parking Permit: A student may earn the privilege of parking his/her automobile on campus subject to the below terms and conditions.

1. Student must have permission to drive to school.
2. Student and guardian understand that the student must have a valid driver's license.
3. Guardian and student understand that the student must have valid car insurance and provide proof of the same.
4. Guardian and student understand and agree that at any time the vehicle is on campus, they are both responsible to ensure that the vehicle does not contain any item that is prohibited by Georgia law or prohibited by the MCSD Code of Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to any product or delivery system that contains nicotine, electronic cigarettes, JUULs, alcoholic beverages, any nonprescription drugs without proper authorization, or any pornographic material.
5. Guardian and student both understand that the student will be accountable for any item or substance in the vehicle, regardless of who placed the item or substance in the vehicle or whether the student was aware of the same.
6. Guardian and student understand and agree to inspect the vehicle before bringing the vehicle on campus each time in order to determine whether anything forbidden by this permit is in the vehicle.
7. Guardian and student agree that the vehicle is subject to random searches at any time the Principal or designee deems appropriate and the student agrees upon request to unlock their vehicle, glove compartment, trunk, or other locked storage compartment in the vehicle for inspection; guardian and student both consent to these searches by signing that they have read and reviewed this Handbook and sending a vehicle with a student.
8. Guardian and student agree and understand that MCSD is not responsible for theft, damage, or loss of vehicle or possessions while parked on MCSD property, and agree not to pursue these costs or claims.
9. The provisions of this section apply to all student vehicles on school district property, regardless of whether or not a student parking permit has been issued.
10. The student's right to park their vehicle on district property may be revoked at any time by the school principal.

Valuables at School

MCSD personnel cannot search for personal items lost or misplaced while at school. MCSD personnel will not be responsible for the value of an item in the event of damage, loss, or theft while at school. Parents – please consider this carefully and be intentional when you decide whether to send items to school with your child or children and inspect any and all containers (and their contents) that are sent to school with your child or children. This applies to telephones, computers, and any other personal items that are brought to school.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities – Parental Opt-Out Information

Outside of the regular school day, MCSD students have many opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities at the school level. Such activities may include athletics, academic competitions, before and after-school extracurricular clubs, as well as various fine arts programs. The law allows a wide variety of clubs. We want all parents to be comfortable with the activities selected by students. Parents and guardians must obtain information regarding the extracurricular clubs offered directly from the school level Administrator at the beginning of the school year. Parents or guardians may restrict participation by filling out and returning the "Opt-Out" form provided by the Student Services Division at the beginning of the school year. Please seek information from your school's Principal about the clubs that are offered so that you can make informed decisions about permissions. If a parent or guardian does not limit the clubs that the student may join, the student will be permitted to join any extracurricular club for which they are eligible. The Opt-Out form must be filled out and returned if a parent or guardian wishes to restrict student participation.

Eligibility for Competition

The governing body for all competitive interscholastic team events is the Georgia High School Association (GHSA). The GHSA guidelines are posted below. Note that updated 2022-2023 guidelines were not available at the time of printing of this Handbook.

HIGH SCHOOL

Eligibility

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 the school's service area, and transfer rules. Note: First-year students (entering 9th grade) are eligible academically.

Limits of Participation

A student has 8 consecutive semesters or 4 consecutive years of eligibility from the date of entry into the 9th grade to be eligible for interscholastic competition.

Age Restriction

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

Academic Standing

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

First-year students (freshmen 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 (sophomore) students must have accumulated 5 total units in the first year, AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units in the previous semester.

Third-year (junior) students must have accumulated 11 units in the first and second years AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units in the previous semester.

Fourth-year (senior) students must have accumulated 17 units in the first three yeas, 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.

Transfer Student Athletic Eligibility

Students and parents or guardian should be aware that school transfers may affect the student's eligibility to participate in athletic and extracurricular activities, which are governed by the Georgia High School Association (GHSA). Parents should verify whether GHSA requirements may affect their child's eligibility, before submitting a school transfer request. https://www.ghsa.net/constitution

Home School Students Eligibility

Home study students who take one or more courses in their resident schools may be eligible per Georgia law, to participate in extracurricular and interscholastic activities with the school that the student would attend based on their residency. The law contains several requirements in order for a student to participate; parents and guardians who would like further information should seek additional information from the District well in advance of their desired participation semester to ensure all requirements may be met.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Eligibility

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 MCSD Athletic office, and after the students have met the standards of academic requirements, age, semesters in middle school, residence in the school's service area, and transfer rules. Note: Students establishing eligibility as entering 6th graders are automatically eligible for the first semester.

Limits of Participation

A student has 3 consecutive years of eligibility from the date of entry into the 6th grade to be eligible for interscholastic competition.

Age Restriction

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic activities, a student must not have reached his/her 15th birthday prior to August 1st of the current school year.

Academic Standing

Promotion into 6th grade makes students eligible for the 1st semester of 6th grade. Students must pass 5 out of 6 classes at the end of the first semester to be eligible for the 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.

ATTENDANCE

Individual students who have emergencies necessitating their absence from school for a portion of the school day must have been present one-half of the instructional day in order to be counted present for the school day and to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The interscholastic activity program in the MCSD is an important part of the educational process. It provides opportunities for learning experiences in athletics, competitive band, and literary competitions which are difficult to duplicate in other school activities. The activity program teaches attitudes of responsible team play and cooperation. The program provides a vehicle for learning mental and physical self-discipline, loyalty, personal pride in the school, respect for the rights of others, and the will to win. Participation in interscholastic activity programs in the MCSD is entirely voluntary. The opportunity to participate in the program is extended to all eligible students who are willing to assume the responsibilities congruent with the privilege.

Athletes/participants who exercise their privilege to engage in the program shall abide by the rules of the game or contest in letter and spirit, as well as those guidelines established by their administrators and coaches. This shall include:

a. Maintaining standards of eligibility established by GHSA and the school of attendance
b. Being respectful and courteous to visiting teams and officials
c. Refraining from disrespectfully addressing officials, antics to intimidate, taunting or baiting visiting opponents and using insulting language and/or swearing
d. Respecting the integrity and judgment of officials and accepting their decisions without question
e. Being modest when successful and gracious in defeat

Gender Equity Notice to Students

Federal and state law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems. This notifies you that the MCSD does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. If you have an inquiry or complaint concerning sports equity in this school system, you may contact:

Mr. Jeffrey Battles
Battles.Jeffrey.W@muscogee.k12.ga.us
Sports Equity/Title IX Coordinator
2960 Macon Road
Columbus, Georgia 31906
Phone Number -706-748-2595

Title IX issues may be reported pursuant to MCSD's procedures; please see the section herein entitled MCSD Prohibits Harassment and Discrimination.

II. Behavior Expectations and Procedures

Authority of School Leadership

The Principal is the designated leader of the school and, with the staff, is charged by the Superintendent with the safe and orderly operation of the school. In cases of disciplinary violations not covered by this handbook, the Principal or designee may impose corrective measures which they believe to be in the best interest of the student involved and the school.

All student codes of conduct shall be submitted to the board for approval. The Code of Conduct shall be distributed to each student and the student's parents or guardians during the first week of school and upon enrollment of each new student. The parent or guardian shall be required to sign an acknowledgment of the receipt of the Code of Conduct and promptly return the acknowledgment to the school. The Code of Conduct shall be available in the school office, online, and in each classroom.

All discipline of students with disabilities will follow the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, IDEA, and all relevant laws and regulations.

Introduction to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports or PBIS is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors in order to create positive school environments. PBIS is a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that provides a continuum of positive behavioral prevention and intervention resources for all students. When implemented with fidelity, PBIS increases teaching and learning opportunities for all students.

MCSD is dedicated to implementing PBIS in every school through a deliberate selection, readiness, training, coaching and evaluation process. A limited number of schools may begin implementing each year and it takes at least 3-5 years to develop a full PBIS framework. As of November 2019, Brewer Elementary, Dawson Elementary, Double Churches Middle, Forrest Road Elementary, Kendrick High, Key Elementary, Lonnie Jackson Academy, Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary, Rigdon Road Elementary, River Road Elementary, Woodall GNET Program, and Wynnton Arts Academy. are the twelve "operational" PBIS Schools in Muscogee County.

If your child(ren)'s school is a PBIS school or is in the "process" of building a 'PBIS' framework, you may request detailed information about what that means for the handling of discipline events at your school. Please note that the Code of Conduct applies to every student enrolled in MCSD, regardless of the school's PBIS status.

Progressive Discipline Information

Progressive discipline processes are designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior leading to the discipline, that the previous discipline history of the student being disciplined and other relevant factors will be taken into account, and that all due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed.

With a progressive disciplinary approach, the staff is encouraged to implement several lower-level interventions before proceeding to higher levels that may involve disciplinary responses that remove the student from the classroom. These responses are designed to teach appropriate behavior so that students are respectful, can learn, and contribute to a safe environment. These responses should be used in a graduated fashion.

Multi-Tiered Supports Must Be Provided

No student in public preschool through third grade shall be expelled or suspended from school for more than five consecutive or cumulative days during a school year without first receiving a multi-tiered system of support, such as response to intervention, unless such student possessed a weapon, illegal drugs, or other dangerous instrument or such student's behavior endangers the physical safety of other students or school personnel. If such student is receiving or has received a multi-tiered system of supports, the school shall be deemed to have met the requirements of this Code section. The school or program shall comply with all federal laws and requirements regarding obtaining parental consent during any advanced tier within the system of supports prior to certain screenings or evaluations.

Prior to assigning any student in preschool through third grade to out-of-school suspension for more than five consecutive or cumulative days during a school year, if such student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan, the school or program shall also convene an IEP or Section 504 meeting to review appropriate supports being provided as part of such Individualized Education Program or Section 504 plan.

Definitions: Detention, Suspension, and Expulsion

Detention: Disciplinary assignment of a student to a certain area of the school outside of regular school hours. MCSD does utilize Saturday school detention. Whenever a student is assigned to detention, the student's parent/guardian shall be notified.

In-School Suspension: Temporary removal of a student from his or her regular classroom(s) to a different location in the school building for a period not to exceed ten (10) consecutive school days. The student remains under the direct supervision of school personnel and will work on assignments from his or her regular classes.

Out-of-School Suspension: Any suspension in which a student is prohibited from attending school as a disciplinary consequence. After an out-of-school suspension, the student and his or her parent or guardian must attend a re-entry conference upon request by the Principal. Failure or refusal on the part of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) to appear for the scheduled conference may result in the Principal making a recommendation to the Superintendent or designee for another period of suspension.

Short-Term Out of School Suspension: A student is prohibited from attending school for a period of ten (10) school days or fewer. Georgia law gives Principals and Building Leaders the authority to assign this consequence.

Long-Term Out of School Suspension: A student is prohibited from attending school for more than ten (10) school days up to the end of the current school semester or year. This consequence is assigned only after the student is afforded procedural and substantive due process in keeping with Georgia law.

Expulsion: The student is prohibited from attending school, and not allowed to enroll in or attend any public school beyond the current school semester or year. This consequence is assigned only after the student is afforded procedural and substantive due process in keeping with Georgia law. Upon the student's return to school after expulsion for the remainder of the year, the student must report to the office of the Chief of Student Services or their designee for a re-entering interview. A student can be reinstated after permanent expulsion only by vote of the Board of Education to readmit the student.

Enrollment of Students Suspended or Expelled from Other Systems

Students suspended or expelled from other school systems will be required to complete their assigned suspension or expulsion prior to attending regular classes at MCSD.

Attendance at School Events While Suspended

Students that are assigned to the Alternative School, In-School Suspension, Out-Of-School Suspension, or Expulsion from school **may not attend or participate** in any school functions or activities on the day of the infraction or the days of suspension until the assigned suspension or assignment to alternative school is complete. Students assigned Out-Of- School Suspension or Expulsion from school may not be on any MCSD Property without prior permission from the school Principal or Building Leader.

Eligibility While Suspended

Students assigned to the Marshall Success Center, In-School Suspension, Out-Of-School Suspension, or expelled from school for disciplinary reasons lose their eligibility to participate in any before/after school-related activities on all day(s) of suspension or expulsion or during assignment to the Alternative School. An assigned disciplinary suspension or expulsion ends when the student returns to the regular class setting on the next regular school day.

Student Discipline Tribunal Hearing and Appeal Procedures

Where a Principal seeks to impose punishment of a suspension or expulsion of longer than ten (10) school days and/or assignment to Alternative School, the student must be offered a hearing before an impartial panel of qualified members of the Student Discipline Tribunal Panel (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751).

Filing of Tribunal Referral

A tribunal referral specifying the disciplinary infraction originates the action of the Student Discipline Tribunal Panel.

A teacher, other school officials, or employee who has been subjected to an assault or battery by a student can file a direct complaint with the School Administration and with the Board of Education, and this complaint shall originate action by the Student Discipline Tribunal Panel. Note that failure to file such complaint shall not prevent the tribunal from taking action to hold a hearing.

Student Discipline Tribunal Hearings

Notice: Reasonable notice of the hearing shall be given to all parties, including the parent or guardian of the student, either personally or by First-Class and Certified U.S. mail to the address last provided by the parent to the MCSD. MCSD may also provide parent/guardian with an emailed notice in addition to personal or mailed delivery.

