



Parent/Student Handbook
2019-2020



Blue Ridge Elementary School

Parent/Student Handbook

Fannin County School System

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

Vision

The Fannin County School System holds a vision of excellence for all students with successful progression at each level and a 100% graduation rate.

Mission

Developing young futures.....
Learning for tomorrow,
Today

WELCOME

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

We are so excited to welcome you to Blue Ridge Elementary School. Every member of the faculty and staff join us in saying we're happy to have you as part of the Blue Ridge family. We hope this will be a successful and amazing year for you and your student.

The pages of this handbook are filled with important information regarding school policy and procedures. Parent/guardians and students should review the contents together. If you have any questions, please call the school office at 706-632-5772. We believe that open and clear communication between school and home is important to the success of our educational growth.

We welcome your participation and support this school year. Working together, we will be able to reach our collective goals and celebrate the achievements of our students.

Thank you,

Dr. April S. Hodges
Principal

PTO

Our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is an important part of the success we have experienced at Blue Ridge Elementary School. The PTO helps make us a better school for all our children. We hope that you will become an active member in our group by attending our meetings and volunteering to help with the many activities and fundraisers during the year. Notes will be sent home announcing each upcoming PTO meeting. Please email bresbearspto@gmail.com for more information.

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SCHOOL HOURS

- Blue Ridge’s school building opens at 7:15 AM and closes at 3:30 PM for students or 4:30 PM for those who participate in tutoring. The office is open until 4:30 p.m.
- All elementary students who arrive before 7:30 AM must report directly to the lunchroom and be seated. They will be dismissed from the lunchroom at 7:30 to report to class.
- Students are tardy at 8:00 AM.
- All students should be on time for school and should remain for the entire day.
- Please avoid picking your child up early if at all possible. Students who leave before 3:00 PM often miss valuable instruction. A parent or guardian **must** sign out students who leave early.
- Students should be picked up by 3:20 PM, unless specific arrangements have been made with the principal.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 7:15 AM..... | School building opens |
| 7:30 AM..... | Students released from lunchroom |
| 7:30-8:00 AM | Breakfast/Character Education Activities |
| 8:00 AM-2:45 PM..... | PK—Grade 2 instructional day |
| 8:00 AM-3:00 PM | Grades 3-5 instructional day |
| 2:45 PM..... | PK-2 parent pickup |
| 3:00 PM..... | 3-5 parent pickup |
| 3:25 PM..... | Load buses |

Guidelines for Attendance

Regular school attendance is required by Georgia law (20-2-690-1) for all children ages of 6-16. (Regular attendance means actual attendance of a pupil during the entire day of school.)

Fannin County School System Elementary Schools and Middle School guidelines:

Absences:

1. At five unexcused absences the Family Support Worker will mail a letter to the parent/guardian.
2. At six unexcused absences the principal may choose to send the school attendance officer to the child's home for a home visit.
3. At seven unexcused absences the Family Support Worker will mail a letter to the parent/guardian. At this time, the parent will be contacted to meet with the Attendance Support Team to discuss ways to help improve attendance.
4. After ten unexcused absences, a student may be referred to juvenile court.

ATTENDANCE—TARDINESS—ABSENCES

- Any absence from school is detrimental to learning. Therefore a concerted effort should be made to have children present for the entire school day.
- Please make every effort to have your student arrive on time. Students who are tardy must check in at the office before reporting to class.
- Excused absences include: medical appointments, personal illness, death in the immediate family, certain religious holidays, and other absences deemed appropriate by the principal. All other absences are classified as unexcused
- The child's parent/guardian must send a written excuse within three days explaining the child's absence. The County Student Attendance Team contacts parents/guardians whose students have excessive absences. Juvenile Court could result in these cases.

STUDENT SIGN-OUT

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

BUS TRANSPORTATION

While the law requires the school district to furnish transportation, it does not relieve parents of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the student boards the bus in the morning and after the student leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once a student boards the bus – and only at that time – does he/she become the responsibility of the school district. In view of the fact that a bus is an extension of the classroom, the board shall require students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. When a student does not conduct himself/herself properly on a bus, the bus driver of that school will bring the incident to the attention of the building principal. The building principal will inform the parents immediately of the misconduct and request their cooperation in correcting the student's behavior. A student can be suspended or expelled from school for misbehaving on the bus.

