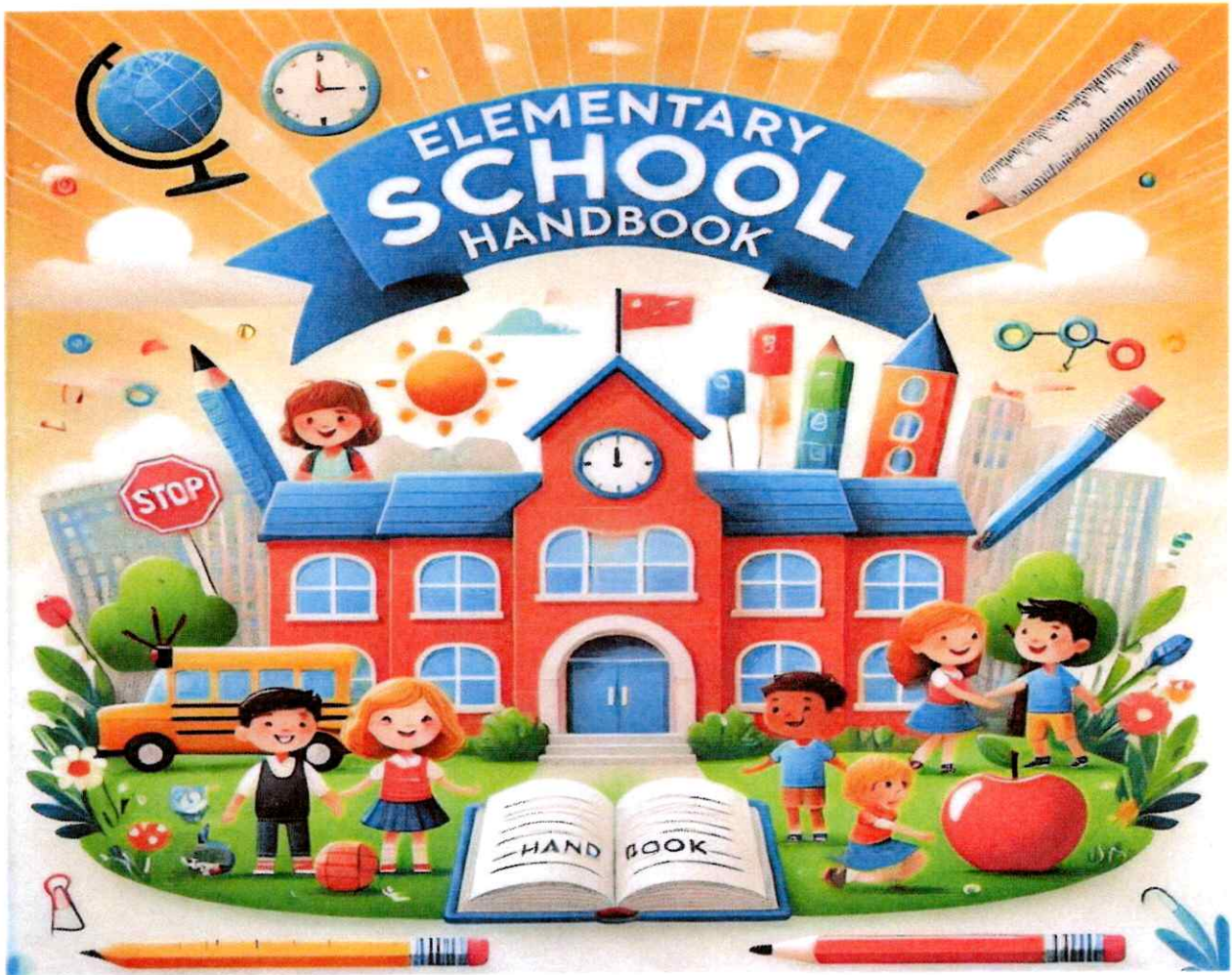


George County School District

Elementary Student Handbook

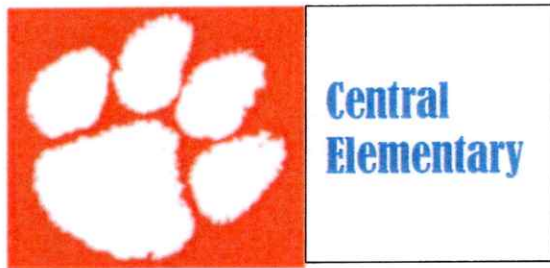


2025-2026

APPROVED

MAY 13 2025

G C SCHOOL BOARD



**L.C. Hatcher
Elementary**



L.T. Taylor Intermediate





GCSD 2025-2026 Academic Session Calendar

July 28-31	Teacher Workdays
August 1	Students Return
September 1	Labor Day Holiday
September 4	Progress Reports
October 3	End of 1 st Nine Weeks
October 6-10	Fall Break
October 16	Report Cards
November 13	Progress Reports
November 24-28	Thanksgiving Break
December 19	End of 2 nd Nine Weeks 60% Day
December 22-January 2	Christmas Break
January 5	Teacher Workday
January 6	Students Return
January 8	Report Cards
January 19	MLK Holiday
February 5	Progress Reports
February 16, 17	Winter Break
March 12	End of 3 rd Nine Weeks
March 13	Teacher Workday
March 19	Report Cards
March 30-April 3	Spring Break
April 16	Progress Reports
May 22	End of 4 th Nine Weeks- Students Last Day
May 25	Memorial Day
May 26	Teacher Workday



George County School District 2025-2026 Dress Code

This dress code outlines the only acceptable form of attire approved to be worn by students in this district. Every component of the student attire should be appropriate in length and/or size. The principal shall have the final decision about the appropriateness of the length/size of clothing. All teachers will monitor student dress and send those students who appear to be out of compliance to the principal at the beginning of the day.

Elementary Pre-K - 6th Grade

SHIRTS

- Any Solid Color Button up or Polo Shirt
- School specific spirit shirts are allowed each day. Alternate days may be designated by principal (examples: House, District, etc.)

SHOES

- FULLY Closed Toe and FULLY Closed Heel shoes must be worn.
- Athletic Shoes, Dress Shoes, and Boots may be worn.
- NO Crocs, sliders, flip flops, or house slippers will be allowed.

PANTS/SKIRTS/SHORTS/JUMPERS/DRESSES/SKORTS

- Colors - Navy blue, khaki, or black
- Pants, skorts, jumpers, dresses, shorts, and skirts must be appropriate fingertip length or longer.
- Blue, black, and khaki jeans will be allowed. Must NOT have holes, rips, or expose skin.
- Blue, black, and khaki jean shorts and skirts will be allowed. Must NOT have holes or rips and must be appropriate fingertip length or longer.
- Leggings may be worn under skirts, skorts, and dresses only and not as a stand-alone pant option.
- Uniform quality only joggers are allowed.
- Yoga pants ARE NOT ALLOWED.
- Pajamas ARE NOT ALLOWED.

PULLOVER SWEATSHIRTS/HOODIES/SWEATERS/TURTLENECKS

- Must be school-approved solid colors and artwork.
- Must not advertise any school prohibited substance or be in any way lewd, profane, vulgar, or threatening to any group.

JACKETS/COATS (To be removed indoors)

Must not advertise any school prohibited substance or be in any way lewd, profane, vulgar, or threatening to any group.

HATS

No Hats or head coverings are allowed inside the building unless approved by the administration.

Secondary 7th – 12th Grades

SHIRTS

- Any Solid Color Button up or Polo Shirt
- School specific spirit shirts are allowed each day. Alternate days may be designated by principal (examples: House, District, etc.)

SHOES

- Socks and shoes must be worn.
- Athletic Shoes, Dress Shoes, Boots, Crocs, Sliders, and Mules may be worn with socks.
- NO house slippers or flip flops will be allowed.

PANTS/SKIRTS/SHORTS/JUMPERS/DRESSES/SKORTS

- Pants, skorts, jumpers, dresses, shorts, and skirts must be appropriate fingertip length or longer.
- Jeans will be allowed. Must NOT have holes, rips, or expose skin.
- Jean shorts and skirts will be allowed. Must NOT have holes or rips and must be appropriate fingertip length or longer.
- Joggers are allowed.
- Leggings may be worn under skirts, skorts, and dresses only and not as a stand-alone pant option.
- Yoga pants ARE NOT ALLOWED.
- Pajamas ARE NOT ALLOWED.

PULLOVER SWEATSHIRTS/HOODIES/SWEATERS/TURTLENECKS

Must not advertise any school prohibited substance or be in any way lewd, profane, vulgar, or threatening to any group.