Attorneys: Students are not required to, but may be represented by an attorney at these hearings. Parents or guardians who intend to bring an attorney to the hearing should reach out to that attorney early enough to ensure they can attend the scheduled date and time of the hearing. Parents or guardians are required to inform the Division of Student Services of their intention to bring an attorney to the hearing, so that the MCSD may inform its attorney to attend the hearing.

Evidence: All parties will be afforded an opportunity to present and respond to evidence and to examine and cross examine witnesses.

Record: A verbatim electronic or a written record of the hearing shall be made available by the MCSD where there is such a request by a party.

Decision: The decision of the Student Discipline Tribunal Panel shall be based solely upon the evidence received in the hearing and the decision shall be given to all parties within ten (10) days of the close of the record. Such decision shall be final unless appealed.

Appeal: Any decision by the Student Discipline Tribunal Panel may be appealed to the MCSD Board of Education by filing a written notice of appeal within twenty (20) days from the date the decision is rendered. This right of appeal shall apply to either party.

Review by the Board on Appeal: Where a parent/student appeals the decision of the Student Discipline Tribunal Panel, The MCSD Board of Education shall review the record and shall render a decision in writing based solely upon the record. Note: The student must serve any punishment rendered while the appeal is pending; however, that upon request, Superintendent may determine whether to suspend enforcement of the suspension or expulsion ordered by the Student Discipline Tribunal Panel pending the outcome of any appeal to the MCSD Board of Education.

Public Meeting and Record

Hearings related to student discipline matters, whether held by the Student Discipline Tribunal Panel or the MCSD Board of Education, are confidential, shall be closed to the press and other media and to the general public, and are not subject to the open meetings law.

Waiver of Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing

Students/Parents/Guardians may waive the right to a hearing by signing a waiver form to forego the hearing and accept the disciplinary consequences assigned by the school Administrator. Parents/guardians who sign a waiver are also waiving their right to any appeal. Parents are required to read and understand the waiver form and its consequences **prior to signature**. Parents or guardians should not sign a waiver form unless or until they are comfortable with what it means for their child.

When MCSD Rules Apply/Off-Campus Behavior

The MCSD Code of Conduct applies while students are at school, while students are on any school district property, while students are at bus stops, on the way to or from school, on school buses or other MCSD-provided transportation, and at all school-related functions and events, such as sports, extracurricular activities, field trips, or any school-related or school-

sponsored events. The Code of Conduct governs student behavior on any school-related or school-sponsored trip. The Code of Conduct additionally applies when students are participating in school or school activities or events using a digital or online platform.

Per Georgia law, off-campus behavior of a student which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's presence at school potentially dangerous or disruptive may be addressed with discipline.

Student Due Process Generally

Students will be told why they are being disciplined and given the opportunity to respond with a brief statement of explanation. If the student is found to be in violation of the Code of Conduct, the Administrator will determine the appropriate consequence. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation that necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student: A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around them and which are likely to recur.

Procedures Specific to Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students

Any time a teacher or Principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the Principal shall notify the parent/guardian of the disciplinary problem, invite such parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference with the Principal or the teacher or both to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan. The plan should include the consolidated ideas from the Principal and parent/guardian to keep the child in the current school. Also, the plan must address the consequences for the child's inappropriate behavior and steps to prevent reoccurrences.

Procedures after Suspension or Expulsion of a Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student

Before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return from an expulsion or suspension, the school to which the student is to be readmitted shall request by telephone call and by mail the following: at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference with the Principal to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan. Failure of the parent or guardian to attend shall not preclude the student from being readmitted to the school. At the discretion of the Principal, a teacher, counselor, or other person may attend the conference. The Principal shall ensure that a notation of the conference be placed in the student's permanent file.

Mandatory Consequences Where Students Cause Physical Harm to School Personnel

Georgia law requires that a student who is found to have intentionally made contact of an insulting or provoking nature, or which causes physical harm (unless in self-defense) ("physical violence") to a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or any school employee shall be expelled from the public school system for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school. The District at its discretion may permit the student to attend an alternative education program for the period of the student's expulsion.

If the student who commits an act of physical violence is in kindergarten through grade eight, then the District at its discretion and on the recommendation of the tribunal panel may permit such a student to reenroll in the regular public school program for grades nine (9) through twelve (12). O.C.G.A. §20-2-751.6

The school district will not be limited by this statute but shall be free to impose more severe disciplinary measures as permitted by other provisions of state law and as set out in this handbook.

Bus Behavior Expectations & Safety Requirements for All Students

All Muscogee County Code of Conduct Rules and Policies apply to student behavior at the bus stop, school activities, and while riding to and from school. Parents are responsible for getting their children safely to and from the bus stop. Parents cannot board the school bus for any reason. Buses run on a schedule and cannot typically wait for passengers. If problems arise, parents are not to confront the bus driver at the bus stop. Make an appointment with the Transportation Department at (706) 748-2876 to discuss the matter. If problems should arise after normal business hours, please contact the MCSD Security Dispatch at (706) 748-2860.

Students should keep their bus pass with them during the first month of school and any time they are assigned to a new bus in case the driver needs to check eligibility.

MCSD is committed to providing a safe learning environment and to promptly addressing any bullying behaviors. Bullying is prohibited, and all stakeholders are encouraged to report any bullying behaviors.

1. At the Bus Stop

- Remember that school rules apply at the bus stop. For example, fighting or physical play, use or possession of tobacco, e-cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol are prohibited.
- Use of profane or vulgar language while waiting for the bus is prohibited.
- Stand off the roadway while awaiting the bus.
- Students in Grades Pre-K-2nd Grade, must have Parent or Guardian or age-appropriate, typically 11 years or older, individual present at the Bus Stop.

2. When the Bus Arrives

- Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices while entering the school bus.

3. On the Bus

- Remember that school rules apply to the school bus. For example, fighting or physical play, use or possession of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol are prohibited.
- **REMAIN SEATED WHILE BUS IS IN MOTION**.
- Make an effort to sit three to a seat.
- Keep arms, head and objects inside windows.
- Use of profane or vulgar language while on the bus is prohibited.
- **ABSOLUTE SILENCE** is required at railroad crossings.
- No eating or drinking allowed.
- Students may transport band instrument(s) on the bus, if space is available.
- Using mirrors, lasers, cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices or electronic devices that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus is prohibited.
- Students are prohibited from using cell phones without head phones.
- ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES, INCLUDING CELL PHONES, **MUST BE TURNED OFF AT RAILROAD CROSSINGS** AND ALL HEADPHONES MUST BE REMOVED.

4. Exiting the Bus

- Exit at your designated bus stop.
- Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices while exiting the school bus.
- When crossing the street is necessary, students will immediately cross in front of the bus in full view of the driver.
- Students in Grades Pre-K-2nd Grade, must havea Parent or Guardian or age-appropriate, typically 11 years or older, individual present to receive the student. If an appropriate individual is not at the Bus Stop to receive thestudent, the student will be taken back to the school.

Emergency Evacuation of School Buses

Emergency evacuation procedures have been established by MCSD for all students within the school district. These procedures are designed to protect the student in case of an emergency while being transported, i.e., fire, danger of life, danger of collision, inclement weather, mechanical failure or other unsafe conditions. The drivers, who are responsible for safety aboard school buses, as well as the students will practice bus evacuation periodically. Evacuation procedures are as follows:

Front Door Evacuation

The evacuation will be conducted using the same procedure for loading or unloading, one side at a time or staggered seats, as explained by the driver.

To ensure a safe exit, hands should be kept free. All lunch boxes, books, and other personal belongings should be left on the bus.

Disembark the bus in a safe and orderly manner, as quickly as possible, and go to a safe point at least one hundred feet from the bus. Remain there until further instructions are given.

Rear Door Evacuation

Passengers should remain in their seats until directed by the driver to leave the bus. The driver may choose whether to evacuate the bus one side at a time or a staggered seat basis.

Front and Rear Exit Evacuation

The bus will be divided and the front portion will evacuate the same as the front door evacuation procedure. The rear portion of the bus will evacuate by the same procedure as the rear door evacuation.

As in any emergency, evacuate the bus quickly and in an orderly manner. Go to a point at least one hundred feet from the bus, and wait for further instructions, from the driver, monitor, and or law enforcement.

The Driver is in full charge of the bus and students and may initially work with parents orguardians to resolve minor incidents.

Consequences of Bus Violations include, but are not limited to:

1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense	5th Offense
Parent contact	Parent conference	Parent conference	Parent conference required before student returns to the bus	Parent conference required before student returns to the bus
Student conference Seat change on the bus	Student Bus Behavior Contract is conducted through a scheduled meeting with the parent and other essential personnel	Modify Student Bus Behavior Contract conducted through a scheduled meeting with the parent and other essential personnel	Modify Student Bus Behavior Contract conducted through a scheduled meeting with the parent and other essential personnel	Modify Student Bus Behavior Contract conducted through a scheduled meeting with the parent and other essential personnel
	Bus Suspension (0 to 3 days) *	Bus Suspension (0 to 5 days) *	Bus Suspension (0 to 10 days)*	Bus Suspension (Remainder of the Semester) *
	**Based on the discretion of the Principal*	**Based on the discretion of the Principal*	**Based on the discretion of the Principal*	**Based on the discretion of the Principal*

Punishment for violation of any of the above rules may result in your student being removed from the bus utilizing the above. Any student found guilty of student endangerment may result in automatic removal from the bus. **Riding the bus is a privilege not a right.** Do not abuse your privilege. Drivers are in charge of the bus and may assign seats to students. Many school buses are monitored by surveillance cameras.

Corporal Punishment is Prohibited

The Muscogee County Board of Education prohibits the use of corporal punishment by its employees.

Use of Reasonable Physical Force or Reasonable Physical Contact

In accordance with MCSD Board Policy JDA, there are instances where the use of reasonable physical force or physical contact is necessary and appropriate in a school setting. The prohibition of corporal punishment should not be construed to eliminate or restrict the ability of a school district employee to use his or her professional discretion in the use of reasonable physical contact or reasonable physical force to protect students, themselves, or others from imminent harm or bodily injury. Nothing in that policy shall be construed to prohibit an employee of the school district from taking appropriate action to diffuse a student fight or altercation.

Return to School After Conviction of a Crime/Pleading Guilty to a Crime and/or Incarceration

A student who has pled guilty to or been convicted of an offense and has therefore served a sentence in a correction or juvenile detention facility who wishes to return to school is required to report with his/her parents/guardians to the Chief Student Services Officer or their designee prior to returning to school. These students may be referred to the Student Discipline Tribunal when their behavior could have or did result in the student being charged with a felony and where that behavior makes the student's presence at school a potential danger to persons or property or which disrupts the education process.

Alternative Education - Achievement, Integrity, Maturity (A.I.M.) Program at the Marshall Success Center

The Marshall Success Center serves students in grades 3 – 12 assigned by the Student Tribunal.

III. Prevention and Intervention Practices

Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students (Multi-Tiered System of Supports MTSS)

Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students is the "umbrella" term that includes all the ways students can get academic or behavioral support at school. Student Support Team (SST) is the term used to describe the process by which the school-level staff identifies students who may need academic or behavioral help beyond regular classroom instruction. Parent involvement is strongly encouraged to facilitate student success.

Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS), now referred to as Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for students by the Georgia Department of Education is a framework that ensures successful education outcomes for all students by using a data-based problem-solving process. The intent of Georgia's Tiered System of Supports is to provide and evaluate the effectiveness of multiple tiers of integrated academic and social-emotional instruction and intervention supports matched to student needs that align with educational standards. A multi-tiered service delivery model incorporates standards and skills-based instruction, assessments to inform instruction, efficient use of school resources, evidence-based programs and practice, focus on integration and alignment with core instruction, and frequency and intensity of instruction/intervention matched to student needs. Evaluating student response to instruction/intervention guides Student Support Teams (SST)s with appropriate educational planning.

Georgia's Tiered System of Supports will offer all schools in MCSD the following:

Tier 1: High-quality core instruction (academic, behavior, attendance) to meet grade-level standards/expectations for all students that are provided by classroom teachers.

Tier 2: Skills-based intervention (received in addition to Tier 1 instruction) that is designed to meet the needs of a targeted group of students and can be provided by a variety of professionals.

Tier 3: Intensive skills-based intervention (received in addition to Tier 1 instruction and Tier 2 targeted intervention) that is specific and designed to meet the needs of a smaller group of students.

For more information regarding Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students, visit the Georgia Department of Education's website at: https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/TieredSystemofSupports.aspx

What happened to Response to Intervention?

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a term used to describe how the MCSD gathers information about student response to interventions and supports provided. We want parents/guardians to have access to information so they are comfortable with supports being provided at school to ensure the best possible results for students. For additional information please visit the Prevention and Intervention Practices website at:
https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/c/Divisions/StudentServices/PreventionandInterventionPractices

MTSS is an expansion of the Response to Intervention (RTI) model. Major components of the model used to determine the educational needs of students have not changed. RTI is part of an MTSS framework but the inverse is not true. MTSS provides a more comprehensive solution in that it uses an educational system change paradigm focused on overall school improvement that is sustainable and, ensures that practices, policies, and programs are aligned on classroom, school, and district levels. MTSS requires collaboration between general education and special education, and emphasizes prevention and intervention.

