

Pickens County School District

2023-2024

**Student-Parent
Handbook
and
Code of Conduct
for Students**



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Board of Education

Tommy Gartrell, Chair
Steve Lowe, Vice Chair
Sue Finley
Amy Gibson
Joe Wigington



Dr. Travis Thomas
Superintendent

August 1, 2023

Dear Pickens County families:

My name is Travis Thomas, and I am honored to have both the privilege and the responsibility of serving as the Superintendent of the Pickens County School District! I hope you were able to enjoy these last few days of summer and are anxiously awaiting the start of a new school year. To me, this time of year always brings anticipation and joy, and we have been working diligently to make sure our facilities are ready for our students and our teachers.

In the Pickens County School District, as part of our beliefs, we believe that collaboration between students, schools, families, and community is critical not only to student success but also to our success as a district. On behalf of our school district and our Board of Education, I look forward to this partnership!

As I close, it is my vision for our school district that we lead the counties in North Georgia academically, athletically, in our performances with our fine arts and activities, and organizationally. It is also my vision that all of our graduates from Pickens High School start their journey after graduation with a plan to be either enrolled, enlisted or employed. Our school district believes in continuous improvement. If we can each commit to getting better every day, of every week, of every month, of this coming year, we will get closer to hitting these aspirations!

I am looking forward to having an excellent year together! Stay fierce and go be great!

Sincerely,

Dr. Travis Thomas
Superintendent
Pickens County Schools



100 D.B. Carroll Street • Jasper, Georgia 30143 • (706) 253-1700 • Fax: (706) 253-1705



www.pickenscountyschools.org



Pickens County School District 2023-2024 Calendar



JULY						
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2023		2024	
July		January	
25-28	Pre-planning/In Service Day	1-2	School Holiday
31	Pre-planning/In Service Day	3	Teacher In Service Day
August		4	Students Return/First Day of Semester
1	First Day of School	5	Report Cards
		15	School Holiday
September		February	
1	Remote Learning Day	19-23	School Holiday
4	School Holiday		
18-22	School Holiday		
October		March	
6	Mid Semester Progress Report	15	Mid Semester Progress Reports
November		April	
7	Teacher In Service/Election Day	1-5	School Holiday
20-24	School Holiday		
December		May	
20	Last Day of Semester	23	Last Day of School/Report Cards
21-29	School Holiday	24	Teacher In Service Day
		24	Pickens High Graduation
		27	School Holiday
		28-29	Post Planning

All holidays/breaks are subject to revisions due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances.

The school district will implement a staggered start on August 1 & 2, 2023. Specific details will be released in the Spring.

Board Approved - 11/10/2022

PCSD CODE OF CONDUCT and PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONSENT FORM 2023-2024

PLEASE SIGN BOTH SIDES OF THE PAGE AND RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

STUDENT INFORMATION

_____	_____	_____	_____
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Current Grade

ABOUT THIS FORM

The purpose of this form is to ensure parents/guardians:

- review the Pickens County School District's Student-Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students; and
- grant or deny specific permissions to the district.

For each student, a parent/guardian must read **each** section of this form and initial. **At the end of this form, the parent/guardian must acknowledge they read the information in this Student-Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students and sign the form.**

1. Attendance Policies

I have reviewed the attendance requirements along with the written consequences and penalties for failure to comply with compulsory attendance as required by state law (see page 7). Parents/guardians are required to keep the school updated any time there is a change in a student's residence or telephone number.

Initials

2. Federal Programs Notifications

I have received the Federal Programs Notifications in the Student-Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students including:

- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act/FERPA (see page 14)
- Federal Programs Complaint Procedure (see page 16)
- Parents Right to Know (see page 18)
- Title I School Designation (see page 30)

Initials

3. Internet Use and Access to Networked Information Resources

I have reviewed the Pickens County School District's "Computer and Network Resources – Student Responsible Use Guidelines" on page 55.

Initials

I grant permission for my student to use the Internet as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, and I understand violations of the "Computer and Network Resources – Student Responsible Use Guidelines" may result in revoking a student's access privileges, additional disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

Initials

4. I have received and reviewed the SB-10 information on page 19. I understand that I should contact the Director of Special Education with any questions.

Initials

Marketing and Communications – Use of Student Information

I give the Pickens County School District permission to use my child's picture, name, video, and/or project on webpages, social media, and all school related publications.

___ YES ___ NO Initials _____

5. Notice of Rights of Students and Parent/Guardian Under Section 504

I have reviewed and understand my child's rights, and my own, under the Section 504 Plan of the Pickens County School District Student–Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students (see page 19). _____
Initials

6. Student Clubs

The Pickens County School District recognizes the importance of student involvement in school-sponsored clubs and organizations. As part of the communication process, parents/guardians must be notified at the beginning of each school year regarding all school-sponsored clubs and organizations available for students enrolled in their respective schools (see pages 22-29).
I DO NOT WANT MY CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOLLOWING CLUBS:

Club Name	Club Name	Club Name	Initials
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7. Transportation Rules

I have reviewed the information on Transportation and Student Discipline (pages 63-66). _____
Initials

SIGNATURES (PARENT AND STUDENT)

I have received and reviewed a copy of the Pickens County School District's 2023-2024 Student-Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students.

Print Name of Parent/Guardian X _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian _____
Date

Print Name of Student X _____
Signature of Student _____
Date

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ATTENDANCE

A. Expectations and Legal Requirements

Students are expected to attend school every day.

1. Georgia's compulsory attendance law O. C. G. A. § 20-2-690 requires all children under the age of sixteen (16) who are at least six (6) years old attend school (i.e. public, private, or home study). Any kindergarten student (age 5) who enters school and remains in school for twenty (20) school days is subject to the Compulsory School Attendance Law.
2. The Pickens County Truancy Ordinance (see below) defines county law regarding student attendance and parent responsibilities.
3. The PCSD must report to the state students in grades K-12 absent more than 10% of enrolled school days. Student absences impact both the school and the district's College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) score.

B. Parental Responsibility

1. Parents are expected to complete all student registration forms in a timely manner.
2. Parents are required to keep Central Registration and the school updated any time there is a change in a child's residence or telephone number.
3. Parents should not send a child to school who is sick and/or has a fever.
 - a) Send an email to the school attendance clerk if your child is absent:
Harmony Elementary – hesattendance@pickenscountyschools.org
Hill City Elementary – hcesattendance@pickenscountyschools.org
Tate Elementary – tesattendance@pickenscountyschools.org
Jasper Middle School – jmsattendance@pickenscountyschools.org
Pickens Jr. High School – pjhsattendance@pickenscountyschools.org
Pickens High School – phsattendance@pickenscountyschools.org
 - b) If your child has a fever, the student must be fever-free, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.
 - c) The student must be free of vomiting and/or diarrhea, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.
 - d) Do not put a child who is sick on the school bus.
 - e) If you are unsure of whether you can send your child to school, refer to the Parent tab of the school district's website (www.pickenscountyschools.org), and under **Links to Forms**, refer to the **Parent Tip Sheet: When can my child return to school?**
4. Head lice and nits (eggs) are common in schools. Parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up their child if live lice are found. Students may not ride the bus or return to school until receiving appropriate treatment. Parents/guardians should bring the child in to be checked by the school nurse before the student can return to class. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice. Parents/guardians will be contacted if nits are found and more information regarding next steps will be provided by the school clinic personnel. If a cluster/outbreak of lice occurs, parents will be notified. These guidelines are aligned to recommendations from DPH, NASN, CDC, and CHOA.

C. Pickens County Truancy Ordinance

1. Section 42-6. School Attendance Required

It shall be unlawful for any child who is subject to compulsory school attendance requirements as established under O. C. G. A. §20-2-690.1 to be absent from school without a valid excuse. Such excuse must be provided to a school official within **ten (10) school days** (*email addresses are in Section B, item 3A*). This section shall also apply to those persons who are required to attend school as part of a court order.

2. Parent Responsibility

A. It shall be unlawful for the parent or legal guardian of a minor under the age of 16 years to permit, or by insufficient control, to allow a minor to violate a section of this chapter. A person charged with a violation of this subsection (A) for the first time shall be issued a citation and upon appearance, the court may inquire as to the cause of the violation and take such action that may be necessary to aid the parent or guardian in addressing the cause. Such action may include but is not limited to the making of referrals to social service agencies or other entities who can provide resources for addressing the cause(s) of the violation. If appropriate and in the best interest of the child, the court may withhold adjudication on a first offense and require reviews with the parent or guardian for a period of the remainder of the school year in which the violation occurred. The School District shall notify the court if there are no further violations during the period of absence and if none occurs, the Court shall dismiss the case with no further action. Upon any subsequent violation in the same school year, the person shall be issued a new citation for each such violation. Each subsequent violation may constitute a separate offense and shall be punished in accordance with section 42-12. Citations for this subsection can be served upon the parent(s) by the sheriff or a lawful deputy, the marshal, or by a constable of the magistrate court.

B. All parents or legal guardians seeking to enroll a student in the Pickens County School District shall be required to provide the following information to the District:

- a. Proof of residence in a form acceptable to the District;
- b. Copy of student's birth certificate, passport, or other proof of age acceptable to the District;
- c. Copy of Social Security Card and/or notarized waiver form;
- d. Completed Georgia Public Health Immunization Form and/or notarized religious objection form as supplied by the District;
- e. Completed Georgia eye, ear, dental, and nutrition form as supplied by the District;
- f. Such other information that the District has requested in writing.

Failure to provide said information within thirty (30) days of enrollment or notice by the District shall be punishable pursuant to Section 42-12.

3. Section 42-12. Punishment for violation of chapter.

Upon conviction of a violation of a section of this chapter, a person shall be punishable in accordance with section 1-11 of this Code. Each violation of this section shall constitute a separate offense.

4. Section 1-11. General penalty; continuing violations.

- A. Whenever in this Code or in any other ordinance of the county any act is prohibited or is made or declared to be unlawful, or an offense, or the doing of any act is required or the failure to do any act is declared to be unlawful, where no specific penalty is provided therefore, the violation of such provision shall be punishable by the imposition of a fine not to exceed \$1,000, by imprisonment in the county jail for a period of time not to exceed 60 days, or by both such fine and imprisonment, or up to the limits of any penalty provided by state law for the ordinance.

B. Each violation of this Code or other ordinance shall constitute a separate offense.

D. School Attendance Areas

The Pickens County Board of Education has established geographic attendance zones for students. Students are required to attend the grade-appropriate school in the attendance zone in which they reside.

If a student is enrolled in any Pickens County school and that student's residency changes to another attendance zone within Pickens County, that student shall be allowed to remain at the school he/she was attending prior to the residency change, or transfer to the school appropriate for the new attendance zone for the remainder of the school year. If the student or upcoming siblings choose to attend the school he/she was attending prior to the residency change, that student shall be responsible for providing their own transportation to that school. If attendance, tardiness, discipline, and/or academics become an issue, the student will be required to attend the school zoned for their residency. If the student withdraws from the school, he/she as well as upcoming siblings, must attend the school zoned for their residency for the remainder of his/her Pickens County school career.

School choice within Pickens County is allowed to the extent space is available. Available school space is determined annually based on projected enrollment. Parents will be notified by July 1 of each year which schools have available space and to which of these schools parents may choose to request a transfer for their children. If a change of school is requested due to hardship, a committee will make the determination as to whether or not a transfer will be granted.

According to Georgia law, "a student shall be allowed to attend and be enrolled in the school in which a parent or guardian of such student is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee..." O. C. G. A. §20-2-293(b)

As an additional benefit, all employees of the PCSD and/or any full-time teachers or professionals working in a school on the PCSD's campus shall be allowed to enroll their children as students in the Pickens County School District; said children shall be allowed to attend any school within the district regardless of whether or not that child's parent works at that particular school and regardless of the residency of that parent.

The Pickens BOE authorizes the superintendent or designee to develop and implement regulations and guidelines to carry out this policy.

E. Excused Absences

School policy requires that all excuses be turned in to the school within ten (10) days of the student's return to school. Excuses should contain the student's first and last name, the reason for absence, date(s) of absence, and a parent/guardian signature.

Students will be excused only under the following circumstances unless they have secured prior written permission from the principal or his/her designee.

1. personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others;
2. a serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school;
3. a court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school;
4. observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school;
5. conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety;
6. a student whose parent or legal guardian is in the Us Armed Forces/National Guard, has been called to duty for, or is on leave from, overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat posting, will be

granted up to five (5) excused absences per school year for the day(s) missed from school to visit with the parent or legal guardian prior to such deployment or during such leave; or

7. a foster care student who attends court proceedings relating to the student's foster care shall be counted as present by the school and shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused, for any day, portion of the day, or days missed from school.

Students may register to vote or vote in a public election within a specified time-period during the school day with written permission of the principal or his/her designee secured in advance.

An administrator must approve any other absence not explicitly defined herein but deemed by the PCSD to have merit based on circumstance in advance.

F. Hospital/Homebound Instruction

If a student is seriously ill or has incurred an injury that will necessitate lengthy (i.e. ten or more days) or intermittent absenteeism, the student may receive course credit via application and satisfactory participation in the hospital/homebound instruction program or other arrangements approved by the principal or his/her designee.

Students who receive full-time hospital homebound status may not participate in school or work activities unless authorized by a medical professional.

G. Students Counted Present When

1. present in a high school class for 45 minutes, or in attendance at an elementary, middle or junior high school for at least one-half (1/2) of the instructional day;
2. serving as a Page of the Georgia General Assembly or Student Teen Election Participant (STEP);
3. participating in activities or programs sponsored by 4-H (any day or portion of a day)
4. assigned to in-school suspension;
5. participating in a school-sponsored function;
6. receiving hospital homebound services; or
7. attending court as a foster care student.

