

SOUTHWEST GEORGIA STEM CHARTER SCHOOL

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2019 – 2020 STUDENT HANDBOOK



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Mission Statement:

The mission of Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School is to foster in its students the passion and curiosity to become life-long learners. Students will develop the ability and motivation to think independently, communicate effectively, and excel academically. Through an innovative curriculum, saturated in the sciences, technology, engineering, our students will become managers of their education. (time, resources, talents and environment).

To accomplish this mission, Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter will:

- *utilize a standards-based interdisciplinary STEM curriculum
- *emphasize hand-on, real-world approach
- *utilize inquiry and project based learning
- *emphasize how to think, not what to think
- *provide a well-rounded curriculum
- *develop and preserve in students the appreciation of their agriculture/forestry rich surroundings (Place-Based Education)
- *develop partnerships with local and regional Ag/Forestry related parties
- *maintain a positive relationship with parents and the community

The faculty and staff will serve as models, demonstrating strong intellectual, physical, social, and emotional skills of productive leaders and life-long learners.

Members of the Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School Board of Education

Tony Lee, Chairman - tlee@sowegastemcharter.org
Chris Weathersby, Vice Chairman - cweathersby@sowegastemcharter.org
Michelle Graham, Secretary/Treasurer - mgraham@sowegastemcharter.org
Lisa Jones, Member - ljones@sowegastemcharter.org

Southwest Georgia STEM CharterSchool District Administration

Ginger Almon, School Leader - galmon@sowegastemcharter.org
Kadie Phillips, Director of Federal Programs - kphillips@sowegastemcharter.org
Nicole Horn, District Data Coordinator and Nutrition Manager -
nhorn@sowegastemcharter.org
Chase Jones, Transportation Director - cjones@sowegastemcharter.org
Natalie Zajac, Special Education Director - nzajac@sowegastemcharter.org

FACULTY & STAFF

<u>Pre-K</u> Julie Jackson Mackenzie Knights	<u>Gifted Coordinator</u> Cindy Carlson
<u>Kindergarten</u> Alex Lovering Lyndsey Alston	<u>Media Center</u> Leah Yurisich
<u>1st Grade</u> Mary Martha Ivey Jordan Scarborough	<u>Technology</u> Heather Page
<u>2nd Grade</u> Toni Avera Taylor Moore	<u>Paraprofessionals</u> Joyce Cooper Wanda Smith Kayla Foxworth Linda Bruce Jessica Hunter Jill Lee
<u>3rd Grade</u> Connie Wilson Ashley Perryman	
<u>4th Grade</u> Amy Greene Tabitha Sapp	<u>Physical Education</u> Sandi Henson Christopher Rumble Bubba Redding
<u>5th Grade</u> Michael Duke Kelly Gentry	<u>Administrative Assistant</u> Deborah Richter
<u>6th Grade</u> Tonya Germany Shawn Banks	<u>Receptionist</u> Amy Ferri
<u>7th Grade</u> Jennifer Nelms Jala Cash	<u>Cafeteria</u> Donna Key Loretta Weeks Mary Myers
<u>8th Grade</u> Cindy Fincher Michelle Horn	<u>STEM</u> Kimberly Moore
<u>9th Grade</u> Teresa Banks	<u>Maintenance</u> Dewayne Cook
<u>Special Education</u> Natalie Zajac - Director Katy Jackson Danielle VanHousen	<u>Maintenance</u> Dewayne Cook
<u>Early Intervention Program</u> Pat Wilkerson Xatavius Hardwick	

Constructive criticism of the schools is welcomed by the Board of Education whenever it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program or to equip the schools to do their tasks more effectively.

Members of the Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School Board of Education have confidence in the professional staff and desire to support their actions in order that they are free from unnecessary, spiteful, or negative criticism and complaint. This policy does not supersede any employee’s or citizen’s right to contact Board members directly. However, whenever a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole or to a Board member as an individual, it will be referred to the administration for study and possible solution.

The Board advises the public that the proper channeling of and most effective way to resolve complaints involving instruction, discipline, transportation, or learning materials is as follows:

CHAIN-OF-COMMAND

Discipline	Curriculum	Transportation
Principal/Assistant Principal	Principal/Assistant Principal	Principal/Assistant Principal
School Board Member	School Board Member	Transportation Director
State Department of Education/State Charter Schools Commission	State Department of Education/State Charter Schools Commission	School Board Member
		State Department of Education/State Charter Schools Commission

ANY ISSUES OUTSIDE OF THIS CHART ADDRESSED BY PRINCIPAL

Grievances

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School is a public charter school, chartered by the State Charter Schools Commission. The following outlines our governance and grievance policies:

The Board of Directors of Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School

The purpose of the Board is to set the general direction and policy of the school, not to manage it on a daily basis. Rather, the Head of School and other administrators manage the school by implementing the policies the Board has enacted. Furthermore, Directors are charged with fostering a positive relationship with school faculty and staff, parents, students, and the

community at large. The Board selects and evaluates the Head of School, oversees the finances of the school, recruits and orients high- quality candidates to serve on the Board, and ensures effective long-range planning. All Board decisions should be made within the parameters of the school's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and previously enacted policies.

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School is a separate entity from its authorizer and the school district in which it is located. By its decisions, the Board shall guard and steward this separateness, both for its own sake and for the sake of the charter school movement.

Grievance Policy

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School values open and proactive communication among and between the members of the school community, including parents, students, faculty, staff, administration, and the Board. Issues that are not dealt with directly can become destructive to the school community and, therefore, detrimental to the learning process of our students. As adults we must model for our students a willingness to address conflict directly. As such, Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School procedures (outlined below) for settling differences are designed to support prompt and equitable resolution of disagreements at the lowest possible faculty or administrative level.

These procedures guide how faculty, staff, parents and students are expected to express grievances about other members of the school community. The administration and Board both expect that conflict will be addressed and proactively dealt with following the fewest steps of the procedures below. However, if the conflict is not resolved at the lowest faculty or administrative level, the guidelines below provide a process for resolving the conflict.

Grievance Procedures: Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School is committed to ensuring that the following procedures are followed:

1. Address Issue With Those Directly Involved

The grievant brings the situation or concern to the attention of those directly involved. Should a student or parent fail to begin the process at the lowest possible level, and instead

go directly to the Head of School with a concern about a teacher or go to a Board member with a concern about a Head of School (for example), the person at the higher level in the policy shall re-direct the grievant to the appropriate level in the process.

2. Address Issue With Appropriate Supervising School Director

If satisfactory resolution is not realized after a direct conversation between the conflicted parties, the situation must be brought to the attention of the Head of School within ten days of the above meeting. The Head of School and the conflicted parties will address the situation, facilitate communication, and develop goals for conflict resolution. The Head of School will monitor this process until resolution is realized or until an impasse is reached.

If the concern is regarding the Head of School, the Chair of the Board will facilitate the complaint at this level.

3. Prepare a Written Grievance for the Board of Directors

If the grievant is not satisfied with the response received via steps one and two, the grievant shall prepare a formal written grievance with the assistance of the facilitator in Step 2. This written grievance should:

- 1) Describe the incident, decision or practice that gave rise to the complaint.
- 2) Cite the contract, policy, or procedure that has been violated and/or rationale for concern.
- 3) Describe what conflict resolution strategies were attempted via steps 1 and 2.
- 4) Explain what corrective action is being requested.

If the concern is regarding the Head of School, the Chair of the Board will oversee this process.

It is the Head of School's responsibility to manage the ultimate resolution of conflicts among parents, students, faculty, and staff, excepting those that pertain to the Head of School him/herself or to a Head of School's execution of a school-wide policy or procedure.

4. Provide Written Grievance to the Board

The grievant may request that the matter be brought to the attention of the Board only if the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved. Upon request by the grievant, the Head of School will forward the written grievance to the Chair of the Board at least one week prior to the next scheduled Board meeting. The Chair, or designee, will review the above process with the grievant and ensure that the proper steps were taken before adding the issue to a meeting agenda. Grievances shall not be brought to the Board without first being submitted in writing, e.g., as a matter of Public Comment, as this does not give the Board sufficient time to consider the issue(s) and address them through this grievance process. The Board will not hear matters that do not follow this grievance process.

The final forum for conflict resolution, after a grievant has followed the steps outlined above, will be at the level of the Board of Directors.

CALENDAR

Monday, August 12, 2019- Thursday, August 15, 2019	Pre-Planning for Teachers
Friday, August 16, 2019	First Day of School
Monday, September 02, 2019	Labor Day
Wednesday, September 11, 2019	Progress Reports - 1st Quarter
Thursday, October 10, 2019	End of 1 st Quarter/ Fall Festival
Friday, October 11, 2019-Tuesday, October 15, 2019	Fall Break
Wednesday, October 16, 2019	Report Cards - 1st Quarter
Monday, October 21- Friday, October 25, 2019	Fall Book Fair
Wednesday, November 13, 2019	Progress Reports - 2nd Quarter
Monday, November 25, 2019- Friday November 29, 2019	Thanksgiving Holidays
Friday, December 20, 2019- January 03, 2019	Christmas Holidays/ End of 2 nd Quarter
Monday, January 6, 2020	Teacher Workday - No School for Students
Tuesday, January 7, 2020	Report Cards - 2nd Quarter
Friday, January 17, 2020	Early Release- 1/2 Day Teacher Workday
Monday, January 20, 2020	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Day
Wednesday, February 5, 2020	Progress Reports - 3rd Quarter
Thursday, February 13, 2020	Early Release- 1/2 Day Teacher Workday
Friday, February 14, 2020- Monday February 17, 2020	Winter Holidays
Thursday, March 12, 2020	End of 3rd Quarter
Friday March 13, 2020	Teacher Work Day - No School for Students
Monday, March 16, 2020	Report Cards - 3rd Quarter
Monday, March 23- Friday, March 27, 2020	Spring Book Fair
Friday April 03, 2020	Early Release- 1/2 Day Teacher Workday
Monday, April 6, 2020- Friday, April 10, 2020	Spring Holidays
Monday, April 13, 2020	Teacher Workday - No School for Students
Monday, April 20, 2020- Friday April 24, 2020	EOG Milestones Test (Grades 3,5, & 8)
Wednesday, April 22, 2020	Progress Reports - 4th Quarter
Monday, April 27- Friday, May 01, 2020	EOG Milestones Test (Grades 4,6, & 7)
Friday, May 1, 2020	Field Day

Tuesday, May 5- Thursday, May 7, 2020	EOC Milestones Test 9th Grade
Friday, May 8, 2020	Honors Night Program-Early Release- 1/2 Day Teacher Workday
Wednesday, May 13, 2020- Friday, May 15, 2020	Final Exams
Friday, May 15, 2020	Kindergarten Graduation
Friday, May 15, 2020	Pre-K End-of-Year Program
Monday, May 18, 2020- Wednesday May 20, 2020	EOG Milestones Retest (Grades 3,5, & 8)
May 20, 2020	Report Cards - End of Year
May 20, 2020	Last Day of School-End of 4 th Quarter-Early Release- 1/2 Day Teacher Workday
May 21-22, 2020	Post-Planning for Teachers

GENERAL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

School Hours

Pre-K through ninth grade school hours are from 8:00 AM until 2:45 PM each day. Students are not to arrive on campus prior to 7:30 AM for any reason. Students may enter the cafeteria at 7:30

AM for breakfast and wait until they are released to their classrooms at 8:00 AM.

