COVINGTON COUNTY SCHOOLS
ANDALUSIA, ALABAMA 36421
CODE OF
STUDENT CONDUCT 2020-2021

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

This document is to inform you of the statutory requirements of Ala. Code 16-28-12 (1975) and the procedures to be followed. This legislation has important implications for parents mainly to provide a safe, secure school environment for your children.

You are encouraged to read this document carefully. Please sign the acknowledgement statement to document your receipt of this information and return it to school.

ATTENDANCE

Early Warning Truancy Prevention Program

The Alabama Compulsory School Attendance Law (Sec. 16-28-3) requires children between the ages of 6-17 to enroll and attend school. Additionally, Section 16-28-12 of the Code of Alabama requires that any parent/guardian be responsible for the child's regular attendance and proper conduct. Parents/guardians must provide to the child's teacher an explanation of each absence within two days after the child returns to school. If the parent/guardian fails to provide information, the absence will be recorded as truant.

Documentation of Absences

Elementary school students may be excused up to a total of fifteen (15) days per school year; middle and high school students may be excused up to a total of seven (7) days per semester. If a student (middle/high school) is absent over seven (7) days in a semester, he/she will not receive a passing grade/credit for that semester unless all absences after the seventh are legally excused. The principal will meet with the parent/guardian and student to review presented evidence in determining whether or not the student will receive credit for the course/class. Absences beyond five (5) consecutive days must be substantiated by a physician's statement. In known extenuating circumstances, the principal may excuse the absences. In case of no physician documentation, the absence may be appealed to the Principal and the grievance policy of the Board of Education will be in effect. Absences beyond the prescribed days for elementary and middle/high school students must be accompanied by additional documentation as follows:

- Death in immediate family---approved by principal
- Legal quarantine---quarantine notice
- All other absences are to be submitted to the principal in written form for consideration. The principal may request appropriate additional documentation as necessary.

ABSENCES

1. Excused. An absence may be excused by the principal for the following reasons:
   a. Student is too ill to attend school
   b.Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life or health of the student if attending school
   c. Legal quarantine
   d. Death in the immediate family
   e. Emergency condition as determined by the superintendent or principal
   f. All make-up work must be completed within five (5) days of returning to school
   g. For attendance at non-school related special events, the principal might excuse students (such absences must be based on written parental request and approved in advance)
2. Unexcused. An absence not approved by the provisions of Item #1 is considered unexcused (i.e. work, truancy, suspension or parental neglect). Students may not make up work if the absence is unexcused.

3. Excessive absences may result in any one (1) or all of the following:
   - Referral to Saturday School
   - Referral to the Attendance Officer
   - Filing of a petition of fact with Juvenile Services
   - Notification of Human Resources of suspected neglect
   - Filing of a complaint with Juvenile Services
   - Requirement to attend Early Warning Court

The following procedures shall be followed to address attendance:

FIRST-FOURTH TRUANCY: (unexcused absence)
Parent/guardian shall be notified by the school principal or designee that the student was truant and date of truancy. Parent/guardian shall also be provided a copy of Alabama's compulsory school attendance laws and advised of the penalties that can be applied and the procedures that shall be followed in the event that other unexcused absences occur.

FIFTH – SIXTH TRUANCY: (unexcused absence)
The parent/guardian or person having control of the child shall (1) attend a conference with the principal or his designee and/or (2) participate in the early warning program provided by the juvenile court. Attendance at one of these conferences shall be mandatory except where prior arrangements have been made or an emergency exists. Failure to appear at the school conference and/or to appear at the early warning program shall result in the filing of a petition against the parent under Ala. Code 1975, §16/28/12© failure to cooperate, or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.

SEVENTH TRUANCY: (unexcused absence)
No earlier than seventh unexcused absence, but within ten (10) school days (court) (i) File complaint/petition against the child and/or parent/guardian, if appropriate.

CHILD UNDER PROBATION: The principal should be notified by the juvenile probation officer of all children in the school system under probation supervision by the juvenile court as consistent with state statue, Ala Code 1975. Where a child under probation is truant, the principal should immediately notify the juvenile probation officer.