H. Make-Up Assignments

Following a documented, excused absence, a student will have three (3) school days to request make-up academic assignments from teachers. Teachers will have three (3) school days to provide the requested make-up assignments. Teachers may initiate the make-up assignments and require alternative assignments from students who have been absent. Grading policies will be established at the school level under the direction of the administration, pursuant to O. C. G. A. § 20-2-929.20

I. Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act

Section A1 of the Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act applies to all minors who are at least 15 years of age and under the age of 18. When such a minor applies for a Georgia driver's license or instructional permit, the applicant must present proof that he or she satisfies one of the following conditions as specified in O. C. G. A. § 40-5-22 (A1):

1. is enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school; or
2. is enrolled in a home education program that satisfies the reporting requirements of all state laws governing such program.

NOTE: A student will lose their driver's license or learner's permit for one year due to a non-compliant violation. [O. C. G. A. § 40-5-22]

J. Non-Compliant Students Have

1. Dropped out of school and not enrolled in a public/private school, or homeschool program; or
2. Been found in violation by a hearing officer and/or administrative tribunal panel of one of the following offenses, has received a change in placement for committing one of the following offenses, or has waived his or her right to a hearing and pleaded guilty to one of the following offenses:
 - A. Threatened, struck, or caused bodily harm to a teacher or other school personnel;
 - B. Possessed or sold drugs or alcohol on school property or at a school-sponsored event;
 - C. Possessed or used a weapon on school property or at a school-sponsored event (for purposes of this subparagraph, the term weapon shall be defined in accordance with O. C. G. A. § 16-11-127.1 but shall not include any part of an archaeological or cultural exhibit brought to school in connection with a school project);
 - D. Committed any sexual offense prohibited under Chapter 6 of Title 16; or
 - E. Caused substantial physical or visible bodily harm to or seriously disfiguring another person, including another student [O. C. G. A. § 40-5-22 (1.a)].

K. Notification and Monitoring

Parents or guardians are required to keep the school and Pickens County Schools Central Registration updated any time there is a change in a child's residence or telephone number. Central Registration can be reached at 706-253-1700.

The principal or his /her designee will monitor student absences daily. Parents will be notified of excessive or unexcused absences, and such notice will be documented by the school. Parents/guardians and children who are age ten (10) years or older by September 1 are required by law to sign a statement indicating they have received a written statement of the possible consequences and penalties for violation of the state's compulsory school attendance law (see page 7). If the parent/guardian does not respond following two (2) reasonable attempts of the school to secure such signature(s), the school will send a copy of the statement to the parent/guardian by mail. **In the event parent excuses have been submitted to the school, please disregard the attendance notification letter.**

1. Upon the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, a letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian. Additionally, a call will go out to parent/guardian, and a referral will be made to the school social worker. At this time, the Student Services Department will contact the parent/guardian to schedule an Attendance Support Team (AST) meeting. If the attempts to schedule an AST meeting are ignored, the parent will be referred to Magistrate Court.
2. Upon the sixth (6th) unexcused absence, a direct referral to court shall be made by the School Social Worker for breach of AST contract.
3. If a student continues to be truant or excessively absent, upon the tenth (10th) unexcused absence, the School Social Worker is authorized to make a truancy referral to Juvenile Court.

L. Early Checkouts / Tardies

An early checkout is excused if a medical excuse is provided due to a medical appointment for the student, illness of the student, or a sudden serious illness or death of an immediate family member. The excuse must be provided to the school the following school day after the student has checked out early and/or an email sent to the student's school attendance clerk:

Harmony Elementary – hesattendance@pickenscountyschools.org

Hill City Elementary – hcesattendance@pickenscountyschools.org

Tate Elementary – tesattendance@pickenscountyschools.org

Jasper Middle School – jmsattendance@pickenscountyschools.org

Pickens Jr. High School – pjhsattendance@pickenscountyschools.org

Pickens High School – [p hsattendance@pickenscountyschools.org](mailto:phsattendance@pickenscountyschools.org)

1. Upon the fifth (5th) unexcused tardy and/or early checkout, the school will notify the parent/guardian by mail or phone call. This letter will specify possible consequences if a student continues to be tardy and/or leaves early.
2. Upon the seventh (7th) unexcused tardy and/or early checkout, the school will notify the parent/guardian by telephone and/or letter. The school request the parent/guardian to participate in an administrative conference or phone conference with the principal or designee.
3. Upon the tenth (10th) unexcused tardy and/or early checkout, the school will enforce appropriate consequences deemed necessary by progressive disciplinary actions. These consequences may include, but are not limited to, after-school detention, loss of parking privileges, etc.

M. Criteria for Withdrawing Students

For the purpose of accurately measuring the academic performance of students continuously enrolled in public schools, the PCSD adopts the following uniform criteria for withdrawing students.

1. Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student who:
 - Has missed more than ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absences;
 - Is not subject to compulsory school attendance; and
 - Is not receiving instructional services through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
2. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall use his or her best effort to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of a student if the school system plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.
3. Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance if the superintendent or superintendent's designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program.
4. Appropriate school personnel shall withdraw students retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.
5. A minor who is older than the age of mandatory attendance (age 16 and in grades 6-12) who has not completed all requirements for a high school diploma and wishes to withdraw from school must have the written permission of his or her parent(s) or legal guardian prior to withdrawing. Prior to accepting such permission, the school principal or designee must hold an exit interview with the student and parent(s) or legal guardian within two days of receiving notice of the intent of student to withdraw from school. The principal or designee must make a reasonable attempt to meet with the student and parent to share the educational options available and the consequences of not having earned a high school diploma.

DRESS CODE

The PCSD's Student Dress Code was developed through the direction of the administrators and with the cooperation of parents, students, and teachers. The purpose of a dress code is to promote an orderly learning environment in our schools while preparing all students for later success in the world of work. Students are expected to dress in a manner that is **conducive to a positive learning environment**. Additionally, administrators reserve the right to prohibit an item of clothing if that clothing creates a potential safety or injury risk to the individual student or others and if the item of clothing creates a reasonable disruption to the school environment. In matters of opinion, the judgment of the principal shall prevail.

The following process will determine the proper length of shorts, dresses, and skirts, as well as determining the appropriateness of holes in jeans or pants:

1. A 3" x 5" index card is used as the standard when measuring the length of shorts, skirts, and dresses worn by middle, junior high, and high school students. An index card will be used by faculty and staff to measure clothing if an item worn by a student appears to be shorter than the required length.
2. Shorts should be no more than 5" inches above the knee.
3. Jeans nor pants should not have holes that expose skin more than 5" above the knee.
4. Dresses and skirts should measure no more than 3" inches above the knee.

A. Unacceptable Items (not limited to):

- Articles that may reasonably be considered to be a safety hazard or potential weapon
- Extremely oversized, over-length, or baggy clothing items (pants must be worn at the waist)
- Garments that expose midriff or chest area; sheer, translucent, and/or transparent clothing (front or back) with nothing worn underneath the article of clothing
- Halter and/or tank tops with less than 2" shoulder straps, tube tops
- Pajamas, sleep/loungewear (except for school-approved days)
- Hats, caps, bandanas, toboggan caps, and hoodie jackets with the hood covering student's head, and other headgear (except for medical, school-approved days or religious purposes)
- Shoes with cleats or wheels
- Baby pacifiers
- Clothing promoting products such as tobacco, alcohol, e-cigarettes, illegal drugs, or weapons
- Large, long, or heavy chains
- Dog collars
- Sunglasses inside the building, except for medical necessity
- Jeans/pants/leg coverings that have holes that expose skin more than 5 inches above the knee
- Clothing, accessories, or body art depicting gang affiliation, racial or ethnic slurs, hate speech, vulgar/obscene/subversive/sexually explicit language or images, or weaponry

B. Dress Code for Grades K-4

The dress code for grades K-4 should follow closely with the dress code for grades 5-12. The difference/exception is as follows:

1. All lengths of skirts, shorts, skorts, and dresses must be age-appropriate.

C. Leggings

Leggings are acceptable as long as a covering is worn (a skirt or shirt) and is long enough to be midway down the thighs.

FALSE REPORTING

No student shall knowingly and/or willingly falsify, misrepresent, omit, or erroneously report information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, student, administrator, or another school employee toward a student.

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

A. Rights Regarding Student's Education Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. Those rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write the school principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want to be changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA:

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

B. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law, requires the PCSD, with a few exceptions, to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the PCSD may disclose appropriately designated directory information without written consent, unless you have advised the PCSD to the contrary in accordance with district procedures.

Directory information, which is information not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. A student's SSN, whole or in part, may not be used for this purpose

If you do not want the PCSD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The PCSD is committed to open communication in order to reach the goal of educating all students. The following procedures have been developed to handle complaints dealing with federal programs, services, and staff members. All federal programs complaints are to be directed to the District Administrator responsible for Federal Programs using the procedures outlined below.

A. Grounds for Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency (“complainant”) may file a complaint with the PCSD if that individual, organization, or agency believes and alleges that a violation of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) has occurred. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

1. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Program Operated by Local Educational Agencies
2. Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children
3. Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
4. Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement
5. Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Fund
6. Title V, Part B: Rural Education Initiative
7. Title IX, Part E: Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Participation of Private School Children
8. Title X, Part C: McKinney- Vento Homeless Assistance Act

C. Grounds for Complaint

A formal complaint must be filed in writing to the PCSD’s superintendent or his/her designee. The complaint must include the following:

9. A statement that the LEA has violated a requirement of a federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program;
10. The date on which the violation occurred;
11. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the federal statute or regulation);
12. A list of names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information;
13. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant’s position; and
14. The address of the complainant.

D. Investigation of Complaint

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, the district administrator responsible for federal programs will review the completed complaint form. The District Administrator responsible for Federal Programs will contact the originator(s) of the complaint in order to resolve the complaint. This will usually occur within ten (10) working days after receipt of the complaint. The superintendent will be notified of the complaint. If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the superintendent will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion

of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings. If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective actions will be required and timelines for completion will be included. The timelines outlined above may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist.

E. Right to Appeal

All efforts are made to resolve complaints at the local level. If the complaint cannot be resolved at the local level, the complainant has the right to request a review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the superintendent's decision and include a statement of the reasons supporting the appeal. The complaint must be addressed to:

Georgia Department of Education
Title I Office
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE
2052 Twin Tower East
Atlanta, GA 30034

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

All medications other than the exceptions listed in BOE policy JGCD, whether prescription or over-the-counter, may be administered only in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Pickens County Board of Education in this policy. Any student possessing prescription or over-the-counter medication not in accordance with the guidelines will be considered in violation of the school district's drug policy and shall be subject to a referral to a disciplinary tribunal.

All medications, prescription and/or over-the-counter, must be taken to the school nurse by the parent/guardian. All medicines (prescription and non-prescription) are to be kept in the school clinic and administered there, with the exception of rescue medications such as inhalers, auto-injectable epinephrine, ready-to-use glucagon, and/or all necessary supplies and equipment to perform monitoring and treatment functions authorized by the student's diabetes medical management plan. Students are not permitted to transport prescription and/or over-the-counter medications, except for the above mentioned.

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

The PCSD seeks to promote a positive environment in which there is an awareness of, involvement in, and support for the system and its educational mission. Recognizing that open channels of communication are essential in fulfilling its role as a legislative body, the Board invites parents, students, staff, and others to offer suggestions on policies. These suggestions regarding additions, changes, or deletions should be submitted in writing to the superintendent's office for consideration and possible recommendations to the Pickens BOE. Parental engagement in policy-making may be accomplished by a variety of means, including, but not limited to:

1. Participating in School Advisory Council meetings and parent organizations (e.g. PTA/PTO/PTSO)
2. Responding to school-generated questionnaires, surveys, or other forms of mass communication intended

to solicit input or ideas

3. Participating in public forums and community meetings scheduled for soliciting parental input
4. Attending school board meetings and workshops
5. Volunteering at school events (on or off campus)

PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the Pickens County School District would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

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

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and /or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the Director of Human Resources at (706) 253-1700.

PICKENS ALTERNATIVE CENTER for EDUCATION (PACE)

The Pickens Alternative Center for Education (PACE) will serve as a placement for students in grades 7-12 who have displayed behaviors that are considered discipline infractions under the student code of conduct warranting a suspension longer than ten days. Upon enrollment at PACE, students will be expected to adhere to the handbook and guidelines specific to the program in addition to this handbook.

Full time certified staff will facilitate a schedule that supports continuation of academics through online platforms and small group/individual instruction in order to keep pace with rigor at each student's original school. PACE staff will maintain communication with teachers at the original school to ensure instruction that supports mastery of standards while providing feedback on student progress both academically and behaviorally. Also included in the daily schedule will be structured activities that support a successful return to the student's original school by providing instruction related to behavioral strategies while creating relationships with PACE staff and maintaining relationships with their original teachers.

SB-10 AND GEORGIA SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP

As a parent/guardian of a student who receives special education services in the PCSD, you have the option to exercise public and private school choice. Under a state law passed by the Georgia State Legislature in 2007, parents of students who receive special education may choose to transfer their child to another public school or private school in Georgia.

Public School Choice Options

Option 1. A parent may request a transfer to another public school within his/her school system as long as available space exists at the school, and the school has a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program. If the parent chooses this option, then the parent will be responsible for transportation to the school.

Option 2. The parent may request a transfer to a school in another school system if there is available space and the system and school have a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program. A school system must agree to accept the student; however, if the parent chooses this option and the school system accepts the child, then the parent shall be responsible for transportation to a school in that system.

Option 3. The parent may also request a transfer to one of the state schools for the deaf and/or blind operated by the State Board of Education. Acceptance into a state school will depend if that setting is appropriate for the student's needs. If the parent chooses this option, then the parent shall be responsible for transportation to the state school. Please contact the Georgia Department of Education for more information about transferring to a state school.