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

THE FANNIN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES FOR RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS.

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

HOMEWORK WHEN ABSENT

- When your child is absent from school, your child will be responsible to get their assignments from their teachers when returning to school.
- Fannin County Policy states that work should be completed within 5 school days after returning to class.

PARTY POLICY

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

SCHOOL SUPPLIES:

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

COMPACT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

STUDENTS

For your success, you are encouraged to:

- Attend school daily
- Strive to do your best at all times
- Follow school rules
- Be prepared
- Accept responsibility for your behavior and actions

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

For your child's success, you are encouraged to:

- Promote high expectations for your child's behavior, academic achievement, and homework
- Establish and maintain open lines of communication between home, school, and teachers
- Ensure that your child gets plenty of sleep, a good breakfast, and is dressed appropriately
- Participate in school activities including parent-teacher conferences and PTO
- Regularly discuss schoolwork with your child

- See that your child attends school regularly
- Assist your child in being responsible for his/her behavior and actions

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

For your child's success we will:

- Provide a safe and effective learning environment
- Establish and maintain open lines of communication between school and home
- Comply with district and state policies and regulations
- Promote high expectations for student behavior and academic achievement
- Provide opportunities for every student to be successful
- Promote student responsibility for behavior and actions

SCHOOL TELEPHONES

- School telephones are business phones and are not to be used by students except in emergencies.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

The Fannin County School System website and the Blue Ridge Elementary website can give you invaluable information about the school system and the school. In order to contact your child's teacher by e-mail, follow these procedures:

- Go to the URL for the Fannin County website which is www.fannin.k12.ga.us.
- Click on Schools, then Blue Ridge Elementary, School News (across the top), then School Staff
- Scroll down to the teacher you need to e-mail, click on their name, and follow the email link.

CELL PHONES AND MOBILE DEVICES

Students may carry mobile devices and cellular telephones in Fannin County Schools under strict provisions, which include:

- Cell phones and devices are to be in the OFF position at all times during the instructional day unless they are being used for instruction under the BYOD guidelines*. The instructional day is defined as from the time students arrive on school property until the time school is officially dismissed.
- During the instructional day, cell phones and mobile devices may be used, with ADMINISTRATIVE PERMISSION, or in the case of an emergency.
- The use of cell phones while on school buses is strictly prohibited unless an emergency situation arises and students have PERMISSION FROM THE BUS DRIVER.

Any violations of this policy will be considered a disciplinary matter and will be subject to the following disciplinary action:

- The first electronic device infraction shall result in the confiscation of the device. Once the device is confiscated it will only be returned to a parent or guardian.
- The second infraction shall result in confiscation of the device, a parent or guardian conference, and immediate termination of the right to carry a mobile device or cellular telephone for the rest of the school year.
- Any violation of this policy may also, at the principal's discretion, result in additional disciplinary action. Other disciplinary action may include work detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or placement in Alternative School.

*Bring Your Own Device (BYOD):

BYOD will be implemented in the upper elementary grades. Guidelines for this process will be sent to the parents based on individual grade level guidelines.

WEATHER/EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

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

- Closures will be announced over the local radio stations as soon as possible, and the phone alert system will be activated.

- **Parent/guardians should have a form on file at school with alternative places for their child to be sent in the event they cannot be reached. Students should be aware of this procedure.**

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

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

- When necessary, parent/guardians may be contacted by the Counselor to offer assistance in dealing with certain issues.
- Conferences with the Counselor should be prearranged whenever possible.
- Students will participate in scheduled instructional classroom guidance sessions conducted by the school counselor.