ANY LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY MAY ADOPT A POLICY MORE RIGOROUS THAN THE STATE POLICY.

UNEXCUSED TARDIES:

Students who accumulate four (4) unexcused tardies may also be required to attend Saturday School, TRR, or after school detention. This action will require the approval of the school principal.

TARDINESS (per semester)
A student is considered tardy when he/she is not in the assigned seat when the tardy bell rings. Unexcused tardies result in the loss of perfect attendance for exemption privileges in that class. Excused tardies shall not count against perfect attendance but will apply for consideration of exemption from semester exams.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR UNEXCUSED TARDIES
1. First, Second and Third Tardies: Class I Offense
2. Fourth Tardy: Class II Offense or Saturday School

CHECK-INS

The approved procedure for entering school after the tardy bell signaling the beginning of school is as follows:
1. The student reports to the principal's office for an admission slip to enter the classroom.
2. A student must bring a written statement from his/her parent/guardian indicating the reason for the student's tardiness to receive an excused tardy. Tardies are excused only for the same reasons as absences.
3. A student who is absent four (4) periods or more will be recorded as absent that day and cannot participate in any school activity scheduled for that day without prior approval or extenuating circumstances.
4. A student who is enrolled in the co-op program at the high school level and attends school a full period or more shall be permitted to report to work that day after reporting to the coordinator.

CHECK-OUTS

The approved procedure for leaving school after the tardy bell signaling the beginning of the school day is as follows:
1. A student may be allowed to check out at the high school level with advanced written consent, a telephone call or personal contact made by the parent or guardian.
2. Under no circumstances may a student leave campus without the approval of the principal/designee.

Additional attendance requirements for high school and middle school students:
A student with 7 or more absences for a semester (questionable or unexcused) will not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities including, but not limited to, sport activities, prom, band concerts, field trips, beauty pageants, and SGA elections. Principals have the discretion to allow for extenuating circumstances.

MARRIED STUDENTS

Married students are subject to all Board of Education policies relating to students.

HEALTH RELATED CONDITIONS, INCLUDING PREGNANCY

When a student's attendance places his/her health or safety in jeopardy, the principal shall request a written statement from a licensed physician including recommendations concerning the advisability of school attendance. Additional statements from the physician verifying satisfactory physical condition shall be provided.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The policies and procedures of the Covington County Board of Education form the Code of Student Conduct and are based on the following responsibilities:

SEARCH OF PROPERTY AND INDIVIDUAL

All school property and other items at school may be searched by school officials with reasonable cause of suspected disruptive or dangerous items. A search of the person shall be conducted when the safety and welfare of others is involved. Officials of law enforcement agencies are allowed to make periodic unannounced visits after notifying the superintendent and building principal for the purpose of detecting the presence of illegal drugs.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

Students are expected to be clean and appropriately dressed for school. Dress and appearance must not present health or safety problems or cause disruption to the teaching/learning process. The local school principal will be the final authority for determining appropriate dress within the framework of the policy.

STANDARD I

Dress and Appearance—Grades K-4:

A. Half-shirts, halter or tube tops, fish net or muscle shirts, and biker shorts may not be worn to school.

B. Midriffs should be covered.

C. Obscene T-shirts or hats with language pertaining to tobacco or alcohol, sexual innuendoes, or foul language will not be allowed. Any apparel which renders one's appearance as suggestive or indecent may not be worn. Clothing should be in good taste for the age, maturity, and size of the student.

D. Shoes must be worn for protection. Flip-Flops & 5-toe shoes are not allowed at P. E. Shoes which mark or damage floors will not be permitted.

E. Wearing jewelry or other accessories which are deemed inappropriate or pose a health hazard or distraction (including nose rings, body rings, nail piercing, tongue piercing, and wallet chains).

F. While medium length apparel may be appropriate for most students in this age range, some students are larger and more mature causing clothing designed for younger students to be inappropriate and uncomfortable. Body suits; and tight fitting jeans or pants should not be worn to school.