Private School Choice Option

If you are interested in transferring your child to a private school in Georgia, you may be able to take advantage of a Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. These scholarships provide funding that can be used to offset tuition costs at participating private schools in the state of Georgia.

SB 10 – Special Needs Scholarship Program

The Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (GSNS) Program is a parental choice program for special needs students attending Georgia public schools who are served under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Important information regarding the GSNS program can be found at <http://www.gadoe.org/external-affairs-and-policy/policy/pages/special-needs-scholarship-program.aspx>.

For more information, contact Chief of Student Services at (706) 253-1700.

SECTION 504

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based upon disability. Section 504 is an anti-discrimination, civil rights statute that requires the needs of students with disabilities to be met as adequately as the needs of the non-disabled are met. The PCSD provides a non-discriminatory learning environment for all students.

A. Notice of Rights of Students and Parents under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a non-discrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

For more information, regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact:

Chief of Student Services, 100 D. B. Carroll Street, Jasper, GA 30143
(706) 253-1700

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

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. [34 CFR 104.33]
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. [34 CFR 104.33]
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and non-academic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. [34 CFR 104.34]
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for nondisabled students. [34 CFR 104.34]
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. [34 CFR 104.35]
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. [34 CFR 104.35]
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. [34 CFR 104.35]
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. [34 CFR 104.35]
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. [34 CFR 104.35]
11. You have the right to prior notice of any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. [34 CFR 104.36]
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. [34 CFR 104.36]
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. [34 CFR 104.36]
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. [34 CFR 104.36]
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other

district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. [34 CFR 104.36]

16. You have the right, at any time, to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

B. Section 504 Procedural Safeguards

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

The hearing request must include:

1. The name of the student
2. The address of the residence of the student
3. The name of the school the student is attending
4. The decision that is the subject of the hearing
5. The requested reasons for review
6. The proposed remedy sought by the grievant
7. The name and contact information of the grievant

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

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

Hearing Procedures: Hearing procedures are available on request.

Decision: The impartial review official shall issue a written determination within 20 calendar days of the date the hearing concluded. The determination of the impartial review official shall not include any monetary damages or the award of any attorney's fees.

Review: If not satisfied with the decision of the impartial review official, any party may pursue any right of review, appeal, cause of action, or claim available to them under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS

The PCSD recognizes the importance of student involvement in school-sponsored clubs and organizations. As part of the communication process, parents/guardians must be notified at the beginning of each school year regarding all school-sponsored clubs and organizations available for students enrolled in their respective schools. The Student Code of Conduct will serve as notification and will include, but may not be limited to, the following information for each club or organization: name, sponsor(s), mission/purpose, and a description of past or planned activities. Georgia law requires that participation in school-sponsored clubs and organizations constituted after the beginning of each school year will require parent notification and written permission prior to student participation. The PCSD has decided that new clubs will not be allowed after the new school year begins. Students who wish to form a club must present club information to the administration of their school for consideration the following year.

Clubs – Middle School

Club	Advisor	Description
2D Art/Creative Coloring	Tiffany Green	Students engage in sketching, rendering with pencil and pen, and a variety of media. We will also encourage a love of coloring while providing time to make new friendships.
4H Club	Kelly Dorsey and Tammy Duncan	Students will learn life skills they will benefit from forever. Service club affiliated with the Georgia Cooperative Extension Service. Most 4-H programs center around three areas; leadership, citizenship, and life skills.
Academic Games/Brain Teasers	Andra Callahan and Diane Jackson	Students will participate in academic and strategic games and activities.
Art of Cooking	Brian Ledford and Christina Rodriguez	Students will learn the fundamental safety and presentation skills of home cooking.
Bingo/Card Games	Melissa Griffith and Kaylin Contardi	Students will learn how to play various card games and bingo, which will teach them patience and turn-taking skills, while developing better concentration.
Board Games	Roseanne Hamrick and Amy Priest	Students will experience a variety of board games.
Chess Club	Stephanie Rickman and Tia Eaton	Students will learn to play chess. Students learn how to improve their chess game by being exposed to different game strategies.
Classic Movies / TV Shows	Paula Henderson and Lydia Kress	Students get to watch and discuss classic movies/TV shows.
Coding Club	Katlyn Duncan and Amber Chadwick	Students will learn the basics of coding in a game-based program.
Craft Club	Melissa Christopher and Donna Franklin	Students will participate in and learn various crafting skills and then use these skills to help bring joy to others.
Dragons and SEC Sports	Abbie Logue and Torie Williams	Students will follow the athletic games of the Dragons and Dawgs.

Club	Advisor	Description
Environmental/Gardening Club	Josh Headrick and Rhonda Noe	Students will explore ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle at school and at home. Concerned about the Earth? Learn ways to cut down on waste and take care of our environment and skills for gardening.
FCA	Crystal Carver and Laura Stansell	A service-oriented club; open to all students interested in promoting Christian values within the realm of athletics
FFA	Charlene Stirewalt and Lydia Marsicek	A service-oriented club designed to promote careers in agriculture. Students will participate in career development events, leadership, and community service activities.
Folk Dance Club	Allison Priest and Al Estep	This club will teach students a variety of traditional folk dances.
Geography/Step Club	Deidre Weaver and Angela Cline	Students will be able to walk across the world virtually as they calculate their distance using pedometers.
Helping Hands	Tom Kleinberg and Angie McDonald	Students will assist in special needs classrooms
Journalism/Media Production Club	Eileen Steinhauer and Tracey Thomas	This club will involve video team elements, writing articles to be used for print, website, Facebook and video scripts.
Lego Robotics	Lisa Cason and Rachel Evans	Students will learn more about Lego robotics in applied engineering, physics, and mathematical concepts.
Let's Get Moving	Lindsay Farmer, Thompson Brock, and Colby Shaw	A club that focuses on awakening the mind and the pursuit of physical fitness through spontaneous cardiovascular exercise.
Community Project Club	Bill Hall and Brandi McEntire	A service organization where students develop character traits and learn the importance of cooperation through community service. Sponsored by Jasper Lions Club
Motivation/Encouragement Club	Tonya Clark and Harriett Wilder	Students will work together to overcome challenges, produce high quality work, interact with others in a positive way and encourage others to do the same.
Yearbook/Photography	Leigh Chapman and Randy Marler	Student will learn how to use photography, editing, and writing skills to produce a quality yearbook for the entire school.

Clubs – Junior High School

Club Name	Mission/Purpose/Advisor(s) and Past/Planned Activities
Academic Games and Activities	Teaches students positive academic and strategic games and activities. Advisor: Jent
Animal Lovers	Open to all students who have a love for animals and would like to learn more about them. We will also have a pet food drive to help our local humane society. Advisor: Eubanks
Band Club	This club provides students an opportunity to practice instrumental music under the supervision and assistance of a professional music teacher. Advisors: Smith

Club Name	Mission/Purpose/Advisor(s) and Past/Planned Activities
Beta Club	<p>Open to students with an overall average of 90 or above and teacher recommendation. The Junior Beta Club promotes character, develops leadership skills, encourages service involvement, recognizes achievement, and provides technological advantages to students in grades 5—12. Advisors: Fowler and Faix</p> <p>Member of National Junior Beta Club</p> <p>Community/School Service Projects including corresponded with troops, teacher appreciation events</p>
Board Games	Students experience a variety of board games. Advisor: Gordy
Brain Teasers and Number Puzzles	Like to solve challenging puzzles like Sudoku? Test your skills and share strategies in this club! Advisor: Kuyper
Chess Club	<p>Students are encouraged to attend and learn to play chess. Students learn how to improve their chess game by being exposed to different game strategies. Advisor: Green</p> <p>Chess club meets before and after school on designated days during the school year.</p>
Classic Movies/TV	Students get to watch and discuss classic movies/TV shows. Advisors: Klein
Ecology Club	<p>To promote awareness on environmental issues with a variety of activities including gardening, recycling, and habit preservation. Emphasis would be placed on days such as Earth Day. Advisor: Pack</p>
Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)	<p>A service-oriented club; open to all students interested in promoting Christian values within the realm of athletics. Advisors: Carpenter</p> <p>Students participate with a monthly guest speaker</p> <p>Students sponsor a White Christmas fundraiser</p>
Future Farmers of America (FFA)	<p>A service-oriented club designed to promote careers in agriculture. Advisors: Dobson</p> <p>Barnyard Olympics, Toys for Tots dance before Christmas Break</p> <p>Participation in career development events, leadership and community service activities, and supervised agriculture experience programs.</p>
Junior Optimist Club	<p>Optimist Clubs are serious about “Bringing Out the Best in Kids” and do their part through community service programs. Each Club is autonomous and led by members in the community where they live. Optimists have the unique flexibility to serve the youth of their community in any way they see fit.</p> <p>Optimist Clubs see a need in their community and reacts to it. Advisor: Adler</p> <p>Student members work with the Pickens County Animal Rescue</p> <p>Student members work with the holiday “Can-A-Thon” as a service to the community</p>
Lego Club	<p>To train students in applied engineering, physics, and mathematical concepts. Advisor: Allday</p> <p>Construct systems and forms using Lego pieces</p>
Photography	Learn how to take good pictures with different devices. Advisor: DiPuma

Club Name	Mission/Purpose/Advisor(s) and Past/Planned Activities
Reading Club	Students will explore various genres of literature. Advisor: Perdue
Sci-Fi/Fantasy Club	Students talk about the various areas of Sci-Fi and fantasy in books, movies, TV shows and more. Advisor: Beninato
SEC and Dragon Sports	Keep up with football, basketball and baseball teams in the SEC conference and our own Dragons. We will watch video highlights from games, discuss upcoming games and talk about what teams are favored to win and more! Advisor: Savage and Raymond
Student Council / Growing Leaders	Service-oriented club designed to promote leadership among young people within the school setting. Student leadership development is the process of involving students in meaningful ways both in and beyond the classroom. It provides opportunities for students to demonstrate their talents, skills, and interests while continuing to develop new skills. It is also about giving students more ownership of the programs they attend. Advisor: Club members sponsor and coordinate a school dance to benefit the Empty Stocking Fund, a canned food drive for the holiday season Students meet and discuss the operations of the student body. Students sponsor and coordinate a school talent show
Student Revolution	Community members associated with the Revolution Church work with the students on being good citizens. Advisor: Holbert
Study Hall	Extra time to complete homework, read or do something else constructive and quiet. You may sign up for study hall or use this option from time to time when you have assignments and you need to catch up. Advisor: Pack, Crump, Hyatt, Sanders
WYLDLIFE	This nondenominational Christian organization introduces teenagers to positive values and helps them grow in their faith. Advisor: Weaver Bi-monthly meetings called "Club" are held as well as special events throughout the year During the month of March, students attend a weekend retreat at Sharp Top Cove Young Life Resort
Yearbook	Student staff members learn how to use photography, editing, and writing skills to produce a quality yearbook for the entire school. Advisor: Adler

Students Organizations and Clubs– High School

<i>Note: Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) are listed separately</i>	
Club Name	Mission/Purpose/Advisor(s)
Art Club	Students learn about different art mediums and techniques. The art club gives students an opportunity to work in their sketchbooks and on individual art projects. Art history will also be introduced. Advisor: Nikki Towery
Automotive Club	PHS Automotive Club will provide opportunities for enhanced automotive related repair knowledge and workplace skills. Students will be provided an opportunity to develop soft skills and career readiness. Students will increase employability skills for seeking careers in the automotive industry and other mechanically based careers. The Automotive Club will promote vehicle safety among the community's youth. Advisor: Daniel Bell
Beta Club	Open to students with an overall average of 90 or above beginning in their sophomore year. The National Beta Club recognizes achievement, while promoting community service, character, and leadership skills. The Beta Club is a charter member of the National Beta Club. Students participate in a wide variety of other community and school-service activities, including serving as teacher helpers. Advisor: Connie Nelson
Chess Club	Chess Club is open to all students, regardless of skill level. Whether you are a skilled player who wants to sharpen your skills, just enjoy playing the game, or you're a beginner who wants to learn how to play the game, we welcome you. Advisor: Kristie Moss
Comic Club	Comic Book Club is the place for kids who love to read, draw, write, and learn about the tricks behind the best comics or graphic novels. If you want to have fun with your friends, are a creative thinker, or if you can see yourself becoming involved in this industry someday, then this is the place for you! Advisor: Kristie Moss
Dragons are Green	Dragons are Green is dedicated to raising awareness of environmental issues and educating our students on how to be good stewards of the earth. Our goal is to establish a school-wide recycling program, as well as raise the funds for a filtered water bottle refill station. Advisor: Sue Watters
Drama/Thespian	Club where students go over thespian business, discuss show business and play drama games. Only active thespians, students involved in the after-school shows or students who are in the drama classes may attend. Advisor: Sara Harbin

Club Name	Mission/Purpose/Advisor(s)
Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)	An organization comprised of individuals seeking to live out their faith on and off campus. Open to any individual (does not have to be a member of an athletic team) at PHS who wishes to fellowship with other Christian young people. Meets monthly. Advisors: Connie Nelson
Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)	The GSA is a student-run club, which provides a safe place for students to meet, support each other, talk about issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and work with homophobia and transphobia. Advisors: Corey Pittman
Interact	Interact clubs bring together young people ages 12-18 to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of Service Above Self. Advisors: Linda Poe
Key Club	Key Club is an international, student-led organization that provides its members with opportunities to provide service, build character, and develop leadership. Advisor: Shelley Buck
Mu Theta Alpha	A National Mathematics Honor Society dedicated to inspiring a keen interest in mathematics, developing strong scholarship in the subject, and promoting the enjoyment of mathematics. Advisors: Kathy Daymude and Kaiti Lewitt
National Technical Honor Society	The National Technical Honor Society recognizes student achievement and leadership in career and technical education, promotes educational excellence, awards scholarships, and enhances career opportunities. Initial induction requires a student be at least a sophomore, have a plan to complete a CTAE pathway, actively participate in a related Career and Technical Student Service Organization (CTSO), and have a 3.5 GPA. Seniors in good standing either who participate in Work-based learning or who complete a capstone project will receive a NTHS honor cord to wear at graduation. Advisors: Angela Quarles
Octagon Club	Students with a common goal of making our communities a better place through volunteerism. JOOI (Junior Optimist Octagon International) is a service-learning organization that connects all JOOI clubs throughout the US, Canada and the Caribbean. Students participate in school and community service projects and activities that promote the goal of bringing out the best in children and the community. Advisors: Shaina Nix