ILLNESS OR ACCIDENT AT SCHOOL

- If a child becomes ill during the school day and needs to go home, the school will notify the parent/guardian.
- Should the child need emergency medical attention, the child's welfare will come first. Appropriate steps will be taken to get medical services started while an effort is made to contact the parent/guardian.
- If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted during an emergency, the other person(s) listed by the parent/guardian on the health form on file in the School Nurse's Office will be contacted.

SCHOOL NURSE

Blue Ridge is very fortunate to have the services of a fulltime School Nurse.

- **A health form MUST be completed for each child by a parent/guardian and will be kept on file in the school clinic.**

MEDICATIONS

Medicine brought to school to take during the day must be brought to the office by a parent or guardian. It must be in its prescription container or original non-prescription container and must be clearly labeled with student's name and dosage. All medications are kept in the school clinic, and are dispensed only by the Nurse or designated school staff. It is NOT permitted to transport medications on the school bus. Parents should contact the school nurse for information about medications given on long-term and short term basis.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Before official enrollment, all students enrolling in a Georgia school must have an official Georgia Department of Human Resources Certificate of Immunization. This certificate may be secured from a local physician or the Fannin County Health Department. All students enrolling in Kindergarten will be required to show proof of immunization (Form 3231) for several immunizations. Some may require a series of shots. Please check with the Health Department or your physician.

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

All students entering school for the first time in Kindergarten or First Grade must present an official copy of his/her birth certificate at the time of registration. Children must be 5 years old on or before September 1st to enroll in the Kindergarten program. Children must be six years old on or before September 1st to participate in the First Grade program.

HEARING, VISION, DENTAL RECORDS

All students entering school for the first time must present a certificate of hearing, vision, and dental examination by the Fannin County Health Department, a physician and/or a dentist licensed by the State of Georgia. This certificate is available from local physicians or the county health department. (Form 3300)

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

At the time of initial enrollment, a Social Security number will be requested for each student. Social Security numbers are not required for enrollment. No student will be denied enrollment for declining to provide his or her Social Security number or for declining to apply for such a number.

PROOF OF RESIDENCE

School officials require that the parent or guardian provide proof of Georgia residency at the time a student is initially enrolled in a Fannin County school. The acceptable items to provide such proof are: settlement/closing papers on a house **OR** current lease agreement **AND** a current utility bill (gas, power, or water). Note that the two items of proof **MUST** show the “911” address (actual physical location). Post Office box addresses cannot be used as proof of residence.

WELLNESS POLICY

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

To the extent practicable, all schools in the district participate in available federal school meal programs. All foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day shall be consistent with the requirements of federal and state law. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the U.S. Secretary pursuant to the Child Nutrition Act and the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as those regulations and guidance apply to schools. School food service staff at the school or district level shall monitor compliance with nutrition guidelines within school food service areas.

It is the intent of the Board that the district shall teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Schools shall provide nutrition education consistent with federal and state requirements and engage in nutrition promotion aimed at improving student health.

All students in grades K-12 shall have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis. The district will provide physical education consistent with federal and state requirements and engage in promotion of physical activities aimed at improving student health.

HEAD LICE

- School-wide head checks will be conducted on all students monthly.
- In the event that your child is found to be positive, you will be contacted and our School Nurse will assist you with identifying available treatment options.
- If you (parent/guardian) discover head lice on your child, please notify the School Nurse so she may implement individual classroom checks in an attempt to prevent outbreaks.

MOVING OUT OF FANNIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

INSURANCE RESPONSIBILITY

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

CAFETERIA

All prices below are subject to change during the year.

PRICES/PAYMENT

I. Lunch and Breakfast Prices for FCSS Enrolled Students:

Lunch and Breakfast Prices for Adults Employed by the Fannin County Board of Education

LUNCH:

Student Elementary Schools \$2.15

Student Reduced Price Meals \$0.40

BREAKFAST:

Student Breakfast free to all students

MENU

- Daily lunch choices include a main menu entrée with several types of vegetables and fruits or a salad.
- Sack lunches may also be offered during the week.
- Additional menu items may be purchased after a lunch has been purchased.
- Only milk, water, and sometimes fruit juices are served to students in the cafeteria. Students who are allergic to milk or milk products must bring a statement from his/her doctor to obtain an alternate drink with the purchase of a lunch. Additional beverages may be purchased.
- Menus are published in *The News Observer* and on the Fannin County School System website. On occasion menus may be changed due to delivery problems.