JACKETS/COATS

Must not advertise any school prohibited substance or be in any way lewd, profane, vulgar, or threatening to any group.

HATS

No Hats or head coverings are allowed inside the building unless approved by the administration or needed for Career Technical Education Classes.

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Section 1

George County Elementary Directory

Administration

Debra Joiner, Superintendent of Education
Dr. Jennifer Mathis, Assistant Superintendent of Education
Gina Hataway, Director of Elementary Curriculum/Student Assessment
Patti Wilkins-Seaman- Federal Programs Director
Dr. David King, Special Education Director
Kim Davis, Gifted Coordinator
James Ray, Title IX Coordinator, Director of Athletics and Operations

Agricola Elementary	Jan French, Principal Tiffany Fillingim, Assistant. Principal	601-947-8447
Benndale Elementary	Sean Riley, Principal Eric Neal, Teacher Lead Teacher	601-766-6341
Central Elementary	Sherry Pilkington, Principal Kelly Huber, Assistant Principal	601-947-2429
L.C. Hatcher Elementary	Kristi Kirkwood, Principal Brittany Williamson, Lead Teacher	601-947-3110
L.T. Taylor Intermediate	Mitzi Davis, Principal Laura Havard, Lead Teacher	601-947-6065
Rocky Creek Elementary	Shelia Taylor, Principal Christina Havard Lead Teacher	601-947-3886

Section 2

2025-2026 School Calendar

[https://irp.cdn-website.com/5877256e/files/uploaded/2025-2026 Academic Calendar.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/5877256e/files/uploaded/2025-2026%20Academic%20Calendar.pdf)

Section 3

Civil Responsibilities and Compliance

Notices of Assurance and Compliance

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act -- FERPA

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- o School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- o Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- o Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- o Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- o Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- o Accrediting organizations;
- o To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- o Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- o State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

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MAY 13 2013

G C SCHOOL BOARD

Discrimination

In compliance with Title IX, the George County School District will not discriminate on the basis of disability, sex, race, creed, color, or national origin in admission or access to benefits of education services or treatment of employment in its programs and activities to the extent provided by law. For questions or concerns please contact the district Title IX Coordinator, Chris West.

Alcohol or Controlled Substances

The use or possession of alcohol, drugs, or a controlled substance (including prescription and over-the-counter medications) at schools, or on the way to or from a school function for an activity, may result in a suspension or expulsion for a period not less than one year. Violations of this policy will result in a referral to alternative school. Additionally, such violations may be referred to law enforcement authorities for appropriate action and/or Child Protective Services. Non-school individuals are subject to removal from school premises and arrest.

Tobacco

The use or possession of tobacco or tobacco products at school, on the way to and from school or at any school function or activity will be referred to administration.

Guns

Any student who has in his/her possession at school, on school property, on the school bus, on the way to and from school, or at any school function or activity will immediately be suspended pending an investigation and Disciplinary Review Committee meeting will be called. Miss. Code Ann. 37-11-18 states the student will be subject to automatic expulsion for a calendar year. Additionally the student committing the offense will be referred to local law enforcement officials for criminal prosecution in accordance with state and federal laws prohibiting such infractions.

Other Weapons

Possession by students of any hard or sharp objects, regardless of its original purpose, that may be considered a weapon while he/she is at school, using other objects (including bodily fluids) as a weapon, on school property, on the school bus, on the way to and from school, or at any school function or activity shall be considered in violation of this policy, an investigation and a Disciplinary Review Committee meeting will be called. Miss. Code Ann. 37-11-18 states the student will be subject to automatic expulsion for a calendar year. Examples of such weapons include, but are not limited to knives, slingshots, billy clubs, brass knuckles, throwing stars, pipes, clubs, chains, razors, and box cutters, etc. Additionally, any student who uses or threatens another person with such a weapon will be referred to law enforcement officials for appropriate actions.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The George County School District does not condone and will not tolerate bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

The George County School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other school employees or students. Likewise, the District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person engages in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior. The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official. The School Board directs the superintendent or designee to design and implement procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors. The procedures should be appropriately placed in District personnel policy handbooks, school handbooks that include discipline policies and procedures, and any other policy or procedure that deals with student or employee behavior. The discipline policies and procedures must recognize the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. Furthermore, the George County School District defines "reasonable action" as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior. Ref: SB 2015; Miss. Code Ann. 37-7-301(e)

Student Complaints of Bullying or Harassing Behavior

Students and employees in the George County School District are protected from bullying or harassing behavior by other students or employees. It is the intent of the Board and the administration to maintain an environment free from bullying and harassing behavior. This complaint procedure provides a process for filing, processing and resolving complaints of such conduct. Adherence to these procedures is mandatory. The failure of any person to follow procedures will constitute a waiver of the right to pursue a complaint at any level, including review by the Board.

I. Definitions

Bullying or harassing is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any gestures, written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruptive to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

II. Procedures for Processing a Complaint

Any student, school employee or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, or has witnessed or who has reliable information that a student, school employee or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor or other school official. The report shall be made promptly but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. The school official shall complete a "Bullying/Harassing Behavior" complaint form which shall include the name of the reporting person, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the names of the victim of the misconduct, the names of any witnesses and any other information that would assist in the

investigation of the complaint. The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints against the principal shall be made to the superintendent and complaints against the superintendent shall be made to the Board chairman. The complaint shall be investigated promptly. Parents will be notified of the nature of the complaint involving their student. The District official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) working days after initial receipt of the complaint by the District. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be reduced to writing. The District official conducting the investigation shall notify the victim and parents as appropriate when the investigation is completed and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined. If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the District official, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the results of the initial decision. The superintendent will arrange such meetings with the victim and other affected parties as deemed necessary to discuss the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written decision to the victim's appeal within ten (10) working days. If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall, within twenty (20) working days, allow the victim and parents as appropriate to appear before the Board to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall provide a written decision within ten (10) working days following the victim's appearance before the Board.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act

In conformance with Environmental Protection Agency Regulation 763.93, a certified EPA Inspector has inspected all buildings in this school district for the presence of asbestos. A management plan has been developed for each school site documenting their findings. A copy of the management plan is on file in each principal's office at the Transportation Office, 14214 Hwy. 26 West, Lucedale, Mississippi. Interested persons may review the plans at these locations. According to the inspection reports and management plans, there are no asbestos hazards in the George County School District.

Communicable Diseases

Any students or employee exhibiting evidence of communicable disease will have a physician diagnose the disease and prescribe the suitable treatment. Common communication disease as listed below will automatically result in exclusion from school and school activities for the designated period.

<u>Disease:</u>	<u>Exclusion from School:</u>
Chicken Pox	7 days after eruption appears
Covid 19	10 days from positive test (or per Physician's Orders)
German/Red Measles	4 days after onset of rash
Mumps	9 days after glands swell
Hepatitis	Clearance by Physician
Mononucleosis	Clearance by Physician
Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)	Clearance by Physician, with proper treatment in compliance with guidelines in Central Office
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Until Proper Treatment
Impetigo	Until Proper Treatment
Pediculosis (Lice)	Until Nits are gone/dead
Ringworm	Until Proper Treatment
Scabies	Until Proper Treatment

Any student with a diagnosed case of staph infection must provide proof of treatment from a physician before returning to school. If a physician allows a student to return to school, all wounds that are draining must be covered with an inclusive dressing.

For these or other communicable diseases, the principal may require a written note from the student's family doctor or public health department in order for the students to return to school after having a communicable or infectious disease. In all cases where the disease is considered acute or of a very serious nature, the school authorities may require additional medical evidence before the person is permitted to enter/re-enter school. Each case may be evaluated by a group composed of the child's physician, and public health personnel. Personal hygiene level and other factors unique to each situation may be used to reach a decision in each case.

Fever

When school officials are aware that a child's temperature is 100 degrees, an attempt will be made to contact the parent/guardian. If the temperature reaches 101 degrees, a school official will request that the parent/guardian pick up the child. This procedure is followed to ensure the safety of the child and the well-being of the other students. Students may return to school when they have been free from fever for a period of at least 24 hours without medication. ***Note: Any student picked up due to vomiting or any other stomach virus related issues may return 24 hours without any symptoms.***

Head Lice

Head checks will be done routinely for head lice. Students found with head lice nits/live bugs should be brought to school by an adult to be cleared for class following treatment. Proof of treatment is required before a student may be cleared. Students must be free of live nits/live bugs to return to class. The student will be considered unexcused from school. Only the first incident of head lice will be considered excused. Unexcused absences for head lice will be reported to the truancy officer.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001—Title X, Part CM of the No Child Left Behind Act—Sec725

If your family lives in any of the following situations:

- In a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground
- On the street
- In an abandoned building, RV trailer, or other inadequate accommodations or
- Double up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing.