Student Support Team

The Student Support Team (SST) is a school-based, solution-focused team of general and special education professionals designed to support the academic, behavior, and social-emotional needs of students through the provision of alternative instructional strategies; these strategies are also called interventions. Each building level team may be comprised of an administrator, classroom teacher, requesting teacher, special education teacher, counselor, school psychologist, school social worker, parent or central office personnel. One member of the SST serves as chair and point-of-contact to schedule a student for the SST process. This process includes identifying needs, planning and implementing appropriate instruction, monitoring progress, and conducting assessments, when needed. The (SST) process is embedded at Tier 3 of Georgia's Tiered System of Supports, as it requires more intensive academic, behavior, or social/emotional support for specific students. The timeline for the SST process will vary from student to student as it is based on the educational concerns presented and student progress with intervention.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, data-driven framework that seeks to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase a school's sense of safety, improve school climate, and support improved academic outcomes for all students. It is an implementation framework for maximizing the selection and use of evidence-based prevention and intervention practices along a multi-tiered continuum that supports the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral competence of all students.

Both MTSS and PBIS are grounded in differentiated instruction. The shared characteristics of these approaches are geared toward meeting the needs of the "whole child" by addressing both academic and behavioral strengths and areas of improvement.

IV. Student Health

Medicine at School

Students who need to take medication during school hours must comply with MCSD Board Policy JGCD, which is available on the MCSD website and must be carefully reviewed. Any questions about this policy and its requirements must be presented to the Principal or Building Leader prior to sending any medication to school.

NOTE:
Students who require medication to be administered at school must have a Medication Administration/Medical Authorization

and Release Form completed, signed and returned to school with the medication. A parent/guardian should take the medication and the authorization form directly to the school office/clinic, in keeping with MCSD Board Policy. Prescription medication must be in original labeled container as required by law. Dosage on label must agree with information on the Medication Administration Authorization Form. Non-prescription medication must also remain in original container properly labeled with the child's name and specific instructions regarding dosage and time of administration. Controlled substance medications will be counted upon receipt. Students may carry specific medications on their person such as, inhalers, insulin and/or auto-injectable epinephrine, which requires a special permission form signed by a licensed physician. If your child needs emergency medications, please contact the school immediately so that accommodations can be made.

Students with Severe Food or Other Allergies

The District works to accommodate students with severe allergies. We rely on parents and students to provide accurate and updated information about a student's food allergies or other allergies, their impact, and what to do to avoid an exposure or address exposure. The school district allows Epi-pens and other allergy medications, but asks that parents share information with the District about their child's allergy. Please provide information to the Principal or Building Leader as early as possible, so that appropriate steps can be taken.

The District encourages parents and students to be aware that others may have possible food sensitivity/allergies (including but not limited to: peanuts, tree nuts, milk/dairy products, fish/shellfish) and encourages students to refrain from sharing food in the cafeteria or at any time during the school day.

Serious Infectious Illnesses

If a student is noted to have symptoms that are consistent with a communicable/infectious illness/condition, such as COVID-19 or the Flu, the parent/guardian will be notified. It may be necessary to exclude the student based on symptoms and have the student evaluated by his/her health care provider for diagnosis and treatment. The parent/guardian will be given an exclusion letter/form that must be signed by the physician and presented to the school upon the student's return as directed by the health care provider. These precautions are in place to provide a safe environment for all of our students.

At the time of compilation of this document, COVID-19 is recognized as a global pandemic; the District provides consistently updated guidance regarding COVID-19 specific protocols at its website. For information regarding COVID-19, please visit our website at http://sites.muscogee.k12.ga.us/covid-19/.

Immunization

Pursuant to Georgia Law, no child shall be admitted to or attend any MCSD school or facility unless the child shall first have submitted a certificate of immunization (GA form 3231 is available at www.gadoe.org) to the responsible official of the school or facility. MCSD may grant a 30-calendar day waiver of the certification requirement for a justified reason. This law provides for the following vaccination exemptions:

- **Medical:** Medical exemption for a vaccine should be filled in only when there is a physical disability or condition that contraindicates immunization for that particular vaccine. There must be an annual review of medical exemptions, and certificates must be reissued with or without indication of exemption.
- **Religious:** For a child to be exempt from immunizations on religious grounds, the parent or guardian must furnish the school/facility with a notarized Affidavit of Religious Objection to Immunization (DPH Form 2208) Chapter 511-2-2-.07 of the Rules of the Department of Public Health. The school/facility must keep the affidavit on file and available for inspection by health officials in lieu of the Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231). The affidavit does not expire.

Fever

If a student has a fever of 100.0 degrees or higher, that student should not come to school or to a school function until they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. Students with a fever of over 100.0 degrees or other symptoms of a contagious disease must go home.

Head Lice – No Nit Policy

MCSD has a "no nit" policy. When head lice are discovered, the Principal or his/her designee will notify the parent/guardian to make arrangements for the student to be picked up and treatment initiated. Instructions will be given on how to treat for head lice. Upon return to school, the Principal or designee will inspect the student's head for the presence of nits or active lice. The student will not be readmitted if either is present. If the lice infestation occurs again or becomes problematic, the Principal may request treatment documentation from the student's health care provider or the local health department. Head lice requires immediate treatment.

Students who are Hospitalized or Homebound

MCSD serves its enrolled students who are hospitalized or homebound as a result of illness or injury. In cases of prolonged absences (10 or more consecutive days) due to illness or injury, or anticipated absences due to illness or injury, the parent or guardian should seek assistance from the Principal or designee for hospital/homebound instruction.

The school will provide the parent with a Hospital/Homebound Referral Form to be completed and signed by a physician indicating that the student is unable to attend school. The form is returned to the school and then submitted to Student Services for processing.

Suicide/Self Harm/Homicidal Prevention Safety Protocol

The District takes a proactive approach seeking to prevent deaths by suicide. When a student has expressed suicidal or homicidal ideations, the School Counselor or designee shall meet with the student to provide counseling support and address risk factors. Contact will be made with the parent or guardian to discuss safety concerns, next steps, and provide community resources. The student must be checked out by the parent/guardian. The student may return to school only upon the provision of appropriate documentation.

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 or guardians to make sure their children are covered by medical insurance. Muscogee County School District does not carry health coverage on students.

School and Student Safety

School Safety Plans and School Emergencies

MCSD has prepared School Safety Plans, approved by the Superintendent and appropriate governmental agencies, in accordance with Georgia law.

Lock Down/Secure Perimeter Parent Protocols:

Please keep in mind our first responsibility is to make sure our students and staff are safe. In any lockdown situations, all parents will be communicated with as soon as possible by an auto call, email, and/or text message. It's important for you to listen to the entire voice message before calling the school.

In the event a school is placed on secured perimeter or in a lock please know the following:

- Communication will go out by text and/or email to alert parents about school lock downs or secured perimeter
- We work closely with the police department and it takes time to gather and confirm accurate information please be patient.
- To enable everyone to remain safe, no one will be allowed to enter or exit the building until the authorities authorize such a release.

Safety Drills

MCSD conducts safety drills throughout the school year, as follows:

FIRE DRILLS: Schools will conduct a "fire drill" in keeping with relevant fire code regulations and MCSD procedures each month (except for two severe weather months) that school is in session. This is a Fire Code requirement as well as a District requirement. We want each student to understand and be aware of the Importance of this drill when the fire alarm is sounded.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS: The schools will conduct periodic "Lockdown Drills"; perimeter doors to classrooms and the building will be locked and access will be limited. This type of drill will secure the school building and safely shelter all students, staff, and visitors inside the building. The purpose of this drill ls to keep the students safe from any danger outside or inside the building. During a "lockdown drill" all of the perimeter doors to the classrooms and school building will be locked. They will remain locked until the danger or issue outside or inside the building Is removed. To enable everyone to remain safe, no one will be allowed to enter or exit the building until the authorities authorize such a release.

SEVERE WEATHER DRILLS: Severe weather drills will be conducted twice a year; students and staff are moved to a secure location within the building. The purpose of this drill is to prepare students to move to a secure location within the building in case of severe weather or tornados.

Please direct any questions regarding Safety Drills or other safety protocols to the MCSD Police Department or the Risk Management Department.

Alternate Release Protocol

Alternate Release Protocol is a formalized and controlled method of reuniting students with parents and guardians after a significant event at the school. Should this procedure be triggered, parents will be notified through the MCSD Blackboard Mass Notifications announcement system. Additional Information may be shared through the media, radio, and social media as appropriate. Please note that parents will be asked to provide identification as part of this procedure.

Because a controlled release is not a typical end of school day event, an Alternate Release Protocol may occur at a different location than the school a student attends.

Parents: If you would like the District to use a cell phone number during an Alternate Release Protocol event, you must list this number as the first number on the emergency form that you need to complete at the beginning of each year. In the case of multiple students being reunified, a separate card for each student needs to be completed.

If a parent or guardian is notified that an Alternate Release Protocol is needed, there are some expectations that parents or guardians should be aware of: First, bring identification, which will streamline things during the Alternate Release Protocol. Second, be patient. Please do not go to your child's school until a message is sent; this ensures you arrive at the correct location. Alternate Release Protocol is a process that protects both the safety of the student and provides for an accountable change of custody from the school to a recognized custodial parent or guardian.

When a parent can't immediately go to the Alternate Release Protocol site, students will only be released to individuals previously identified as a student's emergency contact. Otherwise, the school will hold students until parents can pick up their student.

Students are expected to be orderly and quiet while waiting for pickup. Students may be asked to text a message to their parents or guardians. Students may be asked not to send other text messages either in or out of the school or the Alternate Release Protocol area. Keeping the cellular network usage at a minimum may be important during an Alternate Release Protocol.

Parents and guardians should use caution when driving to and at the pickup site and will be asked to park and go to the Alternate Release Protocol "Check-In" area and form lines based on the first letter of their student's last name. While in line, parents may be asked to fill out an Alternate Release Protocol card and/or asked to present ID. The card is perforated and will be separated during the process. Some of the same information is repeated on both the top and separated bottom of the card. Parents are asked to complete all parts of the card.

During check-in, identification and custody rights are confirmed. The card/s is/are separated and the bottom half is given back to the parent. From the "Check-In" area parents are directed to the "Alternate Release Protocol " area. There, a runner will take the bottom half of the card/s and take It to the Student Assembly Area to recover the student or students. Parents should be aware that in some cases, they may be invited into the building or other location for further information.

In some cases, parents may be advised that a law enforcement investigation is underway and that interviews are necessary. In extreme cases, parents may be pulled aside for an emergency or medical information.

For more information or with specific questions, please contact the Risk Management Department at 706-748-2079.

Raptor Visitor Management System

MCSD utilizes a security measure called "Raptor Visitor Management System." Upon entering an MCSD building, visitors will be asked to present a valid government-issued ID, which will be entered into the Raptor System. If an adult does not have a US government-issued ID, the school staff member can use an alternate form of identification as appropriate, and can manually enter information into the Raptor System. The System ensures compliance with Georgia law requiring notification of sex offender status. No data from the ID is recorded, and no information is shared with any outside agency.

CARE Team

Muscogee County School District has a multi-disciplined team with the purpose to promote the safety of our students, faculty, and stakeholders when a potential crisis is identified. The CARE team provides consultation, management, response and after care support.

V. Where to Go for Help

Students Experiencing Homelessness: McKinney-Vento

The MCSD is committed to providing services that meet the needs of students who are experiencing homelessness; these services will ensure appropriate educational opportunities are provided, and will ensure the preservation of dignity.

Students in homeless situations are those who lack a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence and may be residing in any of the following situations: (1) sharing housing with others due to loss of housing or economic hardship (2) living in a motel or hotel due to loss of housing or economic hardship (3) staying in a shelter (4) living in substandard housing without electricity, running water, health code violations, etc. (5) sleeping in a car, campground, park or public space. These students are protected by the McKinney-Vento federal law. Generally, this federal law provides that students in homeless situations should be enrolled, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residence, birth certificates, proof of guardianship, or other required documentation. A full statement of the MCSD's practices around homeless students is outside the scope of this document, but further information can be obtained at the MCSD website at:
https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/c/Divisions/StudentServices/McKinneyVentoHomelessAssistanceAct

If you are experiencing homelessness, or have questions or need further information, please consult with the MCSD's McKinney-Vento Department for information regarding enrollment at 706-748-2276. You may also contact your school's Counselor for more information.

MCSD McKinney-Vento Department (Points of Contact)

Dr. Trikella Nelson, Director of Counseling and Social Work, Homeless Liaison
706-748-2276
Nelson.Trikella.L@muscogee.k12.ga.us

Ms. Kimberly Brown, McKinney-Vento Outreach Specialist, Homeless Designee
706-748-2276
Brown.Kimerly.D@muscogee.k12.ga.us

Mrs. Mashaundra (Pearl) Steele, McKinney-Vento Technical Assistant, Homeless Designee
706-748-2372
Steele.Mashaundra.M@muscogee.k12.ga.us

Helpful Community Resources

- United Way of Chattahoochee Valley CONTACT 2-1-1: **Dial 2-1-1** or 706-405-4775 CONTACT 2-1-1 is an information and referral line program. CONTACT 2-1-1 callers can speak to a certified specialist that will link them to local community resources such as food, shelter, counseling, employment assistance, quality child care and much more. Residents can also search the comprehensive database online at www.211uwcv.org.The program provides online and telephone access 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, and is confidential, free, and available in multiple languages.