LUNCH CHARGE POLICY

- Students are encouraged to accumulate no more than 20 charges.
- If a student carries a balance, he/she will not be permitted to make additional purchases until the balance is paid in full.
- A parent/guardian will be contacted when charges accrue.
- Phone notification may be used for excessive outstanding balances.
- Free and reduced lunch forms are available at each elementary school year round.
- If personal financial situations change you are encouraged to apply for free or reduced lunches.

FOOD ALLERGIES

- If your child suffers from food allergies, please contact the School Nurse.
- A physician's notice of food allergies will need to be a part of the student's health form records in the School Nurse's office.

FIELD TRIP LUNCHES

- Sack lunches may be purchased from the cafeteria for students. An order form will be sent home with your student before the trip.

LUNCH SCHEDULE/GUESTS

- The lunch schedule will be announced at the beginning of the school year.
- Parents/guardians are welcome to join their children at lunch.

CAFETERIA STAFF

- Our Nutrition employees are certified and are required to take continuing education classes each year. They have also completed the National Restaurant Association's Serve-Safe course.
- We are committed to serving quality, nutritious meals, and to educating our students to help them develop healthy eating habits. The Nutrition staff can be contacted at 706-632-5772.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

The same general rules for behavior apply in the cafeteria as in the classroom.

- Classes will sit together and are responsible for clearing the table before being dismissed.

CAFETERIA POLICIES

- Students are encouraged to eat breakfast and lunch at school.
- Information about lunch prices and about free and reduced prices is provided at the first of the school year and on request.
- Non-approved drinks or snacks will not be sold to students until the lunch period is over.
- Drinks in an unbreakable container are allowed in the cafeteria if these items are wrapped in foil or some other covering.
- A Thermos® or drinks in a carton may be brought, or milk may be purchased at breakfast or lunch.
- Please provide utensils when your student brings their lunch from home.

DRESS CODE

Appropriate dress for school is important. These guidelines should be followed:

- Shoes must be worn at all times. No cleats allowed.
- Clothing items which display inappropriate language or gestures, advertise illegal substances (drugs, tobacco, alcohol) or weapons, and/or promote gang-related activities are strictly prohibited.
- Clothing accessories that present a disruption to the school environment are prohibited.
- No bare midriffs, spaghetti straps, or muscle shirts
- No garments with holes which are deemed offensive or in poor taste.
- No hats worn in the building. (Except on announced special occasions.)
- Tennis shoes are **recommended** for gym class and recess.
- Low-riding pants must fit appropriately. Short, skort, and skirt hem length must be no shorter than four inches above the knee.
- The administration has the authority to determine concerns not covered by the above guidelines.

PETS /ANIMALS

- Animals are not permitted on school property with the exception of specially-trained service animals e.g. Seeing-Eye Dogs or those being used for instructional purposes.
- The Principal must be notified of the presence of any animals on campus.

TOYS/ELECTRONIC GAMES

Toy guns, knives, trinkets, electronic games and equipment, and other trivia are to be left at home. Children are easily distracted and may cause injury to others.

- Banned toys or other items will be taken up by the teacher and held at his/her discretion. Playground equipment may be brought only with prior permission from the teacher.

PERSONAL ITEMS

In an effort to reduce the opportunity for property to be stolen, we recommend certain items not be brought on school campus. These items *include but are not limited to* CD players, radios/tape players, headphones, I-pods/MP₃ players, pagers, laser pointer, non-Band musical instruments, electronic hand-held games, card games, toys, action figures, etc.

School personnel will not be held responsible for items reported stolen. Personal items may be confiscated by school personnel and will be returned to the parent/guardian. Repeated violations may result in more serious disciplinary action.