Then your children have certain rights or protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.

Your children can:

- Continue in the same school they last attended before they became homeless or *the school they last attended*, if that is the parent's or youth's choice and is feasible. If a staff member of a school sent the child or youth to a school other than the one requested, the staff member must provide written explanation and offer the right to appeal the decision.

- Receive transportation to the school they attended before the family or youth became homeless or the school last attended, if the parent or youth request school transportation and it is feasible.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if missing records and documents normally required for enrollment such as a birth certificate, proof of residence, previous school records, and/or immunization/medical records.
- Enroll, attend classes, and participate fully in all school activities while the school arranges for the transfer of records.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children or youth served in these programs.
- Attend school with children not experiencing homelessness; segregation based on a student's status as homeless is prohibited.

Safe Schools

*George County School District
(Student Handbook Addendum)*

Mississippi School Safety Act of 2001

The School Safety Act of 2001 is cumulative and in addition to the school district's existing authority regarding discipline of students. Pursuant to the Act, the school district has adopted policies and procedures that recognize the teacher as the authority in classroom matters regarding the school district's written discipline code of conduct.

In the event the teacher removes a student, who, in the professional judgment of the teacher, is disrupting the learning environment, and the removal is approved by the principal or assistant principal, the student may not be returned to the classroom until a conference has been held with the student's parent, guardian, or custodian. During the conference, disruptive behavior will be discussed and agreements reached that no further disruption will be tolerated. The conference may be in person, by telephone, by email, or other written communications.

Among other provisions, this act provides that a student 14 years of age or older may be subject to automatic expulsion on the third occurrence of habitually disruptive behavior during the school year. (Students 13 years of age or younger may be subject to expulsion for such conduct pursuant to other school policies and procedures).

The term "disruptive behavior" means conduct of a student that is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive, that it seriously interferes with a school teachers' or school administrator's ability to communicate with the students in a classroom, with a student's ability to learn, or with the operation of a school or school-related activity and which is not covered by other laws related to violence, or possession of weapons or controlled substances on school property, school vehicles, or at school-related activities. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to: foul, profane, obscene, threatening, defiant or abusive language or action toward teachers or other school employees: defiance, ridicule or verbal attack of a teacher, and willful, deliberate and overt acts of disobedience of the directions of a teacher.

The term “habitually disruptive” refers to such actions of a student that cause disruption in a classroom, or school property or vehicles, or at a school-related activity on more than two occasions during a school year, and to disruptive behavior that was initiated, willful, and overt on the part of the student and required the attention of school personnel to deal with the disruption. After the second instance of behavior that is determined by the principal or designated administrator to have seriously interfered with the school environment, the parents/guardians will be contacted to help develop a behavior modification plan for the student.

Students with disabilities are responsible for adhering to the same rules of conduct as non-disabled students. State and federal regulations relating to students with disabilities will be followed when implementing discipline procedures.

Section 4

Testing Schedule

***State Test Dates 2025-2026**

STATE TESTING CALENDAR IS PENDING

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, a student scoring at the lowest achievement level in reading on the established state assessment for 3rd grade will not be promoted to 4th grade unless the student meets the good cause exemptions for promotion. The following students may be considered for a good cause exemption:

- Students with disabilities whose individual education plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide accountability assessment program is not appropriate, as authorized under state law;
- Students with a disability who participate in the state annual accountability assessment and who have an IEP or a Section 504 plan that reflects that the individual student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and previously was retained in Kindergarten or First, Second or Third Grade;
- Limited English proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English Language Learner program;
- Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an alternative standardized assessment approved by the State Board of Education; and
- Students who have received intensive intervention in reading for two (2) or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who previously were retained in Kindergarten or First, Second or Third Grade for a total of two (2) years and have not met exceptional education criteria.

Section 5

Academics

Early Childhood

The philosophy of the George County Early Childhood Programs (Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten) is based on the understanding that the early years are crucial to subsequent educational programs. We recognize that the rate of learning and development during these years maximizes each child's potential; therefore, the learning environment builds upon the opportunity that is inherent in the enthusiasm, openness, and readiness to absorb new experiences displayed by most children during their formative years.

Our fundamental goal is to provide a planned educational environment rich in learning experiences so that a positive foundation for the future will be nurtured. We are dedicated to providing those learning experiences that will develop a positive self-image in every child along with the emotional, social, and intellectual skills necessary to be successful in the classroom.

Goals

The goals of early childhood education are to:

- Teach children, recognizing that growth and development are unique to each child and that children develop skills at different rates especially in the areas of emergent literacy and mathematics.
- Motivate children to learn.
- Prepare children for academic work.

Objectives

To reach our overall goals, the early childhood program has the following major objectives:

- Identify the individual needs of the child.
- Develop a positive and realistic self-image.
- Develop positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Encourage the child to express himself/herself creatively.
- Develop good listening and self-help skills.
- Develop language through listening, speaking, and dramatic play activities.
- Develop maximum physical growth through gross and fine motor activities.
- Provide experiences to stimulate and develop cognitive skills.

Pre-Kindergarten

The George County School District is proud to offer a voluntary full day program of pre-kindergarten classes for children who are age 4 on or before September 1st of each school year. A pre-kindergarten classroom is not available on every campus; therefore, these classes are not restricted by district attendance zones. There are a limited number of these classrooms, and parents must submit a request for placement to the school district during the pre-kindergarten/kindergarten preregistration process. If more requests are received than there are slots available, the school district uses a blind drawing to select students to participate. Any student seeking placement must provide a valid birth certificate, Mississippi immunization (Form 121), and current proof of George County residency. As a part of the school system, most of the policies that apply to students in grades 1st – 6th also apply to pre-kindergarten students. However, there are a few variations, and those are outlined below.

Grading— Grading for students enrolled in pre-kindergarten programs differs from the grading system used for students in grades 1st – 6th. Pre-kindergarten students do not receive typical report cards. Each nine weeks, teachers will update parents on progress being made towards meeting the standards as outlined in the guidelines established by the Mississippi Department of Education.

Assessment— Students in pre-kindergarten are administered a variety of standardized assessments in addition to those teacher-made assessments given in the classroom. Students are given pre- and post-Brigance assessments to measure their development across all of the early learning standards. They also participate in the pre- and post-Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (ISIP-Istation). The overall scores by school from the MKAS² are reported to the public annually for all school districts in the state of Mississippi. You will receive a copy of your individual student's score.

Instruction— Classroom instruction in a pre-kindergarten class also looks a little different than it does in upper grades. These students learn and engage through center-based learning and dramatic play for at least 120 minutes per day. Students participate in at least five different centers, which include book/library, math/manipulative, and creative art. The purpose for this design is to increase executive functioning skills in young learners and to grow their academic foundational skills. All student-learning is designed around thematic based units of instruction.

Discipline— All students attending school in the George County School System are expected to abide by the code of conduct established by the school board. A portion of the standards for pre-kindergarten include social and emotional development, and these standards are a part of the daily instruction in the classroom. Parents can expect to receive feedback from school staff regarding their students' progress in these standards on a daily basis.

Classroom/Playground Setup—All pre-kindergarten classrooms use a rug or carpet squares for whole group time. Toilets and restrooms used by pre-kindergarten students must be accessible from the outside, and all classrooms must be near an exit. A pre-kindergarten classroom may have no more than 20 students enrolled if a full-time assistant is assigned to the classroom. Pre-kindergarten outside play areas have clearly defined boundaries, have age-appropriate equipment, and are not simultaneously shared with students in grades 1st – 6th. These items, as well as all others included in the Mississippi Department of Education Early Learning Guidelines, are strictly adhered to by the George County School District to ensure the safest and highest quality learning environment.

Transportation—Parents/guardians must provide transportation to and from school on daily basis for pre-kindergarten students.

Kindergarten

Each elementary campus in the George County School District provides kindergarten classrooms for students who are age 5 on or before September 1 of the school year in which they enroll. Before a student can be enrolled by a parent or legal guardian, they must first provide a birth certificate, a Mississippi immunization (Form 121), and two allowable proofs of George County residency that are dated within a month of the start of school. All kindergarten classrooms operate on a full-day schedule and follow the same calendar as all other grades. Much like the pre kindergarten program, the kindergarten classes follow the same policies established by the George County School Board, with a few notable exceptions which are outlined below.