- For help with suicidal thoughts or depression: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 Boystown National Hotline: 1-800-448-3000 Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD): 1-800-448-1833 NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Georgia Crisis Line: 1-800-715-4225 NAMI – Columbus, Georgia PO Box 8581 Columbus, Georgia 31908 (706) 320-3755

- Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS) Dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov 1-(855) GA-CHILD or 1-855-422-4453

- Human Sex Trafficking (Georgia) Children Treehouse A program of Twin Cedars Youth and Family Services, Inc. 1225 3rd Avenue Columbus, GA 31901 706-327-9612

- Teen Dating Violence Hotline If you are in danger, call 911 or reach the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or TTY 1-800-787-3224

- National Domestic Violence Hotline If you are in danger, call 911 or reach the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or TTY 1-800-787-3224

- Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL) https://www.georgiacollaborative.com/providers/georgia-crisis-and-access-line-gcal/ 1-800-715-4225

- For free help with https://www.cvlga.org/teens/homework-help/ Click on "brainfuse"

MCSD Prohibits Harassment and Discrimination

MCSD does not discriminate on the bases of race, color, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions), gender, religion, national origin, age, military status, disability, or any other federally protected status in its educational programs and activities, including its athletic programs. MCSD provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Any student or parent who believes they have been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students of the school district based upon any of the factors listed above should promptly report the same to the Principal of the school or the leader of the program, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures.

Equity coordinators for the school system and their respective contact information may be found at https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/c/Divisions/StudentServices/AntiDiscriminationStatementandEquityCoordinators:

Alleged discrimination or harassment by Employees under Title IX:

Matthew Bell
Chief Regional Officer, Central Region
2960 Macon Road Columbus, GA 31906
Bell.Matthew.C@muscogee.k12.ga.us/ 706-748-3289

Terry Baker
Chief Regional Officer, West Region
2960 Macon Road Columbus, GA 31906
Baker.Terry@muscogee.k12.ga.us/ 706-748-3289

Dr. Ronald Wiggins
Chief Regional Officer, East Region
2960 Macon Road Columbus, GA 31906
Wiggins.Ronald.J@muscogee.k12.ga.us/ 706-748-3289

Alleged discrimination or harassment of or by Employees under Title VII:

Chief Human Resources Officer
Muscogee County Public Education Center
2960 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31906
706-748-2011

Alleged discrimination or harassment by Students under Title IX, Title VI:

Dr. Angela Vickers-Ward, Chief Student Services Officer
Anti-Discrimination Coordinator (Students)
Muscogee County Public Education Center
2960 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31906
Vickers-Ward.Angela.D@muscogee.k12.ga.us / 706-748-3336

Inquiries regarding Section 504 and Title II of the ADA

Dr. Nikki Sutton, Section 504 Coordinator
Muscogee County Public Education Center
2960 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31906
Sutton.Nikki.T@muscogee.k12.ga.us / 706-748-2196

Inquiries regarding Equity in Athletics

Jeff Battles, Athletic Director, Sports Equity Coordinator
Muscogee County Public Education Center
2960 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31906
Battles.Jeffrey.W@muscogee.k12.ga.us / 706-748-2595

Inquiries regarding the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):

Dr. Cincrystal Poythress, Executive Director, Program for Exceptional Students
Muscogee County Public Education Center
2960 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31906
Poythress.Cincrystal.S@muscogee.k12.ga.us/ 706-748-2000

Inquiries regarding Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA):

Dr. Tim Smith, Executive Director of Federal Programs
Muscogee County Public Education Center
2960 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31906
Smith.Timothy.S@muscogee.k12.ga.us / 706-748-2154

Equity coordinators may also be contacted at the Muscogee County Public Education Center, 2960 Macon Road, Columbus,

GA 31906, or 706-748-2000.

Students will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. A copy of the discriminatory complaints procedure under Muscogee County School District Policy JAA (Equal Educational Opportunities) or under Policy IDFA (Gender Equity in Sports) is available on the MCSD website at https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/index.aspx?s=4121

Discrimination/Harassment Complaints

A. Complaints Against Students

MCSD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions), gender, religion, national origin, age, military status, or disability. It is the policy of the MCSD to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and all accompanying regulations. MCSD also prohibits retaliation against any person opposing discrimination or participating in any discrimination investigation or complaint process, internal or external to the institution.

Any student or parent who believes that they or any student has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of MCSD's policy by a MCSD student must make a complaint in accordance with the procedures outlined in Paragraph C below.

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS:

Procedures for complaints of sexual discrimination and harassment which may constitute Title IX violations by students are distributed in the parent packet sent home with every student annually and are posted on the District's website at https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/c/Divisions/StudentServices/TitleIXCoordinator; see also board policy JAA.

B. Student/Parent Complaints Against Employees or Third Parties

MCSD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, military status, or disability. It is the policy of the MCSD to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act, and all accompanying regulations. MCSD also prohibits retaliation against any person opposing discrimination or participating in any discrimination investigation or complaint process, internal or external to the institution.

Any student or parent who believes that they or any student have been discriminated against or harassed in violation of MCSD's policy by employees or third parties (e.g., visiting students, contractors, vendors, volunteers, parents) may choose to make a complaint to the MCSD in accordance with the procedures outlined in Paragraph D below. The MCSD will address these complaints to the best of its ability and involve outside authorities where appropriate.

C. Procedure and Appeal Process for Student/Parent Complaints Against Other Students or Third Parties (Board Policy JAA)

Complaints presented to the MCSD that allege discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex in violation of Title IX will be processed in accordance with the procedures outlined by the District. These procedures may be found on the District's website at https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/c/Divisions/StudentServices/TitleIXCoordinator.

Complaints presented to the MCSD, pursuant to this procedure, that allege discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin in violation of Title VI, or on the basis of disability in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans With Disabilities Act will be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Any student or parent with a complaint or report alleging a violation as described above shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, the Building Leader or Principal of his/her school within fifteen (15) days of the alleged violation. If the complaint is verbal, the school Principal or Building Leader to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to them and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement confirming that it accurately reflects the complaint made. The Principal or Building Leader shall be responsible for promptly notifying the appropriate Regional Chief and the appropriate coordinator of the complaint.

2. The Principal or Building Leader shall have fifteen (15) workdays to investigate the initial complaint, gather information, review the information, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Principal or Building Leader shall prepare a brief written response. This response shall be furnished to thecomplainant, the appropriate Regional Chief, and the Chief Student Services Officer.

3. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant may appeal the response, in writing, within five (5) workdays of receiving a copy of the written response. The appeal request will be reviewed by the Regional Chief.

4. The Regional Chief shall have fifteen (15) workdays to review the complaint and the initial response of MCSD, investigate and gather information, and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Regional Chief shall provide to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action recommended in the initial response or an alternate response. This shall also be provided to the Chief Student Services Officer.

5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the appeal, the complainant may, in writing within five (5) workdays of receiving a copy of the written response from the Regional Chief, appeal the response. The appeal request will be reviewed by the Chief Student Services Officer.

6. The Chief Student Services Officer shall have fifteen (15) work days to review the complaint, and the initial response of MCSD, the appeal, and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Chief Student Services Officer shall provide to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action recommended in the initial response and the initial appeal, or an alternate action to be taken by MCSD in response to the complaint in lieu of those previous recommendations.

7. This policy is not intended to discourage or deprive any individual of the ability they may have to file a complaint under any other applicable policy of the local board or to contact the Office of Civil Rights or other appropriate state or federal agency with regard to any allegations that the MCSD has violated the statutes described above.

8. The MCSD shall distribute this policy and procedure to students and parents through its District website and the Muscogee County School District Student Handbook and Code of Conduct.

9. No retaliation shall occur as a result of reporting allegations in good faith under this policy.

10. The discovery of truth and/or elimination of harassment or discrimination shall be the overriding consideration when investigating/reviewing complaints, and may preclude confidentiality.

11. Contact information for all Building Leaders, Principals, Regional Chiefs, and the Chief Student Services Officer is available at the MCSD website at www.muscogee.k12.ga.us or by calling 706-748-2000.

D. Procedure and Appeal Process for Student/Parent Complaints Against School District Employees or Third Parties

MCSD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, military status, age, disability, or sex in its employment practices. The MCSD complies fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) and all accompanying regulations.

MCSD prohibits harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate differential treatment of any employee or by any employee, and encourages students and parents who believe they have been discriminated against to seek relief through the discrimination complaint resolution procedures outlined in board policies available at the MCSD website; see GAAA, GAEB, GAEC.

E. Student Complaints or Reports of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct by a School District Employee (Georgia Professional Standards Commission Mandated Procedure under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1184):

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

2. Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school Principal or Principal's designee and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school Principal or Principal's designee within 24 hours. If the Principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and

written reports should be made to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

3. Any school Principal or Principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. §19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

4. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school Principal or Principal's designee shall make appropriate reports to the Superintendent or designee and other outside authorities.

MCSD Prohibits Bullying

MCSD does not tolerate bullying. Students who experience bullying are encouraged to report and share information with any school district personnel. In the event you see or hear about bullying, please let someone know as soon as possible.

Bullying is defined by Georgia law as follows:

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

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

The term applies to acts that occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school-related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system.

The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying that occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

For purposes of this Code section, electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.

Each local board policy shall require that, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal of school officials provided for in this subpart that a student in grades six through 12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, such student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Each local board of education shall establish and publish in its local board policy a method to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student upon a finding by a school administrator that such student has committed an offense of bullying or is a victim of bullying.

Additional information and further information about consequences are contained under Rule 4 of the Student Code of Conduct and in MCSD Board Policy JCDAG.

Some bullying may also trigger responsibilities under the District's policies preventing discrimination. Individuals receiving complaints of bullying or harassment should consider both sets of District policies that prohibit both bullying and peer harassment based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sex, or disability.

Each reported incident of bullying behavior will be documented and investigated by the Principal or designee, and a disposition determined.

How to Make a Silent (Anonymous) Report of Bullying

The District encourages reporting of bullying behaviors by students and will strive to maintain the confidentiality of reporters wherever possible and appropriate. Parents and students, please report bullying or harassing behaviors to any adult at the school. Students who want to make a report of bullying behavior in writing without including their own name may obtain and fill out a "Silent Report" form. These forms are available in the offices of school counselors and school administrative offices.

Additional Bullying Reporting Options:

- MCSD Student Safety Hotline: 706-748-2267
- MCSD Bullying e-mail: Bully.free@muscogee.k12.ga.us
- Vector Safe Schools Alert is located on the MCSD website front page or https://muscogee-ga.safeschoolsalert.com/

VI. Students with Disabilities

Message to Parents:

The mission of the Program for Exceptional Students is to provide a quality educational program that prepares all students for success. We believe that through meaningful access to quality education, all children can be challenged to achieve their best in school, and all children can be lifelong learners. We are committed to Seeking, Serving, and Supporting our students and families.

At MCSD, students with disabilities are provided a free, appropriate public education in schools where decisions concerning services and support are made based on the individual needs of the student, in their least restrictive environment, and in accordance with the guiding principles of the applicable law.

Specially designed instruction is provided through a continuum of educational environments from general education classrooms with special education services and supports at the student's home school to full-day programs in specialized environments. Where appropriate, the type and degree of services provided are determined through the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) to meet the unique needs of the student. For more information, visit the MCSD website "Program for Exceptional Students" or contact the Program for Exceptional Students at 706-748-2230.

Parent Rights

It is the responsibility of the District to provide parents with notice of their rights under the IDEA. The MCSD's Parent Rights form is available at the MCSD website at:
https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/c/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentsWithDisabilities

Child Find – What is Child Find?

Child Find refers to the process of locating, identifying, and evaluating children to ensure that they receive services to which they are entitled. Children and youth, age birth to 21, who live or attend school in Muscogee County, and who are suspected of having a disability, may be referred for a possible evaluation to determine if they are eligible for special education services.

Preschool children: If you are aware of a child, from birth through 3 years old, who has or may have a developmentaldisability, please contact the "Babies Can't Wait" Division of the Georgia Department of Public Health at 888-651-8224.

If you are aware of a preschooler, from 3 through 5 years old, who has or may have a developmental disability, please call the Program for Exceptional Students at 706-748-2230 or email: childfind@muscogee.k12.ga.us.

School age children and youth: If you are aware of a child who is enrolled in a Muscogee County school, any privateschool, or homeschool, and may be in need of special education services, please contact the Program for Exceptional Students at 706-748-2230 or email childfind@muscogee.k12.ga.us.

Students Eligible for Special Education Supports and Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act/Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Parents and children have many rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This law provides that eligible students should receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). For eligible students, the type and degree of services provided is determined through the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) to meet the unique needs of the student with a qualifying disability. The IEP outlines the needs and strengths of the individual student, and guides the delivery of special education supports and services for that student.

A full outline of the programs and services available to students, and the rights afforded to parents and students by virtue of the IDEA is outside the scope of this handbook, but the MCSD welcomes your questions about any part of the IEP process or procedure. Parents are an integral part of all IDEA-related processes, so if you have questions or want information, we encourage you to please visit the MCSD website: https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/c/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentsWithDisabilities or contact Program for Exceptional Students at 706-748-2230.