CONFERENCES

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

- Parents will be notified in advance of any county-wide parent/guardian—teacher conference days. On these days, an alternative school schedule may be used.
- However, parents may schedule a conference at other times simply by contacting the teacher. The teacher will set up a time convenient for both parties.
- "Drop-in" (unscheduled) conferences should be avoided, since this interferes with instructional time and other teacher duties.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The staff at Blue Ridge always strives to resolve complaints in a fair and timely manner.

- Step 1: contact the teacher and schedule a conference
- Step 2: if the problem persists, request a second conference with the teacher or teachers with either the principal, assistant principal, counselor or all three in attendance
- Step 3: if the first steps have not brought about a satisfactory resolution, request a principal conference

REPORT CARDS

- Report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period.
- Parents should sign the report card envelope and return it to the school promptly.
- Progress reports will be sent home at midterm.

INFINITE CAMPUS PARENT PORTAL

Infinite Campus Parent Portal, an online information service for parents/guardians, is available at <https://campus.fannin.k12.ga.us/campus/portal/fannin.jsp>. Infinite Campus allows registered parents/guardians to view their child's grades online after the grades are entered into the electronic grade book by the child's teacher.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

- Kindergarten: The Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program (GKID) is administered throughout the school year to all kindergarten students. The GKID assesses a student individually in five areas: communicative skills, logical-mathematical skills, physical skills, personal skills, and social skills. This assessment aids in determining readiness for first grade
- Grades 3-5: The Georgia Milestones Assessment System, given in the spring, is designed to measure student acquisition of knowledge, concepts and skills set forth in the state curriculum. It is given in the content areas of English/ language arts, mathematics. Grade 5 is also assessed in the areas of science and social studies.
- Writing Assessments (Grades 3 and 5) will no longer be implemented, but progress in writing will be evaluated within the Georgia Milestones Assessment System.

BENCHMARKS

Throughout the year, the students will be assessed to gauge academic progress. These assessments will be used as benchmarks to plan instruction. These assessments do not affect grades.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

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

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

TUTORING

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

- Teachers will refer students to the program based on those who are not meeting grade level requirements and/or are having difficulty in the classroom performing in reading/language and/or math.
- Students are tutored by a certified teacher.
- Tutoring in reading/ELA and math is offered for students in grades 3-5 from 3:30-4:30 PM.
- Students must be picked up at 4:30 PM.

ESSA RIGHT TO KNOW

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, parents may request the following information:

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

GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Fannin County Board of Education recognizes the need to provide gifted education services to students who have the potential for exceptional academic achievement in Grades K – 12. The Gifted Education Program is designed to provide an enriching and challenging alternative to the regular curriculum program. A resource model is provided for students in Grades K-5 with an itinerant teacher. These students receive a minimum of five segments of instruction per week from a certified teacher who is gifted endorsed.

Students are referred for consideration for the gifted program by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. Identification and eventual placement decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. In order to qualify for placement, students must meet three of the four components established by the State Board of Education. These include: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. On the mental measure students in K-2 must score in the 99th percentile and students in grades 3-12 must score in the 96th percentile. If a student does not qualify for gifted placement, they cannot be tested again for two school years.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education services are available for eligible students.

INTERVENTION/ENRICHMENT (I/E TIME)

The daily schedule includes I/E time. During this segment, instruction is provided to strengthen and enrich various skills.

MULTI-TIERED SUPPORT SYSTEM-MTSS

Response to Intervention is a method of academic intervention designed to provide early, effective assistance to children experiencing difficulties in academic areas.

PARENT RESOURCE ROOM

The Parent Resource Center is located in the parent liaison room and has a wide range of books and materials available for parent check out.

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

- Textbooks and library books are furnished to your child by the school system on a loan basis, and should be treated as borrowed property.
- Students must pay for the loss or abuse of textbooks or library books.
- Additionally, we have a Parent Resource Center that offers many resources for parents to help their children. Please contact 706-632-5772 for more information.
- The BRES PTO furnishes planners to students as requested by grade-level teams. If a planner is lost, students will be required to purchase another planner.