Students who are late to school must report to the front office - in the main building - accompanied with their parent. Homeroom starts at 8:00 AM. Classes begin immediately after attendance is checked. Students should be in school by homeroom so as not to miss any instructional time.

After-School

Students not riding the bus must be picked up no later than 3:00 PM unless they are involved in after school activities (in which case they must report to that area immediately). All students are expected to go directly home after dismissal in the afternoon. If students are staying for a school related activity, the student must inform his/her parents in advance of the activity and establish appropriate means for getting home after this activity. Students cannot make arrangements at school to visit a friend when parents do not know of this in advance.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus

We look forward to transporting your child to and from school this year -provided there is enough room on the bus route for the identified county. To ensure that your child will have a safe riding experience, we ask that you review the safe riding instructions that follow, now and periodically throughout the school year.

Safe Riding Instructions

Statistics show that children riding a school bus are much safer than riding any other form of transportation on the roadways. The Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School Board of Education considers the school bus as an extension of the classroom; therefore, all the same rules for the classroom will apply while on the bus.

While on the Bus

Once students board the bus, the driver is in full charge of the safety of your child. Students must follow the driver's directions and instructions at all times. The bus is an extension of the classroom therefore all rules of behavior and conduct identified in the Student Handbook are enforced and apply anytime students are on board the bus. Electronic devices may be used on the bus, but if privileges are abused (cyber bullying, loud music, etc.), the same consequences apply as when school is in session.

Bus Evacuation

Due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the bus driver's control, your child may have to evacuate a bus at some time during the year. When evacuating a bus is necessary, students are placed in a safer location while waiting for assistance. When any type of evacuation occurs, students must follow the instructions of the driver to safely unload and to relocate in a safe location away from any hazard. All buses are designed with several "Emergency Exits"; these locations are, but not limited to the entrance/exit door, rear door, emergency exit windows and roof hatches. Students should always use the front entrance/exit doors whenever possible during evacuations.

Transportation Changes (Bus)

Transportation changes for the student's bus pick up point (am route) must be submitted - in writing (hand-written note or email to transportation@sowegastemcharter.org) - by 2:00 pm the

day before the intended change in transportation change is supposed to take place. Any transportation changes to the student's drop-off point (pm route) must be submitted - in writing (hand-written note or email to transportation@sowegastemcharter.org) - by 10:00 am on the day of the intended change in transportation change is supposed to take place. Front office staff will reply to let you know if your request can be fulfilled (bus capacity) in a timely manner. In order to ensure the identity of the parent and safety of the student, no transportation changes will be accepted by telephone. Students transported to school are expected to behave in a manner which is conducive to the safety and welfare of all riders. Students who violate bus conduct regulations will be suspended from the privilege of bus transportation.

Procedures for Car Riders

Drop Off

1. Morning drop-off occurs on the side entrance of the main building. **NO students should be dropped off before 7:30 AM.** Students drop off begins at 7:30 AM when teachers begin morning duty and there is an adult present to monitor students.
2. Please come to a complete stop in the drop-off/pick-up area to let your child out of the car. **Please do not leave your car unattended along the way or take too much time at the drop off point.**
3. If you need more time, please park in a designated parking spot and escort your child into school. **ALL PARENTS/VISITORS MUST ENTER THE SCHOOL THROUGH THE MAIN ENTRANCE AND OBTAIN A VISITOR'S BADGE.**
4. **DO NOT** use your cell phone while driving.
5. **DO NOT** pass other vehicles to pull in front of them to drop off your child.
6. After 8:00, please park in a designated area and escort your child into the main entrance of the building to obtain a tardy slip in the front office.
7. Please proceed slowly and cautiously when exiting the drop-off/pick-up lane and the campus.

Pick-Up

1. **EARLY CHECKOUTS ARE DISCOURAGED AFTER 2:30 PM.**
Early checkouts after 2:30 PM are discouraged due to ongoing instructional practices that include remedial and acceleration opportunities for students. In addition, students are also transitioning to various areas to prepare for dismissal.

Although early checkouts are discouraged, we do realize that extenuating circumstances such as doctor's appointments and family emergencies will occur. In the event that an early checkout is necessary, every effort will be made to accommodate our students and their families.

2. **ALL CAR RIDERS ARE DISMISSED AT 3:00 PM.**
3. Afternoon pick-up will take place each day on the side entrance of the main building (same as morning drop off). Students will be in line on the sidewalk near the drop-off/pick-up area and grouped by grade. Students will be waiting in the hallways of the school until their name is called. All persons picking up a student **MUST HAVE** the 2019-2020 Student Name Decal on the front dash of their car. Two decals will be provided in the event that your child is being picked up by another driver. This is not a measure intended to cause aggravation - It is intended to ensure that your child is **ONLY** picked up by people who have permission.
4. Students will be dismissed to the staff member standing by the car line. A staff member will monitor students being loaded into the cars. **Please do not leave your car unattended.** This will allow the car line to move quickly and smoothly as students are dismissed.
5. **DO NOT WALK UP AND GET YOUR CHILD TO TAKE TO THE CAR.** This is for the safety of all students. If you plan to exit your vehicle to pick up your child, please arrive before 2:30 PM and report to the front office. Your child will be called to the front office and you will be required to sign your child out of school. This will be considered an early check-out. **DO NOT GO DIRECTLY TO THE CLASSROOM.**
6. Please notify your child's teacher if you will be walking onto campus and not utilizing a vehicle to pick up your child. A monitor will walk with your child to the front entrance of the school to meet you.
7. **DO NOT** use your cell phone while driving.
8. **DO NOT** pass other vehicles to pull in front of them to pick up your child.
9. Please proceed slowly and cautiously when exiting the drop-off/pick-up lane and exit the campus.
10. **Car riders should be picked up no later than 3:10 PM.**

BOOK BAGS

Students are allowed, but not required, to use a book bag to carry their textbooks and school supplies. Book bags should be simple in design with no offensive messages or language on them. For safety reasons, book bags may not be placed in the center aisle of the bus. Book bags may be inspected at any time by school officials.

CAFETERIA INFORMATION

Breakfast

The breakfast line will open at 7:30 AM. They are to remain in the cafeteria until they are released to class by the teachers on duty.

Lunch

Eating will be allowed only in designated areas. Students may not leave the lunchroom during lunch without permission from the teacher/administrator assigned for duty in the lunchroom. No food/drink is to be removed from the lunchroom. It is very important that the cafeteria is kept clean and orderly. Appropriate discipline measures will be taken for students who abuse the tables and chairs or otherwise disrupt the lunchroom routine. This includes breaking in line, throwing food, repeatedly leaving their table messy, etc. If you are bringing your child lunch, please make sure you arrive approximately 5 minutes prior to their lunch period to ensure that they receive their food on time. Students will not be allowed to receive and eat lunch after their lunch period has ended.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School is a 1:1 school in terms of technology. This means that Chromebooks have been purchased for each student to use at the school. Cell phones, iPads, tablets, iPods, Smart Watches, etc. will not be needed or used during instructional times. Students also have a limited amount of time for breakfast and lunch, so cell phones, iPads, tablets, iPods, etc. will not be needed/used during these times. We understand that students may need their phones after school is dismissed, so phones may be brought to school, but must be turned off and kept in a backpack or purse. Electronic devices may be used on the school bus. If the policy is violated, the cell phone may be confiscated and returned to the student's parent or guardian after the student has complied with any other disciplinary action that is imposed.

FIELD TRIPS

Students on a school sponsored field trip are subject to all school rules. As an ambassador of the school, you will be held to a higher account of school rules. Excessive absences and substantial discipline referrals may result in loss of field trip privileges. Also, keep in mind the Dress Code will be in effect on any school sponsored field trip, unless permission is granted by the principal.

LOST AND DAMAGED TEXTBOOKS

A student who loses or damages a textbook will not be denied the use of a textbook in classes; however, he/she will NOT be issued another textbook until the lost/damaged textbook has been paid in full. At the end of the school year, report cards may be held until lost/damaged textbooks or library books are paid in full.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter is identified as a Title I school as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Title I is designed to support State and local school reform efforts tied to challenging State academic standards in order to reinforce and enhance efforts to improve teaching and learning for students. Title I programs must be based on effective means of improving student achievement and include strategies to support parental involvement. All Title I schools must jointly develop with all parents a written parental involvement policy.

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School will provide opportunities to improve parent

engagement to support student learning. We value the contributions and involvement of parents in order to establish an equal partnership for the common goal of improving student achievement..

The Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School welcomes parent input and comments at any time regarding our parent engagement plan. All parent feedback will be used to revise the plan for next year. We invite parent to come out to the revision meetings throughout the year for this policy. The Parent Coordinator, Kadie Phillips, is also always open to one on one parent revision meetings. All students participating in the Title I, Part A program, and their families, are encouraged and invited to fully participate in the opportunities described in this plan. Parents can obtain more information about Title I at our Annual Title I Parent Meeting at the beginning of the school year. Parents can also retrieve a copy of the plan sent via email. Just send your request to kphillips@sowegastemcharter.org. The plan will also be available on the school website.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

We share a common interest in the most precious commodity in the world - your child. We look forward to sharing communication frequently regarding every aspect of your child's education. We do ask, however, that you schedule conferences with the teachers through the office with our secretary. ***Interruptions during classroom instruction are to be kept to emergencies only.***

SCHOOL TELEPHONE

- The school telephone is a business phone and may be used by students only in case of illness or an emergency. The following suggestions are made for parents:
 - Have an understanding with your child about how he/she will get home each day and if arrangements will be different.
 - Write a note to your child's teacher or email transportation@sowegastemcharter.org if arrangements for getting home are different than usual for your child.
 - Ask your child to make sure the teacher receives the note.
 - Plan how your child will be picked up if staying for activities or detention before he/she leaves home in the morning.
- Parents may call the office to leave emergency messages for their children.

VISITORS

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School has deemed safety as a top priority for our students and staff. As a result, we require that all visitors sign in at the front office and wear the Visitor's Badge the entire time on campus.

Visitors please remember to always use the main entrance to our school and have ID ready - if needed. You should expect the following when you visit all school buildings during regular school hours:

- All visitors who enter the building will need to report to the front office where they may be

asked to show ID and sign in.

- After checking in, an identification badge will be issued that contains the visitor's full name, the date, and their destination within the building.
- Front office staff records tardies and early check outs as well. After 8:00 AM please remember to escort your child to the front office for a tardy slip.
- All visitors will need to return to the front office to sign out prior to leaving the building.

ACADEMICS

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Instruction is the most important aspect of each day at school. Comprehensive instruction coupled with effective classroom management provides your child with an optimum learning environment. Georgia's Standards of Excellence serve as the basis for all instructional planning.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework provides students with the opportunity to apply the information they have learned and develop independence. Meaningful and quality homework is limited to 30 minutes per night. However, students are encouraged to pursue non-assigned, independent leisure reading.

REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Mid-term progress reports are sent home every 4-1/2 weeks and report cards are sent home after each 9 week grading period. Students receive an evaluation of their achievement and general conduct. The teacher will be happy to discuss the report card if necessary. Also, you may call the main office if you need to set up a conference with any one or all of your child's teachers. **Outstanding debts or non-payment of debts may result in report cards being withheld until all debts are settled.**

The following criteria are used in determining grades:

<u>1st – 9th Grades</u>	
<u>A</u> 90-100	<u>C</u> 70-79
<u>B</u> 80-89	<u>F</u> Below 70

We encourage you to contact your child's teacher if you have questions regarding your child's progress.

PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

The following local promotion criteria will be used for the 2019 - 2020 school year. Students in grades 1-8 must pass the following requirements in addition to any state requirements:

While there are four subject areas - Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies. There is a Promotion & Retention (P&R) Committee led by the Principal to make decisions about the retention and placement status of named students.

Kindergarten

In order to be **promoted** to the next grade level, kindergarten students must demonstrate mastery of the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory Developing Skills (GKIDS) for language arts and math as well as all other kindergarten assessments. In addition, student must meet all attendance requirements as specified by Sowega STEM Charter School.

Grades 1st - 8th

In order to be **promoted** to the next grade level, students in grades 1st - 5th must pass at least three of the Core Subject Areas with a cumulative grade of 70% or better. This would result in the student passing at least three of the four subject areas for the year. In addition, students must meet all attendance requirements as specified by Sowega STEM Charter School.

If a student is **retained** in the current grade level, he/she will have failed at least two (or more) of the four Core Subject Areas. This decision will be reviewed and agreed upon by the Promotion & Retention Committee.

If a student is **placed** into the next grade level, he/she will have failed at least two (or more) subject areas, but there are factors that would exclude the student from being retained. This decision will reviewed and agreed upon by the Promotion & Retention Committee.

Students may be promoted upon recommendation of their teacher(s) after careful consideration of all the available records and available test scores. Retention is considered the last alternative after all other avenues have been attempted. Students who are in jeopardy of being retained will be immediately referred to the Student Support Team. Per State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11, school level promotion and retention decisions shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

Georgia law requires students in grades 3, 5, and 8 to receive a reading determination of Grade Level or Above on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment in the area of reading and to attain an achievement level of "Developing Learner", "Proficient Learner", or "Distinguished Learner" on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of Grade Assessment in mathematics for grades 5 and 8 in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

No third grade students shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not achieve a status of grade level on the state-adopted assessment in reading and meet the promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends, in compliance with the Georgia Promotion, Placement, and Retention law (O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-282 through 20-2-285) and State Board of Education Rule (160-4-2-.11).

No fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not achieve a status of grade level on the state-adopted assessments in reading and mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends.

High School - 9th - 12th Grade

State-required areas of study	
To graduate, Georgia students must earn a minimum of 23 credits (also called units) in the following areas of study:	
Required Area of Study	Credit/ Unit
Language Arts	4
Mathematics	4
Science (3 required and 1 elective)	4
Social Studies	3
Modern/Classical Language and/or Technical Education and/or Fine Arts	3
Health and Physical Education	1
Electives	4

REMEDIATION

Remediation will be available to students that have been determined to need remedial help in reading and/or mathematics. Students qualify based on test scores and daily academic performance.

INFINITE CAMPUS PARENT PORTAL USER GUIDE

Infinite Campus’s Parent Portal is a web-based student information system used by Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School to maintain student data including attendance, grades, and course information.

If you already have a portal account:

LOGIN with your Infinite Campus username and password

If you have an account but have forgotten your log in information:

Follow these instructions or contact the student's school for assistance.

If you do not have a portal account, follow these simple steps:

First Time Users ONLY. Please Read ALL Directions First.

Go to LOGIN page.

Scroll down to the New to Campus Portal? [CLICK HERE](#) Section. See EXAMPLE

Enter the student's social security number and the month, day and year of the student's birth.

Click SUBMIT to receive an ACTIVATION KEY. Write this key down. You will need it for step 6.

On the Infinite Campus Log-in Page, click the link to activate your parent portal account. See

EXAMPLE

Enter the Activation Key, Click SUBMIT.

Choose and enter a User Name and Password. Your password must be at least 8 characters and include letters and numbers. Select a User Name and Password that will be unique to Infinite Campus.

Write down your User Name and Password and keep it in a safe place.

Click CREATE ACCOUNT.

You will find a link to Infinite Campus on the district and school webpages. There are also Parent and Student Apps you can download to your mobile device.

TESTING

The State Department of Education requires standardized testing at certain grades. Students here also receive additional testing. You will be notified well in advance of test dates so that you can prepare for testing.

- The **Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)** provides diagnostic information about kindergarten students' developing skills in language arts, math, science, social studies, social/emotional development, and approaches to learning.
- **Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)** is a formative literacy assessment designed to assess the acquisition of a set of K-6 literacy skills, such as phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. It will be administered to K – 3rd grade students.
- **The Georgia Milestones** is a comprehensive summative assessment which measures how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. It is administered to 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders.
- **End of Course Testing** Improved teaching and learning are the main focus of Georgia's education system. The EOCT align with Georgia's state mandated content standards and include assessment of specific content knowledge and skills. The assessments provide diagnostic information to help students identify strengths and areas of need in learning, therefore improving performance in all high school courses. The EOCT also provide data to evaluate the effectiveness of classroom instruction at the school, system and state

levels. In 2011 – 2012, the EOCT became Georgia’s high school accountability assessment as part of the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI).

- **Benchmark Assessments** are designed to measure student progress in Pre-K through 9th grade and will be administered as pre-assessments at the beginning of the school year, at mid-year, and post-assessments at the end.
 - The STAR assessments are used to screen students for their reading and math achievement levels. **STAR Reading** and **STAR Math** assessments help determine reading and math achievement levels in order to place students into the Accelerated Reader and Accelerated Math programs. **STAR Early Literacy** assessments help educators monitor students’ growing literacy skills and students’ progress toward becoming independent readers. STAR assessments are also used to monitor student growth throughout the year, to estimate students’ understanding of state standards, and predict students’ performance on the Georgia Milestones Assessment. In addition, STAR also helps teachers determine appropriate instructional levels and skills that students are ready to learn.
 - **DIBELS** - (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) is a series of short tests that assess early childhood (grades K-3) literacy. It is a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of a set of K-6 literacy skills, such as phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
 - **USA TestPrep** is utilized to monitor the student growth of 3rd-9th graders throughout the year in the content areas of Science and Social Studies.

SECTION 504 PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

1. Overview:

Any student or parent or guardian (“grievant”) may request an impartial hearing due to the school system’s actions or inactions regarding your child’s identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant’s failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system’s obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator. The school system’s Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.

2. Hearing Request: The Request for the Hearing must include the following:

- The name of the student.
- The address of the residence of the student.
- The name of the school the student is attending.
- The decision that is the subject of the hearing.
- The requested reasons for review.
- The proposed remedy sought by the grievant.

- The name and contact information of the grievant.

Within 10 business days from receiving the grievant's request for Hearing, the Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request for Hearing does not contain the necessary information noted above, the Section 504 Coordinator will inform the grievant of the specific information needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will be stayed until the Request for Hearing contains the necessary information noted above.

3. Mediation:

The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues detailed by the grievant in his or her Request for Hearing. Mediation is voluntary and both the grievant and school system must agree to participate. The grievant may terminate the mediation at any time. If the mediation is terminated without an agreement, the school system will follow the procedures for conducting an impartial hearing without an additional Request for Hearing.

4. Hearing Procedures:

**Georgia Department of Education
Richard Woods State School Superintendent**

- A. The Section 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official who will conduct a hearing within 45 calendar days from the receipt of the grievant's Request for Hearing unless agreed to otherwise by the grievant or a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
- B. Upon a showing of good cause by the grievant or school system, the impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may grant a continuance and set a new hearing date. The request for a continuance must be in writing and copied to the other party.
- C. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.
- D. The grievant will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel at his or her own expense at the hearing and participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If the grievant is to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, he or she must inform the Section 504 Coordinator of that fact in writing at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify the Section 504 Coordinator in writing of representation by legal counsel shall constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.
- E. The grievant will have the burden of proving any claims he or she may assert. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the recipient to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A recipient shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the recipient unless it is demonstrated by the recipient that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R.§104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an

attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.

- F. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.
- G. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence based on its reliability and probative value.
- H. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
- I. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.
- J. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.
- K. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the recipient. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the recipient.
- L. Georgia Department of Education, Richard Woods, State School Superintendent

Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under 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 our school's Section 504 Coordinator at the following address:

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School
Ginger Almon, 504 Coordinator
185 Pecan Street
Shellman, GA 39886
galmon@sowegastemcharter.org

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/or students with the following rights:

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.

4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Perfect Attendance (Kindergarten – 9th Grade)

This award is given to students without any absences, tardies or unexcused early check-outs per nine week period. If any tardies or early check-outs occur during the nine weeks, they must be accompanied by a written excuse from the doctor in order for the student to be eligible for the award. It is given at the end of each nine weeks, as well as the end of the year.

Principal’s List (1st – 9th Grade)

This award is in recognition of those students who earned all A’s in the core content areas only (excluding PE and specials). It is given at the end of each nine weeks as well as the end of the year. **For end of the year recognition, students must receive the Principal’s List recognition for each 9-Week period - this will not be an average.**

A/B Honor Roll (1st - 9th Grade)

This award is in recognition of those students who earned A’s and B’s in the core content areas only (excluding PE and specials). It is given at the end of each nine weeks, as well as the end of the year. **For end of the year recognition, students must receive the A/B Honor Roll recognition for each 9-Week period - this will not be an average.**

Aggie Award (Kindergarten – 9th Grades)

This award is given to students who have shown considerable improvement in academics during the nine week grading period. It is given at the end of each nine weeks as well as the end of the year.

End of the Year Awards (1st – 9th Grades)

These awards are given to the student with the highest average for each content area per homeroom.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PERFORMANCE INDEX (CCRPI)

The College and Career Ready Performance Index – CCRPI – is Georgia’s annual tool for measuring how well its schools, districts, and the state itself are preparing students for the next educational level. It provides a comprehensive roadmap to help educators, parents, and community members promote and improve college and career readiness for all students.

The CCRPI includes five main components each scored on a scale of 0 to 100: Achievement, Progress, Closing Gaps, Readiness, and Graduation Rate (high school only). These components, encompassing multiple indicators, are combined for a total CCRPI score on a scale of 0 to 100. The CCRPI also reports other information, such as the performance of student subgroups, school climate, and financial efficiency status.

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School earned a score of 37.8 on the 2018 CCRPI.