MCSD Facilitated IEP Meeting Procedure

MCSD, in conjunction with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) offers Facilitated IEP Meetings. In a Facilitated IEP Meeting, an impartial third-party facilitator helps to keep members of the IEP Team focused on the development of the IEP while addressing conflicts and disagreements that may arise during the meeting. Parents or district personnel may initiate the process by completing the IEP Team Meeting Facilitation Request Form located on the MCSD website. Both parties – parents and MCSD – must agree to participate. Further information about the Facilitated IEP Process is available at: https://muscogee.k12.ga.us/c/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentsWithDisabilities/FacilitatedIndividualizedEducationProgramFIEPTeamMeetings

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your teacher or Principal, the Section 504 Chair at your school, or the MCSD Section 504 Coordinator, Dr. Nikki Sutton, at 706-748-2230.

Notice of Section 504 Procedural Safeguards and Parent Rights

Any student, parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing due to the school district's actions or inactions regarding a student's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the District Section 504 Coordinator Dr. Nikki Sutton at 706-748-2230. A grievant' s failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate MCSD's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant makes a request verbally to the MCSD's Section 504 Coordinator. Additionally, Dr. Sutton can provide a copy of the Procedural Safeguards and Parent Rights document.

The MCSD's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing a Request for Hearing as necessary. The MCSD Section 504 Coordinator may be contacted for assistance. Copies of the MCSD 504 Procedural Safeguards and MCSD Parents Rights may be found on the District website or may be picked up at each school or the central office (2960 Macon Road).

Discipline for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities will be disciplined in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. At times, discipline procedures for students with disabilities will be the same as the procedures implemented for students without disabilities, and, at times, the procedures implemented for students with disabilities will be different. A comprehensive discussion of those procedures and their legal underpinnings is beyond the scope of this MCSD Handbook. However, if you have questions about the disciplinary process related to a student with disabilities, and those questions cannot be answered at the school level, please contact the Regional Chief for the student's assigned school which is provided in the District Contact List on Page 3.

Manifestation Determination Meetings

Within ten (10) school days of the decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of misbehavior or violation of a Code of Student Conduct, the MCSD will provide notice and hold a Manifestation Determination Meeting (MDM). This meeting will include relevant members of the child's IEP or Section 504 Team. Parents will be given notice of the meeting and are encouraged to attend.

The purpose of this meeting is to consider whether the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability; whether the behavior has a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability; and to determine whether the behavior was a direct result of the District's failure to implement the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan. The meeting participants will consider relevant information from the student's IEP, 504 Plan, or other records, teacher observations, and information provided by parents.

A decision will be made at the Manifestation Determination Meeting. After that meeting and decision, the parent or the school may appeal by requesting a Due Process Hearing. If such a request is filed, the parent or the school may request an expedited hearing, which must occur within twenty (20) school days of the date the complainant requesting the hearing is filed.

Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)

Functional Behavior Assessment

A functional behavior assessment (FBA) involves gathering information in order to determine the cause or function of a behavior. In most circumstances, a FBA should be conducted before developing a behavior intervention plan.

There are many different tools that can be used for a FBA. Tools are selected on a case-by-case basis for each individual student. The information that is collected in a FBA is used to help understand why and in what conditions target behaviors occur. The information will help an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or other group of individuals working with a student to develop a behavior intervention plan or address behaviors in another appropriate way. A FBA is not a consequence for misbehavior but is a process by which MCSD personnel gather information in order to learn more about the function of a target behavior.

Behavior Intervention Plan

A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is a plan that can be added to a student's IEP to address target behaviors. A BIP includes positive interventions, strategies and supports to address target behaviors.

Typically, between one and four behaviors are selected for inclusion in a BIP. The BIP identifies the function of those behaviors, as well as interventions, strategies, and supports that are linked to those functions. Parents are an important part of both the FBA and BIP process and will be asked for input throughout the FBA and BIP process. If your child is displaying behaviors that would necessitate the consideration of a FBA or BIP, consent will be obtained through the appropriate MCSD process. Please do not hesitate to ask questions of your child's teacher(s) or other school-based personnel involved to ensure you are comfortable with the process.

Change of Placement

A change of placement in the context of a discipline event occurs where a student is removed from school for more than 10 (ten) consecutive or cumulative school days during a single school year, or the child has been subjected to a series of removals from school that constitute a pattern. A disciplinary change of placement for a student with a disability will likely involve an analysis of the behaviors and may include the initiation of a FBA, or revisions to an existing BIP.

VII. TECHNOLOGY AND DEVICES AT SCHOOL

Technology at School or School Events

Technology or device as used here refers to District-provided or privately owned wireless and/or portable electronic equipment that includes, but is not limited to, existing and emerging mobile communication systems and smart technologies, portable internet devices, Personal Digital Assistants, tablets, phones, handheld entertainment systems or portable information technology systems that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting, receiving, storing, etc.

Internet: Only the internet gateway provided by the District may be accessed while on campus. Personal devices with internet connectivity, such as but not limited to, cell phones/cell network adapters, hotspots, smartwatches, to include electronic accessories, are not permitted to be actively used to access non-District internet sources.

Lost or Damaged Technology/Devices

Personal Devices: Individual owners are responsible for the care of their devices; **MCSD is not liable for any personal device that is lost, stolen, or damaged on District premises.** It is recommended that skins, decals, and other custom touches be used to physically identify individually owned devices. Protective cases for technology are encouraged and should be age-appropriate**.**

District Issued Devices for School Use: Student use of any District-provided technology or devices is a privilege that is earned by abiding by the rules described in the Responsible Use Policy (see below) and the rules in the MCSD Student Behavior Code of Conduct.

Expectations and Procedures: Failure to use technology or devices properly and respectfully can result in the privilege being revoked and possible disciplinary action. The parent will be notified.

Technology and Device Responsible Use Policy

The use of District technological resources, including access to the Internet, is a privilege. Students are responsible for their behavior and communications and are expected to behave in a manner that is ethical, respectful, and academically honest.

General student behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable board policies, the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct, and other regulations and school rules apply to use of technological resources. Guidance provided here is intended to clarify expectations for conduct but should not be construed as all-inclusive.

Responsible Use Guidelines

A. RESPONSIBLE USE GUIDELINES – INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. School system technological resources are provided for school-related purposes, and must be used consistently with the educational objectives of the District. Acceptable uses of such technological resources are limited to responsible, efficient, and legal activities that support learning. Use of school system technological resources for commercial gain or profit is prohibited.
2. Students must comply with all applicable laws, including those relating to copyrights and trademarks, confidential information, and privacy. Any use that violates state or federal law is strictly prohibited. Plagiarism of Internet resources is prohibited.
3. No user of technological resources, including a person sending or receiving electronic communications, may engage in creating, intentionally viewing, accessing, downloading, storing, printing, or transmitting images, graphics (including still or moving pictures), sound files, text files, documents, messages, or other material that is unlawful, obscene, defamatory, profane, pornographic, harassing, abusive, or that is harmful to minors.
4. The use of anonymous proxies to circumvent content filtering is prohibited.
5. Students may not install or use any Internet-based file sharing program designed to facilitate sharing of copyrighted material.
6. Students may not send electronic communications fraudulently (i.e., by misrepresenting the identity of the sender). Users are prohibited from using another individual's ID or password for any technological resource.

7. Students may not reveal personal, private, or confidential information while online or via electronic communication; this information includes but is not limited to a home address or telephone number, credit or checking account information, or social security number of themselves or fellow students.
8. Students may not intentionally or negligently damage computers, computer systems, electronic devices, software, computer networks, or data of any user connected to school system technological resources. Users may not knowingly or negligently transmit computer viruses or self-replicating messages or deliberately try to degrade or disrupt system performance.
9. Students may not create or introduce games, network communications programs, or any foreign program or software onto any school system computer, electronic device, or network without the express prior permission of the technology director or designee.
10. Engaging in unauthorized or unlawful activities, such as "hacking" or using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers, computer systems, or accounts, is prohibited. Students are prohibited from copying, changing, or deleting another user's work without their permission.
11. Students are required to immediately report any inappropriate Internet content they encounter while on District premises to a teacher or other adult.

B. RESPONSIBLE USE GUIDELINES – USE AND CARE OF DEVICES

1. Students are authorized to use devices only as specifically permitted by this policy and as permitted by their school administrator. Possession and use of a device while at school is a privilege that may be revoked by the school administrator or designee.
2. Students should bring the device to school fully charged every day, taking full responsibility of its care, and keep it with them at all times. Sharing of district-provided devices without prior teacher permission is prohibited; students must log in with assigned student username and password only.
3. Students are prohibited from loaning district-provided devices to another user without prior express permission of the Administrator or designee.
4. Students must keep devices silent while at school and on school buses.
5. Students must immediately comply with an adult's request to close the screen, power down a device, or put a device away.
6. Students must promptly report any damage to a district-provided device and must submit the device to be examined upon request. Only MCSD personnel may inspect and/or repair devices; do not take the device to a third party for any such action.
7. Students must back up work.
8. Students must not knowingly introduce any virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data; participation in hacking is prohibited.
9. Any use of a device to record or photograph another individual is prohibited without (1) express prior teacher permission and (2) express prior permission of that individual. Any such use may subject the student to disciplinary action and if appropriate, may be referred to legal authorities.
10. Any use of a device to transmit a recording of another individual without both express prior permission of a teacher and express prior permission from all persons depicted in the recording is prohibited and may subject the student to disciplinary action, and if appropriate, may be referred to legal authorities.
11. Use of any device with a camera in a locker room, bathroom, or any other area where others have an expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited.
12. Any use of a device that violates any rule in the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct is prohibited and may subject the student to disciplinary action.
13. All devices, whether district-provided or privately owned, are subject to reasonable search and confiscation. Any device deemed to contain evidence in a disciplinary or legal matter will be maintained by the MCSD pending the outcome of the matter. Parents, please consider this when determining what device will come to school with your child.

C. RESPONSIBLE USE GUIDELINES – HOME AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

The District takes precautions to prevent students from accessing material and information that is inappropriate, obscene, pornographic, or otherwise harmful to minors, including violence, nudity, or other content that does not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose. However, parents and guardians should be aware that the internet contains information from diverse and rapidly changing sources, including some that could possibly be inappropriate for students. Please talk with your child or children about responsible use of the internet, and please share any concerns with your child's school Administrator.

The District is not responsible for the content accessed by students who connect to the internet via their personal mobile telephone technology by passing District filters. Accessing inappropriate content this way is prohibited and will be addressed as a disciplinary matter.

Students may require accounts in third-party systems to meet educational goals. Parental permission will be obtained when necessary to create and manage such third-party accounts; currently, MCSD utilizes the Google Workspace for Education tools along with Chromebooks, and parental permissions are obtained specific to those tools through the **MCSD Chromebook and Google Workspace for Education Permission** document that parents and guardians sign annually. Parents and age-appropriate students should review that document carefully, and should use the website listed in that document to learn about Google Workspace for Education. If you decline the use of the Chromebook and Google Workspace for Education services, please make an appointment with the Principal of your child's school to discuss the educational options available in the absence of these resources.
Additional information regarding Google Workspace for Education can be accessed at the following sites:
https://www.google.com/edu/trust; https://gsuite.google.com/terms/education_privacy.html;
https://google.com/intl/en/policies/privacy; https://www.google.com/apps/intl/en/terms/education_terms.html

Muscogee County School District
Chromebook and Google Workspace for Education
Agreement & Permission Form

MCSD believes that all students should be engaged in, be excited by, and take ownership of their learning.
Purpose: This year, MCSD students will use Google's G-Suite for Education tools, Chromebooks, and web-based applications selected and authorized by classroom teachers as learning tools to promote and maximize personalized learning and achievement. Although this Agreement authorizes the student's use of the Chromebook for the year, the device is the property of the district and must be returned upon the district's request, and no later than the last day of the student's attendance for the school year.

Permission: PLEASE READ CAREFULLY
My signature indicates that I have read the information provided and referenced in this document and in the MCSD Student Handbook and Code of Conduct regarding the use of devices, technology, and web-based applications in the MCSD. I give permission for the MCSD to create and maintain a G-Suite for education account for the named student, and I consent for Google to collect, use and disclose limited information only for the purposes described below.