STANDARD II

Dress and appearance—Grades 5-12:

Teachers may deny a student admission to class due to improper dress. In this case, the student's absence will be unexcused. Students who violate the dress code will be documented, warned and asked to secure proper attire on the first offense. Disciplinary actions may be taken for the following:

A. Wearing a head covering of any type in the school building during school hours.

B. Having suggestive, offensive, or vulgar writing and/or pictures on clothing (including tobacco or alcoholic beverage signs, ads, offensive words, etc.). In addition, students will not be permitted to wear any articles of clothing that promote any groups that do not reflect a positive image in today's society. Clothing that dishonors the flag or military uniforms, has racial implications or is gang related (including trench coats) is not permitted at school. School principals will have the discretion to determine negative images.

C. Exposing midriffs including exposed stomachs backs and shoulders must be covered. Inappropriate dress will include sleeveless shirts or dresses, sundresses, spandex or bicycle pants, mini dresses or skirts, unbuckled overalls, low ride pants, baggy pants, half-shirts, tank tops, halter tops, tube tops and sleeping apparel. Pants designed to be worn with a belt must have a belt worn at the waist.

D. Wearing clothing with cutouts, tears, holes, slits, open-sided tops, tops that are cut extremely low, or shirts that are longer than shorts under the shirt.

E. Wearing see-through clothing, such as mesh jerseys, without a full shirt under the jersey.

F. Wearing clothing that is tight fitting and revealing is prohibited. It is recommended that shorts/skorts not be worn to school. If shorts, skorts, dresses, or skirts are worn, the length should be three (3) inches above the top of the knee. If clothing such as leggings or jeggings is worn, pants, top, dress or skirt must be worn over the leggings/jeggings and length should be three (3) inches above the top of the knee.

G. Wearing inappropriate shoes. Comfortable shoes should be worn due to health and safety rules. Flip-Flops & 5-toe shoes are not allowed at P.E.

H. Wearing jewelry or other accessories which are deemed inappropriate or pose a health hazard or distraction (including nose rings, body rings, nail piercing, tongue piercing, and wallet chains).

I. Athletic bags will be permitted in designated areas only.

FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Alabama Act 94-819: Liability of Parent/Guardian

The parent/guardian of a minor under the age of eighteen (18) shall be liable for the actual damage sustained but not exceeding the sum of $1000 plus court costs to any person, firm, association, or corporation of the State of Alabama for all damages or destruction of any property by the intentional, willful, or malicious act of the minor.

BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

The principal or designee has the authority to assign students to a designated area at the end of the regular school day for a reasonable and specified period of time. The parent/guardian is responsible for providing transportation in these cases. The elementary or middle school student will be assigned to detention following notification of the parent/guardian. High school students will be notified the day prior to detention assignment and will be responsible for parent/guardian notification. Detention time on a daily basis shall be limited to one (1) hour per day for elementary, middle, and high school students.

SATURDAY SCHOOL

Saturday School may be used for disciplinary reasons for Class I and Class II offenses as a penalty for tardiness or to make up excessive absences.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Crisis Management Program, defined as removal of students from the regular class program to a class setting within the school or locale where the student will have no contact with the regular program, will be used as a support alternative for behavioral and academic reasons. Students shall be assigned as specified in the Code of Student Conduct or for academic reasons by the school principal/designee. Students may be assigned from one (1) hour to five (5) days unless time is extended for noncompliance with rules of conduct. Students who do not follow the rules of the Crisis Management Program may be immediately referred to the Administrative Hearing Committee. Parent/guardian will be notified of this transfer.

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING COMMITTEE

The superintendent/designee shall appoint an Administrative Hearing Committee to review the recommendation from the principal for any disciplinary action that is deemed necessary. The committee will review all information, question the student, and fully discuss the matter in an informal setting with the principal, student, and parent/guardian. Alternative actions other than those recommended by the principal may be recommended by the committee if the evidence so warrants. The superintendent, upon receiving the recommendation of the Administrative Hearing Committee, shall notify the parent/guardian of the action to be taken. The superintendent has the authority to approve or change the recommendation made by the committee. If expulsion is recommended, the Board of Education shall meet within twenty-five (25) days of the administrative hearing to consider this recommendation.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL (Short-Term)