Club Name	Mission/Purpose/Advisor(s)
Partners Club	<p>Supports and assists Special Olympic athletes in training and competition in local Special Olympics. Members help provide social opportunities for the athletes by sponsoring activities for them. such as dances, bowling parties, movie nights, hayrides, and skate nights. The club displays a strong bond of friendship and loyalty between club members and our special students on and off the field.</p> <p>Advisor: Curtis Freeman</p>
School Spirit Club	<p>The Spirit /club would provide more students the opportunity to be involved in the planning of the homecoming dance, prom, pep rallies, and other school spirit and recognition activities.</p> <p>Advisor: Holly Rylee</p>
Student Government Association	<p>The Student Government Association is comprised of Student Council representatives and class officers. The Student Government's purpose is to teach students the principles of representative democracy in order to make them more effective citizens and participants in our local, state, and national governments; to encourage leadership qualities; to foster a strong community spirit within the school; to establish close cooperation among the students, faculty, and staff of PHS; and to promote the general welfare of the school and greater community.</p> <p>Advisor: Shelley Buck</p>
Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)	<p>Mission: to empower young people to successfully confront risks and pressures that challenge them in daily life. We create, equip, and sustain a network of student-led chapters and communities focused on peer-to-peer educations. We foster a sense of belonging and promote resiliency, leadership, and advocacy skills so that young people make positive life decisions.</p> <p>Advisor: Judith Barber</p>
Thespian Troupe	<p>The Thespian Troupe is an invitation only honorary group within the Drama Club, including students who have participated in a minimum of 100 hours in two or more theater productions. Selected members will attend a state leadership conference and the state theater festival.</p> <p>Advisor: Sarah Harbin</p>
Travel Club	<p>PHS Travel Club is an extension of the 515 Pathway to the World community organization. The goal is to help students experience the world and discuss all sorts of benefits to travel.</p> <p>Advisors: Christi Hobgood</p>

Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) – High School	
CTSO	Mission/Purpose/Advisor(s) and Past/Planned Activities
Career Technical Instruction CTI *requires enrollment in CTAE course	The mission of Career and Technical Instruction (CTI) is to provide unique and meaningful leadership experiences for students who are currently enrolled in secondary Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) courses at PHS through participation in community projects, leadership conferences and workshops, and work-based learning opportunities. CTI also works to enhance CTAE related skills to improve employability and transition into the job market after high school through Work Place Readiness classes, Work Based Learning coursework, and Vocational Services. Advisor: Sarah Bauer
Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) *requires enrollment in CTAE course	To promote personal growth and leadership development through family and consumer science education. Focusing on the multiple roles of family members (wage earner, community leader) members develop skills for life. Advisors: Sue Gibbons and Katherine White
Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) *requires enrolment in CTAE course	We bring business and education together in a positive working relationship through innovative leadership and career development programs. We bring our mission to life through the application of our motto: Service, Education, and Progress. Advisor: Ginger Rizoti
Future Health Care Professionals (HOSA) *requires enrollment in CTAE course	Allow students to develop leadership skills and occupational skills in the health care field and encourages students to become active in community projects. Advisors: New Hire
Skills USA *requires enrollment in CTAE course	Skills USA is a national nonprofit student organization serving 285,000 students enrolled in career and technical training programs at high schools and colleges. Skills USA's programs provide students with opportunities to learn and practice leadership as well as employment skills. Advisors: Dennis Wilson and Carissa Parker
Technology Student Association (TSA) *requires enrollment in CTAE course	To prepare students to be successful leaders and responsible citizens in a technological society through co-curricular activities within the technology education program. Advisor: Angela Quarles
National FFA Organization (FFA) *requires enrollment in CTAE course	FFA is the premier youth organization preparing members for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture. Advisors: Nick Cantrell and Emily Fellenbaum

SEX EDUCATION

The PCSD follows the guidelines from the Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.12 regarding sex education for middle school, junior high school, and high school students which states that "Sex education/AIDS education – a planned program that shall include instruction relating to the handling of peer pressure, promotion of high self-esteem, local community values, and abstinence from sexual activity as an effective method of preventing acquired immune deficiency syndrome and the only sure method of preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. This instruction shall emphasize abstinence from sexual activity until marriage and fidelity in marriage as important personal goals."

Rule 160-4-2-12(e) states that sex education shall also include annual age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention in kindergarten through grade 9. A committee comprised of community members, parents, and students review and recommend curriculum to the Pickens BOE for approval. Before the start of the course, a letter is sent home to parents with information on the program and the option to have the student "opt-out" from the course. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES

The PCSD provides a variety of resources that are available at every school to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) RTI Plans, peer mentoring, tutoring, Student Support Teams (SST), school counselors, behavior plans, etc.

TITLE I SCHOOL DESIGNATION

Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Under ESSA, schoolwide programs remain a key tool for using Title I funds to improve academic achievement and enable a school to more effectively leverage federal funds to upgrade its entire educational program.

The following schools in the PCSD have Title I Schoolwide Programs:

1. Harmony Elementary School
2. Hill City Elementary School
3. Tate Elementary School
4. Jasper Middle School
5. Pickens Junior High School

As a Title I school, each building develops a plan known as the School Improvement Plan/Schoolwide Program Plan to outline goals for the year and to determine what action steps, professional learning opportunities, and family engagement activities will take place to improve student achievement. Families are valuable stakeholders and are invited to provide input and feedback regarding the plan at their child's school. Please contact the District Administrator responsible for Federal Programs at (706) 253-1700 if you have any questions regarding the Title I School Designation and/or plans.

Code of Conduct for Students



The PCSD believes all students can learn better in a safe school environment. It is the policy of the PCSD to maintain an educational and working environment free from sexual harassment, including harassment or bullying based on race, color, gender, or sexual orientation. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Such prohibition shall be included in the Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school district.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Pickens County School District (PCSD) developed the following Student-Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students to improve the student-learning environment and comply with state law and State Board of Education rules. The Student Code of Conduct includes the following:

1. **Standards for student behavior**-developed to create the expectation that students will behave in such a way as to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. The standards are designed to encourage students to respect each other as well as the school community.
2. **Student support processes**-established to consider, as appropriate:
 - A. the severity of the behavioral problem;
 - B. support services available at each school and within the school system; and
 - C. public entities or community organizations that may assist students to address behavioral problems.
3. **A progressive discipline process**-designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline imposed by each school will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student, the previous discipline history of the student, and other relevant factors, while ensuring that each student receives the due process mandated by federal and state law.
4. **Parental engagement processes**-created to enable parents, guardians, teachers, and school administrators to work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance. The process should enable parents, guardians, and school employees to communicate freely their concerns about student behaviors that detract from the learning environment.

How the Student–Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students is used:

1. The code requires disciplinary action for each infraction.
2. Each student receives electronic access to the **Student–Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students** the first week of school (or upon enrollment of a new student).
3. The parent/guardian and student must sign and return to school the form acknowledging they read the **Student– Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students** or complete an electronic acknowledgement form.
4. The **Student–Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students** will be available on the district/school websites.
5. The **Student–Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students** is in effect during the following times and in the following places:
 - A. at school or on school property at any time;
 - B. off school grounds at any school activity, bus stop, function, or event, and/or;
 - C. on vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system.
6. Students may be disciplined for conduct off-campus that results in an arrest or may pose a threat to the school’s learning environment or the safety of students and employees. See the “Student Misconduct On or Off-Campus” (page 60) for more details.
7. Schools will engage parents in developing and updating the **Student–Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students**. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to communicate and review the **Student– Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students** frequently with their children.

ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUG, AND INHALANT USE

Use of Alcohol, Illegal Drugs, Inhalants by Students

1. Any student under the influence of alcoholic beverages, in possession of alcoholic beverages, or engaged in the sale of alcoholic beverages or liquids represented to be alcoholic beverages while attending school or school-related activities shall be suspended immediately by the principal or assistant principal and reported to proper law enforcement authorities.
 - A. Upon suspension, the student and parents or guardian shall be given written notice of the opportunity to appear before the PCSD's Disciplinary Tribunal and show cause, if any, why the Disciplinary Tribunal should not suspend or expel student from school.
2. Any student under the influence, in possession of, or engaged in the sale of any one or more of those drugs or substances represented to be drugs listed in the Georgia Controlled Substances Act while on the school premises shall be suspended immediately by the principal or assistant principal and reported to proper law enforcement authorities.
 - A. Upon suspension, the student and parents or guardian shall be given written notice of the opportunity to appear before the PCSD's Disciplinary Tribunal and show cause, if any, why the Disciplinary Tribunal should not suspend or expel student from school.
 - B. Any student suspected of being under the influence of, in possession of, or engaged in the selling of drugs shall be subject to a search of said student's person and belongings by the principal, assistant principal, or their authorized designee. A school official will be present during the search.
3. Possession of any herb/synthetic drugs or drug paraphernalia is also subject to disciplinary consequences. Immediately upon such suspension, the principal or assistant principal shall notify the proper law enforcement authorities as to the violation.
4. Inhalation of intoxicating fumes also known as huffing/sniffing is subject to disciplinary consequences (see Discipline Matrix on pages 38-52).

Physical Exam

Any student who loses consciousness while on the school premises may be subject to an immediate physical examination which can include a blood and urine test. Upon a finding of drug use, said student shall be suspended immediately as aforesaid and paragraphs 1 and 2 shall be put into effect. [STATE REF.: Georgia Board of Education Policy IDB (Rule 160-4-2-.12) State Standards I 7.1(1d) LEGAL REF.: O.C.G.A. § 3-3-21 et seq.; 16-13-32.4; 19-7-6; 20-2-144; 20-2-1184]

ALTERNATIVE NICOTINE PRODUCTS, TOBACCO, TOBACCO-RELATED OBJECTS, VAPOR PRODUCTS USE POLICY

The PCSD recognizes that the use of tobacco, tobacco-related objects, alternative nicotine products, vapor products as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-12-170 or low THC oil as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-12-190 is a health, safety, and environmental hazard for students, employees, visitors, and school faculties. The PCSD acknowledges that adult employees and visitors serve as role models for students and that the PCSD's acceptance of any use of these

products implies school approval, if not endorsement, of such use. In addition, the PCSD recognizes that it has an obligation to promote positive role models in schools and promote a healthy learning environment.

Finally, the PCSD recognizes that it has legal authority and obligation pursuant to state and federal law.

A. Tobacco, Tobacco-Related Objects, Electronic Smoking Devices, Alternative Nicotine Products, Vapor Products or Low THC Oil Use Prohibited

No student, staff member, contracted services employee, vendors, or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product, including e-cigarettes, tobacco-related objects, alternative nicotine products, vapor products or low THC oil at any time, including non-school hours 24 hours per day, 7 days per week while:

1. In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by the PCSD
2. On any school grounds and property – including athletic fields and parking lots – owned, leased, rented or chartered by the PCSD; or
3. At any school-sponsored or school-related event on-campus or off-campus.

Volunteers and visitors on school property will be reminded of this policy in a tactful and courteous manner and will be asked to adhere to this policy.

ASSAULT ON OR THREAT TO A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE

The PCSD's most important job is to maintain the safety of our students and staff. To ensure that safety, the following guidelines are in place:

1. The penalty for any intentional act to cause physical or bodily harm to any school system employee shall be subject to permanent expulsion and referral to Juvenile Court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior.
2. Any student who commits an act of physical violence against a school system employee involving intentional physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature will be disciplined by expulsion, long-term, or short-term suspension.
3. No student shall harass or threaten a school employee. The penalty for violation of this rule is a minimum of ten (10) days out-of-school suspension to a maximum of permanent expulsion.
4. No student shall use abusive language or otherwise display disrespectful conduct toward a school employee (i.e. oral, written, social media, etc.).

BEHAVIOR NOT COVERED

School officials reserve the right to punish behavior that is subversive to good order and discipline in the schools, even though such behavior is not specified in this Student Code of Conduct. School administration will determine the penalty for violations of the Student Code of Conduct if the penalty is not specified. Otherwise, administrators will use the Discipline Matrix (see page 38). School administration will report to the legal authorities any behavior that violates laws of the State of Georgia or local ordinances.

Student disciplinary penalties for violation of the Student Code of Conduct applied in one (1) school year shall be carried over to future school years if the penalty has not been completed and for the purpose of determining a second violation.

[Legal Ref.: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-59; 20-2-155 (a) (b); 20-2-1184; 16-5-23; 16-5-24; 16-11-127; 16-13-30]

BULLYING

Bullying, as defined by Georgia law, is as follows:

An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school-related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system (social media), that is:

1. any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or
2. any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that
 - A. causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1;
 - B. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - C. is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
 - D. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not the electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment if the electronic communication:

1. is directed specifically at students or school personnel;
2. is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and
3. creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature, transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photograph, electronic, or optical system.