	CCRPI Score					
	37.8					
	Sum of Achievement, Progress, Achievement Gap, and Challenge Points					
	Content Mastery	Progress	Closing Gaps	Readiness	School Climate Rating	Financial Efficiency

Elementary	40.5	35.7	0	44		
Middle	40.1	44.4	N/A	77.2		

Student Growth Percentiles

The new growth score, called a student growth percentile answers the question “How much did a student grow over the previous year compared to his/her academic peers?” It is an accurate and fair way to capture the process students make through the course of an academic year.

Student growth percentiles not only show how individual students are progressing, but they also can be aggregated to show how groups of students, schools, districts, and the states are progressing. Students also receive growth projection and growth targets, which describe the amount of growth needed to reach and exceed proficiency in subsequent years.

The Georgia Growth Model will include multi-year projections, giving a long-term view of what is required for students to reach or exceed proficiency.

Example:

Anna’s reading growth percentile is 54. The median reading growth for Anna’s school is 65. This means that Anna grew at a rate greater than 54% of academically-similar students in reading. On average, she grew at a lower rate in reading compared to the other students in her school.

EDUCATIONAL ACRONYMS

These are common acronyms and abbreviations that are used in the educational environment.

ADD

Attention deficit disorder

BD

Behavior disorder

BOE

Board of Education

CCGPS

Common Core Georgia Performance Standards

CCRPI

College and Career Readiness Performance Index

DFACS

Department of Family and Children Services

IDEA

Individuals with Disabilities Act

IEP

Individualized Education Plan

ISS

In school suspension

LD

Learning disability

LRE

Least restrictive environment

O.C.G.A.

Official Code of Georgia

DOE
Department of Education

EIP
Early Intervention Program

ELL
English Language Learner

GaDOE
Georgia Department of Education

GPA
Grade point average

GPS
Georgia Performance Standards

GSE
Georgia Standards of Excellence

OSS
Out of school suspension

Pre-K
Pre-Kindergarten

PTO
Parent-Teacher Organization

RTI
Response to Intervention

SST
Student Support Team

GKIDS
Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills

HEALTH

CLINIC

Students may not be allowed to go to the clinic at any time unless you have a note from a teacher or administrator. Entrance without permission may result in discipline. The clinician will check the student and make a decision regarding notification of parents. In the event of an injury or other emergency, parents and an ambulance will be called. Make your visit to the clinic as quick as possible in order to avoid missing class time.

MEDICATIONS

Asthma

Students diagnosed with asthma and require the use of asthma medication must have a one time visit to the school clinic in order for the medicine to be administered at school. A **Self-Administration of Asthma Medication at School** form must be signed by parent/guardian and physician before students are allowed to carry and self-administer asthma medication at school.

Allergy

Students diagnosed with asthma and require the use of asthma medication must have a one time visit to the school clinic in order for the medicine to be administered at school. If a student has an allergy that requires the use of an EpiPen, etc., then parents must provide an EpiPen, etc., with proper pharmacy label to be kept in the school clinic.

In order for a student to carry and self-administer EpiPen, etc., then parent/guardian and physician must complete one of the following forms:

- **Self-Administration of EpiPen, EpiPen Jr.**
- **Twinject Medication at School**

Diabetes

A student diagnosed with diabetes must have the following form complete prior to any medication being administered at school:

Diabetes Medical Management Plan (DMMP)

This form must be completed **EVERY SCHOOL YEAR** by the **parent/guardian and physician**.

Seizures

Any student diagnosed with a seizure disorder must have parent/guardian and physician complete a **Seizure Action Plan form**.

Gastronomy Feeding

A student with a Gastronomy appliance must have the following form completed by a **parent/guardian and physician** annually.

STUDENT ILLNESS/INJURY

The main reasons for keeping your child home are **he/she's too sick to participate** comfortably at school or **he/she might spread a contagious disease to other students**. If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease, please contact the front office or school clinic so other students' parents and school staff may be alerted of the symptoms. A doctor's note is required before a student is readmitted when there is a contagious disease/infection involved. Students should stay home from school if there is:

- Fever > or equal to 100.0°F
- Vomiting more than once
- Diarrhea
- Frequent cough
- Persistent pain (ear, stomach, etc.)
- Widespread rash
- Head lice, until treated
- Chicken pox, until lesions have scabbed (usually 5-7 days)
- Impetigo, Ringworm, or Scabies until under treatment and lesions covered
- Bacterial Pink Eye (thick eye drainage and redness of the whites of the eyes) until under treatment
- Open Wound Drainage (ears, wound, etc.)

Fever

Check your child's temperature with a thermometer, and if they have a temperature equal to 100* F or over 100* F they are considered to have fever. **Children must be fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of medicine, before returning to school.**

Vomiting/Diarrhea

Until we know that these are not signs of a contagious illness, such as a stomach virus, your child should be kept home. Your child should be vomiting/diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to

school.

Skin Rashes or Open Wounds

If the rash or wound has any fluid or drainage coming from it, the child must remain out of school until the rash or wound has been treated and a note from the doctor states it is ok to return to school, or until the rash is gone, dried, or scabbed over with no new spots appearing. Anytime a rash is associated with fever, the child may not come to school until that fever is gone for 24 hours without medication.

Red Eyes with Drainage or Crusting Around the Eye

This can often mean your child has conjunctivitis, also known as pink-eye. We must have a note from the doctor stating the condition is not contagious or when the student may return to school. If no doctor's excuse is available, your child must remain out of school until the redness and drainage are completely gone.

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

Head lice are an especially common problem for all school aged children. If, during the screening process or individual inspection, an infestation of head lice is confirmed, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The student will be removed from the classroom. Parent/guardian will be contacted and required to check-out the student and provide the appropriate treatment.
2. When the students have left at the end of the school day, the school classroom where an incidence of head lice has been found will be cleaned to help prevent the spread of the condition.
3. After parent/guardian has administered the first treatment and the nits have been manually removed, the child may return to school. The school clinic will conduct an examination. All students must be cleared by the school nurse and found to be free of all nits and/or live head lice prior to being allowed to ride the school bus or return to class. If the student is not lice and/or nit free, he or she **WILL NOT** be readmitted to school.
4. A second inspection (7 – 10 days later) may be conducted by school officials to ensure that another infestation has not occurred. If an exam during this period reveals lice or nits, you will be notified to pick up your child and the absence will be unexcused because it will be considered a continuation of the original head lice condition.
5. Absences of one or more days due to head lice infestation will be unexcused. Chronic or recurring cases that result in excessive absences will result in a referral to the school attendance clerk and may cause failure to progress to the next grade or to receive credit for the course.

GENERAL TREATMENT INFORMATION

- Repetitive and frequent use of pediculicide treatments is not recommended because of the associated hazards and potential resistance. Treatment labels

should always be followed.

- There are several alternative treatment methods available; please consult your local pharmacist or school nurse for more information. (Examples: mayonnaise, olive oil, tea tree oil and Vaseline)
- If live lice remain after treatment, a second treatment is recommended around 7-10 days after the first treatment.
- Children should be referred to a physician for repeat (more than 3, in most cases) lice infestations.
- The key to eliminating head lice is diligence. The following measures will also assist in ridding the household environment of any infestation:
 - Check all household members (including adults) of children with live lice. Close friends of the infested child should be examined and treated if necessary.
 - Launder linens, pajamas, and towels of the infested person; wash hairbrushes/combs in hot water
 - Vacuum mattresses, pillows, stuffed animals, furniture, carpeting and car seats. Discard the contents of the vacuum in a plastic trash bag after each use.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

PURPOSE

To provide knowledge to employees/clients/families/other individuals on infectious/communicable diseases that arise in the community, which could threaten their health and safety and to give direction on how to effectively and efficiently control them.

POLICY

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter is committed to ensuring the safety of its employees/students/families/other individuals, by establishing procedures for responding to the infectious/communicable diseases and for protecting the privacy of infected persons, in accordance with the requirements of the Georgia Board of Education rule 160-1-3-.03.

DEFINITIONS

1. Infectious Diseases

An infectious disease is an illness caused by a specific infectious agent or its toxic produces, which can be passed on from one individual to another. It may be

transmitted directly from one body to another, without the help of other objects such as kissing, droplet spray from sneezing, coughing, spitting, singing or talking. It may be passed indirectly when an object transmits the organism. Objects of transmission could be utensils, food, water, milk, clothing, linens, air, soil or insects. They include, but are not limited to:

- Malaria Chicken Pox
- Strep Throat Conjunctivitis
- Influenza (the flu) Hepatitis (A, B, C)
- HIV/Aids Lice
- Measles Ringworm
- Mumps Scabies
- Rubella Scarlet Fever
- SARS Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Tuberculosis Yeast Infections
- Common Cold

PROCEDURES

1. Employees, who become aware of an infectious/communicable disease, shall:
 - a. report any confirmed occurrences of infectious diseases to the leader of the school;
 - b. follow the policies and procedures for infection control; and,
 - c. take recommended training or refresher training for infection control, if needed.
2. Upon becoming aware of the infectious/communicable disease, the principal shall:
 - a. Send the infected person to the nursing facility located on school grounds.
 - b. follow all medical advice from the appropriate health authority;
 - c. advise employees about its existence; and, review measures for dealing with it;
 - d. remind employees about the infectious/communicable disease policy including:
 - i. an overview of the policy; and,
 - ii. the location of the written policy.
 - e. provide general information and infections control measures to teachers/families; and,
 - f. ensure that infection control practices are followed.
3. Should exposure to a blood-borne disease occur, leader of the school and employees shall follow the procedures outlined in *Reporting and Recording Exposure to Blood-borne Diseases*.
4. The leader of the school shall ensure a “*Post Exposure Incident Report for Blood-borne Diseases*” is completed for any employee whose eye(s), mouth, other mucous membrane or no intact skin has come in contact with blood, a potentially infectious material(s) or needle/sharp object(s) while performing his/her duties.
5. The leader of the school and employees shall respect the privacy rights of individuals who have contacted an infectious/communicable disease.

6. The leader of the school and employees shall not discriminate against individuals who have contracted an infectious/communicable disease or who have positive antibodies to a blood-borne disease.

GUIDELINES

1. The leader of the school is responsible for ensuring the policy is followed.
2. Employees shall be given information on infectious/communicable diseases and their control measures.
3. Employees shall receive training on infectious/contagious diseases upon initial assignment and annually thereafter.
4. Training for infectious/contagious diseases shall include:
 - a. what infectious/contagious diseases are, how they are contacted, how they are transmitted and how they are controlled;
 - b. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards;
 - c. Universal Precautions
 - d. employer's policies and procedures;
 - e. employer's exposure control plan;
 - f. personal protective equipment;
 - g. engineering and work practice controls.
5. Training records shall include:
 - a. dates when training was given;
 - b. summary on what training was given;
 - c. names and credentials of person(s) providing the training; and,
 - d. names and positions of people attending the training sessions.
6. Records are to be maintained for 3 years from the date of training.
7. Students/families/other individuals who have/been exposed to infectious/contagious diseases shall be given basic information including what infectious/contagious diseases are, how they are contacted, how they are transmitted and how they are controlled.
8. Each LEA shall limit the disclosure of health-related information of its employees and students. FERPA prohibits the unauthorized disclosure of information from educational records except in certain limited circumstances, such as a health and safety emergency as described in 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.31(a) (10) and 99.36. Additionally, the disclosure of certain confidential health information may be a misdemeanor punishable under O.C.G.A. § 24-9-47.



Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H., **Commissioner**

Brian Kemp, **Governor**

2 Peachtree Street, NW, 15th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3142

dph.ga.gov

May 21, 2019

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Meningococcal disease is a serious bacterial illness that affects the brain and the spinal cord. Meningitis can cause shock, coma and death within hours of the first symptoms.

To help protect your children and others from meningitis, Georgia law requires students be vaccinated against this disease, unless the child has an exemption.

Before starting the 2020-2021 school year, all students entering or transferring into 11th grade will need proof of a meningococcal booster shot (MCV4), unless their first dose was received on or after their 16th birthday.

If your teen has not been vaccinated against meningococcal disease, we strongly recommend getting your child vaccinated. Getting MCV4 (meningococcal conjugate vaccine) now will not only help protect your child against the ongoing threat of meningitis, it will also meet the new school entry requirement.

Ask your pediatrician or local health department about other shots your child may need including:

- the human papillomavirus (HPV) series
- the tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis shot (Tdap or Td booster)
- an annual flu vaccine; and
- catch-up immunizations, including chickenpox, MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) and hepatitis B.

If your child does not have health insurance or their health plan won't cover these vaccines, call your local health department and ask about getting no or low cost vaccines. For more information, visit <http://dph.georgia.gov/vaccines-children> or call (800) 848-3868.

Sincerely,

Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner & State Health Officer

ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL

The Governing Board of Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School adopts the following regulation which shall be effective on that date that the policy is adopted by the Board.

Adopted: 2/21/2018

Section 1. Compulsory Attendance

Georgia's Compulsory Education Law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1) requires that students in the state of Georgia between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) attend a public or private school or a home study program. However, if a child is under 6 and has attended more than 20 days in a public school, he/she is then subject to the compulsory attendance laws (20-2-150(C)). Public Kindergarten is available in every school system, but it is not mandatory.

Section 2. School Policy

The attendance policy for Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. is taken very seriously. The maximum number of days absent (excused or unexcused) is 6. Chronic absenteeism results in tremendous gaps in learning. The Attendance Protocol policy will be followed and judicial action may result. Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter will work closely with the local Truancy Intake Officer and judge.

Under and by virtue of the school laws of this state, any person in Georgia who has control or charge of a child between the ages of six and sixteen must enroll and send that child to school including public, private and home schooling and is required to cause the continuous attendance of said child/children in a school. Failure to do so will make anyone who has control or charge of school age eligible children liable to the penalties provided therein. Violation of the law is a misdemeanor, and violation makes you subject to a fine of up to \$100.00 and 30 days in jail, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court. Each day of absence from school in violation of this law shall constitute a separate offense.

Regular school attendance is mandated by the state and necessary for students to make adequate progress each year. As we are committed to each child's mastery of all essential skills, we will continue to closely monitor absences, tardies, and early checkouts.

Section 3. Attendance

Section 3.1. Definitions of Attendance Protocol

Tardy

A student is tardy when he/she arrives to school after the beginning of the official school day or is not in the assigned class at the official beginning of the class period.

Excused Tardy

Late arrival to school or class as a result of verifiable reasons defined herein as excused absences or as a result of events physically out of one's control such as inclement weather, documented transportation delays, health related emergencies, power outage, compliance with the court order, necessary medical or dental appointments, etc.

Unexcused Tardy

Arriving late to school or class with or without the knowledge of parent/guardian, as a result of oversleeping, parent errands, etc., unless it is an excused tardy. Fifteen (15) unexcused tardies result in a referral to social worker.

Early Check-out

Students who have been in attendance for more than half of the school day but check-out of school before the end of the day.

Excused Early Check-out

Check-outs for Medical/dental appointments (must have documented excuses from medical or dental facility) personal illness, or family emergencies or other extenuating circumstances.

Unexcused Early Check-out

Check-outs for any other reason other than necessary medical/dental appointments, personal illness, or documented family emergencies or other extenuating circumstances

Full Day Attendance

All students are expected to be in attendance every day/all day as attendance is an essential component of their academic success. It is understandable that it is sometimes difficult to arrange medical/dental appointments after school, but parents should make every attempt to arrange those appointments at the end of the school day. For a student to be considered present for the day they must remain in school for at least the number of minutes below.

Kindergarten-Third Grade: 135 Minutes

Fourth-Fifth Grade: 150 Minutes

Sixth-Ninth Grade: 165 Minutes

Section 3.2. Excused Absences

State Board Rule 160-5-1-.10 delineates absences which all schools must consider excused. As permitted under the state law and State Board of Education policies, students may be excused lawfully from attendance for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or when attendance in school would endanger the student's health or the health of others; Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter may require students to present appropriate medical documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence. With proper verification a student may be eligible for 160-5-1-.10 (Continued)
2 hospital/homebound instruction as outlined in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services.
2. Serious illness or death in a student's immediate family (mother, father, sister, brother, grandparent, or legal guardian) that necessitates absences from school;
In the event of a serious illness in a student's immediate family, Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter may require students to present appropriate medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
3. The observation of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
4. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school (high school). The first day for armed forces will be counted present.

5. When registering to vote or voting in a public election, which shall not exceed one day
6. Conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
7. A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave. Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to require a local school system to revise any policies relating to maximum number of excused and unexcused absences for any purposes (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-692.1).
8. Local boards of education shall count students present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly as set forth in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-692.
9. A student who successfully participates in the Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) program shall be counted as present and given full credit for the school day during which he or she served in the STEP program. No student shall be permitted to be absent from school or participate in the STEP program for more than two school days per school year.
10. A foster care student who attends court proceedings relating to the student's foster care shall be credited as present by the school and shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused, for any day, portion of a day, or days missed from school as set forth in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-692.2
11. Any other absence not explicitly defined herein but deemed by the local school board of education to have merit based on circumstances.

Section 3.3. Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences will be issued and subject to attendance investigation that can result in penalty as imposed by the Compulsory Education Law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1) and Student Attendance Failure to attend school, with or without the knowledge of the parent/legal guardian, for reasons other than those specifically outlined as excused absences. An absence is considered unexcused until proper written and signed documentation is provided.

Section 3.4. Truant

Any child who is subject to the compulsory attendance law who has more than five (5) days of unexcused absences during calendar school year or has more than 15 days absences, excused, unexcused or unverified.

School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Section 4. Attendance Protocol

Section 4.1. Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Students who arrive at school late must sign in at the office and obtain a tardy slip before going to class. Students should be in class by 8:15 for homeroom to be considered at school on time. The tardy bell will ring at 8:15 a.m. The student must be signed in by a parent/guardian or have a signed note from the parent/guardian which must include: date, time, the student's name, and the reason for being tardy. Please also note that if half of the class is missed, the student will be marked absent for the entire class period (middle school students).

Each accumulation of (5) unexcused tardies will equal one unexcused absence. Reward trips/movies/activities may be affected by the accumulation of unexcused tardies. See the child's teacher for specific guidelines. In order to be eligible for Student of the Month, students can have only 1 unexcused tardy for the month. Students with more than 5 unexcused tardies/will not be eligible for perfect attendance. In order for a tardy to be considered excused, a doctor's note or other verifiable, acceptable documentation must be on file. The student will have 3 days to bring the note to school. Students must attend half of the school day (half of the academic class sessions, excluding lunch, to be considered present for the day).

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M Charter will by certified mail, notify parents/guardians of students who have accumulated ten (10) unexcused tardies per semester and will report violations to the Student Attendance Team to determine if court action will be pursued for formal intervention.

Section 4.2. Early Check-Outs

Students are expected to attend school all day every day. Students who check-out early must be signed out at the office by a parent. Please also note that if half of the class is missed, the student will be marked absent for the entire class period (middle school students).

Students who need to leave before the end of the school day must present a note from a parent/guardian to the office/teacher. The note must include the date, time, the student's name, and the reason for leaving.

Each accumulation of (5) unexcused check-outs will equal one unexcused absence. Students who return to school before the day is over must sign back in. Otherwise, the student is marked absent for the rest of the day. Students must remain in school until 12:00 (noon) to be counted present for the entire day.

Students must attend half of the school day (half of the academic class sessions, excluding lunch, to be considered present for the day). In order to be eligible for Student of the Month, students can have only 1 unexcused early check-out for the month. Students with more than 5 unexcused early check-outs will not be eligible for perfect attendance.

Failing to sign in or out properly could result in disciplinary action.

Section 4.3. Absences

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school in writing of the date and reason for the absence within three (3) school days of the absence. The parent/guardian must note the student's name, the date(s) of absence(s), and the reason for the absence. If a student is being checked-in or checked-out for a doctor's appointment, a physician's note or appointment card may be required to be considered excused. Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M.

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter adopts, as part of the student codes of conduct developed pursuant to O.C.G.A 20-2-735, a definition of truancy that contains the minimum standards related to student attendance and a summary of possible consequences and penalties for truancy established in State Board rule (160-5-1-.10).

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter will take the following action related to absences:

1. Three (3) unexcused absences or a total of five (5) absences (excused or unexcused):

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter will initiate phone contact with the parent/guardian and mail an attendance letter via first class mail to the parent notifying them of the number of absences and a summary of the penalties and consequences. Students with 3 unexcused absences or a total of five (5) absences shall be referred to the school social worker or attendance designee for remediation. This process may include a conference with the student and/or his or her parent, legal guardian, or other person having charge. The student's attendance is monitored by the attendance designee or Attendance Support Team (AST).

2. Five (5) unexcused absences or seven (7) total absences (excused or unexcused):

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter will initiate phone contact with the parent/guardian and will mail notification through certified mail of the number of absences and a summary of the penalties and consequences. Parents/guardians will also be required to attend a scheduled meeting with the social worker, attendance officer, or the AST. Parents/guardians will be required to enter into an attendance agreement. A home visit may also be necessary at this time. If no response is received from the parent/guardian or no improvements are noted, Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter will by certified mail, issue an attendance letter to the parent/guardian to provide notification again of days absent and a summary of the penalties and consequences and to let parents/guardians know that a referral has been made to the truancy officer.

3. Seven (7) unexcused absences or ten (10) total absences (excused or unexcused):

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter may turn the case over to the magistrate court. Violation of the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law OCGA 20-2-690.1 requires any person in the state of Georgia who has charge of a child between the ages of six and sixteen to enroll and send that child to school.

This law further states that any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this State who has control or charge and who shall violate this code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to:

a. a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00,

b. imprisonment not to exceed 30 days

c. community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction.

Prior to any action to commence judicial proceedings to impose a penalty on a parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of the school aged child for failing to comply with compulsory attendance, a Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter shall send a notice to such parent, guardian, or other person by certified mail, return receipt requested

School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not be counted as unexcused for the purpose of determining truancy

Section 5. Homebound

Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services
Hospital/Homebound (HHB) services are designed to provide continuity of educational services between the classroom and home or hospital for students in Georgia public schools whose medical needs, either physical or psychiatric, do not allow them to attend school for a limited period of time. HHB instruction may be used to supplement the classroom program for students with health impairments whose conditions may interfere with regular school attendance (e.g., students receiving dialysis or radiation/chemotherapy or students with other serious health conditions). Students must be enrolled in a public school in Georgia in order to receive HHB services.