LOST-AND-FOUND

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

SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR PROGRAM

Positive Behavioral Support (PBIS) is a behavior management program adopted by the Fannin County School System. PBIS is recommended by the Georgia Department of Education. It is a proactive behavioral plan, which rewards and reinforces good behavior.

DISCIPLINE

- Teachers have the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline in the classroom.
- When misbehavior occurs, the teacher may...
 - Talk to the student or give the student a 'time-out' to reflect on making a better choice.
 - Request a parent conference
 - Place the child on a behavior contract
 - Place the child in detention for recess
 - Refer the situation directly to school administrators
- Level 5 behaviors (e.g. weapons on school campus, terroristic threats, etc.) are subject to Fannin County School Board policy.

MINDSET PROGRAM

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

BULLYING

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

BULLYING, ELECTRONIC BULLYING, THREATENING

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

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

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

Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;

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

Consequences: Grades PK-5

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

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

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

EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN

Blue Ridge has an Emergency Operation Plan. You may review this plan by requesting it from the school office.

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

FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS

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

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER

- If your address or phone number changes, please notify the school immediately. The school must be able to contact you in the event your child has an accident, becomes ill at school, school is dismissed early, or for other reasons.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

- All visitors and volunteers are required to enter through the front door and report to the office to sign in and receive a visitor’s tag, which must be worn at all times in the building. All other doors in the school building will remain locked for security reasons.
- Before leaving the building, all visitors and volunteers must return to the office, sign out, and return the visitor’s tag. Everyone in the building must be accounted for if an emergency situation arises, and failure to sign out may result in danger for those looking for someone who has already left the building.
- In order to preserve instructional time and to promote security unplanned visits to your child’s classroom are discouraged during the school day.
- A parent volunteer program is in place at BRES.
- Parent volunteers should sign in and sign out in the office.
- If your child has difficulty with your presence in the classroom, you may volunteer in another classroom or the media center.
- **House Bill 1176 - Child Abuse Reporting Revisions:** O.C.G.A. 19-7-5, which now holds **volunteers** in schools, hospitals, social agencies, or similar facilities responsible for the same child abuse reporting requirements as employees.
- Volunteers will be required to complete Mandated Reporter and confidentiality training.
- Volunteers will be asked to review and sign a Volunteer Code of Confidentiality stating that they will keep all student information confidential.

PICKING UP/DROPPING OFF YOUR CHILD

- Exercise care and courtesy when picking up your child from school. Small children may be hard to see. Cars will not be allowed on to or off of the bus pad while buses are parked in that area. If you are parking to walk your student inside, you should park along the tree line on the bus pad or in the big parking lot in front/to the side of the school.

RECESS

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

LEGAL NOTIFICATIONS--TITLE I

Blue Ridge Elementary is a school-wide Title I School. Federal funds received by the school are spent to help close the achievement gap and help students meet challenging state standards. Research shows that parental involvement is a key factor in the academic success of students. Parents are encouraged to learn about the school's educational program, as well as our educational goals and objectives. Parents are also encouraged to stay informed about their child's progress at school. As a Title I school, BRES, provides access to educational materials and resources to help parents learn more and be involved in the educational process. Parents are invited to access information available in the parent resource room. These materials are made available for parents to learn strategies and techniques to help their child(ren) improve academically and be as successful as possible at school. A Parent Involvement Policy is available in the office, on the school website, and distributed to parents at the beginning of the school year in a Title I meeting. BRES's Title I Plan is also available in the office. Please contact the office at 706-632-5772 if you have any questions

REPORTING OF ACTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

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

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

In compliance with the requirements of the ESSA statute the Fannin County School District informs parents that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualification or certification criteria have been waived;
- the college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's qualifications, please contact April Hodges, Principal, at 706-632-5772, ahodges@fannin.k12.ga.us, or 224 E. Highland St., Blue Ridge, GA 30513

MOMENT OF SILENCE

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

SCHOOL CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

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

- Blue Ridge Elementary School offers a variety of clubs each school year. The clubs are advertised and the mission, purpose, and activities of those clubs are also advertised when the clubs begin each fall.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Fannin County Board of Education is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate in Employment on the basis of Race, Color, Sex, Religion, Creed, National Origin, Age or Disability.