Procedures may be developed at each school encouraging a teacher or other school employee, student, parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student, either anonymously or in the person's name, at the person's option, to report or otherwise provide information on bullying activity. Any teacher or other school employee who, in the exercise of his or her personal judgment and discretion, believes he or she has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that someone is a target of bullying is encouraged to report it to the school principal immediately. The administration will investigate any report based on the nature of the complaint in a timely manner to determine whether bullying has occurred, whether there are other procedures related to illegal harassment or discrimination that should be implemented, and what other steps should be taken. Any report of retaliation for reporting bullying will also be investigated and addressed as called for in this policy and in accordance with school procedures.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Student Code of Conduct. **However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal that a student in grades 6—12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third (3rd) time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.**

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which may be done electronically.

Students and parents are officially notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition through the Student Code of Conduct.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Teachers manage most common student discipline issues. Teachers and principals utilize different methods of discipline as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct Discipline Matrix (see below).

The following guidelines are to be used when corporal punishment is administered:

1. Only the principal or his/her designee will administer corporal punishment.
2. Corporal punishment must not be unduly severe.
3. Due process for the student must be provided.
4. Corporal punishment shall not be used as the first line of punishment for misbehavior.
5. Corporal punishment must be administered in the presence of a designated employee who has been informed beforehand in the student's presence of the reason for the punishment.
6. The student's parents will be provided a written explanation of the reason for the punishment and the name of those present.
7. Corporal punishment must not be administered to a student whose parents have filed a statement on the day of enrollment from a medical doctor against its use on the grounds that it is detrimental to the student's mental or emotional stability.

[STATE REF.: State Standards B 1(1a.7) LEGAL REF.: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-730; 20-2-731; 20-2-732; *Ingraham v. Wright*, 430 U.S. 651 51 L.Ed.2d 711 (1977)]

DISCIPLINE MATRIX – STUDENT INFRACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

The Discipline Matrix (provided by the Georgia Department of Education) is designed to provide administrators and teachers a guideline for implementing interventions and consequences for student behavior. The interventions and consequences are progressively more intense if student misbehavior continues.

Principals have the authority and discretion to impose interventions and consequences ranked higher on the Discipline Matrix than indicated for each behavior. In the case of disciplinary violations not covered by the matrix, the principal may impose corrective measures which he/she believes to be in the best interest of the student involved and the school.

A. Prohibited Behavior

1. Use vulgar or profane language or gestures.
2. Engage in rowdy or unruly behavior.
3. Cheat, plagiarize, or represent other's work as his/her own.
4. Possess a weapon or use any potentially harmful object as a weapon.
5. Use or possess tobacco products, tobacco paraphernalia, or any simulated tobacco products of any form, or actions that mimic the use or possession of tobacco products. Refer to district tobacco policy GAN to include e-cigarettes, tobacco-related objects, alternative nicotine products, vapor products or low THC oil or any vaporizing device not intended for medical use.
6. Occupy any school building, gymnasium, school grounds, properties, or part(s) thereof with the intent to deprive others of its use, or when the effect thereof is to deprive others of such use.
7. Block the entrance or exit of any school building, property, corridor, or room thereof so as to deprive others of such use.
8. Set fire to or otherwise damage any school building or property.
9. Participate in any gambling activity.
10. Use or threaten to use mace, pepper spray, or a similar potentially harmful substance.
11. Prevent or attempt to prevent the convening or continued functioning of any school, class, activity, lawful meeting, or assembly on the school campus.
12. Prevent students from attending a class or school activity.
13. Block normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic on a school campus or adjacent grounds.
14. Continuously and/or intentionally make noise or act in any other manner so as to interfere with a teacher's ability to conduct a class or the job performance of any school system employee.
15. Bully, harass, verbally assault, or threaten another person.
16. Verbally or electronically assault or otherwise engage in disrespectful conduct toward a school system employee.
17. In any other manner by the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or any other conduct, intentionally cause the disruption of any lawful mission, process or function of the school, or engage in any such conduct causing the disruption or obstruction of any such lawful mission, process, or function (e.g. false fire alarm, riot, blockade, alarmist graffiti, bomb threat, etc.).
18. Refuse to identify himself/herself upon request of any school system employee.
19. Engage in inappropriate bodily contact to include kissing, displays of affection, or inappropriate sexual behavior.
20. Expose private body parts.
21. Engage in the unauthorized selling of items or solicitation for monies.
22. Be truant or chronically tardy.
23. Possess or use a laser pointer or reflective device.
24. Use an electronic device or cell phone during regular school hours unless authorized by an instructor or administrator. Cell phones and other electronic devices removed by school personnel are subject to search by the administration.
25. Commit a traffic violation on school grounds (e.g., speeding, reckless driving, illegal parking, etc.).
26. Commit or attempt to commit extortion.
27. Cause or attempt to cause willful or malicious damage and/or steal or attempt to steal real or personal property of the school or personal property of any person legitimately at school, during a school function, or an event off school grounds. Marking, defacing, or destroying school property or property of another student is included in this violation. Parents and/or students are responsible for restitution of damages or stolen property. PCSD is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen property.
28. Commit an act of physical violence, assault, fight, bodily injury, or threat to any person.
29. Disregard any reasonable directions or commands of any authorized school personnel.
30. Participate in hazing.
31. Possess bullets, ammunition, or fireworks.

32. Possess or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages, inhalants, drugs, or actions that mimic the use or possession of alcoholic beverages, inhalants, or drugs identified by the Georgia Controlled Substances Act.
33. Participate or have involvement in a gang.
34. Possess unauthorized prescription or nonprescription drugs.

B. Disciplinary Actions

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process by referencing the Discipline Matrix (see page 42). The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will take into account the severity of the misbehavior of a particular student, the student's discipline history, the age of the student, and other relevant factors. All due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed. The Student Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which consequences follow inappropriate behaviors. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with character education programs.

The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for violations of the Student Code of Conduct:

- Alternative School Placement
- Behavior Contract
- Confiscation of items not allowed at school
- Corporal Punishment
- Detention (in or after school)
- Expulsion/Permanent Expulsion
- Financial Restitution (for repair of any damage to school-related, private, or personal property)
- In-School Suspension
- In-Team Suspension/Time-Out
- Isolation or Time-Out
- Loss of Driving Privileges/Permits
- Loss of Privileges
- Mandatory Parent Escorts
- Notification of Parents
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Parent Conference
- Referral to Attendance Officer, Attendance Support Team, Magistrate and/or Juvenile Court
- Referral to Disciplinary Tribunal
- Referral to Law Enforcement
- Restriction from School Programs and Special Assemblies
- Saturday School
- School Community Service (clean/repair damage caused to the school-related environment)
- Silent lunch
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Temporary Removal from Class or Activity (athletics or extra-curricular activity)
- Warning and/or Counseling (with a school administrator, counselor, and/or teacher)

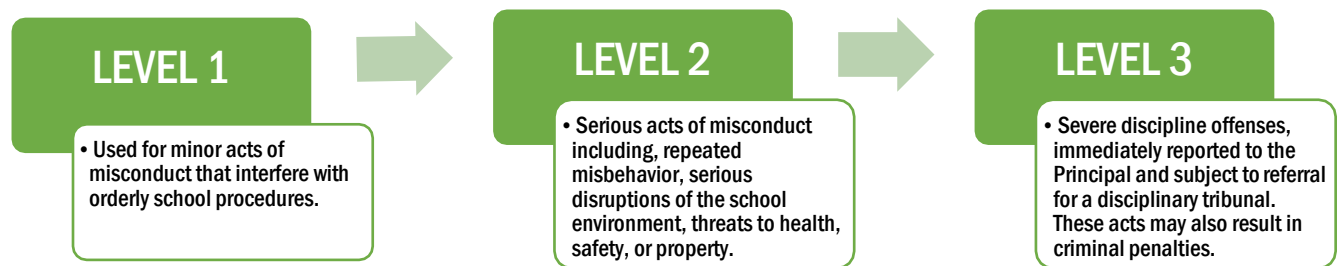
The maximum disciplinary actions for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion. A disciplinary tribunal or the Pickens BOE shall only impose permanent expulsion.

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Student Code of Conduct or the prescribed disciplinary consequences. In such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving their right to respond to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.

Before a student is suspended for ten (10) days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parents/guardians will be notified, if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

C. Discipline Matrix Levels

The Discipline Matrix is built upon a progressive discipline philosophy and designed to create the expectation that the degree of consequences imposed by each school will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of the student, the previous discipline history of the student, and other relevant factors while ensuring that each student receives due process mandated by law.



Level 1 (Mild) discipline is used for minor acts of misconduct which interfere with orderly school procedures, school functions, extracurricular programs, approved transportation, or a student's own learning process. Students may be disciplined by the professional staff member involved or may be referred directly to the principal. These acts include, but are not limited to, repeated unrelated acts of minor misconduct and misbehaviors directed against persons or property, but which do not seriously endanger the health, safety, or well-being of others. Consideration of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided.

Level 2 (Moderate) discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature, serious disruptions of the school environment, threats to health, safety, or property, and other acts of serious misconduct. These offenses must be reported to the principal. Offenses that threaten the health, safety or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from the school and/or school-sponsored activities for up to five school days, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the principal/designee is a required element of all disciplinary actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided.

Level 3 (Severe) discipline offenses represent the most serious acts of misconduct. These offenses must be immediately reported to the principal and are subject to referral for a disciplinary tribunal. These violations are so serious that they may require use of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. Such acts may also result in criminal penalties being imposed. Any misconduct that threatens the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from the school and/or school-sponsored activities for up to ten (10) school days, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the principal/designee is a required element of all discipline actions in this particular category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided.

Disciplinary Matrix (Infractions and Consequences)