HHB services are not intended to supplant regular school services and are by design temporary. The student must anticipate being absent from school for a minimum of ten consecutive or intermittent school days due to a medical or psychiatric condition. The student's inability to attend school for medical or psychiatric reasons must be certified by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist who is currently treating the student for the diagnosis presented. Students or parents requesting more information about Hospital Homebound can contact the main office at (229)-345-3033..

Section 6. Final Grades and Make-up Work

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

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

Section 7. Student Withdrawals (limitations)

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter is authorized to withdraw a student who:

1. Has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences;
2. Is not subject to compulsory school attendance; and
3. Is not receiving instructional services from the local school system through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Parental Notification of Student Withdrawal

The Superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall use his or her best efforts to notify the parent(s), guardian(s), or other person(s) who has charge of a student if the school system plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter is authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance only if the local superintendent or the superintendent's designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program.

Section 8. Excessive Absences Letter

All parents will receive excessive absence letters. An example of the type of letter that may be received is below.

EXCESSIVE -ABSENCES LETTER

Date _____

Student Name
Parents Name
Address

Dear _____

This letter is to formally notify you that as of _____, _____ has accumulated _____ absences, and _____ of these are unexcused absences. Please contact the school if this absence information is not correct.

Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of any child or children enrolled in the (School) who accumulates more than five (5) unexcused absences in violation of the Compulsory Education Law, (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1) shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine of not less than \$25.00 nor greater than \$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction.

This violation of Georgia Law has been referred to _____ for further investigation and intervention. (Law Enforcement Agency) Please refer to the enclosed attendance policy and make every effort to have punctual and regular attendance at school.

Sincerely,
Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter School

MONITORING

The Principal/designee will review attendance records at the end of each school year for the purpose of identifying students for attendance monitoring at the start of the next school year. Students referred to the Principal or designee for violation of compulsory attendance during a school year will be considered as an active referral for continued monitoring at the beginning of the next school year.

**CODE OF CONDUCT & STUDENT
DISCIPLINE**

It is the desire of Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School that all students should have every possible opportunity to take advantage of the instructional programs. Whatever distracts from a favorable learning environment lessens that opportunity.

EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Students enrolled in Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School that will be expected to demonstrate the following:

In an effort to fully implement school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports, along with maximizing students' engagement and instructional time, Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School teachers will utilize corrective strategies in **Level 1** (Classroom Managed) prior to referring a student to campus administration for an office discipline referral (**Levels 2**). These corrective strategies include but are not limited to:

- Remove distractions
- Proximity control
- Proactively prompt desired behavior
- Increase opportunities for active participation
- Increase use of specific praise statements
- Increase wait time for response
- Redirect student
- Review/Re-Teach expectations
- Provide opportunities for student to practice expected behaviors and provide descriptive feedback
- Loss of recess or other free choice time
- In-class privileges revoked
- Teacher/student conference

Incentives and Rewards

Our school wide incentive program focuses on students who are following school rules and rising to school expectations. Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School will be celebrating those students who do not have any office referrals during each nine weeks grading period. At the end of the nine weeks, these students will receive a prize and/or celebration. An end of the year celebration will take place for those students receiving no office referrals for the year.

Each month, teachers will nominate a student from their homeroom who shows tremendous character, academic growth/performance, and has appropriate attendance. These students will receive a prize, certificate, and recognition. Each month these students will participate in a kindness committee for the month where they will spread kindness throughout the entire school.

It is important that we are respectful of students in our disciplinary responses. Consequences should focus on teaching, remediation, or logical consequences as much as possible. In providing consequences we also want to be mindful of the instructional time students are missing with the goal of minimizing the amount of instructional time missed.

<p style="text-align: center;">Level 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Minor Offenses</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Classroom Managed Behavior</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Level 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Major Offenses</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Office Managed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Level 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Illegal Offenses</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Office Managed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Running in the hallway ● Loud voices/yelling ● Off-task behavior ● Noise making ● Class Disruption ● Failure to complete assignments and/or bring materials to class ● Out of Seat ● Horseplay ● Breaking cafeteria rules ● Breaking playground rules ● Inappropriate behavior in the bathrooms ● Distracting paraphernalia (games, phones, tablets, etc.) ● Chewing gum or eating candy except by teacher permission ● Violation of Dress Code ● Any other acts or violations which the Principal or Designee deem reasonable to fall in this category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Major verbal altercation/major disruption ● Fighting/physical aggression ● Harassment/bullying ● Persistent/Willful Disobedience ● Insubordination ● Leaving class/campus without permission ● Property destruction/misuse ● Theft ● Forgery ● Unauthorized use of electronic devices/Internet misuse/cyberbullying ● Trespassing ● Offensive Touching ● Disorderly conduct ● Cheating ● Any other acts or violations which the Principal or Designee deem reasonable to fall in this category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assault/Battery ● Use or possession of alcohol' under the influence of while on campus or a school sponsored event ● Weapons (possess, use or transmit) ● Threatening staff ● Bullying students ● Use or possession of drugs; under the influence of while on campus or a school sponsored event ● Terroristic Threats (staff/students) ● Arson ● Threatening to destroy school property (bomb, fire, shootings) ● Extreme property damage/vandalism ● Any other acts or violations which the Principal or Designee deem reasonable to fall in this category

CONSEQUENCES

Level 1 Minor Offenses Classroom Managed Behavior	Level 2 Major Offenses Office Managed	Level 3 Illegal Offenses Office Managed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ Teacher warning ∅ Parental contact · 2nd Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ Teacher warning ∅ Parent conference · 3rd Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ Administrative referral ∅ Invitation for parent/guardian to accompany student to school or classes · Successive offenses may result in after school detention or out of school suspension (OSS) as assigned by administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ Administrative Discretion ∅ Parental contact · 2nd Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ After school detention ∅ Parent conference · 3rd Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ After school detention (2 Days) ∅ Behavior contract implementation ∅ Invitation for parent/guardian to accompany student to school or classes ∅ Successive offenses may result in out of school suspension (OSS) as assigned by administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ Out of school suspension (3 - 5 days) ∅ Parent conference ∅ Student behavior contract · 2nd Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ OSS (5 days) ∅ Parent conference ∅ Follow-up of behavior contract · 3rd Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∅ OSS (7 days) ∅ Parent conference ∅ Possible tribunal · All Level 3 violations are zero tolerance offenses. Successive offenses may also result in expulsion

The principal will be the final say in the decisions related to identified behaviors. The chart above is meant to serve as a guide for educators and administrators - these are not the exact consequences for each violation. Decisions are subject to administration.

- As with any incident of student behavior, school administrators must exercise informed judgment as to whether a student's actions constitute a violation of the Board policy and/or the Code of Student Conduct. The levels shown on the previous page assist in guiding administrators to use progressive interventions to change student behaviors. The administrator always has the option to use an intervention from a lower level as long as one from the prescribed level is also employed.
- Three or more discipline referrals per 9-week period will result in the revocation of privileges (field trips, special events/programs, etc.)

ALCOHOL, NARCOTICS, STIMULANTS, & OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS

Students in the Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, transmitting, intending to transmit, or being under the influence of alcohol and 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;
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, 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. Prescriptive medicine or drugs, with or without medical cause or medical permission, unless such medications have been registered with the school's guidance department according to the school's procedures. In all schools, medicines must be registered with the principal.
- d. Possession of non-prescription drug/medicine (over the counter) is also prohibited. ALL MEDICATION (Prescription/non-prescription/over-the-counter) IS TO BE TURNED IN PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL DAY.

BULLYING

Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All schools within the district have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance among students, staff, and volunteers. Behavior that infringes on the safety of any student will not be tolerated. A student shall not bully, harass, or intimidate another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes but is not limited to: direct physical

contact such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults such as teasing or name-calling; the use of electronic methods to harass, threaten or humiliate, and social isolation and/or manipulation. The school policy prohibiting bullying is included in the student code of conduct and includes but is not limited to the following:

- Any student who engages in bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- Students are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designee.
- Students can rely on staff to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner.
- If the complainant student or the parent of the student feels that appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached after consulting the school principal, the student or the parent of the student should contact the local superintendent or his or her designee.
- The school system prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

All students and/or staff shall immediately report incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation to the school principal or designee. School staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. Each complaint of bullying shall be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling on a school bus to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, during a school sponsored activity, 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 or acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic equipment 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.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be taken after each incident of bullying and upon a finding of guilt.

Disciplinary action after the first incident of bullying may include but is not limited to the following:

- Loss of a privilege
- Reassignment of seats in the classroom, cafeteria or school bus
- Reassignment of classes
- Out-of-school suspension
- Detention
- Expulsion (through appropriate due process hearing)

If necessary, counseling and other interventions should also be provided to address the social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of students who are victims of bullying and students who commit an offense of bullying. Students, parents/guardians and other stakeholders may report incidents of bullying to an administrator, teacher, counselor or other staff member by using the school's complaint procedures or by calling Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter (229-679-5555) or the Georgia Department of Education's 1-877 SAY-STOP (1-877-729-7867) School Safety Hotline.

Please note: Any form of electronic bullying (cyberbullying) using school equipment, school networks, e-mail systems or committed at school is strictly prohibited.

The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited, to the following:

- All staff, students and their parents will receive a summary of this policy prohibiting bullying at the beginning of the school year as part of the student code of conduct.
- The school shall keep a report of bullying and the results of an investigation confidential.
- Staff are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur or upon receipt of any report of bullying.
- People witnessing or experiencing bullying are encouraged to report the incident to the school principal designee.

The following actions will be taken when bullying is reported:

1. Investigate Upon receipt of any report of bullying, Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. personnel will direct an immediate investigation involving appropriate personnel. The investigation should begin no later than the following school day. The investigation shall include interviewing the alleged perpetrator(s) and victim(s), identified witnesses, teacher(s) and staff members and reviewing video surveillance if available. School police, school counselors, school social workers and/or other support staff should be utilized for their expertise as determined by the circumstances of the matter.

2. Notify At an appropriate time during or after the investigation, parents/guardians of the accused and the victim must be notified. If the incident involves an injury or similar situation, appropriate medical attention should be provided and the parent/guardian should be notified immediately.

3. Discipline Upon confirming that bullying has occurred, the accused student should be charged with bullying and given an age-appropriate consequence which shall include, at minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling as appropriate under the circumstances. Students in grades six through twelve found to have committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year shall be assigned to an alternative school through appropriate due process by disciplinary hearing officers, panels, or tribunals. Schools should clearly communicate to all parties that retaliation following a report of bullying is strictly prohibited and may result in strong disciplinary action.