Grading— Students enrolled in kindergarten classrooms receive a regular report card and progress report, just as other students. However, their grades are limited to reading/language arts and mathematics. While students are provided instruction in other subjects as well as through thematic units, grades are only given to measure growth in the foundational skills of mathematics and reading with language. Students must achieve passing grades in both subjects to be promoted to 1st grade.

Assessment— Kindergarten students are administered a standardized assessment in addition to those teacher-made assessments given in the classroom. They will also participate in the pre and post Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (MKAS²). The overall scores by school from the MKAS² are reported to the public annually for all school districts in the state of Mississippi. You will receive a copy of your individual student's score.

Instruction— Kindergarten schedules operate on a 360 minute instructional day. During this time a minimum of 120 minutes is dedicated to students participating in learning centers. The activities engaged in by students participating in the learning centers are tied to the thematic unit of instruction. The centers cover the following areas of instruction: language arts, creative arts, mathematics, social studies, science, dramatic play, physical activity, approaches to learning, and social/emotional standards. Students participate in at least four different centers per day, including one teacher-led small group, book/library, math/manipulative, and creative art.

Discipline— All students attending school in the George County School System are expected to abide by the code of conduct established by the school board. A portion of the standards for kindergarten include social and emotional development, and these standards are a part of the daily instruction in the classroom. Parents can expect to receive feedback from school staff regarding their students' progress in these standards on a daily basis.

Classroom/Playground Setup—All kindergarten classrooms use a rug or carpet squares for whole group time. Toilets and restrooms used by kindergarten students must be accessible from the outside, and all classrooms must be near an exit. A kindergarten classroom may have no more than 27 students enrolled if a full-time assistant is assigned to the classroom. Kindergarten outside play areas have clearly defined boundaries, will age-appropriate equipment, and are not simultaneously shared with students in grades 3rd – 6th. These items, as well as all others included in the Mississippi Department of Education Early Learning Guidelines, are strictly adhered to by the George County School District to ensure the safest and highest quality learning environment.

Grading System (Grading Changes)

According to MS Code 37-11-64, no school board member, school superintendent, assistant superintendent, principal, guidance counselor, other teachers, coaches, or other administrative staff members of the school or the central services staff of a local school board shall attempt, directly or indirectly, to change, alter, or otherwise affect the grade received by a student from his/her teacher except as otherwise specifically allowed by this section.

A teacher's determination of a student's grade as a measure of the academic achievement or proficiency of the student shall not be altered or changed in any manner by any school official or employee other than the teacher except as provided in this subsection.

A school official or employee having authority provided under formally adopted written rules and procedures adopted by the local school board to change a student's grade can take such action only upon it being determined that the grade is an error or that the grade is demonstrably inconsistent with the teacher's grading policy.

Any local school district or personnel employed by the school district who violates the provisions of this act shall cause the local school district to be subject to losing its accreditation in the manner determined by the policies and procedures of the State Board of Education.

Note: All student/parent requests for grade reviews must be made with the teacher assigning the grade. Parents/students should schedule a parent/student/teacher conference to discuss any and all grading issues.

Elementary Grading Policy (Grades Pre-K – 6)

A minimum of 10 grades per subject will be posted each nine-week term. These grades may be taken from various sources. Different types of subjective and objective tests, performance assessments (such as projects, journals, writing, plays, creative dramatics, etc.) teacher checklist, portfolio or other measures may be used as assessments. Nine weeks and semester averages will be an average of the two nine weeks' grades. Yearly averages will consist of an average of the two semester grades. Letter and numeric grades will be reported on report cards and cumulative records.

Grade symbols and numerical equivalents for academic grades Pre-K-6 are:

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- D = 65-69
- F = Below 65

The school system is divided into two semesters. Each Semester is further divided into two nine week terms. Grades are placed on report cards each nine week term. The rating scale for all elementary (K-6th) classes is: A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 65-69 F = below 65. The grade should consist of 75% test, 5% on EQT;s (End of Quarter Test), and 20% daily grades (combination of classwork and homework).

Homework

Your child's education is a joint responsibility of the home and school. Homework is an important part of the educational program and is to reinforce skills already introduced. The amount of homework assigned to an elementary student depends upon the age and ability of the child. Credit may be given for homework assignments.

Make-up Work for Excused Absence

The student will be allowed to make up work missed following an excused absence by contacting his/her teacher(s). The make up work may be done under the following provisions:

1. The initiative must be taken by the student to consult the teacher(s) about the work missed upon the day he/she returns with an excused absence.
2. The administrator determines when and how work can be made up.
3. Make up work may be picked up after 2:00 at parent's request.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Progress Reports and Report cards will be issued as listed on the school calendar.

Promotion and Retention

Students are required to master basic course curriculum minimum standards. Student's performance of these objectives will be measured in the district's testing programs. The final decision concerning a child's retention will be made by the principal and teacher after all available information has been gathered, and sufficient communication with parents has been conducted, this decision will reflect what is best for the child educationally.

In addition to the requirement of the 3rd Grade Reading Summative Assessment as required by Literacy-Based Promotion Act, the George County School Board established the following standards for the promotion and retention of students in grades one through six: To be promoted, the students must pass Math, Reading, Language Arts, and Science. For Kindergarten students are required to pass Language Arts and Math.

Grades must reflect mastery of grade level objectives.

Pupil Assignment

Students will be given their schedule of classes on the first day of school. These schedules will not be changed unless there is a conflict, an error, or it can be determined by the principal that the change will be beneficial to the student. Changes will not be made for reasons such as dislike for the teacher, dislike for the subject, or dislike of classmates.

Textbooks

Textbooks for pupils are provided by the state. State-loaned books are issued at the beginning of the school year and returned at the close of the same school year.

Parents are required to assume full responsibility for the books and their proper care until they have been checked back to the school. All textbooks must have textbook covers. Pupils should see that their books are not abused. A fine will be charged for any state-loaned book that shows unnecessary wear. The following chart will be used to assess fines by the district for lost or unusable textbooks older than three years.

First year.....full cost
Second year.....75% cost

Third year.....50% cost
Fourth year.....25% cost

The district will use the following chart to assess fines on textbooks that show damage or excessive wear. After a fine is collected, the person making this collection will document on the inside front cover the amount collected, date of collection, name of person collecting these fines, and extent of damage. This will occur any time a fine is collected on a textbook.

Bent cover \$1.00

Missing page 1/2 cost

Torn Page \$1.00

Markings \$1.00

Worn cover \$1.00

Missing cover 1/2 cost

Holes in Page \$1.00

Water damage 1/2 cost

The person imposing these fines should use sound judgment and note prior damages and fines.

Distance Learning

For information on distance learning please review the George County School District's policy on distance learning IAAA. Individualized distance learning will be determined by the local school principal or designee.

Section 6

Admission

All elementary students to be enrolled in school must provide the school with the following information:

1. **Immunization Records**—All students in grades K-12 must acquire from their doctor or health department a special immunization certificate known as the Certificate of Compliance. The school will not be allowed to enroll any students without this immunization record.
2. **Birth Certificate**—A pupil entering the first year will not be allowed to enroll without a certified birth certificate (Mississippi Code 6225-03)
3. **Special Needs**—The school must be advised of any known handicaps, defects, or special needs at the time of admittance to school. Special needs of food allergies must have a written doctor's statement to verify the child's special dietary needs.
4. **Age Requirements**—Students entering Pre-K must reach their fourth birthday on or before September 1. Students entering kindergarten must reach their fifth birthday on or before September 1. Students entering the first grade must reach their sixth birthday on or before September 1.
5. **Two current proofs of residence must be provided.**

Residency

The parent or legal guardian of a pupil must be a legal resident of the George County Schools District to be eligible for admittance in accordance with school board policy. Two current proofs of residence must be provided before a student can be admitted to school. The proof of residency must be attached to a residence. It cannot be a PO Box or a cell phone.

Child Nutrition

A student entering school must pay full prices for lunch or breakfast until an application has been approved. Students may bring their lunch. Free/reduced lunch applications are available online. Applications can be taken any time of the year if a status changes. All cafeteria charges must be paid before registration for a new school year will be allowed.

Section 7

Attendance

Attendance Policy for Grades Pre-K thru 6

The state legislature requires students to be present for 63% of the instructional school day to be counted as present in attendance for that day. This means that a student who is checked out or comes in tardy and does not complete 63% of the instructional day will be marked absent. The instructional day does not include lunch or recess times. Our computers will automatically calculate each child's attendance time daily.

Regular attendance and promptness to class are necessary to assure the continuity of the educational program. Time lost from class is irretrievable, and absences tend to interrupt the continuity or the instructional program. Time on task is essential if students are to succeed in their educational efforts. A student who is in school cannot be absent from a class without permission for the principal.