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Academic Dishonesty (32) Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assignments, or exams</p>	<p>1 – Intentional receiving or providing of unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assessments, and assignments. May include but is not limited to failure to cite sources.</p> <p>2 – Intentional plagiarism or cheating on a minor classroom assignment or project. Includes but is not limited to intentional dishonesty on minor classroom projects, assignments, homework, etc.</p> <p>3 – Intentional plagiarism or cheating on a major exam, statewide assessment or project, or the falsification of school records (including forgery). Includes but is not limited to cheating on major exams, statewide assessments, or other state-mandated academic work; Includes the falsification of school records; forgery; Level 3 may be used for students who violate the school policy on academic dishonesty three or more times during the same school year.</p>
<p>Alcohol (01) Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or consumption of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol. Students under the influence of alcohol may be included if it results in disciplinary action.</p>	<p>1 – Unintentional possession of alcohol.</p> <p>2 – Under the influence of alcohol without possession.</p> <p>3 – Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol.</p>
<p>Arson (02) Unlawful and intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary devices. (Note: <u>Possession</u> of fireworks or incendiary devices must be reported as “Possession of Unapproved Items.” <u>Use</u> of such items should be reported as arson.)</p>	<p>2 – Attempt to commit arson or use of matches, lighters, or incendiary devices at school; includes but not limited to the use of fireworks and/or trashcan fires without damage to school property.</p> <p>3 – Intentional damage as a result of arson-related activity or the use of an incendiary device; includes but not limited to setting fires to school property.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Battery (03)</p> <p>Intentional touching or striking of another person to intentionally cause bodily harm. (Note: The key difference between battery and fighting is fighting involves mutual participation.)</p>	<p>1 – Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in no bodily injuries. Includes but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping, and other intentional physical confrontations.</p> <p>2 – Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in mild or moderate bodily injuries. Includes but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping, and other physical confrontations that result in mild or moderate injuries.</p> <p>3 – Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack on school personnel. Physical attack on teachers should be reported as Violence Against a Teacher (44). Level 3 may be used for students who violate the school policy on battery three or more times during the same school year. Includes but not limited to choking, pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping, and other physical confrontations resulting in severe injuries. Includes any physical attack on school personnel and incidents serious enough to warrant calling the police or security.</p>
<p>Bullying (29)</p> <p>Behavior, which may include written, verbal, physical acts, or through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology, occurring on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, threatening the educational environment, or causing substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm.</p>	<p>1 – First Offense of bullying as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4. Includes but is not limited to unwanted teasing, threats, name calling, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, hazing, physical attacks, extortion, social exclusion, coercion, spreading of rumors or falsehoods, gossip, stalking, or using any type of electronic means to harass or intimidate.</p> <p>2 – Second incident of bullying as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4. Includes but is not limited to unwanted teasing, threats, name calling, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, hazing, physical attacks, extortion, social exclusion, coercion, spreading of rumors or falsehoods, gossip, stalking, or the use of electronic equipment on school property or using school equipment to harass or intimidate.</p> <p>3 – Repeated acts, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4, occurring on school property or school possession that is a willful attempt or threat to inflict injury, or apparent means to do so, any display of force that puts victim at fear of harm, any written, verbal or physical act that threatens, harasses, or intimidates; causes another person physical harm; interferes with a student's education; so severe and pervasive intimidated or threatens educational environment. Includes the use of electronic equipment on school property or using school equipment to harass or intimidate.</p>
<p>Breaking/Entering Burglary (04)</p>	<p>3 – Unlawful or unauthorized forceful entry into a school building or vehicle (with or without intent to commit theft). *Note: The key difference between Trespassing and Breaking and Entering-Burglary is that Trespassing does not include forceful entry into the school building.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Computer Trespass (05)</p> <p>Use of a school computer for anything other than instructional purposes or unauthorized use of a computer or computer network with the intention of deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging, or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program(s) or data</p>	<p>2 – Unauthorized use of school computer for anything other than instructional purposes. Includes but not limited to computer misuse, using computer to view or send inappropriate material and violation of school computer use policy.</p> <p>3 – Unauthorized use of a computer or computer network with the intention of deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging, obtaining confidential information or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program(s) or data; includes disclosure of a number, code, password, or other means of access to school computers or the school system computer network without proper authorization. Includes but not limited to hacking.</p>
<p>Disorderly Conduct (06)</p> <p>Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others. (Includes disruptive behaviors on school buses)</p>	<p>1 – Creating or contributing to a moderate disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment but doesn't pose a threat to the health or safety of others. Including but not limited to general bus misbehavior, spitting on property or persons, encouraging disruptive behavior.</p> <p>2 – Creating or contributing to a severe disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment but doesn't pose a threat to the health or safety of others; may represent a repeat action. Including but not limited to general bus misbehavior, spitting on property or persons, encouraging disruptive behavior.</p> <p>3 – Creating or contributing to a severe disturbance that substantially disrupts the school environment or poses a threat to the health and safety of others. Level 3 may be used for students who violate the school policy on disorderly conduct three or more times during the same school year. Including but not limited to disruptive behavior on school bus, misbehavior during a fire drill or other safety exercises.</p>
<p>Other - Dress Code Violation (31)</p> <p>Violation of school dress code that includes standards for appropriate school attire (refer to page 13 for the district dress code)</p>	<p>1 – Non-invasive and non-suggestive clothing, jewelry, book bags or other articles of personal appearance. Pursuant to local dress codes, dress code violations for Level 1 may include but are not limited to bare feet; trousers, slacks, shorts worn below waist level; no belt; body piercings; clothing that is excessively baggy or tight; skirts or shorts that are shorter than mid-thigh; sunglasses worn inside the building; hats, caps, hoods, sweatbands and bandanas or other head wear worn inside school building.</p> <p>2 – Invasive or suggestive clothing, jewelry, book bags or other articles of personal appearance. Pursuant to local dress codes, dress code violations for Level 2 may include but are not limited to depiction of profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, or violence; promote the use or abuse of tobacco, alcohol or drugs; creates a threat to the health and safety of other students; creates a significant risk of disruption to the school environment; clothing worn in such a manner so as to reveal underwear, cleavage or bare skin; spaghetti straps, strapless tops, halter tops, see-through or mesh garments or other clothing that is physically revealing, provocative or contains sexually suggestive comments.</p> <p>3 – Invasive or suggestive clothing, jewelry, book bags or other articles of personal appearance. Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school dress code policy three or more times during the same school year.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Drugs, except Alcohol and Tobacco (07)</p> <p>Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics; or any medication prescribed to a student or purchased over-the-counter and not brought to the office upon arrival to school</p>	<p>1 – Unintentional possession of prescribed or over the counter medication. Does not include the possession of narcotics or any illegal drugs. Does not include auto-injectable epinephrine as properly administered pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-776.</p> <p>2 – Any medication prescribed to a student or purchased over-the-counter and not brought to the office upon arrival to school. Does not include auto-injectable epinephrine as properly administered pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-776.</p> <p>3 – Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics. Does not include auto-injectable epinephrine as properly administered pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-776.</p>
<p>Electronic Smoking Device (42)</p> <p>Any purpose-made or homemade device used to deliver nicotine or any other substance intended for human consumption that may be used by a person to simulate smoking through inhalation of vapor and/or aerosol from the device. By way of an example and not as a limitation, devices may include those manufactured, distributed, marketed or sold as an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, electronic hookah, Juuls, vape pen, electronic delivery system and/or any cartridge and/or other component or paraphernalia of the device and/or related product(s).</p>	<p>1 – Possession of an electronic smoking device as defined by Disciplinary Infraction/State Code 42. All devices and/or paraphernalia found in connection with the offense will be confiscated and not returned.</p> <p>2 – Distribution of an electronic smoking device as defined by Disciplinary Infraction/State Code 42. All devices and/or paraphernalia found in connection with the offense will be confiscated and not returned.</p> <p>3 - Possession and/or Distribution of electronic smoking devices as defined by Disciplinary Infraction/State Code 42. All devices and/or paraphernalia found in connection with the offense will be confiscated and not returned. Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on electronic smoking devices three or more times during the same year.</p> <p>NOTE: In the event a student is found to be in possession of an illegal substance/drug for use in an electronic smoking device, such will be treated as a separate drug-related offense and coded as Drugs (07).</p>
<p>Fighting (08)</p> <p>Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender and intent to harm.</p> <p>* Note: The key difference between fighting and battery is that fighting involves mutual participation.</p>	<p>1 – A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in no bodily injuries.</p> <p>2 – A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in mild or moderate bodily injuries. Mild or moderate injuries may include but are not limited to scratches, bloody noses, bruises, black eyes, and other marks on the body.</p> <p>3 – A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in severe bodily injuries. Level 3 may be used for students who violate the school policy on fighting three or more times during the same school year. Repeated physical confrontations resulting in severe injuries that require medical attention.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Gang-related Activities (35) Any group of three or more students with a common name or common identifying signs, symbols, tattoos, graffiti, or attire which engage in criminal gang activity (O.C.G.A. 16-5-3)</p>	<p>2 – Wearing or possessing gang-related apparel; communicating either verbally or nonverbally to convey membership or affiliation with a gang. Examples include but not limited to possession or wearing of gang-related clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, or using colors to convey gang membership or affiliation; gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc. to convey gang membership or affiliation; committing any other illegal act or other violation of school policies in connection with gang-related activity.</p> <p>3 – The solicitation of others for gang membership, tagging or defacing of school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang; the requirement or payment for protection or insurance through a gang. Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to gang activity.</p>
<p>Homicide (09) Killing of one human being by another</p>	<p>3 – Killing of a human being. Includes but is not limited to shooting, stabbing, choking, bludgeoning, etc.</p>
<p>Kidnapping (10) The unlawful or forceful abduction, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will</p>	<p>3 – Unlawful or forceful abduction, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will.</p>
<p>Motor Vehicle Theft (12) Theft or attempted theft of any motor vehicle.</p>	<p>3 – Theft or attempted theft of any motor vehicle. Includes but not limited to cars, trucks, ATVs, golf carts, etc.</p>
<p>Other Incident for a State-Reported Discipline Action (24) Any other discipline incident for which a student is administered corporal punishment, detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, expelled, suspended from riding the bus, assigned to an alternative school, referred to court or juvenile system authorities, or removed from class at the teacher’s request (pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-738).</p>	<p>When a student’s behavior does not coincide with a discipline incident definition provided within the Matrix, and a state-reportable discipline action is issued, the incident should be coded as Other Incident for a State-Reported Discipline Action (24).</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Other - Attendance Related (30)</p> <p>Repeated or excessive unexcused absences or tardiness; including failure to report to class, skipping class, leaving school without authorization, or failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions.</p> <p>Please see Compulsory School Attendance Law.</p>	<p>1 – Repeated or excessive unexcused absences or tardiness; including failure to report to class, skipping class, leaving school without authorization, or failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions.</p> <p>2 – Violation of Compulsory School Attendance Law and referral to School Social Worker with possible court referral.</p> <p>3 – Violation of Compulsory School Attendance Law and referral to Magistrate and/or Juvenile Court.</p>
<p>Other - Non-Disciplinary Event (40)</p> <p>This code is used exclusively for the reporting Physical Restraint. When the Incident Type = '40', then the Action Code must = '95' for Physical Restraint.</p>	<p>Physical restraint.</p>
<p>Other – Possession of Unapproved Items (34)</p> <p>The use or possession of any unauthorized item disruptive to the school environment. (NOTE: The use of fireworks or incendiary devices must be coded as Arson.)</p>	<p>1 – The possession of any unauthorized item. Does not include the possession of fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous. Includes but is not limited to possession of toys, mobile devices, gadgets, person items, gum, candy, etc.; includes possession of pepper spray.</p> <p>2– The use of any unauthorized item (i.e. toys, mobile devices, or gadgets). Does not include the possession of fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous. Includes but is not limited to use of toys, mobile devices, gadgets, personal items, etc.; Includes the use of pepper spray without injury.</p> <p>3 – The use or possession of unauthorized items including but not limited to toy guns or other items that can be construed as dangerous or harmful to the learning environment; Includes the possession of matches, lighters, incendiary devices or fireworks. The use of matches, lighters, incendiary devices or fireworks should be coded as Arson; Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to unapproved items. Includes but are not limited to matches, lighters, or the possession of fireworks, bullets, sting bombs, CO2 cartridges; includes the use of pepper spray with injury.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Other – Student Incivility (33)</p> <p>Insubordination or disrespect to staff members or other students; includes but is not limited to defiance and/or refusal to follow school staff member instructions, disruptions in and out of the classroom, taunting, use of vulgar or inappropriate language, and misrepresentation of the truth.</p>	<p>1 – Failure to comply with instructions or the inadvertent use of inappropriate language. May include but is not limited to general disrespect for school staff or students; vulgar/profanity/inappropriate language; failure to follow instructions; Minor classroom disruption that includes not following classroom or school behavior expectations.</p> <p>2– Blatant insubordination or the use of inappropriate language directed towards school staff or peers; intentional misrepresentation of the truth; Major classroom disruption that stops instruction for an extended period of time and requires administrative intervention or a major out of classroom disruption.</p> <p>3 – Blatant and repeated insubordination or intentional misrepresentation of the truth; Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to student incivility. Documentation should be made of Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions implemented and effectiveness.</p>
<p>Repeated Offenses (36)</p> <p>Collection of offenses not previously assigned a state reportable action that occurs on a single day or across multiple school days that leads to a state reportable disciplinary action (ISS, OSS, Expulsion, or Alternate placement)</p>	<p>1 – Collection of minor incidents</p> <p>2 – Collection of moderate incidents</p> <p>3 – Collection of severe incidents</p>
<p>Robbery (13)</p> <p>The taking of, or attempting to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. (Note: The key difference between robbery and larceny/theft is that the threat of physical harm or actual physical harm is involved in a robbery)</p>	<p>2– Robbery without the use of a weapon. Taking something by force or threat of force.</p> <p>3 – Robbery with the use of a weapon. Weapons may include but are not limited to guns, knives, clubs, razor blades, etc.</p>
<p>Sexual Battery (14)</p>	<p>3 – Sexual misconduct against the person's will or where the victim did not or is incapable of giving consent; touching of private body parts of another person either through human contact or using an object forcibly or against the person's will or where the victim did not or is incapable of giving consent. Includes, but is not limited to rape, fondling, child molestation, indecent liberties, and sodomy.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Sexual Harassment (15)</p> <p>Non-physical and unwelcome sexual advances, lewd gestures or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature; requests for sexual favors; gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment</p>	<p>1 – Comments that perpetuate gender stereotypes or suggestive jokes that are not directed towards specific individuals. Includes, but not limited to insensitive or sexually suggestive comments or jokes.</p> <p>2 – Comments that perpetuate gender stereotypes, suggestive jokes or lewd gestures that are directed towards specific individuals or group of individuals. Includes, but not limited to insensitive or sexually suggestive comments or jokes; leering.</p> <p>3 – Physical or non-physical sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; Level 3 may be used for students thato violate the school policy on sexual harassment three or more times during the same school year.</p>
<p>Sexual Offense (16)</p> <p>Unlawful sexual behavior, sexual contact without force or threat of force, or possession of sexually explicit images; can be consensual</p>	<p>1 – Inappropriate sexually based physical contact including but not limited to public groping, inappropriate bodily contact, or any other sexual contact not covered in levels 2 or 3. Examples include but not limited to public groping or inappropriate bodily contact.</p> <p>2 – Inappropriate sexually-based behavior including but not limited to sexting, lewd behavior, possession of pornographic materials; simulated sex acts. Examples include but not limited to sexting; lewd behavior, possession of pornographic materials; simulated sex acts.</p> <p>3 – Engaging in sexual activities on school grounds or during school activities. Examples include but not limited to sexual misconduct; prostitution; indecent exposure of private body parts.</p>
<p>Theft/Larceny (11)</p> <p>The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity (i.e. school) without threat, violence or bodily harm. (Note: The key difference between larceny/theft and robbery is that the threat of physical harm or actual physical harm is involved in a robbery.)</p>	<p>1 – The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value between \$25 and \$100. Includes but not limited to theft by taking, theft by receiving stolen property, and theft by deception.</p> <p>2 – The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value between \$100 and \$250. Includes but not limited to theft by taking, theft by receiving stolen property, and theft by deception.</p> <p>3 – The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value exceeding \$250. Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on larceny/theft three or more times during the same school year. Includes but not limited to theft by taking, theft by receiving stolen property, and theft by deception.</p>
<p>Threat/Intimidation (17)</p> <p>Any threat through written or verbal language or act which creates a fear of harm and/or conveys a serious expression of intent to harm or violence without displaying a weapon and without subjecting the victim to actual physical attack</p>	<p>2 – Physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack. Examples include but not limited to physical, verbal or electronic threats.</p> <p>3 – School-wide physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack; Note: Students that display a pattern of behavior that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to have the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education, threatening the educational environment, or causing substantial physical harm, threat of harm or visible bodily harm may be coded as bullying. Includes but not limited to bomb threats or unauthorized pulling of the fire alarm.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Tobacco (18) Possession, use, distribution, or sale of tobacco products on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, and on transportation to and from school. Does not include electronic smoking devices; See Electronic Smoking Devices (42)</p>	<p>1 – Unintentional possession of tobacco products on school property. 2 – Use of or knowledgeable possession of tobacco products on school property. 3 – Distribution and/or selling of tobacco products; Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on tobacco three or more times during the same school year.</p>
<p>Trespassing (19) Entering or remaining on a public-school campus or school board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry. *Note: Trespassing does not include forceful entry into the school building.</p>	<p>2 – Entering or remaining on school grounds or facilities without authorization and with no lawful purpose. 3 – Entering or remaining on school grounds or facilities without authorization and with no lawful purpose. Refusing to leave school grounds after a request from school personnel; Level 3 may be used for students who violate the school policy on trespassing three or more times during the same school year.</p>
<p>Vandalism (20) The willful and/or malicious destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property without consent.</p>	<p>2 – Participating in the minor destruction, damage or defacement of school property or private property without permission. 3 – Participation in the willful/malicious destruction, damage or defacement of school property or private property without permission; Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on vandalism three or more times during the same school year.</p>
<p>Violence Against a Teacher (44) Intentional physical attack against a teacher with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack against a teacher. Violence against other school personnel should be reported as Battery (03) Level 3.</p>	<p>3 – Intentional physical attack against a teacher with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack against a teacher.</p>
<p>Weapons/Knife (22) The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife</p>	<p>1 – Unintentional possession of a knife or knife-like item without intent to harm or intimidate. 2 – Intentional possession of a knife or knife-like item without intent to harm or intimidate. 3 – Intentional possession, use or intention to use a knife or knife-like item with the intent to harm or intimidate.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Weapons/Handgun (25)</p> <p>Possession of a firearm that has a short stock and is designed to be held and fired by the use of a single hand; and any combination of parts from which a firearm described above can be assembled. NOTE: This definition does not apply to items such as toy guns, cap guns, bb and pellet guns (Pursuant to Gun-Free Schools Act – Public Law 107- 110, Section 4141).</p>	<p>3 – Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a handgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. Examples are pistols or revolvers</p>
<p>Weapons/Other (23)</p> <p>The possession, use, or intention to use any instrument or object that is used or intended to be used in a manner that may inflict bodily harm (does not include knives or firearms).</p>	<p>2 – Unintentional possession of a weapon, other than a knife or firearm, or simile of a weapon that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. Includes but is not limited to razor blades, straight edge razors, brass knuckles, blackjacks, bats, clubs, nun chucks, throwing stars, stun guns, tasers, etc.</p> <p>3 – Intentional possession and/or use of any weapon, other than a knife or firearm, in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. Includes, but is not limited to razor blades, straight-edge razors, brass knuckles, blackjacks, clubs, nun chucks, throwing stars, stun guns, tasers, etc.</p>
<p>Weapons – Rifle/Shotgun (26)</p> <p>The term “rifle” means a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire only a single projectile through a rifled bore for each single pull of the trigger. The term “shotgun” means a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed ore redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire through a smooth bore either a number of ball shot or single projectile for each single pull of the trigger. (Pursuant to Gun-Free Schools Act – Public Law 107-110, Section 4141)</p>	<p>3 – Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a rifle or shotgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm.</p>