4. Follow Up Follow up is important to the accused and the victim. Implement a planned method to provide after-care and follow up. Reiterate to all the previously stated prohibition on retaliation.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The rules listed in this policy apply to Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School. This list is not all inclusive, and a student committing an act of misconduct not covered by this policy will be subject to the discretionary authority of the principal. More severe punishment may be necessary in extreme cases. The policy represents a progressive discipline process. Factors taken into account

in determining dispositions include (but are not limited to):

- Student's history
- Degree of premeditation
- Age
- Disability
- Evidence
- Willingness to cooperate
- Seriousness of offense

Because of these factors, punishment imposed may vary from student to student for the same offense.

Federal and state laws and regulations that are in conflict with this or its application shall take precedence. All disciplinary action is subject to review and disposition under the discretionary authority of the principal.

PARENT CONCERNS PROCEDURE

We recognize that there will be times when students and teachers may not resolve the issue in the above resolution procedure. If this is the case, we ask that the parent contact first the teacher by: Email and/or call to speak with teacher (may leave message to be returned) and then set up an appointment to meet with teacher. If a resolution still cannot be reached, then we ask that you contact the following individuals in this order as needed until situation can be resolved for both parties:

1. School Administrator
2. Superintendent
3. School Board Members**

** We ask that board members be contacted only after all previous school/district level contacts have been exhausted.

DRESS CODE

Students are encouraged to dress in a manner that demonstrates pride in themselves and the school. Southwest Georgia S.T.E.M. Charter recognizes the relationship between personal dress and personal attitude and how each influence the nature of the learning environment. The principal and his/her staff are responsible for determining and enforcing regulations governing proper dress and grooming of students. Any type of dress or grooming which is disruptive/distracting will not be permitted.

General Dress Code Policies:

1. Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. Undergarments may not be visible (i.e. Boys: underwear/boxers; Girls: bras, undershirts, or underwear).
2. Clothes which resemble loungewear, pajamas or underwear/undergarments as outerwear are not permissible.
3. All clothing must be worn in an appropriate and tasteful manner and as originally intended by the designer (i.e. overalls may not be worn with the straps hanging down instead of on the shoulders).
4. Proper undergarments should be worn to ensure modesty.
5. See-through, sheer, mesh, solid lace, and fishnet fabrics are not permissible as stand-alone apparel. See-through shirts may only be worn over tops that meet dress code rules as stand-alone apparel.
6. Spaghetti strap tops and tank tops are only permissible underneath shirts or jackets meeting dress code requirements.
7. Leggings, jeggings, tights, yoga pants, stretch pants, and spandex pants are not permissible to be worn as stand-alone apparel.
8. Leggings, jeggings, or tights can only be worn under clothing that already meets dress code requirements in length and appropriateness (i.e. leggings, jeggings, and tights should not be worn under shorts or dresses that do not already meet length requirements).
9. Pants and shorts must be fitted at the waist and crotch and of appropriate length.
10. Pants must be properly fitted and/or worn with a belt if needed. Pants that do not stay up without assistance and which must be held at the waistband while walking to keep them on are not permissible.
11. Pants worn below the waist, exposing other clothing/underwear underneath the pants, are not permissible.
12. Loose fitting wind pants or wind suits will be permitted, but all other types of jogging pants are not permissible.
13. Clothing, accessories and jewelry which contain obscene language, symbols, signs, or slogans and/or which are degrading or advocate prejudices on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or political party/affiliation are not permissible.
14. Clothing, accessories, or jewelry which contain language or symbols referencing sex, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, and impose an imminent threat of violence or disruption to the orderly operation of the school are not permissible.
15. Any articles of clothing or jewelry that could likely cause injury are prohibited. Articles as described include chains, bracelets, rings, chokers with spikes, and wallet chains of any length.
16. The face must be visible at all times. Masks and face paintings are not allowed. The principal, staff, students, and parents/guardian may establish reasonable dress and grooming regulations for events, or extra-curricular/special school activities in which students are engaged in alternative dress (i.e. spirit day).
17. Hats, caps, bandanas, headbands, and sweat bands, and hoods attached to hoodies, and all other head coverings are not allowed to be worn in the in the classroom or in any other part of the building. Hair rollers, combs, or picks in the hair are not permissible in the classroom or in the building.
18. Revealing clothing and tight clothing will not be permitted.
19. Shoes and sandals must be worn at all times.
20. Hairstyles or coloring that may cause a substantial disruption to the learning environment, as determined by the dress code committee or administration, are prohibited.

The following clothing apparel and accessories are prohibited:

Pants: Torn jeans or jeans with holes which expose skin more than 4 inches above the knee, cut-offs, pajama pants, sagging pants, leggings, jeggings, tights, yoga pants, stretch pants, and spandex pants worn as stand-alone apparel, sweat pants, and pants with writing across the seat of the pants

Skirts and Dresses: All skirts and dresses must be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee. Measurements should be taken from the side of the leg. Skirts with slits are only permissible if the top of the slit ends no less than 4 inches above the knee. No strapless dresses permitted.

Shirts: Tight shirts, sheer shirts, netted shirts, see-through shirts, shirts with large arm holes, halter tops, spaghetti strap tops, strapless tops, and tank tops as stand-alone apparel, off-the-shoulder tops, low-cut tops, tops that expose midriffs, backless tops, sideless tops, tops with holes that expose any part of the midriff or back, and tops considered as undergarments

Shorts: Girls: All shorts must meet fingertip rule requirements (must be as long as the longest fingertip when hands are placed to the student's side) must be at least mid-thigh. Boys: All shorts should be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee. All Students: Boxer shorts, spandex shorts, running shorts, bicycle shorts, spandex shorts, all other types of athletic shorts, frayed shorts, shorts with holes, and shorts with writing across the seat of the pants

Tattoos, body and facial piercings, and piercings that pose a safety risk or are distracting in nature are not permissible: Body and Face: Large holes with gages, facial piercings, or heavy ear bars. Tattoos and body paintings are not permissible and must be covered at all times.

Shoes: Bedroom shoes, slippers, water shoes, shoes without a strap, heels over 2 inches, and cleated shoes, shoes with spikes or other bottoms that are dangerous or harmful to floor surfaces.

Headgear/Apparel Jewelry and Accessories: Hats, caps, beanies, and other types of head gear and apparel, long belts, chains, studded bracelets, studded belts, or studded neckbands are not permissible. Hoods attached to hoodies should not be worn in class or the building. Sunglasses are not permissible in the classroom or building. Students are encouraged not to wear jewelry of significant value to school. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen jewelry.

General Consequences for Dress Code Violations: Students are expected to adhere to the dress code at all times. Students in violation of the dress code will be required to change clothes or remove the inappropriate item. Student compliance with the the dress code may require parents/ guardians or other approved/designated visitors to bring a change of clothes or take the student home to change before returning to school (all attendance/tardy regulations will apply).

A student who violates the dress code will be required to change or remove the inappropriate item each time there is a violation. Teachers will handle the first two dress code violations and make parental contact as needed. After being administered three teacher/administrative warnings, the dress code violation will be submitted as an office referral and classified as a chronic behavior violation. The student will report to an administrator and will be subject to disciplinary action beyond a change of clothes and removing the inappropriate item.

Disciplinary action including but not limited to detention or suspension from school will be taken for all office referrals which are considered chronic behavior violations (refer to student code of conduct handbook).

The administrators/or their designee will make final determination of what is or is not appropriate to wear to school. This decision is final and is not subject to appeal.

HARASSMENT (STUDENT): POLICY JCAC

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

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

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

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

STUDENT ALLEGATIONS

OCGA 20-2-751.7(a) Education; alleged inappropriate behavior by teacher or school personnel; provisions: Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school. 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 their immediate supervisor or their immediate supervisor's designee. 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 child welfare agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney. Reports of acts sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. 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 an immediate written report to the Board of Directors and Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

Bill Summary From the State: This bill addresses falsified reports of inappropriate behavior of educators toward students, establishes a complaint procedure, requires notice of the procedure in teacher and student handbooks, provides for statements to the media, and provides penalties for students who falsify reports.

Requirements:

- Student codes of conduct must add falsifying, omitting or erroneously reporting information regarding alleged inappropriate behavior of school personnel toward a student.
- PSC must establish a state-mandated process for students to report such claims; the process must reserve the right of the students to report to law enforcement, and the bill requires publishing the process in teacher and student handbooks.
- If the report is deemed unsubstantiated, the LEA shall, at the request of the employee, submit a written statement to that effect to the media outlets that previously reported the claim.
- A student over 10 years old who falsely reports with malice can be punished by:
 - o Court ordered community service, or any other court sanction;
 - o Suspension or expulsion from the school system; or both court and school penalties

AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

The purpose of After School Detention is to provide an alternative discipline model for students who exhibit disruptive and/or unruly behavior. It will provide an in school opportunity for the student to continue core curriculum studies and acquire skills and behaviors for school and community success.

The length of the assignment will be related to the offense committed and the student's disciplinary history.

After school detention is assigned for behavioral infractions. During parent notification of the assigned after school detention, transportation arrangements will be made for the student to attend after school detention within TWO DAYS of the behavior infraction(s). Refusal to attend after school detention will result in out-of-school suspension in addition to the assigned after school detention. Removal from after school detention for disciplinary reasons will result in out-of-school suspension. Students suspended for any part/fraction of after school detention will not

receive credit for attending after school detention that day and will be required to make that day up. Students will be required to complete all remaining after school detention and assignments once they have returned to school.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS)

Suspension is used as a disciplinary action to deter inappropriate student behavior including violation of school rules, policies, and procedures. A student who has been suspended from school for any disciplinary reason shall not be entitled to be present on the school campus **for ANY REASON AT ANYTIME** during the term of the suspension. In addition, a student who is assigned out-of-school suspension for disciplinary reasons shall not be entitled to participate in or attend school sponsored extracurricular activities.

The exclusion from the campus and from attendance at or participation in school sponsored extracurricular activities shall begin when the suspension is imposed by the appropriate school official. Eligibility will be restored on the day that the student returns to the regular classroom. Student is responsible for obtaining all assignments from teachers during the suspension period. All work will be due upon the day the student returns to school, any unfinished or unsubmitted work will result in a zero.

SEARCH & SEIZURE

Pursuant to the Fourth Amendment and its applications to schools, school officials or designees have access to students, student lockers, automobiles, and personal belongings while under school supervision and when there is reasonable suspicion for search and seizure. Discovery of contraband and/or dangerous or illegal materials shall be reported to the proper authorities.

SURVEILLANCE CAMERA PROCEDURE

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School recognizes a need to strike a balance between the individual's right to be free from invasion of privacy and the school's duty to promote a safe environment for all students and faculty.

The purpose of video surveillance at Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School is to:

1. Promote a safe environment by deterring acts of harassment or assault.
2. Deter theft and vandalism and assist in the identification of individuals.
3. Assist law enforcement agencies with regard to the investigation of any crime that may be depicted.
4. Assist in the daily monitoring of student conduct and behavior.

While surveillance cameras are posted in hallways, auditorium, gymnasium, outdoor walkways and some labs, they are not mounted inside any restrooms. Surveillance cameras are, however, mounted outside restroom doors so that if an incident does occur the person leaving the restroom will be easily identified.