Type of Device	**The student will be issued a Chromebook, a protective carrying case, and a USB-C charger (if the device is authorized to be taken home) to be used for educational purposes only.**
Use of and Care for the Tools	The device is to be treated as a valuable learning tool and should be cared for accordingly. The student's use of the device must comply with all applicable School Board policies and regulations as outlined in the MCSD RUP (Responsible Use Policy). The RUP is located within the MCSD Handbook & Code of Conduct. The student is responsible for the reasonable care of the device and all applicable equipment associated with the device. The student should take care not to drop it or get it wet, and must not leave it outdoors or in a car in extreme weather conditions, or use it near food or drink. The student may clean the device with a soft, dry cloth, only. The student will carefully transport the device in the assigned protective case, and if applicable, will bring it to school each day, fully charged. The student and parent/guardian understand that if the student comes to school without his/her device, the student may not be able to participate in classroom learning activities and his/her grade may be affected. The device is for the student's exclusive use. The student shall not: lend the device/equipment to anyone; alter, disfigure or deface the device/equipment; cover up any numbering, lettering, or insignia displayed on the device; alter or remove any MCSD software, programs or applications from the device, and will not load any software, programs or applications on the device. The student is responsible for all personal data contained on the device, and MCSD is not responsible for any data loss. The student should regularly back up all files and data to external media such as Microsoft's OneDrive or the Google Drive.
Accidental Damage Protection Warranty	Each student-issued Chromebook comes with an Accidental Damage Protection (ADP) Warranty entitled VirtuCARE Plus. This warranty is provided "free of charge" by the Muscogee County School District. The ADP warranty covers a variety of unintentional and/or accidental damage to the Chromebook. Students should follow all school procedures and policies when reporting damage to a Chromebook. Damage caused by intentional acts, fire, theft or loss, are not covered.
Fees or Fines for Intentional Damage to or Loss of the Device	Students and parents or guardians must comply with all District policies, procedures, and regulations as outlined online and in the MCSD Student Handbook and Code of Conduct and MCSD's RUP (Responsible Use Policy). A violation of any of these policies could result in a loss of privilege to use the Chromebook, appropriate discipline action and/or restitution. <u>Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges</u> The Muscogee County School District Board of Education retains the right to charge students a reasonable fee for restitution of lost, damaged, or abused school system property, including textbooks, library books or media materials. The current replacement cost to MCSD from our Chromebook vendor, Virtucom, is listed below. All repairs must be completed by Virtucom. Prices can change at any time, and parents and students may be charged the current rate for intentional damage or loss of the device: Chromebook Replacement Cost - $469.00 — Lenovo USB-C Charger Cost - $41.00 Chromebook Tablet Replacement Cost - $359.80 — Chromebook Tablet Case - $23.00
Inspection & Security Measures by MCSD	The student has no expectation of privacy in his/her use of the device. MCSD reserves the right to monitor the student's use of the device and to inspect the device and anything stored on it without prior notice. MCSD has installed security measures on the device that are intended to filter or block access to sites MCSD deems to be inappropriate, in keeping with CIPA [http://fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/cipa.html]. MCSD does not collect personal student info for commercial purposes per COPPA [http:ftc.gov/privacy/coppafaqs.shtm].

	While MCSD uses these technology protection measures to limit access to material considered inappropriate to students, it may not be possible for the system to absolutely prevent such access, and the parent/guardian should supervise the student's use of the device while at home. If the device is lost or stolen, MCSD will remotely render the device inoperable. G-Suite accounts are school-managed; therefore, administrators have access to information stored in them.
Google's G Suite for Education Information	MCSD will be utilizing Google's G Suite for Education with the Chromebook. G Suite Core Services include Gmail, Calendar, and Classroom; these are required for Chromebook login. G-Suite also offers additional Services like YouTube, Maps, and Blogger are used with G Suite for Education accounts only if appropriate and only for educational purposes. Full listings of Services and additional information is available at the links below. Google does not own student data stored or created in MCSD G Suite for Education, nor does it sell student information residing in MCSD G Suite for Education. MCSD G Suite does not show advertising to logged-in students. Google's adherence to its contractual obligations to protect student privacy is audited by several third parties. You can learn more at the G Suite for Education FAQ (https://support.google.com/a/answer/139019?hl=en) and notice(https://support.google.com/a/answer/7391849) and the G Suite for Education Privacy and Security page (https://edu.google.com/why-google/privacy-security/?modal_active=none). Students may, where appropriate, access Google services such as Google Docs and Sites for collaborative work, which include features where users can choose to share information with others or publicly. Google uses the information collected from all Additional Services to provide, maintain, protect and improve the services, to develop new ones, and to protect Google and its users. Google may also use this information to offer tailored content, such as more relevant search results, and may combine personal information from one service with information, including personal information, from other Google services. Google does not use any user personal information (or any information associated with a Google Account) to target ads.

VIII. Career, Technical & Agricultural Education

MCSD's Career, Technical & Agricultural Education Department (CTAE) offers career and technical education programs designed to prepare youth for a broad range of employment and further education and are offered under the guidance of certified teachers. All program areas are not available at every middle and high school. For the CTAE offerings at each middle and high school, please visit the school's website. Links to schools' websites are available at http://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/. Click on the schools' links to access each school's website.

CTAE does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, military status, disability, or any other legally protected status in its educational programs and activities, including its athletic programs. MCSD provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation. Any student or parent who believes they have been subjected to harassment or discrimination by anyone involved in the CTAE program, whether a student or employee of the school district based upon any of the factors listed above, should promptly report the same to the principal of the school or the leader of the program, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures.

Equity coordinators are available to address allegations of discrimination; equity coordinators' names and contact information is available on pages 26 and 27 of this handbook.

For more information about CTAE programs, including admissions requirements, contact:

Mrs. Victoria Thomas
Director of CTAE
2960 Macon Road
Columbus, Georgia 31906 (706) 748-2000
Thomas.victoria.m@muscogee.k12.ga.us

The following CTAE programs are currently being offered:

Accounting	Agriculture	Architecture
Audio-Video, Technology & Film	Automotive	Barbering
Business	Computer Science	Construction
Cosmetology	Culinary Arts	Education (Teaching as a Profession)
Engineering	Family & Consumer Sciences	Graphics
Healthcare Science	JROTC	Law & Justice
Machining	Manufacturing	Marketing, Sales & Service
	Metals	

IX. WHAT PARENTS AND STUDENTS CAN EXPECT

Valuables at School

MCSD personnel cannot search for personal items lost or suspected stolen while at school. This specifically applies to electronic devices, phones, handbags, or any other valuable items brought by students to school. MCSD will not be responsible for the value of an item in the event of damage, loss, or theft while at school. Additionally, items sent to school that become evidence in a discipline or legal matter must be held pending the outcome of that event. **Parents, please consider this carefully when sending items to school with your child or children.**

Searches of Students or Property and Questioning of Students

MCSD personnel are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of students, staff and visitors, to include the use of handheld metal detector wands, pursuant to applicable law. Students, staff, or visitors may consent to a search. To conduct a search without consent, school officials with reasonable suspicion may search students whom they believe have violated a law or rule of the school. The scope of the search will be reasonably related to the purpose of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and gender of the student and the nature of the suspected infraction.

Searches of School Property

All lockers, desks, computers, technology resources, and any other school property available for student use are the property of the school district, the school district retains control over said property, and such property is therefore not private, and is subject to search at any time. School computers and school technology resources are not private and are open to school review at any time. Periodic general inspections of school property may be conducted by MCSD for any reason at any time without notice and without student consent.

Searches of Student Property

Bringing a vehicle to school or to a school event is a privilege, not a right. Where a student chooses to bring a vehicle to school or to a school event, the student has waived any expectation of privacy as related to the vehicle, and in bringing a vehicle to school or to a school event, the student and his or her parents/guardians acknowledge and agree that the vehicle is subject to search at any time. The school retains authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of student vehicles on school property.

Student vehicles located on or near campus, as well as, student possessions such as pocketbooks, book bags, wall lockers containing student property, and other containers which could hold or transport drugs, alcohol, stolen property, weapons, or other dangerous substances, instrumentalities or contraband or all other articles or instruments in violation of the Student Behavior Code and Discipline Policy or in violation of any law may be subjected to searches by a dog sniffing or otherwise.

Dog Sniffs

Trained sniff-screening dogs are allowed in the schools to prevent drugs and weapons. These randomized checks of property by dog sniffs are not considered a search by law. Handheld metal detection wands may also be in use in schools and at school events. These are safety precautions intended to provide a safe and healthy learning environment. Nothing in this provision shall be construed to obstruct a law enforcement officer in the performance of their duty.

Personal cell phones and other electronic devices brought on campus are subject to search in accord with this policy and applicable law.

Where a student chooses to bring any container or item to school or to a school event, the student acknowledges and agrees that the container/item is subject to search at any time.

Students should not share lockers, clothing items, book bags, purses, etc. since items found during searches could subject both parties to disciplinary proceedings.

FERPA: Student Education Records

Notification of Rights under FERPA and the Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act of Georgia (Act) afford parents, and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students"), certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the District receives a request for access. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the District to amend a record should write the school Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

4. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth herein. A school official includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or, in legally appropriate circumstances, a person serving on the School Board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; an adult volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

5. Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. MCSD intends to forward records to such other school districts upon request.

6. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The office that administers FERPA:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-8520

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the District to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review a record of disclosures upon request. The District may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers,

or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))

- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State Educational Agency in the parent or eligible Student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to:
  (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests;
  (b) administer student aid programs; or
  (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10)
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

Directory Information

FERPA requires that the District, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, MCSD may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow MCSD to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include but are not limited to:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- Student work samples;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

MCSD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name, address, and telephone number;
- Student's date and place of birth;
- Student's participation in official school activities and sports;
- Weight and height of members of an athletic team;
- Dates of attendance at schools within the District;
- Degrees, honors and awards received during the time enrolled in district schools;
- Certain Student work samples;
- Photograph;
- Grade level; and
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended.

If you do not want MCSD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Principal of your school in writing at the beginning of each school year or within thirty (30) days of enrollment at the District.

MCSD Video/Audio Recordings

The MCSD seeks to promote a safe and secure teaching and learning environment, and in doing so, utilizes cameras that monitor public areas of MCSD buses, properties, buildings and grounds. Cameras are not utilized in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, including but not limited to restrooms, locker rooms, or the like. It is not the typical practice of the MCSD to store, maintain, or allow the viewing of images captured through these cameras.

Demonstrations and Strikes

School officials have the authority to control demonstrations, strikes, and other similar activities on school campuses, properties, facilities, and buses.

Visitors to School

Visitors to the school must register at the school office as they enter the building, and must bring a current valid I.D. to utilize the Raptor Visitor Management System. Visitors must also adhere to the guidelines set forth by the school, are asked to wear appropriate attire, and must park in designated parking areas. All yellow curbed areas are reserved for emergency vehicles only. Visitors parking in these areas are subject to ticketing.

Student Dress Code and Uniform Information

MCSD has a district-wide dress code that is enforced at each school. For additional information about the District-wide dress code, please review Rule 16 in the Code of Conduct. In addition to the District-wide dress code, Principals have authority and discretion to set school-specific dress codes and uniform codes at each school. The schools shall present dress and uniform codes to the Board of Education for review. In order to allow students time to obtain clothing, school-specific uniform codes are not enforced during the first five (5) school days that a student attends the school.

Students who cannot afford to purchase a uniform shall not be denied admission to school for that reason. If you need assistance to comply with dress or uniform codes, please contact the Principal or designee for assistance.

It is not the intent of MCSD to dictate the quality or style of clothing worn, but rather an effort to encourage good habits and acceptable group behavior. Student dress and personal appearance should reflect dignity and pride in oneself and in the school. Therefore, a student shall not dress, groom, or wear or use emblems, insignias, badges or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonably the attention of other students or otherwise to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school.

Bonafide religious attire will be permitted. Student dress code and uniform dress codes will be enforced in a reasonable, non-discriminatory manner.

X. Code of Conduct

The following rules apply from the time the student leaves home to go to school until s/he returns home, and any time a student is on school grounds. These rules also apply off school grounds while en route to or from any school activity, function, or event, en route to and from school and school functions, activities, or events, any time a student is on a school bus or any other transportation furnished by the school district, as well as at any school bus stop. The school district also addresses certain off-campus misconduct as authorized by law; please see Rule 10.

Violation of any rule will result in an age-appropriate consequence, which should be progressive in nature to include parental involvement:

Rule 1 - Verbal Assault, Physical Assault, Disrespectful Conduct of Students	**Rule 14 -** Damage or Destruction or Theft of School Property
Rule 2 - Alcohol, Narcotics, Stimulants, and Other Dangerous Drugs and Controlled Substances	**Rule 15 -** Damage or Destruction or Theft of Private Property
Rule 3 - Weapons; Hazardous Objects; Unauthorized Items	**Rule 16** - Dress and Grooming
Rule 4 - Bullying	**Rule 17 -** Leaving School or Assigned Area Without Permission
Rule 5 - Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students	**Rule 18 -** Unexcused Absences
Rule 6 - Sexual Misconduct or Inappropriate Display of Affection	**Rule 19 -** Trespassing and Loitering on School Property is Prohibited
Rule 7 - Gangs	**Rule 20 -** Incitement of Student
Rule 8 - Sexual Harassment	**Rule 21 -** Falsifying Reports of Alleged Inappropriate Behavior by Teacher/School Principal
Rule 9 - Disruption and Interference with School	**Rule 22 -** Acts of Misconduct
Rule 10 - Off-Campus Misconduct	**Rule 23 -** Gambling
Rule 11 - Disregard of Directions or Commands	**Rule 24 -** Academic Integrity
Rule 12 - Bus Conduct	**Rule 25** - Counterfeit Currency
Rule 13 - Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices in the Schools	**Rule 26 -** Recording Student Fights or Other Misbehavior is Prohibited

Teacher and Principal Removal of Student

It should be noted that the Superintendent fully supports the authority of Principals and teachers to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to Georgia law at O.C.G.A. §20-2-738.