Disciplinary Infraction / State Code	Consequences (Level 1 = Mild, Level 2 = Moderate, Level 3 = Severe)
<p>Other Firearms (28)</p> <p>Firearms other than handguns, rifles, or shotguns as defined in 18 USC921. Includes any weapon (including starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive; the frame or receiver of any weapon described above; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device, which includes any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas (i.e., bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge more than 4 ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than ¼ ounce, mine, or similar device); any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than ½ inch in diameter; any combination or parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. (Note: This does not include toy guns, cap guns, bb guns, pellet guns, or Class-C common fireworks). (Pursuant to Gun- Free Schools Act – Public Law 107-110, Section 4141).</p>	<p>3 – Includes any weapon (including starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive; the frame or receiver of any weapon described above; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device, which includes any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas (i.e. bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge more than 4 ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than ¼ ounce, mine, or similar device); any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than ½ inch in diameter; any combination or parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. (Note: This does not include toy guns, cap guns, bb guns, pellet guns, or Class-C common fireworks). [Pursuant to Gun-Free Schools Act – Public Law 107-110, Section 4141]</p>

ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

The PCSD shall further have the right to take action for behavior of a student where such behavior involves or advocates illegal activity of any kind or behavior that is subversive to good order and discipline in the schools. Illegal activities include, but are not limited to, any violation of the laws of the State of Georgia as described in Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated and the possession of fireworks.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)

In-school suspension is a program primarily used in Middle, Junior High, and High school, to which a student is assigned (per matrix or administrator discretion) for misbehavior for a specified amount of time. The PCSD recognizes the need for an in-school suspension program designed to:

1. isolate a student from the regularly assigned classrooms and activities of the school;
2. continue progress relative to classroom assignments;
3. provide individual, differentiated instruction in essential skills and knowledge areas for which low achievement levels may be contributing to a student's adjustment problems.

A. Disruptive Behavior Defined

The Student Code of Conduct defines disruptive behavior as:

1. behavior that interferes with the students' learning or the educational process of others and requires attention and assistance beyond which the traditional program can provide or results in frequent conflicts of a disruptive nature while the student is under the jurisdiction of the school, either in or out of the classroom; or
2. behavior that severely threatens the general welfare of students or others with whom the student makes contact.

If an assignment to the in-school suspension program becomes necessary for a student, the following procedures are administered:

1. at the time of the assignment, the referring principal/designee discusses with the student the behavior expectations and notifies the parents;
2. a copy of the referral and assignment to in-school suspension is sent home to be returned with the student's and parent's signature.

B. Expected Behavior in ISS

1. Students must bring all books, papers, and pencils needed to complete assignments.
2. Students will be assigned and expected to remain in individual cubicles or desks.
3. A student will not leave the assigned work area without permission from the in-school suspension instructor.
4. Students will not talk during in-school suspension unless directed to do so by the instructor.
5. Students will be allowed to bring lunch from home or may purchase a tray from the lunchroom. Students must adhere to set lunch times.

6. Students will have two (2) breaks a day or as necessary as approved by the instructor.
7. Student behavior is expected to be satisfactory and is documented daily on a checklist.
8. Students assigned to the ISS program cannot participate in any school activities until the entirety of ISS is served. An assignment to the ISS program terminates on the last day of said assignment at the end of the last academic class.
9. ISS may include 30 minutes per day of school improvement chores, including trash pick-up, cleaning hallways, cleaning bleachers in the gym, or other acceptable chores. Students are not allowed to use cell phones during ISS.

C. Consequences of Inappropriate Behavior in ISS

1. The student's principal will be contacted by the in-school suspension instructor, and the principal will contact the parents to explain the problems as reported by the in-school instructor.
2. The principal will suspend the uncooperative student from school to out-of-school suspension for the remainder of the days previously assigned to in-school suspension. The out-of-school suspension will not be excused absences.
3. Upon returning to school following the out-of-school suspension, the student may return to in-school suspension to complete the original period of time assigned at the discretion of the administration.
4. If a student is disruptive and/or uncooperative for the second time upon returning to in-school suspension, the student may be suspended from school until a conference is held involving the parents, student, and principal. A tribunal referral for further action may be required. [STATE REF.: Georgia Board of Education Policy JDD (Rule 160-4-8-.03) State Standards B 1(1a.8); I 10(1g); J 4.1; J 4.2 LEGAL REF.: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-155(b); 20-2-751 et seq.; 20- 2-1160(a); Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565, 42 L.Ed.2d 725 (1975)]

INTERNET USE AND ACCESS TO NETWORKED INFORMATION RESOURCES

The network is provided for students to conduct research and complete school assignments. Access to networked information resources and services will be provided to students who agree to act in a responsible manner.

To ensure the proper use of technology, the staff will provide developmentally appropriate guidance to students as they make use of telecommunications and electronic information resources to conduct research and other studies related to the school curriculum. All students will be informed by staff of their rights and responsibilities as users of any district network prior to gaining access to that network, either as an individual user or as a member of a class or group.

1. Students may use the Internet and access networked information resources only if they have been granted permission and have submitted all required forms.
2. Permission is not transferable and may not be shared.
3. Parents may revoke their child's access at any time by notifying the school in writing.
4. Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway.
5. All school rules for student conduct and communications apply.

A. Technology Use Rules

Individual users of the PCSD's computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over those networks. Users will comply with district standards and will honor the agreements they have signed. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files

and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on district servers will be private.

During school, teachers of younger students will guide them toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear responsibility for such guidance, as they must also exercise caution with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio, and other potentially offensive media.

B. Students Using School Technology Resources Shall Not

- Send, download, display, or distribute offensive messages or pictures including, but not limited to, pornography, racist materials, vulgar jokes/cartoons, anti-religious propaganda, and ethnic insults
- Send, download, display, or distribute information that advocates violence and/or destruction of property or other violations of legal statutes
- Use obscene language
- Harass, insult, or attack others
- Use technology resources for non-educational purposes
- Damage computers, computer systems, or computer networks
- Change the setting on computers, computer systems, or monitor settings
- Use others' passwords / logins
- Engage in practices that threaten the network (e.g. loading files that may introduce a virus, destroying data, etc.) and/or other computers and related technology
- Violate copyright laws
- Trespass in others' folders, work, or files
- Waste limited resources (e.g. paper, disk space, cartridge ink, etc.)
- Employ the network for commercial purposes
- Assist a public campaign for election of any person to any office (excluding student elections to school office)
- Engage in any other such behaviors as may violate existing school and board policies
- **A student and the parent/guardian will be responsible for damages and will be liable for costs incurred for service or repair.**

C. Computers and Network Resources – Student Responsible Use Guidelines (Bring Your Own Device)

Please read the following guidelines carefully. Violations of these guidelines may cause a student's access privileges to be revoked, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. Students will be held accountable for any violation of the following policies (as would be the case for any classroom disciplinary matter).

1. A student and his/her parents will be responsible for damages and will be liable for costs incurred for service or repair.
2. Students are only allowed to utilize the computers and network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their teacher.
3. Students are not permitted to explore the configuration of the computer, operating system or network, run programs not on the menu, or attempt to do anything they are not specifically authorized to do.
4. Students are responsible for ensuring that any computers or computing devices, diskettes, CDs, memory sticks, USB flash drives, or other forms of storage media they bring in from outside the school are virus free and do not contain any unauthorized or inappropriate files.
5. Students are permitted to connect to the district network via the secure wireless connection provided by the school system, but all access must be in accordance with this policy. Students are NOT permitted to use their own computing devices to access the Internet via personal Wi-Fi accounts or by any manner other than connecting through the secure wireless connection provided by the school system.

D. Safety Issue Guidelines for Students

1. Be under the direction and with the supervision of a teacher for any online communication.
2. Never provide last name, address, telephone number, or school name online.
3. Never respond to and always report to the teacher or parent any messages that make an individual feel uncomfortable or that are from an unknown origin.
4. Never send personal photos of anyone else.
5. Never arrange face-to-face meetings with online contacts.
6. Never open attachments or files from unknown senders.
7. Always report to a teacher any inappropriate sites observed or accessed by another user, including accidental searches.

E. Examples of Prohibited Conduct (not limited to the following list)

1. Audio or video recording of any nature, regardless of the device, that is strictly prohibited except when consented to by the instructor and must be for educational purposes once consented;
2. Accessing, sending, creating, or posting materials or communications that are damaging to another person's reputation; actions that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, or demeaning to another person; contrary to the school's policy on harassment; and/or harassing or illegal;
3. Using the network for financial gain or advertising;
4. Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without their consent;
5. Posting anonymous or forged electronic mail messages;
6. Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other system users;
7. Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license, or social security numbers, bank card, or checking account information;
8. Using the school's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music or images, or violation of copyright laws;
9. Downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware, or any other unauthorized program on any school's computer or computer system;
10. Purposely bringing on premises or infecting any school computer or network with a program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information;
11. Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person;
12. Using, or attempting to use, the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account;
13. Using the school's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended;
14. Using the school's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with a teacher's directions and accepted network etiquette;
15. Altering, or attempting to alter, the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software;
16. Attempting to vandalize, disconnect, or disassemble any network or computer component;
17. Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by a teacher or inconsistent with school policy;
18. Providing another student with user account information or passwords;
19. Bringing on premises any computer, disk, or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data;
20. Downloading or accessing, via e-mail, file sharing or website, any software or programs not

- specifically authorized by technology personnel;
21. Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies;
 22. Possessing or accessing information on school property related to “hacking,” altering, or bypassing network security or policies;
 23. Participating on social media sites without teacher direction or (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and/or texting);
 24. Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which is not school system property or in the district’s technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel (Students are permitted to connect to the district network via the secure wireless connection provided by the school system, but all access must be in accordance with this Acceptable Use Policy. Students are NOT permitted to use their own computing devices to access the Internet via personal Wi-Fi accounts or by any manner other than connecting through the secure wireless connection provided by the school system).

F. Internet Search Guidelines by School:

Elementary Schools: Students in grades K—4 may visit sites pre-selected by a teacher. Searches may only be done with a student-safe search engine and must be done with staff supervision.

Middle School/Junior High School: Students in grades 5-8 may only perform unsupervised Internet searches using a student-safe search engine. A search using any other search engine must be conducted with teacher supervision. No unauthorized cell phone or other mobile device usage allowed.

High School: Students in grades 9—12 may use a general search engine. In compliance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) the PCSD has implemented filtering/blocking software restricting access to Internet sites containing inappropriate materials. However, no system is always effective and therefore, there is a risk a student using a search engine other than a student-friendly search engine could be exposed to objectionable materials. Any student who connects to such a site **MUST** immediately disconnect from the site and notify a teacher or supervisor.

G. Consequences of Violations

1. Violations may result in a loss of access;
2. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the school level using the Discipline Matrix.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS)

Out-of-school suspension is a program to which a student is assigned (per matrix or administrator discretion) for misbehavior for a specified amount of time.

The principal or his/her designee may suspend students from school for a period not to exceed ten (10) days. Only a disciplinary tribunal or the Pickens BOE may suspend students from school for a longer period of time unless otherwise provided by state law or state board rule. Grading policies will be established at the school level under the direction of the administration. [O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.20]

Parents may be notified of a suspension prior to the day the suspension begins. A suspended student may not return to any school campus (trespassing) or participate in any school activities during the time of the suspension. When the suspension has ended, the student should be accompanied by his/her parents or guardian when he/she returns to school.