ASBESTOS STATEMENT

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

PARENT/ELIGIBLE STUDENT DATA PRIVACY COMPLAINT POLICY

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

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

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

Complaints shall be handled in accordance with the following procedures.

All complaints shall be directed to the Superintendent’s Designee:

FCSS Director of Instructional Technology

2290 E First Street

Blue Ridge, GA 30513

706-258-2791

technologyhub@fannin.k12.ga.us

Upon the receipt of a request from a Complainant, a compliant form will be provided within 3 business days, which is also available on the District’s website.

A written response shall be provided to the Complainant within 10 business days of the Designee’s receipt of the completed complaint form.

The Complainant may file an appeal with the Superintendent within 10 business days of receipt of the Designee’s response.

The Superintendent shall provide a written response to the Complainant within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal.

The Complainant may file an appeal to the Board of Education within 10 business days of receipt of the Superintendent’s response.

The Board of Education shall render a final decision within 10 business days of receipt of an appeal.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE

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

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

- Military recruiters

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Planned Annual Surveys:

Georgia Student Health 2.0 Survey Consent: If you do not wish for your child to participate in this survey, please send a letter stating that you do not want your student to participate with your signature and phone number by September 30, 2019.

PARENTAL RIGHTS UNDER FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS PRIVACY ACT FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

A. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

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

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202

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

Fannin County School System

Heather Finley, Director of Instructional Technology

2290 E First Street

Blue Ridge, GA 30513

706-258-2791

hfinley@fannin.k12.ga.us

C. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

1. To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
2. To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure Model Annual Notification is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
3. To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
4. In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of

the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))

5. To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))

6. To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))

7. To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))

8. To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))

9. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))

10. To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))

11. Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

Appendix

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT Revised July 27, 2015 FANNIN COUNTY SCHOOLS

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

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

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

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

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

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

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

AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER

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

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

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

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

from Georgia's Character Education Program.

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

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

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

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

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

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Student vehicles brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, desks, and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without prior notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers, or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of administrators.

BEHAVIORS WHICH WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

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

Possession, sale, use in any amount, distribution, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate marijuana, drug paraphernalia, or alcoholic beverage or alcoholic beverage or other intoxicant

**Possession, distribution, attempted sale, or sale of substances represented as drugs or alcohol
Sale, attempted sale, distribution, or being under the influence of a prescription or over the counter drug**

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

Assault, including threats of bodily harm and/or sexual assault, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions:

Immediate suspension and automatic referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student or a person attending a school-related function

Battery, including sexual battery, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions:

Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

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

Bus Misbehavior: Students shall be prohibited from acts of physical violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6. These include bullying, as defined by subsection (a) of Code Sections 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus and other unruly behavior; students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones, or any other electrical device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of

the school bus.

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

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

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

Possession or use of tobacco in any form

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

Theft

Extortion or attempted extortion

Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive

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

Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives;

Disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff

Classroom and school disturbances

Violation of school dress code

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

Violations of Board Policy JCDAE, regarding use of pagers and cellular phones

Inappropriate public displays of affection

Gambling or possession of gambling devices

Moving and non-moving driving violations

Giving false information to school officials

Cheating on school assignments

Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, leaving campus without permission, failure to comply with compulsory attendance law

Bullying: Georgia law mandates that upon a finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Hazing

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

Willful and persistent violation of the student Code of Conduct

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

DISRUPTIVE PRESENCE

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

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

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

DEFINITION OF TERMS

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

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

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

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

The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system. The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose. Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.

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

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

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

Disciplinary Tribunal: School officials appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact finders and judge with respect to student disciplinary matters.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Weapon: The term weapon is defined as any object which is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to

place another in fear for personal safety or well-being. The following may be defined as dangerous weapons: Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade, OR any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

UNSAFE SCHOOLS

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

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES

The Fannin County Board of Education provides a variety of resources which are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include Student Support Teams, school counselors, and chronic disciplinary problem student plans.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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



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