Absences will be considered either excused or unexcused. Each student is allowed five (5) parent excuses for the year. A parent note can only be an excuse for one day. A parent note does not automatically excuse the absence. Doctor's excuses shall be furnished on the day of the student's return to school for any medically related absences. In order for a doctor's excuse or parent note to qualify for deduction from total days missed, it must be presented to the school not later than two (2) days after the student's return to school after the illness, injury or treatment that resulted in a doctor's visit or consultation.

The school principal may excuse the following types of absences from the total allotted days unless reasonable grounds exist to not provide for deduction:

1. Attendance of authorized school activity with prior approval of the superintendent or her designee.
2. Illness or injury resulting in physical disability (physician's statement required).
3. Isolation of children by the State Board of Health, County Health Department, or School Official.
4. Death or serious illness of an immediate family member.
5. Medical/Dental appointment by prior approval of School Officials or in emergency situations.
6. Required presence of a student in a court proceeding.
7. Religious observance as approved by School Officials.
8. Valid educational opportunities with prior approval of school officials.

9. Superintendent or designee determined conditions are sufficient to warrant non-attendance.

The school district shall be in compliance with the Mississippi Compulsory Attendance Law (Section 27-13-91 MS Code of 1972 Ann., as amended). Excessive absences shall be reported to the appropriate attendance officer in compliance with the requirement of the law. When a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences ten (10) unexcused absences, and twelve (12) unexcused absences; the school is required to report these absences to the George County Attendance Officer who explains and gives written notice of the Compulsory School Law to

the parents/guardians. The Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated section 37-13-91(4) states: A disciplinary suspension shall not be considered as an "excused" absence.

Checking Out During School Day

In order to provide for the best welfare of each student and the school, the following checkout policy has been adopted: Before the student may be released from school, a parent, legal guardian, or person authorized by a parent must come to the school office and sign for the student. Students will only be released to authorized persons listed on the checkout list/contact sheet. *Appropriate picture identification may be required to check out a student.*

Tardies and Early Checkouts

Tardy: It is recognized that an elementary school child may occasionally be tardy or may be checked out of school due to an unforeseen emergency. Parents who bring their child to school late must bring the child in to the office to check him/her in. Students will not be subject to consequences if they arrive late on a district school bus.

Tardy is defined as arriving at school after the beginning of the school day or leaving school before dismissal time (a checkout).

Tardies due to a medical appointment will be excused if a doctor's excuse is presented the day of the tardy. No late medical excuses will be accepted for tardies.

Section 8

Student Conduct and Discipline

Discipline Policies

The George County School District supports the teacher's right to teach and the student's right to learn. Behavior, which stops the teacher from teaching and/or the student from learning, will not be tolerated. We recognize that effective discipline requires the shared responsibility of parents, students, and school personnel.

Assertive discipline will be used in each classroom. Each teacher will develop class rules, which will be approved by the principal. At the appropriate step, the student will be referred to the principal.

Classroom Assertive Discipline

- Step 1: Warning
- Step 2: Teacher consequence
- Step 3: Parent contact and consequences
- Step 4: Referral to principal

Discipline Plan

A parent, guardian, or custodian of a compulsory-school-age child enrolled in the school district:

- Shall be responsible for his or her minor child's destructive acts against school property or persons.
- May be requested to appear at school by the school attendance officer or an appropriate school official for a conference regarding acts of the child specified in paragraph one of this subsection, or for any other discipline conference regarding the acts of the child.
- Shall be responsible for any criminal fines brought against such students for unlawful activity occurring on school ground or buses.

Any parent, guardian, or custodian of a compulsory-school-age child enrolled in a school district that refuses or willfully fails to attend a discipline conference specified in paragraph one of this section may be summoned by proper notification by the superintendent of schools or the school attendance office and be required to attend a discipline conference.

Discipline Ladder

The principals are authorized to institute the below steps of the discipline ladder for any student for the following:

1. Improper behavior in the cafeteria or on the campus.
2. Improper behavior at assemblies or other school activities.
3. Cutting classes.
4. Continuous disobedience.
5. Defacing or otherwise injuring property that belongs to the school district.
6. Any activity that disrupts school.
7. Public display of affection.
8. Cheating

A student's failure to follow regulations 1-8 will result in the following punishment.

First Offense	Principal Consequence
Second Offense	1 day In School Detention
Third Offense	2 days In School Detention
Fourth Offense	3 days In School Detention
Fifth Offense	4 days In School Detention
Sixth Offense	5 days In School Detention
Seventh Offense	Recommendation for Alternative School

Severe Clause

The superintendent or principals are authorized to institute the disciplinary action below including immediate suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion if warranted, for any student for disorderly or misconduct including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Open defiance of a teacher/principal.
2. Language which is inappropriate in a school setting including: profanity or vulgarity (to include acts, gestures, or symbols directed at another person, or possession/use of pornography).
3. Fighting at school, on the way to or from school, or at school activities.
4. Refusal to identify one's self properly when requested to do so by the faculty or staff member.
5. Racial Comments/Jokes etc.
6. Severe disruption leading to the removal of student from the classroom.
7. Other misbehavior as designated by the administration.
8. Possession or use of tobacco, electronic cigarettes, or vaping devices, on school grounds, or while participating in a school function.
9. Inappropriate internet search.
10. Stealing.
11. Running from authority
12. Possession of Pepper Spray

A student's failure to follow regulations 1-12 will result in the following punishment.

First Offense	2 day Out of School Suspension
Second Offense	3 days Out of School Suspension
Third Offense	5 days Out of School Suspension
Fourth Offense	Recommendation for Alternative School

EXTREME SCHOOL DISRUPTIONS

1. Use or possession of dangerous objects.
2. Running from authority/attempting to leave campus.
3. Possession/distribution of pornographic materials or contraceptives.
4. Indecent exposure/behaviors.
5. Possession or use of alcohol, counterfeit substances, or drug-related products including prescription and over-the-counter medications at school, on school grounds, or while participating in a school function.
6. Other behaviors as designated by principal or assistant principal.
7. Use of Pepper Spray

A student's failure to follow regulations 1 —7 will result in the following punishment.

First Offense	Recommendation for Alternative School
Second Offense	Recommendation for Alternative School/Expulsion

Illegal Activities Miss. Code Ann. 37-11-18

1. Use or possession of fireworks, unused ammunition , or any explosive device.
2. Use or possession of a weapon; not limited to guns, knives, objects utilized as a weapon, and bodily fluids.
3. Falsely reporting a bomb or other explosive device knowing the report if false.
4. Terroristic Threats

These illegal activities will result in an automatic expulsion for a calendar year pending discipline review committee meeting.

A student who returns to his/her home school after a stay at alternative school will begin at the fourth step of the regular discipline ladder.

A student's alternative stay or expulsion is not negated by withdrawal or transfer to another campus.

Principals may impose more severe consequences depending on the age of the student and the severity of the violation.

Prohibited Articles

Problems arise each year because students bring articles, which are hazardous to the safety of others or interfere in some way with school procedure. Liquid white out and compressed air products including but not limited to hair spray, deodorant, perfumes, and compressed air are prohibited. Items such as laser lights, lighters, rubber bands, rolling book bags, MP3 Players, IPODS, toothpicks, sunglasses, gum, toy guns, water pistols, slingshots, ball bats, skateboards, stickpins, balls of any kind, and other articles that may be designated by the principal, if brought to school as playthings are undesirable and will be impounded and returned to the parent if he/she wishes to come to the school and retrieve the article(s). Tape recorders, video recorders, digital recorders, cameras, electronic recording devices, smart watches, or surveillance equipment is expressly prohibited. Additional disciplinary measures may be taken. The article is not to be brought to school. A parent may be called to remove artificial fingernails of students that hinder the student's ability to perform school-related work.

There shall be no lettering, signs, placards, decals, or other such objects pasted, glued, or otherwise attached to any surface of the school buildings inside or outside, without special permission from the principal. In addition, pamphlets, leaflets, brochures or other literature shall not be distributed to students by anyone without permission of the principal.

Campus Security

Students are to report an accident on the school grounds to the teacher on duty. A main rule of conduct of the school grounds is "hands off" other children. Skateboards, bicycles, ATV's are prohibited on sidewalks and school grounds. Buildings and grounds are monitored by cameras for the protection of the students.