Alternative School is a structured disciplinary program for students removed from the regular classroom to an alternative location. Students are referred by the principal and are assigned to the short-term program by the superintendent or an Administrative Hearing Committee with the concurrence of the superintendent/designee. All Alternative School assignments are reported to the Department of Youth Services. Attendance is mandatory from 8:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M. Students failing to attend will be reported to the juvenile authorities by the school principal. Students must abide by all rules given by the Alternative School Teacher upon admittance. The parent/guardian is responsible for transporting the student to and from the Alternative School. The student assigned to Alternative School will lose privileges including exam exemptions, extracurricular activities, and participation in work experience programs. Students unable to complete assignment prior to the last day of the school year will be required to attend until the assignment is completed. A report card will not be issued until such assignment is completed and all grades earned. Students in the program at the end of the grading period shall complete tests/exams at the Alternative School. Students will not be dismissed after testing in order to fulfill requirements of assignment.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL (Long-Term)

Alternative Education Program assignments are to be considered based upon the following:

1. Disciplinary Reasons---recommended by the principal with the concurrence of the Administrative Hearing Committee and the Superintendent/designee.
2. Health and Safety Reasons---student/parent/guardian written request to the Principal.
3. Curriculum or Attendance Reasons, Parent/Guardian Request, Court-related Reasons, Principal's Recommendation with the concurrence of the Administrative Hearing Committee and recommendation made by the Superintendent/designee.
4. A student may not be assigned to the long-term program more than one (1) time during a school year unless assigned by an Administrative Hearing Committee with the approval of the Superintendent/designee. Second assignments to the long-term program may be for the remainder of the school year or until the student has demonstrated appropriate work and behavior or on the recommendation (due to a special situation) of the principal and with approval of the Superintendent/designee. On occasions of special need, the Superintendent/designee may reassign a student as a temporary measure pending development of an alternate placement.
5. All students who have been adjudicated upon completion of the court ordered process must report to Alternative School before reentering their respective schools.

SCHOOL BUS SUSPENSION

The principal or transportation supervisor has the authority to deny a student the privilege of riding a school bus. The denial based on misconduct of the student will be for a reasonable and specified period of time. The parent/guardian will be notified of the suspension and will be responsible for the transportation of the student to school during the suspension. Random use of video cameras is permitted on school buses.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment may be administered by the principal/designee or teacher in the presence of a professional employee of the Board of Education. A written report will be prepared for each incident and copies of each report must be on file in the administrative office of the school. Corporal punishment for a student documented as having a disability, in which the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, will follow the same procedures as a non-disabled student.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as the temporary removal of a student from a school for violation of school rules or regulations. Only the principal has the authority to suspend a student from school. All suspensions will be for a specified time (not to exceed five (5) days). The superintendent has the authority to extend the suspension for an additional five (5) days.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student for an extended period of time due to the student violating school rules or regulations. Only the Board of Education has the authority to expel a student. The school principal recommending expulsion may suspend the student for five (5) days pending a hearing by the Administrative Hearing Committee. Expelled students and students withdrawing from school pending disciplinary action may apply for readmission to the Board of Education through written parental request to the Superintendent to be presented to the Administrative Hearing Committee which shall meet with the student and parent/guardian to consider the request. Expelled or withdrawn students may apply for admission to the long-term program as specified in the long-term procedures. Students and parents will be notified of these procedures at the Administrative Hearing.

Electronic Communication and Recording Devices:

Covington County Schools prohibit student possession of electronic communication or recording devices including but not limited to, cell phones, pagers, beepers, IPODS, and cameras during the school day or on school buses. Students participating in after-school activities are not permitted to use such devices except by approval of the personnel supervising the activity.