Rule 1 – Verbal Assault, Physical Assault, Disrespectful Conduct of Students

The following conduct of students is prohibited:

A. Verbal assault (including threats of violence) against teachers, administrators, and other school personnel;
B. Physical assault or battery of teachers, administrators, and other school personnel;
C. Disrespectful conduct (including the use of vulgar or profane language) toward teachers, administrators, and other school personnel;
D. Physical assault or battery of other students including sexual harassment;
E. Hazing: to subject a student to an activity that endangers or is likely to endanger the physical health of a student. This is prohibited regardless of the student's willingness to participate in such activity;
F. Verbal assault of other students, including threats of violence and/or sexual harassment;
G. Disrespectful conduct toward other students, including the use of vulgar or profane language;
H. Verbal assault of, physical assault or battery of, or disrespectful conduct toward persons attending school-related functions; and,
I. Threats: Threats include (but are not limited to) threats to commit violence, threats to release dangerous instrumentalities or hazardous substances, and threats to cause harm that are likely to cause terror or evacuations (i.e., bomb threats, threats to bring weapons to school, threats to injure others by violent means, etc.).

Any student alleged to have committed an act of physical violence (as defined below) against a teacher, bus driver, or other school official shall be suspended pending a hearing by the Disciplinary Hearing Tribunal.

A student found by a Disciplinary Hearing Officer, Panel, or Tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature against a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or school employee may be disciplined by expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6

A student found by a Disciplinary Hearing Officer, Panel, or Tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact that causes physical harm (unless such physical contacts were in self-defense) to a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or school employee shall be expelled from the public school system for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school and shall also be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior. The local school board, at its discretion, may permit the student to attend an alternative education program for the period of the student's expulsion. If the student who commits physical harm as described in this paragraph is in kindergarten through eighth grade, the school board at its discretion and on the recommendation of the Disciplinary Hearing Tribunal Panel may permit such a student to re-enroll in the regular public school program for grades nine through twelve. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6

Rule 2 – Alcohol, Narcotics, Stimulants, and Other Dangerous Drugs and Controlled Substances

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, swapping, stealing, transmitting, intending to transmit, distributing, intending to distribute, or ingesting, holding, carrying, or being under the influence of alcohol and/or any other substances prohibited by this rule.

Substances prohibited by this rule include:

A. All substances, chemicals, and drugs made illegal or defined as dangerous or illicit by any local, State, or Federal law;
B. Drugs including, but not limited to narcotic drugs, synthetic marijuana, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, herbal marijuana, cocaine, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, inhalants, opiates, herbal supplements, or any other controlled substance or intoxicant;
C. Alcoholic beverages or other intoxicants of any kind;
D. Prescription and non-prescription medicine that has not been registered with the school pursuant to Board Policy JGCD;
E. Any item or substance which is thought, represented to be, or treated as if it is an illegal or dangerous drug, illicit substance, intoxicant, or alcohol; and
F. Any drug-related paraphernalia containing any substance prohibited hereunder.

Where a lawful substance is used inappropriately to cause or attempt to cause intoxication, that substance will be treated as an unlawful drug for the purposes of student discipline under this Rule.

Selling, transmitting, intending to transmit, distributing, intending to distribute, buying, attempting to buy, giving, swapping, or stealing prescription or over-the-counter medication is prohibited.

All medication (prescription/nonprescription/over-the-counter to include diabetic supplies) in their original container is to be turned in to the office prior to the beginning of the school day. See MCSD Board Policy JGCD.

A student's prescribed use of a prescription drug pursuant to and in accordance with a prescription from a registered physician authorizing that student's use of the drug is not a violation of this rule if the mandates of MCSD Board Policy JGCD are met prior to that student's use of the drug. Parental permission to have or use substances prohibited by this policy does not exempt a student from compliance.

Improper or 'off label' use of prescription and/or over-the-counter medication is prohibited.

Student Alcohol Use

A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind:

1. On the school grounds during or immediately before or immediately after school hours;
2. On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school group;
3. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
4. En route to and from school;
5. Off the school grounds while the student is in attendance at school or any school function, or is otherwise subject to jurisdiction of school authorities, or
6. En route to and from school functions, activities, or events.

Student Drug Use

It is the responsibility of the Muscogee County Board of Education to safeguard the health, character, citizenship and personality development of students in the schools. The Muscogee County Board of Education places the highest priority on the elimination of substance abuse in the schools and in the community. The use, possession or transmitting of illicit substances and the use of alcohol are wrong, harmful, and will not be tolerated. Violation of this policy will be met with firm and consistent disciplinary measures.

Students in MCSD are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, transmitting, intending to transmit, or being under the influence of alcohol or intoxicants of any kind, and any substances made illegal by the O.C.G.A § 16-30-70 *et. seq.* (Dangerous Drug Act) and O.C.G.A. § 16-13-20 *et. seq.* (Georgia Controlled Substance Act):

1. On the school grounds during, immediately before, or immediately after school hours;
2. On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school group;
3. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
4. Within legal proximity to school grounds as designated under Georgia Statutes;
5. En route to and from school;
6. At any school-sponsored function, whether held during or after regular school hours, and whether held on or off school property;
7. En route to and from school functions, activities, or events; and
8. During any time that students are under the jurisdiction of school authorities.

Substances defined by local and state laws governing dangerous illegal substances are covered by this policy. Such substances include, but are not limited to:

A. Drugs (stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, inhalants, THC, opiates) including, but not limited to narcotic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, cocaine, or any other contraband or controlled substance or prohibited drug;
B. Alcoholic beverages or intoxicants of any kind;
C. Prescription medicine or drugs, with or without medical cause or medical permission, unless such medications have

been registered with the school according to the school's procedures. In all schools, medicines must be registered with the Principal or designee. Parental permission to have or use substances prohibited by this policy, including alcohol or prohibited substances does not exempt a student from this policy.

Rule 3 – Weapons; Hazardous Objects; Unauthorized Items

A student shall not possess, use, handle, transmit, or control any object which is or may reasonably be considered as a weapon, hazardous object, or unauthorized item. This includes objects that may not be considered a weapon, hazardous object, or unauthorized item as defined below, but are used as a weapon against any other person.

"Weapon", while not meant to be all-inclusive, is any firearm, pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, as defined in O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1(a)(3), and any dangerous weapon, machine gun, rifle or shotgun, as defined in O.C.G.A. §16-11-121.

"Hazardous Object", while not meant to be all-inclusive, is any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more ridged parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nunchuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind, or any stun gun or taser as defined in subsection (a) of O.C.G.A. §16-11-106.

"Unauthorized Item", while not meant to be all-inclusive, is ammunition, BBs, paint pellets, CO2 cartridges, fireworks, matches, lighters, stink bombs, pepper spray, mace, or similar instruments/items. These instruments/items are disruptive to the function of the school and may pose a safety risk.

A student who wishes to bring an object which could be reasonably considered to be a Hazardous Object or Unauthorized Item on school grounds as a part of or in conjunction with a class assignment or other school project must first receive written permission from the office of the Principal. Weapons, as defined above, are not allowed on or in a school safety zone under any circumstances.

Where a student is determined by the MCSD Student Discipline Tribunal Panel to have brought a Weapon to school, that student shall be expelled from school for a period of not less than one calendar year; however, the local board of education may modify such expulsions on a case-by-case basis. The Discipline Tribunal or the Board of Education is authorized to place a student determined to have brought a weapon to school in an alternative educational setting.

Principals and Building Leaders have discretion in the school-level handling of all disciplinary events. At the discretion of the Principal, a student who is accused of violating this policy may be taken before the MCSD Discipline Tribunal, and police may be summoned to the campus.

Rule 4 – Bullying

Incidents of bullying may be reported to any school MCSD employee and can be reported anonymously by calling 706-748-2267 or by filling out a 'silent report' form at your school.

Reports can also be made to the State: 1-877-729-7867 or 1-877-SAY-STOP

Additional Bullying Reporting Options:
MCSD Student Safety Hotline: 706-748-2267
MCSD Bullying e-mail: Bully.free@muscogee.k12.ga.us-
Vector Safe Schools Alert located on the MCSD website front page or https://muscogee-ga.safeschoolsalert.com/

Bullying behavior is prohibited and is defined by Georgia law as:

A. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or

B. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or

C. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:

1. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of O.C.G.A. §16-5-23.1 or "visible bodily harm" as such term is defined in O.C.G.A. §16-5-23.1. Visible bodily harm is defined by 16-5-23.1 as bodily harm capable of being perceived by a person other than the victim;
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
3. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment;
4. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term 'bullying' applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer systems, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system.

The term, as used in this Rule, also applies to cyberbullying, which is behavior that occurs through the use of electronic communication, including social media, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, where such electronic communication:

A. Is directed specifically at students or school personnel;

B. Is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and

C. Creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

For the purposes of this Rule, electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has either committed a bullying offense or has been a victim of bullying, the student's parent or guardian will be notified.

Note that some student misconduct prohibited by this policy may also trigger responsibilities under the District's policies preventing harassment or discrimination and both sets of policies should be considered when addressing behaviors.

Where the Student Discipline Tribunal panel finds a student in grades six through twelve guilty of bullying behavior for the third time in one school year, that student must be assigned to an alternative school in keeping with Georgia law.

Retaliation against a reporter following a report of bullying is prohibited.

Rule 5 – Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students

A "Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student" is defined by law as a student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around them and which are likely to recur.

A student shall not willfully and persistently violate the student code of conduct.

Procedure:

Any time a teacher or Principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the Principal shall notify the parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem by telephone call and by either certified mail or statutory overnight delivery with return receipt requested or first-class mail, invite such parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference with the Principal or the teacher to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Rule 6 – Sexual Misconduct or Inappropriate Display of Affection

A student shall not:

A. Indecently expose themselves, or engage in any inappropriate sexual actions or behaviors;
B. Molest or rape another person;
C. Engage in any form of inappropriate bodily contact or display of affection, such as fondling, making out, intercourse;
D. Participate in inappropriate activities such as mooning (pulling one's own pants down) or ankling or pantsing (pulling another student's pants down);
E. Possess, pose for, and/or transmit pornographic materials (magazines, pictures, images within cellar phone, websites, etc.); and/or
F. Take, show, distribute, or pose for any inappropriate photo or video, to include posts on social media by way of example, photos or videos while undressed or that expose breasts, buttocks, or genitals.

Students found guilty of the above actions may be suspended for not more than ten (10) days pending a referral to the Student Discipline Tribunal and/or may be referred to the law enforcement agencies.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct.

Rule 7 – Gangs

Gangs are herein described as clubs, groups, or organizations of limited membership, which are known to MCSD through its personal intelligence or through information furnished through local law enforcement officials, to advocate, practice, engage or participate in unlawful acts such as intimidation, violence, or destruction to property. Gangs shall not be permitted on school premises or in school facilities, or to conduct any activities, meetings, or gatherings on or about school facilities, premises, or property at any time. The presence of such gangs is a threat to the safety and well-being of the students and faculties of MCSD, and disruptive to the education process.

1. Membership in or affirmation with gangs as defined above shall not be permitted. Membership will be determined, by whatever means, from the existence of objective criteria. While not intended to be an all-inclusive list, and in addition to those items set forth in subpart (2) immediately below, criteria which can serve to indicate membership or affiliation with gangs include the following:

   (a) Direct admission of gang affiliation;
   (b) Documented information on gang membership;
   (c) Information from known gang affiliate;
   (d) Admission of former membership, with continued associations; and/or
   (e) Photographs indicating gang association, etc.

2. Wearing of any insignia, and/or uniforms, or other means of any gang identification, or using or making any signs, signals, or other means of gang communication or identification by any student or non-student visiting on the premises of any school facility shall not be permitted.
3. Any attempt to gather or commingle on school premises, facilities, or property for any purpose by gang members shall be prohibited.
4. No student shall use, employ, or rely upon his or her gang membership or affiliation to threaten, intimidate, or harass verbally or physically other students or MCSD employees.
5. All of the above prohibitions concerning gangs apply as well to any school functions or events conducted away from school facilities, property, or premises.

Any student who violates this policy or any subpart thereof shall be subject to discipline, including the sanction of expulsion if warranted under the particular circumstances of a violation.

Rule 8 – Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate oral, gestures, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the school staff to a student or when made by any student to another student or system employee constitutes sexual harassment when:

A. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's education;
B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual; or
C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic professional performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment.

Sexual harassment further may include but is not limited to gestures, verbal harassment or abuse, pressure for sexual activity, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications, unwelcome touching, suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.
Harassing or discriminatory conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling; exclusionary acts; graphic and written statements, which may include the use of cell phones or the internet; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating.

Rule 9 – Disruption and Interference with School

No student shall:

A. Occupy any school building, gymnasium, school grounds, properties or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use, or where the effect is to deprive others of its use;
B. Block the entrance or exit of any school building or property or corridor or room thereof as to deprive others of access thereto;
C. Prevent or attempt to prevent the convening or continued functioning of any school, class, activity or lawful meeting or assembly on the school campus;
D. Prevent students from attending a class or school activity;
E. Except under the direct instruction of the Principal, block normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic on a school campus or adjacent grounds;
F. Continuously and intentionally make noise or act in any other manner so as to interfere with the teacher's ability to conduct his/her class;
G. In any other manner, by the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or any other conduct, intentionally cause the disruption of any lawful mission, process or function of the school, or engage in any such conduct for the purpose of causing the disruption or obstruction of any such lawful mission, process or function;
H. Refuse to identify themself upon request of any teacher, Principal, Superintendent, school bus driver, or other authorized school personnel;
I. Use profanity or obscene language;
J. Use any electronics, including cell phones, computers, tablets, to access, post, or create any improper content, including pictures or social media posts, which causes an unsafe or disruptive school atmosphere; nor
K. Urge, encourage or counsel other students to violate any of the preceding paragraphs of this rule.