Conduct in Cafeteria

Students should observe the following guidelines while in the cafeteria:

- Be responsible, pick up your trash, tray and area.
- No food can be taken from the cafeteria.
- Students are not to bring drinks unless in a thermos.
- Students bringing their lunch may only purchase milk, ice cream or water.
- Students may not bring purchased food in the original wrapper.
- Students may not purchase ice cream, chips, or water from the cafeteria if a balance is owed.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

At their own risk, students may bring their cell phones/electronic devices to school. The phone/ device must remain on silent or vibrate at all times so as not to distract from instructional time during the school day. The teachers may declare their classrooms as "No Electronic Device Zones." Any student in violation will receive a discipline referral. The teachers who choose to monitor the use of cell phone/electronic devices in their classrooms will be allowed to take up the student's device when used without permission. Devices will be sent to the office accompanied by a discipline referral. Inappropriate use of cell phone/electronic devices is not allowed, and students who are defiant or refuse to comply will be sent to the principal's office for disciplinary action. Outgoing calls, incoming calls, camera use, social media or other uses are not allowed. Violation of the electronic device/cell phone policy will be referred to the office and the student will face the following consequences: 1st offense—Warning ;2nd and following offenses—Student will be placed on the discipline ladder, and parent must pick up the device in the office. If parents have an emergency and need to contact the student, they must call the office. Parents should not contact their students via the student's cell phone. George County Schools, its faculty, and staff are NOT responsible for any damaged, missing, or stolen cell phones. If a student has a cell phone and it is damaged or stolen, school personnel WILL NOT utilize time to investigate the incident nor will the district or schools take any financial responsibility for the cell phone or cell phone charges.

Corporal Punishment

The principal or certified designee may administer corporal punishment when necessary. The principal must administer in the presence of a teacher, assistant teacher, or secretary. Any certified designee must administer in the presence of the principal, when available, or another certified teacher and the administration must take place in the principal's office. If a parent chooses to allow corporal punishment, he/she is responsible for personally notifying the principal and completing the necessary packet. The parent will be contacted should the need arise. For further clarification concerning corporal punishment, please reference MS Code 37-11-57.

MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972 As Amended

SEC. 37-11-57. Immunity of school personnel from liability for carrying out action in enforcing rules regarding control, discipline, suspension and expulsion of students.

Except in the case of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment, a teacher or other member of the instructional staff, a principal or his designated representative, or a bus driver shall not be civilly liable for any action carried out in conformity with state law and district school board rules regarding the control, discipline, suspension and expulsion of students. The local school board may provide any necessary legal defense to a teacher or other member of the instructional staff, a principal or his designated representative or a bus driver in any action which may be filed against such school personnel.

SOURCES: Laws, 1991, ch. 539, Sec. 5; 1994, ch. 607, Sec. 16, eff from and after July 2, 1994

1997 Amendment:

SECTION 1. Section 37-11-57, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-11-57. (1) Except in the case of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment, a teacher, assistant teacher, " " " principal, or an assistant principal acting within the course and scope of his employment " " " shall not be " " " liable for any action carried out in conformity with state or federal law or rules or regulations of the State Board of Education or the local school board " " " regarding the control, discipline, suspension and expulsion of students. The local school board shall provide any necessary legal defense to a teacher, assistant teacher, " " " principal, or assistant principal " " " acting within the course and scope of his employment in any action which may be filed against such school personnel. A school district shall be entitled to reimbursement for legal fees and expenses from its employee if a court finds that the act of the employee was outside the course and scope of his employment, or that the employee was acting with criminal intent. Any action by a school district against its employee and any action by the employee against the school district for necessary legal fees and expenses shall be tried to the court in the same suit brought against the school employee.

(2) Corporal punishment administered in a reasonable manner, or any reasonable action to maintain control and discipline of students taken by a teacher, assistant teacher, principal or assistant principal acting within the scope of his employment or function and in accordance with any state or federal laws or rules or regulations of the State Board of Education or the local school board does not constitute negligence or child abuse. No teacher, assistant teacher, principal or assistant principal so acting shall be held liable in a suit for civil damages alleged to have been suffered by a student as a result of the administration of corporal punishment, or the taking of action to maintain control and discipline of a student, unless the court determines that the teacher, assistant teacher, principal or assistant principal acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose or in a manner exhibiting a wanton and willful disregard of human rights or safety. For the purposes of this subsection, "corporal punishment" means the reasonable use of physical force or physical contact by a teacher, assistant teacher, principal or assistant principal, as may be necessary to maintain discipline, to enforce a school rule, for self-protection or for the protection of other students from disruptive students.

SOURCE: 1997 Laws, Chapter 512, Sec. 1, HB313, Effective July 1, 1997.

Suspension

The act of suspension should be taken only when every other effort to work constructively with the student has been examined. Specific behavior displaying severe disruptions will result in immediate suspension. The Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated section 37-13-91(4) states: A disciplinary suspension shall not be considered as an “excused” absence. While students are suspended from school they are not allowed to participate in any school-related activities including those occurring after school hours.

Section 9

Bus Transportation Transportation Rules for Students

Please note that school bus drivers are not permitted to make unscheduled stops in the mornings or evenings. This includes restroom stops. Students should use home or school restroom facilities before boarding the bus.

Afternoon Student Transportation—A note from a parent/guardian is required if a student has to be transported by a different bus in the afternoon. The note must be verified by the school office and given to the driver.

The privilege of riding the bus carries with it some responsibilities on the part of the student and the student’s parents/guardians. Drivers are expected to keep order and discipline on the bus, but their major responsibility has to be driving the bus. A Student’s failure to conform to acceptable standards of behavior and courtesy will result in his/her being subject to disciplinary actions by the building principal and assistant principal. Therefore, students are expected to cooperate with the following regulations:

1. Obey all orders of the driver and to show proper courtesy and respect to drivers.
2. Be at assigned stops at loading time.
3. Do not touch the outside of the bus or hang heads, arms, bodies, or hands out the window of bus.
4. Be seated immediately upon entering the bus and remain seated while the bus is in motion.
5. Loud talking and other distracting noises are not permitted on the bus.
6. Follow the instructions of the driver at all times.
7. Sit in seats assigned by the driver.
8. Students are asked to assist in keeping the bus clean.
9. No beverages or food may be consumed on the bus.
10. Chewing gum is prohibited on the bus.
11. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before trying to enter.
12. Do not play on or near the road while waiting for the bus.

A student's failure to follow regulations 1-12 will result in the following punishment.

First Offense	Warning
Second Offense	Suspended from the bus for 1 day
Third Offense	Suspended from the bus for 3 days
Fourth Offense	Suspended from the bus for 5 days
Fifth Offense	Suspended from the bus for 10 days
Sixth Offense	Suspended from bus for remainder of semester, <u>or</u> expulsion for remainder of year

13. Harassing, intimidating, or threatening other pupils – either at bus stop or on bus
14. Use of vulgar language and obscene gestures or actions
15. Cursing the bus driver or severe disrespect toward the bus driver
16. Fighting on school bus or at the bus stop
17. Throwing objects on the bus

Offenses 13-17 will result in the following consequences:

First Offense	Suspension from riding the bus for 5 days
Second Offense	Suspension from riding the bus for 10 days
Third Offense	Suspension from riding the bus for 45 days
Fourth Offense	Off the bus for the remainder of the year

18. Use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, counterfeit substances, electronic cigarettes, or drug- related products including prescription and over-the-counter medications.
19. Use or possession of matches or lighter of any kind
20. Leaving the bus on its way to or from the schools at unauthorized location
21. Possession of pornographic materials
22. Damaging bus in any way to the interior or exterior

Offenses 18-22 will result in the following consequences:

First Offense	Suspension from riding the bus for 10 days
Second Offense	Suspension from riding the bus for 20 days
Third Offense	Suspension from riding the bus for 45 days
Fourth Offense	Off the bus for the remainder of the year

23. Use or possession of knife/any objects as a weapon
24. Threatening and/or assaulting a bus driver

25. Use or possession of fireworks
26. Possession of a firearm
27. Throwing objects out of the bus window
28. Indecent exposure
29. Sexual Harassment of any individual (adult or student).

Offenses 23-29 will result in the following consequences:

- Minimum of 45 days
- Maximum expelled from the bus for the remainder of the year.
- The school police may also file charges with Youth Court.

Section 10- Self Care

Personal Appearance

Basing our dress code on three precepts-good health and safety, morality, and consistency with the instructional process-the George County School Board has approved the following dress code.