Violation of this policy will result in the following sanctions:

1) The electronic device will be taken up until the end of the day, at which time the parent can pick up the device at school and sign a statement of acknowledgement that the 2nd violation will result in confiscation for two weeks.
2) The electronic device will be confiscated for two weeks.
3) The electronic device will be confiscated for two months and student will be disciplined according to Code of Conduct offense #320.
4) The electronic device will be confiscated until the end of the school year and student will be disciplined according to Code of Conduct Class IV

Refusal to turn cell phone over to school board employee will be treated as a Class III offense. Repeat offenders will be treated as a Class IV offense with possible referral to Alternative School. A violation of this policy during any State testing will result in confiscation of the electronic device for 9 months and suspension of the student from school for 3 days. Cell phones/electronic devices may be searched by school administrator(s) for reasonable suspicion; i.e., cheating, text messaging of threats and inappropriate photos taken of students.

CLASSIFICATION OF VIOLATIONS

Class I – Minor Offenses
Class II – Intermediate Offenses
Class III – Major Offenses
Class IV – Severe Offenses

Class I and Class II offenses that are listed on succeeding pages of the Code of Student Conduct are included in the individual school handbooks. The individual school may expand and detail these offenses which are governed and regulated at the local school level. These additions must be approved by the Board of Education. Class III and Class IV offenses are specifically governed and regulated by the Code of Student Conduct. In the following classes of violations and disciplinary procedures, it is understood that the student will be provided with due process before any disciplinary action is taken.

CLASS I – MINOR OFFENSES

105-Distraction of other students and behavior that alters the teaching process in the classroom or activity
110-Quarreling, minor harassment, bullying
120-Nonconformity to dress code
125-Minor misbehavior on a school bus
130-Inappropriate public display of affection
135-Unauthorized use of school or personal property
140-Eating or drinking in unauthorized areas
145-Locker abuse, incidental defacement, littering of school property
155-Possession of radios, tape players, cards, electronic games, etc. without written administrative approval will result in the confiscation of said articles
160-Sitting in parked vehicle after arriving at school or returning to vehicle during the school day without permission
165-Tardies: Procedures will be followed as outlined under Tardiness
170 Minor physical conflicts (ex. pushing, shoving) which stops by directive
175-Failure to follow specific instruction (disobedience)
180-Cheating (copying school work)
190-Any other violation which at the discretion of the principal may be deemed reasonable within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances

CLASS II– INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES

200-Continued failure to follow instructions of School Board employee
205-Repetitive instances of minor harassment/bullying
210-Possession and/or ignition of fireworks, firecrackers, stink bombs, etc.
215-Use of obscene behavior (verbal, written, gesturing, touching) directed toward another person
220-Leaving class without written permission
230-Misuse of lunch tickets and/or privileges
235-Truancy: Absence from school or class without Principal approval
240-Speeding (exceeding any posted campus speed limit) or reckless driving
245-Intimidation of students (threat by word or action to do violence to another student)
250-Any misuse of school equipment and/or supplies
290-Any other violation which at the discretion of the principal may be deemed reasonable within the category after consideration of extenuating circumstances

Sanctions for Class I and Class II offenses are covered in individual school handbooks.

CLASS III – MAJOR OFFENSES

300-*Possession and/or use of tobacco products
301-*Leaving campus without permission
302-Possession of non-controlled substance and over the counter drugs
304-Bullying
305-*Gambling (any participation in games of chance for money and/or other things of value)
310-*Vandalism (intentional and deliberate action resulting in damages of less than $100 to public property/ personal property of another)
315-*Stealing items less than a total of $25 in value
320-*Defiance of a School Board employee's authority
321-*Possession of a laser light or any electronic device designed to shine bright lights at school or school activity
325-*Possession of stolen property (value of less than $100)
330-*Threats, extortion (verbal, written, or printed communication maliciously threatening injury to the person, property or reputation of any person with the intent to extort or coerce any person against his/her will)
335-*Trespassing (willfully entering or remaining on school property without authorization)
340-*Unjustified activation of a fire alarm system or fire extinguisher
345-*Written or verbal proposition to engage in sexual activity
350-*Use or possession of obscene/pornographic materials
355-*Fighting ---See No Fight Policy
360-*Forgery (falsifying/altering documents to secure privileges or monetary gain)
365-*Possession of a pocket knife on school property
370-*Directing obscene or profane language to a School Board employee
375-*Use of racial slurs/derogatory remarks
380-*Unauthorized activities/organizations (any attempt to use property for activities/organized meetings that are not school related)
385-*Any gross abuse of computers/computer programs/cell phones including inappropriate & unauthorized videos and photos
390-*Any other violations which in the discretion of the Principal may be deemed reasonable within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstance

**Indicates the offenses which may be reported to law enforcement authorities. The principal will determine if Class III offenses are treated as Class II or Class IV offenses after viewing all facts.*

Notification of law enforcement authorities means notification of the Covington County Sheriff's Department or nearest local authority, requesting an officer, and filing a petition of fact with the Department of Youth Services.

Sanctions for Class III Offenses

First Offense: Crisis Management Program, five (5) days or Saturday School
Second Offense: Crisis Management Program, ten (10) days or Saturday School
Third Offense: Out of School Suspension, three (3) days
Fourth Offense: Out-of-School Suspension and referral to Administrative Hearing Committee

NOTE: Disciplinary action for accumulated combinations of Class II and Class III offenses are progressive, with a maximum of four (4) offenses (ex. Students who have committed the second offense in a Class II and commit a Class III first offense will automatically go to the third offense of a Class III).
Fourth offenses are to be reported to law enforcement authorities.

NO FIGHT POLICY

Fighting or other forms of assault are violations of the Code of Alabama 13A-11-7 and will not be tolerated on school property. Fighting warrants a three (3) to five (5) day suspension and/or possible placement in Alternative School at the discretion of the Principal.

A fight is defined as any significant physical conflict such as hitting, exchanging of blows causing physical injury. The Principal will investigate each incident and may notify the law enforcement authorities/Juvenile Justice. Secondary school principals have the authority to sign warrants on any student the age of eighteen (18) years or older. Incidences requiring medical attention should be reported immediately.

CLASS IV - SEVERE OFFENSES

404- Bullying
405-*Drugs, controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages, or imitations of all the preceding (unauthorized possession, distribution, transfer, sale, use or being under the influence while on school property or attending a school sponsored activity)
410-*Arson (the willful burning of any part of school property)
415-*Assault upon a School Board employee (the actual unlawful touching or striking of a School Board employee or the causing of bodily harm to an employee)
420-*Robbery (the taking of money/property by force, violence or intimidation)
425-*Stealing, larceny, grand theft (carrying away /possession of property of another valued at $25 or more)
430-*Burglary of school property
435-*Criminal mischief (willful and malicious injury/damages in excess of $100 to public/personal property of another)
440-*Bringing or possessing a weapon or an imitation of a weapon on school property (including, but not limited to, a firearm, stun/taser gun, an air gun, or an edged instrument)
441-*Firearm
445-*Bomb threats
450-*Explosives (possessing, preparing or igniting of explosives likely to cause bodily injury on School Board property)
455-*Sexual acts (acts including but not limited to sexual harassment, intercourse, attempted rape, or rape)
460-*Aggravated assault (intent to cause serious bodily harm or use of a deadly weapon)
465-*Inciting or participating in a major student disorder
470-*Indecent exposure (intentional exposure of private parts, mooning)
475-*Unprovoked assault/attack on another student
480-*Profession of affiliation/involvement with any subversive organization/gang-related activity (includes wearing clothing, symbols, or offensive speech causing disruption on school property)
485-Malicious use of technology for harassment, anti-social communications, and inappropriate and unauthorized videos and photos
490-*Any other violation which at the discretion of the Principal may be deemed reasonable within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances

Sanctions for Class IV Offenses Grades K-12

All actions should be considered
1. Parent/guardian notification and request for conference
2. If deemed necessary, reported to law enforcement authorities
3. Suspension (three (3) to five (5) days)
4. If requested by the Principal or parent/guardian, an Administrative Hearing
5. Expulsion

Subsequent Offenses in the Same School Year: (all actions are required)
1. Parent/guardian notification and request for conference
2. Notification of law enforcement authorities
3. Suspension (five (5) days or until Administrative Hearing is convened)
4. Initiation of procedures for an Administrative Hearing

Note: Successful participation in a drug/alcohol-training program will reduce time assigned by one (1) week

Note: To comply with the Gun-Free School Act of 1994, it is the policy of Covington County Schools to prohibit all persons other than authorized law enforcement personnel, from bringing or possessing any deadly weapon or dangerous instrument on school property. Any student who brings a weapon as defined by the Act on school property will be automatically expelled from school for a minimum of one (1) year and will be prohibited from participating in any school system activity. Any school personnel who violate this policy will be suspended notwithstanding any criminal penalties which may also be imposed.