Any person purposely touching, blocking, damaging, and/or causing a surveillance camera to malfunction will be charged with vandalism of school property. Surveillance cameras operate 24 hours per day, seven days a week and record continually for several months. Cameras are monitored by designated school officials who may include, but are not limited to, administrators and teachers.

Request to view surveillance evidence will require Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School approval. Surveillance evidence may be used to corroborate or verify an act has taken place, identify a specific person(s) involved in an act/incident, and/or to witness the extent of which an act has been committed.

WEAPONS: Policy JCDAE

It is the policy of the Board of Education that a student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

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

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

Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. The Superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one year expulsion under circumstances where the one year expulsion appears excessive to the superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment. Finally, in any tribunal decision appealed to the board of education, the board may reduce the mandated punishment but shall consider whether the superintendent and/or tribunal considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction.

Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the student code of conduct.

Reporting Requirements

Any employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a student possesses a weapon as defined in paragraph 1, is involved in an assault using a weapon as defined in paragraph 2, or is involved in a second offense with a weapon on campus must report such violations to the principal or assistant principal of the school. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that such report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney.

The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any activity involving weapons.

Students will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct, which includes a statement of prohibited conduct with regard to weapons and possible disciplinary actions.

NOTICE

IT IS UNLAWFUL FOR ANY PERSON TO CARRY, POSSESS, OR HAVE UNDER CONTROL ANY WEAPON AT A SCHOOL BUILDING, SCHOOL FUNCTION OR ON SCHOOL PROPERTY OR ON A BUS OR OTHER TRANSPORTATION FURNISHED BY THE SCHOOL. THE TERM "WEAPON" MEANS AND INCLUDES ANY PISTOL, REVOLVER, OR ANY WEAPON DESIGNED OR INTENDED TO PROPEL A MISSILE OF ANY KIND, OR ANY DIRK, BOWIE KNIFE, SWITCHBLADE KNIFE, BALLISTIC KNIFE, OR ANY OTHER KNIFE, ESPECIALLY THOSE KNIVES HAVING A BLADE OF THREE OR MORE INCHES, STRAIGHT-EDGED RAZOR OR RAZOR BLADE, SPRING STICK, METAL KNUCKS, BLACKJACK, OR ANY FLAILING INSTRUMENT CONSISTING OF TWO OR MORE RIGID PARTS, CONNECTED IN SUCH A WAY TO ALLOW THEM TO SWING FREELY, WHICH MAY BE KNOWN AS A NUN CHUCK, OR FIGHTING CHAIN, THROWING STAR OR ORIENTAL DART, OR ANY WEAPON OF LIKE KIND, ANY STUN GUN OR TASER. ****VIOLATION MAY RESULT IN EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL****

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

STATEMENTS

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Notice to parents/guardians and eligible students of rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (the "Act"). You have a right to:

- (1) Inspect and review the education records of a student who is your child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen years of age (18) or older, your own education records;
- (2) Request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
- (3) Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure without consent;
- (4) File with the United States Department of Education a complaint under 20 C.F.R. 99.64 concerning the alleged failures by the Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School to comply with the requirements of the Act or the regulations promulgated hereunder; and
- (5) Obtain a copy of the policy (JR) which the board of education had adopted regarding access to student records. Copies of this policy may be obtained by contacting Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School

Generally, a parent will be permitted to obtain a copy of education records of his/her child upon reasonable notice and payment of reasonable copying costs of ten (10) cents per page.

GENDER EQUITY

State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A. 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this school may be submitted to Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) that requires each state to ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth. In accordance with the Act and State Board Rule 160-5-1-.28 (JBC), the term “Homeless Child and Youth” is defined as children and youth who are:

- a. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
- b. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- c. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- d. Abandoned in hospitals; or
- e. Awaiting foster care placement.
- f. Moreover, the following children are included in the definition: children who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; children who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Limitation of Liability

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware. While Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness. Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP

There are occasions when forms are sent home requiring the signature of a parent or guardian. These documents are valid only if the custodial parent or legal guardian signs them. Consequently, if someone other than the custodial parent enrolls a student in school, proof of legal guardianship will be required within 30 days of enrollment.

TECHNOLOGY

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School recognizes that access to technology in school gives students greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21st-century technology and communication skills. To that end, we provide access to technologies

for student and staff use.

This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviors that users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices on the school campus.

The Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School network is intended for educational purposes.

All activity over the network or using district technologies may be monitored and retained.

- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children’s Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)] (CIPA).
- Staff and students are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary action.
- Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School makes a reasonable effort to ensure staff and students’ safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected administration immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

Technologies Covered

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School may provide Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more.

As new technologies emerge, Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School will attempt to provide access to them. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all available technologies, not just those specifically listed.

Personally-Owned Devices Policy

Students should keep personally-owned devices (including laptops, tablets, smart phones, smart watches, and cell phones) turned off and put away during school hours—unless in the event of an emergency or as instructed by a teacher or staff for educational purposes.

Because of security concerns, when personally-owned mobile devices are used on campus, they should not be used over the school network without permission.

Security

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin.

If you believe a computer or mobile device you are using might be infected with a virus, please alert administration. Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or download any programs to help remove the virus.

Netiquette

Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.

Users should also recognize that among the valuable content online is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet.

Users should also remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

Plagiarism

Users should not plagiarize (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet. Users should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online. Research conducted via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

Personal Safety

Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life without parental permission.

If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored.

Examples of Acceptable Use

- I will:
 - Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.
- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

Examples of Unacceptable Use

I will not:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- Attempt to find inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarize content I find online.
- Post personally-identifying information, about myself or others.

- Agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that isn't intended for my use.
- This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

Limitation of Liability

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware. While Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness. Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School Supply Lists for Each Grade Level

Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First Grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Black Expo Markers • Hand Sanitizer • Blanket for Naptime • Regular Sized Book bag *(no wheels on book bag)* • Lysol Wipes • Paper Towels • Disinfectant Spray 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils • Pencil Bag • Kleenex • Hand Sanitizer • Crayons • Markers • Glue Stickers • Scissors • Expo Markers • Paper Towels • Clorox Wipes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencil Box • Crayons • Markers • Cap Erasers • Scissors • Fine-tip Dry Erase Markers • Washable Watercolor Paints • Ziploc Bags • Hand Sanitizer • Baby Wipes • Paper Towels • Kleenex • Clorox Wipes • Lysol Spray

Supply Lists for Each Grade Level

Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book bag • Pair of Scissors • Pair of Earbuds • Disinfectant Wipes • Lysol Spray • Pencil Pouch - 3 ring • Yellow Highlighter • Dry Erase Markers • Pencil Cap Erasers • Pack of Clear Sheet Protectors • 2 Large Erasers (Ex. Pink Pearl) • 2 Packs of Ticonderoga #2 Pencils • 2 Packs of Wide-Ruled Notebook Paper • 2 Packs of 24-Count Crayons • 2 Boxes of Kleenex • 2 Bottles of Hand Sanitizer • 3 2-Pocket PLASTIC 3-Prong Folders *(1 Red - 1 Blue - 1 Green)* • 4 Small Glue Sticks - OR - 2 Large Glue Sticks • 4 Mead Composition Notebooks - 100 Page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Pack of Highlighters • 1 Pack of Cap Erasers • 1 Pair of Scissors • 2 Bottles of Hand Sanitizer • 2 Boxes of Kleenex • 2 Packs of Wide-Ruled Paper • 2 Composition Books *(no spiral notebooks)* • 4 Packs of Pencils • 4 Plastic Folders w/ Prongs • 4 Tennis Balls *(for legs of chairs)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clorox Wipes • Post-It Notes • Notecards • Hand Sanitizer • Earbuds/Headphones • Cap Erasers • Paper Towels • 1 Box of Tissue • 1 2-inch 3-ring Binder • 1 Pack of Notebook Dividers 12 – with pockets) • 1 Pair of Child’s Scissors • 1 Pack of Multi-Colored Highlighters • 1 Pack of Colored Pencils • 1 Pencil Pouch (one punch to go in binder)* • 1 Box of 24-count Crayons • 1 Pack of Dry Erase Markers • 2 70-page Marble Notebooks • 3 Glue Sticks • 4 Packs of Wide-Ruled notebook Paper • 4 packs of #2 Pencils with Erasers • Boys: 1 Box of Quart Ziploc Bags • Girls: 1 Box of Gallon Ziploc Bags

Supply Lists for Each Grade Level

Fifth Grade	
English Language Arts/Social Studies	Math/Science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide-Ruled Loose Leaf Notebook Paper • 3 Ring Binder *(minimum 1 inch)* • 3 Pocket Folder with Brads – any color except black *(label with child’s first and last name)* • 2 Composition Notebooks • #2 Pencils • Assorted Color Pens - must include blue and black • USB Jump Drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide-Ruled Loose Leaf Notebook Paper • 3 Ring Binder w/ Pockets *(1 inch or 2 inch)* • 3 Plastic Pocket Folders w/ Brads (1 yellow, 1 blue, 1 red) • #2 Pencils • Zip Fabric Pencil Pouch (No Pencil Boxes) • Dry Erase Markers • Colored Pencils OR Crayons • Post-It Notes • Earbuds/Headphones (labeled with first and last name) • Scissors (labeled with first and last name)
<p>OPTIONAL ITEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markers • Crayons • Color Pencils • Dry Erase Markers • Post-It Notes • Highlighters • Hand Sanitizer • Clorox Wipes • Box of Tissue • Girls: Quart Ziploc Bags • Boys: Gallon Ziploc Bags 	<p>OPTIONAL ITEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pack of Clear Page Protectors • Lysol Wipes • Box of Tissue • Baby Wipes • Paper Towels • Glue Sticks • Girls: Quart Ziploc Bags • Boys: Sandwich Ziploc Bags

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School Supply Lists for Each Grade Level

Middle/High School (6th – 9th Grades)		
HOMEROOM – Submit to Teacher	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clorox Wipes • Hand Sanitizer • Lysol Spray • Expo Markers • 1 Roll of Paper Towels • 1 Box of Tissue • 1 Pair of Safety Scissors • 1 Pack of Pencil Erasers • 1 Pack of Copy Paper • 3 Glue Sticks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2-inch Binder with Dividers <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Packs of Pencils *(turn one in to teacher)* <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Packs of Notebook Paper (turn one in to teacher)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-inch Binder with Dividers • 2 Packs of Pencils • 2 Packs of Notebook Paper • Flash Drive
	6th Grade Earth Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-inch Binder with Dividers • 2 Packs of Wide-Ruled Lined Paper • Colored Pencils 	
	7th Grade Life Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-inch Binder with Dividers • 2 Packs of Wide-Ruled Lined Paper • Colored Pencils 	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	MATH	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-ring Binder • Dividers • 2 Packs of Notebook Paper • Flash Drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-ring Binder • Dividers • Protractor • Composition Book (not spiral) • 2 Packs of Pencils • 2 Packs of Notebook Paper 	
<p><i>*Students will be responsible for keeping all (science, social studies, ELA and math) items unless otherwise noted*</i></p>		