1. Body piercing will be permitted in ears only.
2. Hats or other head coverings are not to be worn.
3. Sunglasses shall not be worn without doctor's permission.
4. Hair shall not be groomed in class.
5. Hair and body shall be free from obnoxious odors, clean air quality, and neat in appearance, and of natural color.
6. Unnatural or non-prescription colored contacts are not to be worn.
7. No gloves or partial gloves can be worn.
8. Any clothing, appearance, or styles that are deemed to be a distraction by the administration are not permitted.

Noncompliance

1. Students new to the district and enrolling on or after the first day of school will have three (3) days to comply with the dress code (mandatory uniform).
2. The administration at the school shall confer with the parent of each student who fails to comply with the dress code in an effort to ascertain the reason(s) for non-compliance. Financial hardship forms will be available. A copy of the form will be on file at the school, and a copy will be given to parents along with the list of agencies. Parents will be contacted if the dress code is violated.

Section 11

School Day Activities

Visitors

No one other than regular school employees is allowed on campus without clearance from the office. All visitors, including parents, district employees, community members and consultants and other officials, must check in and out of the office upon arrival on campus (as required by state law). The office will issue a visitor's pass. All visitor passes must be returned. Visitors who fail to secure passes from the office to be on campus may be referred to the campus police.

Interruptions

Phone Calls and Messages—School telephones are for school business only, and students are not permitted to use them without permission. In case of emergency or illness, calls for students are made through the office, teacher, or school nurse. Students will not be called from class to the telephone or to speak in person with visitors unless it is an emergency. Phone messages for students will not be accepted. For the safety of the student, afternoon transportation changes are not allowed over the phone. All transportation changes must be in writing from the parent or guardian for verification by school personnel.

Deliveries

No deliveries of flowers, balloons, or gifts are allowed for students.

Field Trips and Parties

While we welcome and need your assistance on field trips and classroom parties, preschool students, students in other classrooms, and or students from other schools, will not be allowed to attend. There is a limited space and, as a chaperone, you will need to assist with your child and other students. Chaperones may be required to provide their own transportation. We are allowed two (2) parties and one (1) field trip per year; in addition, one (1) local field trip may be scheduled.

Board policies provide that “no student shall be released at the conclusion of any out-of-town school sponsored activity to return home via alternate means without prior approval by school authorities of a written request from the parent/guardian.” Any student who serves in-school detention or out of school suspension may be subjected to loss of participation in field trips or school sponsored activities. Any student who serves 3 days or more out of school suspension will not be allowed to attend field trips, interact with classmates who are participating in a field trip, or school sponsored events during the semester in which they have received the out of school suspension. A student who exhibits excessive classroom behavioral problems will not be allowed to attend field trips or school sponsored activities without parental supervision. Students who have been placed in alternative school will not be allowed to participate in school related events including field trips. Any payments made for field trips will be forfeited.

Fundraising

The school fund raising activities allowed are those approved by the principal and school board. Proceeds from fund raisers will go to the school's activity fund.

School Pictures

School pictures are offered each year on an optional basis as a fundraiser.

Section 12

Safety and Security

Delayed Start of School Day Due to Inclement Weather

If a delayed start of school day is called, the following will occur:

- No breakfast program
- Buses will run at 8:30 a.m. and run on the regular schedule at the end of the day.
- Car riders should arrive between 9:30 and 10:00 a.m.
- Classes will begin at 10:00 a.m. and end at the usual time at the end of the day.
- Employees will report to work at regular time or as soon as safe to do so.

The students are our first priority, and we feel strongly that any change in procedure be thoroughly communicated to avoid confusion and difficulty for our students, parents, and staff.

In the event of inclement weather, the Superintendent, after communicating with School Board President, will make the decision to close schools or announce a delayed start of the school day via the District's AIM System. This information will be broadcast on the local radio station WRBE 106.9 FM/1440 AM.

Student Emergency Information

For student safety, only adults (over the age of 18) listed on the student's emergency information may check out a student. Proof of identification **may** be required prior to the school releasing a student for check out. Parents and guardians are required to maintain a valid emergency contact. Failure to do so may result in a report being filed with Child Protective Services.

Emergency Information Updates

Any time there is a change in address, telephone number, custody agreements, or emergency contact, the legal parent/guardian must come in person to the office to update the database to ensure student safety.

Employee Safety

The George County School District will be vigorous in its protection of all employees from physical and/or psychological abuse. Personnel are also protected by Section 37-11-21 of the Mississippi Code. It will be the policy of the Board to interpret the statute to include any striking, assaulting or physical attack, as well as verbal abuse or insult.

To protect employees of the George County School District, if during a fight between students, an employee is injured in any way, directly or indirectly, the student will be suspended from school with a recommendation for expulsion.

Emergency Operations

In order to provide a safe environment for students and faculty, fire drills and other disaster preparedness measures are a regular part of the school program. Students are expected to learn the procedures to be followed under emergency conditions and to cooperate fully with the supervising teacher.

Campus Police

The George County School District Police Department is dedicated to developing partnerships with the community we serve, including students, parents, and faculty in order to enhance the goal of providing quality education in a safe and secure atmosphere. Through these partnerships, we will preserve a learning environment that supports academic freedom, respect for diversity, fair and equal treatment to all, and an open exchange of ideas.

Loss, Theft, or Damage of Personal Items

It is against school rules to bring personal items such as Ipods, sunglasses, hand-held games, etc. to school. Therefore if a student chooses to bring these items to school, the items will be at risk for loss, theft, or damage. The school will not be responsible or liable for the recovery of these items or for any damages incurred. It is essential that classroom instruction not be interrupted for unnecessary searches for items that should not be brought to school.

Student Accidents—Emergency Action

School personnel will exercise their best judgments in handling an emergency affecting the health and welfare of a student.

Unsafe School Choice Option

Students assigned to a school which the State Board of Education has determined to be persistently dangerous shall be allowed to attend another school in the district which is not designated a persistently dangerous school, provided there is such a school in the district which offers instruction at the student's grade level.

Any student who is the victim of a violent crime offense committed against him/her while he/she was in or on the grounds of the public school that he/she attends shall be allowed to choose to attend another school in the district which is not designated a persistently dangerous school, provided there is such a school in the district which offers instruction at the student's grade level and provided the student requests transfer within 30 days of the violent criminal offense.

Section 13

School Services

School Nurse

If a school nurse is available, students may visit the nurse for illnesses and emergencies that occur during the school day. If it is determined that the student should be sent home, the parent will be contacted.

Medication

Students are prohibited from carrying medication on campus. Prescription medication will not be administered to any student unless prescribed by a physician and required to be taken during the school day. Parents/guardians are responsible for completing the medication form (available from school nurse or office) for mandatory daily prescriptions. In addition, over the counter medications will not be administered to any student unless a parent/guardian has signed a permission form from a doctor that is also available from the school nurse or office. Any student with significant medical issues must be cleared through school administration before registering.

If medication is to be given, a medical form must be obtained from the principal's office to be signed by the attending physician and the parents to satisfy board policy for administration. Medication must be brought to the school by the parent or adult on the child's check out list. **Medication must be brought to the nurse and must be counted and signed in with the nurse.** All medication must be brought to school in the prescription bottle with the child's name, doctor and directions for administration. All medication must be picked up by the parent or person on the child's check out list. This includes ALL medication prescribed or over the counter medication authorized by the doctor to be administered at school. This means medication cannot be sent to school or back home with the child in his/her backpack.

Specialized Education Services

Specialized Education services are offered based on identified and approved student needs. Upon being identified as needing special education, students will receive specialized services from highly qualified staff based on their needs. Students may qualify for Specialized Education Services under any of the following programs:

- 504
- Gifted and Talented
- Dyslexia Therapy
- English Language Learner
- Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act.

Library/Media Center

The library/media center serves as an information center, which will provide materials for the intellectual growth, educational enrichment, and personal enjoyment of students. The staff encourages students to visit the media center often and to take advantage of the services offered.

1. Please maintain quietness so that everyone in the room can work undisturbed. Misconduct in the media center will not be tolerated.
2. Students must return all materials to their proper places. A book out of place is a lost book. If a student is uncertain where a book belongs, he/she should return it to the circulation desk where it can be shelved by a media aide.
3. Students should take care of the media center materials. The value of a book is decreased when marred by writing. Students should use a bookmark rather than turning down a corner of the page. Cutting or tearing pages from media center materials not only involves the destruction of school property, but also shows a great lack of consideration.
4. Students will check out books properly. No student may check out books for another student.
5. Books are checked out for a designated period. They must be returned promptly.
6. Teachers may have materials for special assignments placed on reserve.
7. Lost or damaged library books must be replaced at cost.