Rule 10 - Off-Campus Misconduct

The school district has the authority to take disciplinary action regarding any off-campus actions taken by students, where those actions could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony (note: this rule applies whether or not the student is actually charged with any crime) and where those actions either make the student's continued presence on campus a potential danger to persons or property at the school or where the student's presence disrupts the educational process.

Rule 11 – Disregard of Directions or Commands

A student shall not ignore or fail to comply with directions or commands of teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, para-professionals, Principals, Assistant Principals, school bus drivers or other school personnel.

Rule 12 – Bus Conduct

All Rules in this Code of Conduct and handbook apply to students while on the bus, at the bus stop, at any school activities or en route to or from school or any school activities or on any district-provided transportation.

Students who fail to respond to the direction of the bus driver or the bus monitor will be reported to the school Principal, who is authorized to deny the student bus transportation.

Any bus driver who believes that a student's continued presence on the bus will imperil or endanger other students or district personnel may bring this to the attention of the Principal first, and then, if the Principal does not remove the student from the bus, may appeal to his or her transportation department supervisor and ultimately to the School Board. Without the use of headphones, students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players; or any other electronic device that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

It is unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop. Such interference is considered trespassing and law enforcement will be contacted.

Rule 13 – Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices in the Schools

Students enrolled in the Muscogee County public schools shall not possess, transmit, or use tobacco in any form.

An electronic cigarette (or e-cigarette), JUUL, electronic-vaping device, personal vaporizer (PV), or electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS) is a battery-powered device which simulates tobacco smoking. They are considered and sold as tobacco products and are prohibited.

Rule 14 – Damage or Destruction or Theft of School Property

A student shall not recklessly, willfully or maliciously cause or attempt to cause damage or destruction of school property. A student shall not steal or attempt to steal school property. Parents of students who violate this Rule and damage or deface school property will be required to make restitution for all damage as part of the discipline process.

Rule 15 – Damage or Destruction or Theft of Private Property

A student shall not recklessly, willfully, or maliciously cause or attempt to cause damage or destruction to the property of anyone at school or on school property. Students shall not steal or attempt to steal private property of others.

Rule 16 - Dress and Grooming

Bonafide religious attire will be permitted.

A student shall not dress, groom, or wear or use emblems, insignias, badges, or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonably the attention of other students or otherwise to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school.

In addition to the District-wide dress code, Principals have authority and discretion to set school-specific dress codes and uniform codes at each school.

District Wide Dress Code:

In addition to the language above and in the Student Handbook regarding dress and uniform codes:

- Bonafide religious attire is permitted.
- Chests, backs, and midriffs must be covered. Transparent items do not constitute cover.
- Shorts, dresses, skirts, skorts or other garments may be no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the knee. Tights or leggings must be accompanied by another garment that is no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the knee.
- Pajamas may not be worn to school unless permitted by the school Principal.
- Undergarments are not to be visible at any time. Outer garments are to be worn in a manner which will cover up all undergarments. Transparent items do not constitute cover.
- All pants and slacks and skirts must be worn at the waist.
- No pants, shorts, or skirts may have holes above the knee.
- Blankets are not permitted in school.
- Hats, caps, sunglasses, rollers, picks, combs, and bandanas are not to be worn in the building during the school

day. Principals may use discretion as to head coverings that are not listed here.

Note: students may be required to wear a hairnet and/or other hair restraints in technology classes,laboratory, swimming, and instructionally related activities or advised by the teacher.

- Shoes must be secured to the foot in the front and/or the back. House slippers and shoes with cleats are prohibited.
- Gang-related tattoos, badges, insignias, and colors are prohibited.
- Logos or symbols which denigrate racial, social, or ethnic groups are prohibited.
- Attire that may damage school property or cause personal injury to others (such as chains or studded items) is prohibited.
- Clothing items which advertise alcoholic beverages, sex, tobacco, obscene, crude suggestive messages, or use profanity or slurs pertaining to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, or national origins are prohibited. Clothing that suggests or portrays violence or illegal actions is prohibited.
- Fake alcohol or drug advertisement is prohibited.
- Clothing that causes a distraction from the learning environment or a disruption to the operation of the school is not permitted.
- "Fake" alcohol or drug advertisement is prohibited.

Dress Code for New and Transfer Students

New and transferring students will be given five (5) school days before being required to comply with a school-specific uniform dress code.

Rule 17 – Leaving School or Assigned Area without Permission

No student may leave school or an assigned area at any time during the school day without permission of the Principal or designee.

Rule 18 - Unexcused Absences

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school function during required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, except with written permission of the parent, guardian, teacher, Principal, or other duly authorized school official, nor shall any student encourage, urge or counsel other students to violate this rule.

Rule 19 – Trespassing and Loitering on School Property is Prohibited

A student shall not enter any school district property without permission when neither school nor a school-related activity is in session; remain on school district property when directed to leave by the Principal or designee; or enter upon school district property or attend a school-sponsored function (whether or not on school property) while under expulsion, Out of School Suspension, In-School Suspension or assignment to the alternative school.

Students are not allowed to enter the premises of a school other than his/her school unless prior permission is received from an administrator of the school to be visited or unless the school is hosting a school-related function, such as an academic or athletic activity. A student and/or non-student will be in violation of this rule and subject to discipline and/or legal consequences if the student fails to leave school district property or a school event after being ordered to leave by the Principal or designee.

It is unlawful for any person to remain within the school safety zone when that person does not have a legitimate cause or need to be present thereon. It is unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop.

Rule 20 – Incitement of Student

A student shall not incite, advise, or counsel others to engage in prohibited acts.

Rule 21 – Falsifying Reports of Alleged Inappropriate Behavior by Teacher/School Personnel

A student shall not falsify, misrepresent, omit, or erroneously report information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior of a teacher, administrator, or other school employees toward a student.

Rule 22 – Acts of Misconduct

A student may be suspended for acts of misconduct, not specifically cited herein, that are deemed to affect the health and safety of other students or school personnel and/or disrupt the educational process.

Rule 23 - Gambling

A student shall not gamble or solicit others to gamble:

A. On the school grounds at any time;
B. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event; or
C. Under the jurisdiction of school district transportation.

Gambling includes betting on any game or event, shooting dice, matching or other games of chance played for money and/or things of value.

Participating in a raffle or bingo game sponsored by a school-related support group such as a PTA or Booster Club will not violate this rule when the student is accompanied by his or her parent or guardian or by another parent who has permission in writing from the student's parent or guardian to supervise that student at the fundraiser.

Rule 24 – Academic Integrity

Students must be honest and submit only their own original work. Cheating, forgery and plagiarism are strictly prohibited. Examples of violations of this rule include, but are not limited to:

A. Copying or "borrowing" from another source and submitting it as one's own work
B. Seeking or accepting unauthorized assistance on tests, projects or other assignments
C. Fabricating data or resources
D. Providing or receiving test questions in advance without permission
E. Working collaboratively with other students when individual work is expected
F. Forging signatures or altering grades

Given that academic integrity is an expectation of all students, consequences may be applied if cheating incidences occur on any work submitted by students in an event or contest or during any athletic or other competition in which they represent the school system.

Rule 25 - Counterfeit Currency

Any attempted use of imitation currency produced without the sanction of the governmental authority is prohibited.

Rule 26 - Recording Student Fights or other Misbehavior is Prohibited

Possession of a personal electronic device by a student at school during school hours is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who breaks a District rule or otherwise abuses the privilege. The use of a personal electronic device for non-educational purposes including but not limited to the recording of District staff or students without their express permission is prohibited. Regardless of permission, it is prohibited for any student to use a personal electronic device to record other students breaking District rules, including but not limited to recording student altercations or fights, and recording other students' misbehavior will subject the student to disciplinary action at the Principal's discretion.

Teacher and Principal Removal of Student

The Superintendent fully supports the authority of Principals and teachers to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to Georgia law at O.C.G.A. §20-2-738.

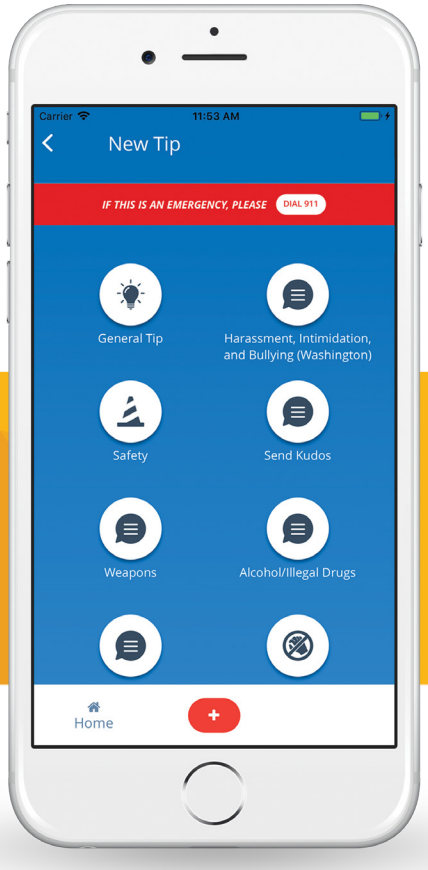
NOTES

VectorSolutions™
Vector Alert

Muscogee County School District

Report It

Vector Alert is our district's tip reporting service. If you have information about a threat to our safety, do your part and report it! And remember, you can remain anonymous.



SUBMIT USING OUR APP

Available on the iPhone App Store

ANDROID APP ON Google play

FOR EMERGENCIES, PLEASE CALL 911

EASY WAYS TO REPORT

Visit the website
http://1897.alert1.us

Email your Tip to
1897@alert1.us

Call to report your tip
762.583.9079

Text your Tip to
762.583.9079

REPORT ON:

- BULLYING
- INTIMIDATION
- HARASSMENT
- WEAPONS
- DRUGS
- OTHER

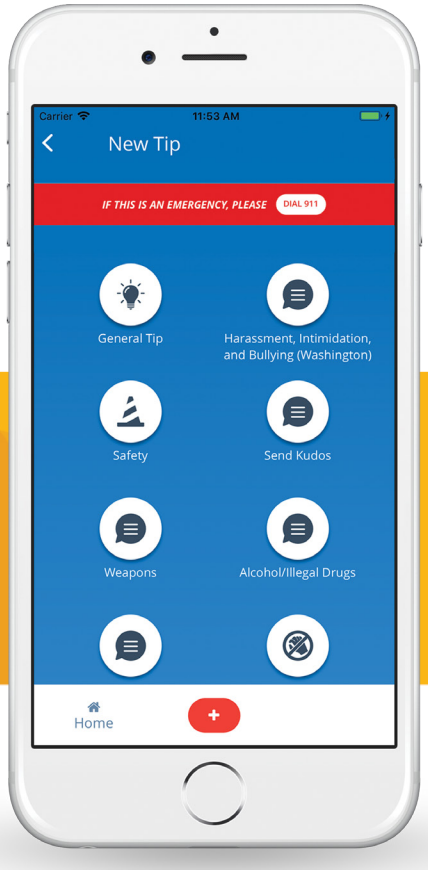
Our District Code is: 1897

All tips submitted are taken seriously and will be acted upon. Please be responsible with your submissions.

VectorSolutions™
Vector Alert

Muscogee County School District

¡Denúncielo!



Vector Alert es el servicio de denuncias de nuestro distrito. Si tienes información sobre una amenaza a nuestra seguridad, ¡haz tu parte y denúnciala! Y recuerda que puedes permanecer en el anonimato.

ENVÍA CON NUESTRA APLICACIÓN

Available on the iPhone App Store

ANDROID APP ON Google play

EN CASO DE EMERGENCIAS, LLAMA AL 911

FORMAS FÁCILES DE DENUNCIAR

Visita el sitio web
http://1897.alert1.us

Envía un correo electrónico para hacer tu denuncia
1897@alert1.us

Llama para hacer tu denuncia
762.583.9079

Envía un mensaje de texto para hacer tu denuncia
762.583.9079

DENUNCIA:

- BULLYING
- INTIMIDACIÓN
- ACOSO
- ARMAS
- DROGAS
- OTRO

Nuestro Código de distrito es: 1897

All tips submitted are taken seriously and will be acted upon. Please be responsible with your submissions.

CRIME STOPPERS

Call in your
Anonymous Tips to
(706) 653-3188

Scan the Bar Code to
Submit your Anonymous tip

Submit your tip on line at

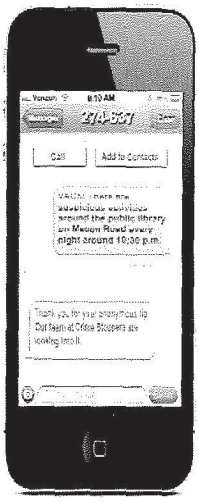
https://www.columbusga.gov/police/crime-stoppers

CRIME STOPPERS

Crime Doesn't Pay ... But Crime Stoppers Does!

Text VACS plus
your message to
274637
(CRIMES).

Standard rates may apply.



Creating "WE"

Our Mission
To inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.

Our Vision
The MCSD is a beacon of educational excellence where all are known, valued and inspired.

Muscogee County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, disability status, or age in its programs and activities. It provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Additional information about the District's anti-discrimination policies, procedures, and coordinators is provided inside this Handbook.

muscogee.k12.ga.us