Only the Superintendent of Schools shall have the authority to modify such actions on a case by case basis.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF DISABLED STUDENTS

Suspensions and expulsion may be appropriate disciplinary action for students with disabilities but additional procedural protections may apply. Any decision to discipline a student with disabilities that removes the student from the school campus for more than ten (10) cumulative days per year may constitute a change in placement, and a manifestation determination shall be conducted by the student's IEP Team.

If IEP Team determines the misconduct is not related to the student's disability, then the administrator may proceed with the discipline of the student with a disability in the same manner and for the same duration as students without disabilities and may refer the student to the Administrative Hearing Committee. The student must continue to receive educational services that will allow the student to participate in the general curriculum (although in another setting) and progress toward meeting the goals in the IEP. The IEP Team shall review the student's behavior, the IEP, and the behavior intervention plan. If there is no behavior intervention plan, an assessment shall be conducted and a behavior intervention plan developed.

If the IEP Team determines the misconduct is related to the student's disability, the Team will review the IEP Plan, the student's behavior intervention plan, and the student's placement. If the student does not have a behavior intervention plan, an assessment shall be conducted and a plan shall be developed that addresses the behavioral concerns. (The student must be returned to the placement from which the student was removed unless the parent and the LEA agree to the change of placement as part of the modification in the behavior intervention plan or the student is removed due to a violation regarding Special Circumstances: weapons, drugs or inflicting serious bodily injury.)

Any student with a disability who carries or possesses a weapon, knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits the sale of controlled substances, or inflicts serious bodily injury on another person while at school, on school premises or at a school function shall be removed for up to forty-five (45) calendar days to an interim alternative educational setting, during which time a manifestation determination meeting shall be conducted and all changes to the IEP shall be made at the alternative setting.

Covington County Board of Education Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome or personally offensive conduct (including but not limited to advances, gestures, or speech with sexual innuendos).
Sexual harassment by any employee or student toward another person will not be tolerated.

Harassment-Cyberbullying

Harassment-cyberbullying – is the use by students of Internet, email, cell phones or text messaging with the intent to harm another student(s). Cyberspace harassment will not be tolerated and violators will be appropriately punished including the loss of computer privileges during school activities. Students should report any cyberbullying. Harassment will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken. Refer to Covington County Schools Harassment Policy.

Administrative Regulations

Victims of sexual harassment should report the activity to the immediate supervisor, counselor, or Assistant Principal. The Title IX Coordinator will be responsible for investigating all complaints. Any employee or student found to be engaged in sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the Superintendent.

Covington County Board of Education Tobacco Policy

The use of any tobacco product is strictly prohibited on all school system property and is prohibited at all school related activities/events. This policy applies to all employees, students, salespeople, and visitors. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to the same disciplinary actions that accompany infractions of Board of Education policies. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action for Class III offenses.

The Code of Conduct is in effect during all school related or sponsored events. Students shall be under the control and supervision of the Principal, teacher, and staff in charge or school bus driver. With questions regarding the Code of Student Conduct, contact the local school principal.

Equal Opportunity Policy: It is the official policy of Covington County School System that no person shall, on the ground of race, sex, religion, color, creed, national origin, handicap, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment and provide access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries of complaints regarding compliance with federal regulations on 504, Title I, Title II, and Title IX may be directed to Chris Thomasson, Federal Programs Coordinator (chris.thomasson@cov.k12.al.us).
Kelly McCollough, 504 Coordinator, Covington County Board of Education, 807 C.C. Baker Avenue, Andalusia, AL 36421, (334) 222-7571.