Section 14

Computer and Network Guidelines

George County School District Computer Acceptable Use Policy

The George County School District (GCSD) offers currently enrolled students, faculty and staff access to the school computer network through computer labs, networked and stand-alone computers. District technology equipment is provided for use in fulfilling curriculum objectives and quality enrichment activities. Personal electronic devices are not to be connected to the District network. This includes, but is not limited to, personal computers, laptops, tablets, smart phones, and MP3 Players.

The GCSD is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and will comply with any additional state and federal regulations that pertain to technology use within the district and through use of the GCSD network infrastructure and servers that is forthcoming from the local, state, and federal regulatory agencies.

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access in schools and libraries to the Internet and other information. Among other things, it calls for schools and libraries to have in place appropriate electronic filters to prevent children and adults from accessing and viewing inappropriate Internet content. For any school or library that receives discounts for Internet access or

for internal connections, CIPA imposes certain requirements. The GCSD receives these discounts for Internet access through the E-Rate program and therefore must be in compliance with CIPA.

Computer Network and Internet Use Rules

Students and school personnel are responsible for good behavior on the school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or in a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored.

In compliance with CIPA 2008 updates, all students (K-12) will be educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites, in chat rooms, and in cyber bullying awareness and response. When using the Internet, all students will be closely monitored to prevent students from accidentally or otherwise accessing inappropriate material.

Computer access is a privilege, not a right, and is provided for students and staff to conduct research, fulfill course requirements, and communicate with others when appropriate or authorized. Access to network services is given to students and staff who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Signed parental permission is required for all students. All faculty and staff using the District's Internet access must sign a written contract.

Network administrators may review network storage files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. While user files will not be examined without good cause, users should not expect that files stored on school computers will always be private. The GCSD will fully cooperate with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through any GCSD Internet account.

All users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of Netiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be polite. Do not abuse or be 'bullying' in your messages to others.
- Use appropriate language.
- Do not assume that email is secure and/or confidential. Never send anything that you would hesitate to have viewed by others.
- Respect other people's privacy regarding mail and files. Do not reveal personal addresses or phone numbers, or those of students or colleagues.
- Keep paragraphs short and to the point. Be mindful of spelling.
- Check email regularly and delete unwanted messages as quickly as possible.

Network Security—CIPA Compliance

Users have the responsibility to use computer and network resources for academic purposes only. Therefore, as mandated by CIPA, filtering and monitoring will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet. Free email sites are blocked for all users. Faculty and staff must use District provided email. The District is required by the State to archive (keep on file) all email going in and out. This is due to past litigations involving email and requirements for the District to produce email copies when requested by the courts.

Activities using the computer network in violation of local, state, federal, or GCSD policies are strictly forbidden.

Students will not respond to unsolicited online contacts or reveal personal identifiable information over the network unless it meets District-approval (examples: ACT Registration, Scholarships, or College Applications). This includes information about themselves as well as information about anyone else.

GCSD staff are prohibited from disclosing personal information about students on websites. Although teachers and other district personnel may reveal personal information about themselves over the network, they are strictly forbidden to disseminate any student information electronically to any source that has not met District approval. Information that is considered personal includes, but is not limited to, the following: student's full name, home address, Social Security number, personal telephone numbers, and any information relating to their health.

Because there are additional prohibitions with which users must comply, non-compliance with these regulations will result in disciplinary and/or legal actions taken by the GCSD authorities if deemed necessary.

There is absolutely no expectation of privacy on the GCSD network. Activities at any workstation or transmission and receipt of data can be monitored at any time both electronically or by staff members. This includes the transmission and receipt of email, email attachments, Web browsing, and any other use of the network.

Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using the network to transmit, or retransmit copyrighted material (including plagiarism).
- Accessing, transmitting, or retransmitting threatening, harassing, bullying (cyber bullying), obscene, and pornographic or trade secret material or any material deemed harmful to minors.
- Using the network to access, transmit, or retransmit language that can be considered defamatory, abusive, or offensive.
- Using social networking sites, chatting, or blogging unless associated with a specific curriculum related activity.
- Users of the GCSD network are forbidden to access, transmit, or retransmit information that could cause danger or disruption, engage them in personal, prejudicial, or discriminatory attacks or that harasses or causes distresses to another person.
- Users of the District network are forbidden to access, transmit, or retransmit material that promotes violence or the destruction of persons or property by any device including, but not limited to, firearms, explosives, fireworks, smoke bombs, incendiary devices, or other similar material.
- All users agree to report any accidental access of any of the aforementioned material to the appropriate school authority so that the district can take steps to prevent similar future access.

- Using the network to download, upload, or store large files such as music and video that are not directly related to projects or activities that are a part of the school curriculum.
- The use of flash (thumb) drives is limited to data storage only.
- No executable files of any type may be transferred to district property.
- Re-sending email chain letters or engaging in any spamming activities where bulk mailings of unsolicited email are sent.
- Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks (hardware or software). If a student maliciously damages GCSD technical equipment in such a way that requires service or repairs, the parent/guardian of the student is responsible for providing all expenses incurred for those services, grades K-12.
- Deliberate or careless action that damages the computer's configuration or limits the computer's usefulness to others.
- Downloading unauthorized software on school computers/networks. This includes students, teachers, staff, and administrators. All software installed on district computers must be installed by the Technology Department and only after the proper licenses or authorizations for use have been acquired and verified.
- Creating, uploading, or transmitting computer viruses, worms, or other disruptive software code.
- Making any attempt to defeat computer or network security on the District network or any other client, server, or network on the Internet. Hacking or attempting to gain access to unauthorized areas of the District network or the Internet is prohibited.
- Invading the privacy of other individuals. Using another person's password or account or providing his/her password to another person. Trespassing in another's folder, work, or files, in the attempt to use others' work to 'cheat' on assignments, tests, or any class work.
- Intentionally wasting limited resources.
- Using the network or school computer for unauthorized commercial, private, personal purposes, or political lobbying.
- Any activity harmful to or reflecting negatively on the GCSD community.

Consequences of Policy Noncompliance

Violation of this AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) may result in the denial, suspension, or cancellation of the users' privileges as well as other disciplinary and/or legal action deemed appropriate and imposed by the school administration, district administration and/or local, state, or federal law enforcement officials. Other action not specified above may include, but are not limited, to monetary restitution, school suspension or expulsion, detention, or any other action deemed appropriate by the administrative authorities.

In grades K-12, students in computer-based classes may be removed from the course for the duration of the semester or school year if found by administration to be intentionally in violation of the AUP. Reinstatement procedures will be individually addressed.

Any disciplinary action that is a result of an alleged violation of this policy can be appealed through the normal channels provided by the disciplinary policy of the GCSD.

Signatures at the end of this document are legally binding and indicate the parties who have signed have read

the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance.

Terms and Conditions for Use of the GCSD Network

All users of the GCSD's network and Internet access are required to adhere to the District's Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). The policy describes in detail the purpose of the District's network and the rules governing its use. If a parent does not want their child to have access to the Internet or Internet services provided by the District, they must obtain and complete a Refusal Form and return to your child's Principal. This form will be completed each school year. Please realize that this action will make enrollment in certain classes impossible.

All users and the parents of all student users are required by the GCSD AUP to sign a contract stating that they will abide by the policy while using the District's computer network resources.

All users, including faculty and staff, must be aware that misuse of the network facilities could result in disciplinary action by the GCSD officials including termination of employment or legal action by local, state, and/or federal law enforcement officials.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon all who sign the Internet Use Contract to carefully read the District AUP and understand what is expected and the penalty for non-compliance.

George County School District Statement on Bullying

As part of our commitment to fostering a safe and supportive learning environment for all students, please note this important information about the ***difference*** between ***bullying and mean behavior***. Understanding this distinction is key to helping our children navigate social interactions and grow into kind, respectful individuals.

Children and adolescents are still learning how to communicate and handle conflict. At times, this may result in someone saying or doing something hurtful. This is often considered *mean behavior*, which can happen in the heat of the moment, and may not be repeated. For example, a child might make a rude comment out of frustration or exclude someone from a game. While still unacceptable, these actions are typically not planned or part of a larger pattern. *Bullying*, on the other hand, involves repeated, intentional harm where there is a real or perceived power imbalance. This can be physical, verbal, social, or even digital. A student being bullied may feel targeted over and over again, and the behavior often leaves them feeling powerless to defend themselves.

Here is a quick comparison:

<i>Mean Behavior</i>	<i>Bullying</i>
Happens occasionally	Repeated over time
Intent may not be to cause lasting harm	Intent is to hurt, embarrass, or exclude
Equal power between peers	Involves a power imbalance
May show remorse afterward	Often lacks remorse or is used to gain control