PARTIES TO THE OFFENSE

Any student who urges, incites, encourages, counsels, furthers, promotes, assists, causes, advises, procures, or abets any other student or students to violate any section or paragraph of this Student Code of Conduct shall be deemed to have violated that section or paragraph. [LEGAL REF.: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-59; 20-2-155(a) (b); 20-2-1184; 16-5-23; 16-5-24; 16-11-127; 16-13-30]

SEARCHES BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS

School or system administration may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. A school official is present during the student search. Student vehicles on the school campus, student book bags, school lockers, desks, and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without further notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, handbags, lockers, or any vehicle on campus. Cell phones and other electronic devices which are taken up by school personnel are subject to search by an administrator. Metal detectors and drug or weapon-sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities which occur outside of normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of administrators. Additions or changes in offenses and their dispositions may be made as deemed necessary, and if this becomes necessary, appropriate announcements will be made to all students. Parents should be aware that state and/or federal law may require modified disciplinary actions for special education students.

STUDENT DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNALS

For the purposes of conducting certain student discipline hearings, as defined below, rendering a decision, and imposing punishment, the Pickens BOE has established policy JCEB. The superintendent or designee shall convene a tribunal hearing in the following cases:

1. Where a student has committed an alleged assault or battery upon a teacher, other school official, or employee;
2. Where a student has committed an alleged assault or battery upon another student and the school principal determines that expulsion or long-term suspension may be the appropriate punishment;
3. Where a student has intentionally caused substantial damage while on school premises to personal property belonging to a teacher, other school official, employee, or student and the school principal determines that expulsion or long-term suspension may be the appropriate punishment;
4. In any other discipline matter when the principal, superintendent, or designee determines the offense should be punished by long-term suspension or expulsion, if it is necessary for the case to be heard by a tribunal.
5. The PCSD, upon the recommendation of the superintendent or designee, shall appoint administrators to serve as members of a hearing tribunal. When the principal of a school refers a student to the superintendent or designee for a hearing as described in paragraph 1, the superintendent or designee shall choose three (3) of the pool of administrators to serve as the hearing tribunal. No member of the hearing tribunal shall be an administrator of the staff at the school in which the student attends. The selection of administrators to serve on tribunals shall be in accordance with rules and regulations to be promulgated by the superintendent and his/her staff.
6. Whenever a principal refers a student discipline matter to the superintendent or designee, the

superintendent or designee shall send a letter by certified mail and/or hand-delivered written notice to the student and his or her parents or guardians containing a short and plain statement of the time, place, and nature of the hearing; a short and plain statement of the matters asserted and charges against the student, including names of any witnesses who may be called to testify at the hearing; a statement setting forth the right of the student to present evidence, cross-examine witnesses, and be represented by legal counsel.

7. In the event a student or his/her parent does not wish to contest the charge(s) of violation(s) of the discipline rules of the Student Code of Conduct for which a tribunal has been requested, the student and parent may voluntarily accept the consequences prescribed by the school by signing a Waiver of Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Form. Such waiver shall specify the violation committed, the date, the description of the incident, the prescribed consequences, and an agreement to waive the opportunity to participate in a tribunal hearing, present evidence, cross-examine witnesses, and be represented by an attorney. The decision to waive the tribunal shall be final and cannot be appealed by the school or family. The waiver must be signed by the student, a parent, a school administrator, and a district level administrator from the superintendent's office, who shall act as hearing officer with authority to approve the disciplinary consequences set forth in the waiver.
8. The hearing before the disciplinary tribunal shall be convened within ten (10) school days of the beginning of the suspension unless the school system and parents or guardians mutually agree to an extension. Within ten (10) calendar days of the closing of the record, the disciplinary tribunal shall render its decision in writing.
9. The school principal or designee shall be responsible for presenting evidence in support of the charges against the student and all parties shall be afforded an opportunity to present and respond to evidence and to examine and cross-examine witnesses on any and all issues. Any teacher who is called as a witness by the school system shall be given notice no later than three (3) days prior to the hearing. The hearing tribunal shall have made a verbatim electronic or written record of the hearing. This record shall be available to all parties but the cost of transcribing such record shall be borne by the party requesting the transcript.
10. The hearing tribunal shall render a decision finding whether the student committed the offense and, if so, the appropriate punishment. The decision of the hearing tribunal shall be based solely on the evidence received at the hearing, including any evidence presented by either party relevant to the appropriate punishment to be imposed. The hearing tribunal shall render a decision in writing within ten (10) days of the close of the record and shall furnish a copy of the decision to the student, his or her parents or legal guardian, the principal, and the superintendent or designee. The decision of the hearing tribunal shall be final and shall constitute the decision of the Pickens BOE unless either party should appeal the decision to the Pickens BOE.
11. Any party may appeal the decision of the hearing tribunal to the Pickens BOE by filing a written notice of appeal within twenty days from the date the decision is rendered with the superintendent or designee. Such notice of appeal shall set forth the decision of the hearing tribunal and the basis of the appeal. Any decision of the hearing tribunal not appealed in this manner shall be final. The superintendent or designee may in his or her discretion suspend the disciplinary action imposed by the hearing tribunal pending the outcome of the appeal.
12. The Pickens BOE shall review the record of the hearing before the hearing tribunal, the decision of the hearing tribunal, and the notice of appeal and shall render its decision in writing within ten (10) days, excluding weekends and holidays, from the date it receives the notice of appeal. The decision of the Board of Education shall be based solely on the record before the hearing tribunal and the board shall not consider any other evidence in ruling on the appeal. The board may impose penalties not recommended by the hearing tribunal. The decision of the Pickens BOE shall be final. The Pickens BOE has approved video-taping of student disciplinary hearings.
13. According to Georgia law, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160, party grievances by a decision of the local board has the right to appeal the decision to the State Board of Education. The appeal must be in writing and must set forth distinctly the question in dispute, the decision of the board, and a concise statement of the reasons why the decision is appealed. The party making the appeal must also file with the appeal a

transcript of the testimony. Any such appeal must be filed with the superintendent of the local system within twenty (20) days of the decision of the local board.

14. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe upon any rights provided to students pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. [LEGAL REF.: 1972 Education Amendments, Title IX; 45 CFR Part. 86; 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title VI; 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Section 504, 45 CFR Part 84; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1993; O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160; 160-1-3-.04]

STUDENT EXPULSION

In extreme cases of misconduct, the principal or school administrator will refer a disciplinary infraction to a disciplinary tribunal. This may result in a long-term suspension, which means expelling the student from school and school functions for the remainder of the semester, the remainder of the year, year, next school year, or permanent expulsion. If the student and parent agree to the recommended punishment by the school administration, the tribunal hearing may be waived.

[STATE REF.: Georgia Board of Education Policy JDD (Rule 160-4-8-.03) State Standards B 1(1a.8); I 10(1g); J 4.1; J 4.2 LEGAL REF.:O.C.G.A. § 20-2-155(b); 20-2-751 et seq.; 0-2- 1160(a); Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565, 42 L.Ed.2d 725 (1975)]

STUDENT MISCONDUCT ON OR OFF-CAMPUS

The PCSD and the institutions under its jurisdiction shall have authority to control the conduct of students under its general power to provide for control and management of the school system. It is the duty of the Pickens BOE to make necessary rules and policies to regulate student conduct for the purpose of maintaining good order and discipline in the schools including bus stops. The Pickens BOE has a responsibility to provide protection for students and employees and to maintain a safe, orderly environment for education to take place.

Administrative authority to take disciplinary action also extends to any off-campus, non-school related actions by student which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the students continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process. Said action may include, but is not limited to, short- or long-term suspension, expulsion, and/or assignment to an alternative school.

School officials shall contact proper authorities to verify any and all allegations that a student has been arrested or charged. The superintendent and staff shall cooperate with the probation office or courts in order to allow for that office to conduct a proper investigation. If the matter involves a juvenile, the superintendent and staff shall cooperate with the Juvenile Court concerning the student's conduct and record in school.

Any suspension, expulsion, or exclusion from enrollment under this policy shall not waive the student's rights to a due process hearing as set out in board policy relating to suspension or expulsion.

[LEGAL REF.: Georgia Constitution, Art. VIII, Sec. V, Par. I STATE REF.: Georgia Board of Education Rule JCDAD 160-5-3-.13 State Standards B 1 (1a. 23)] O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.5

STUDENT OFFENSES AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

In accordance with disciplinary procedures of the PCSD, this listing of offenses and required or recommended dispositions is submitted for the information of school personnel, students, and parents. Any disciplinary action taken against a student as the result of an administrative process may include appropriate hearing and review. In all cases, the rights of individuals involved will be ensured and protected. Parents and students should be aware that in most instances an offense may constitute a violation of Georgia law. As a result, additional sanctions may be imposed by any court having jurisdiction.

It is the policy of the PCSD to take all reasonable steps and precautions to provide a safe environment for students and staff members. To that end, any threat (expressed or implied) by any individual which, if carried out, would pose a potential danger to the life and safety of students and/or staff members or the destruction of property should be regarded and treated seriously. Any student who receives or has knowledge of information concerning such a threat should immediately report that information to a school administrator or staff member.

Students should notify an administrator or staff member when illegal or suspicious items, dangerous items, or other items banned from school are found in the school building, on the school campus, or on the school bus. Students are advised not to pick up or handle illegal, dangerous, banned, unidentified items, or items not belonging to them.

A student at school bus stops, on his/her way to or from school, on the school bus, at any school function or activity, or at any school event held away from school is under the jurisdiction of school authorities and is subject to all rules and regulations of the PCSD. Any conduct outside of school hours or away from school, which may adversely affect the educational process or endangers the health, safety, morals, or well-being of other students, teachers, or employees within the school system may be subject to the rules and regulations of the Student Code of Conduct.

STUDENT SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

It is the policy of the PCSD to maintain an educational and working environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to harass another student or employee through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below.

“No person...shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Section 504 provides: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability...shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate oral, written, electronic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a student to another student or employee constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Verbal or written harassment or abuse
2. Pressure for sexual activity
3. Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications
4. Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, extra-curricular activities, etc.

All allegations of sexual harassment shall be fully investigated immediately and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated by the principal or his/her designee. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject such person to disciplinary action according to the Discipline Matrix (see [page 41](#)). No student shall knowingly and/or

willingly falsify, misrepresent, omit or erroneously report information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student. [LEGAL REF.: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 42 USC 2000e-2; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 USC 1681(a); Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools, 503 U.S. page 117 L.Ed.2d 203 (1992), reversing 911 F2d 67 (11th Cir. 1990); O.C.G.A. § 20-2-795.1; see also 20-2-118]

A. To File a Complaint

Any person who alleges sexual harassment may complain directly to a principal, guidance counselor, or other individual designated to receive such complaints. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the student’s status, nor will it affect grades or extra-curricular activities.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the PCSD’s legal obligations, with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct, and with the authority to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

Title VI Coordinator	(706) 253-1700	Student Services Department	(706) 253-1700
Title IX Coordinator	(706) 253-1700	Harmony Elementary School	(706) 253-1840
Director of Human Resources	(706) 253-1700	Hill City Elementary School	(706) 253-1880
Director of Special Education	(706) 253-1700	Tate Elementary School	(706) 253-1860
School Nutrition Services	(706) 253-1700	Jasper Middle School	(706) 253-1730
Transportation Department	(706) 253-1727	Pickens Junior High School	(706) 253-1830
ADA Coordinator	(706) 253-1700	Pickens High School	(706) 253-1800

**TEACHER AUTHORITY TO REMOVE STUDENT FROM CLASS;
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL**

The principal is the designated leader of the school and is responsible for its orderly operation. In cases of disruptive, disorderly, or dangerous conduct not covered in this Student Code of Conduct, the principal may undertake corrective measures that he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school, provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures. The district website (www.pickenscountyschools.org) lists all Pickens BOE policies.

Following receipt of a report filed by a teacher and within one (1) school day of the student’s removal from class, the principal or his/her designee will send written notification to the student’s parents or guardians. The notification will state why the student was removed from class, a copy of the report filed by the teacher, and information regarding how the student’s parents or guardians may contact the principal or the principal’s designee.

The superintendent and/or designee shall ensure that procedures are disseminated as necessary for the implementation of this policy and applicable state laws.

A teacher has the authority to manage his/her class, discipline students, and refer a student to the principal or his/her designee to maintain discipline in the classroom. A teacher has the authority to remove from his/her class:

1. a student who repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher’s ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student’s classmates to learn;
2. when the student’s behavior is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct; or
3. determines that such behavior of the student poses an immediate threat to the safety of the student’s classmates or the teacher.

The Discipline Matrix (page 42) lists violations and their resulting disciplinary consequences.

The teacher shall file with the principal or the principal's designee an incident report describing the student's behavior, in one page or less, within one school day.

TRANSPORTATION AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Transportation should occur in an environment that is conducive to safety. Safe transportation requires the same order and discipline as in the classroom. Students are subject to the rules and regulations of the PCSD when transported on buses and other school vehicles at the public expense to and from school or other school activities.

A. Student Discipline

The driver shall make every attempt to resolve student conduct problems before a formal disciplinary report is made.

This may be done by:

1. The driver may verbally reprimand a student; issue a written notice of warning; assign a seat; or arrange a conference with the parent, school or district administrator, or classroom teacher. These actions are considered informal disciplinary actions.
2. A formal disciplinary action should occur when a written report is made to a school or district administrator regarding the student's misconduct on the bus. Administrators will provide copies of disciplinary action reports to the student and parent/guardian.

Upon a student being reported for the first time during the school year, the administration shall make the student aware of the charges and give the student the opportunity to respond. If the school or district administrator determines disciplinary action is warranted, then the administrator shall give the student written notification of the charges and the disciplinary action to be taken using the Discipline Matrix (see page 42). Repeated misconduct will result in progressively more severe disciplinary consequences that include but are not limited to suspension of bus riding privileges for up to ten (10) days, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, permanent loss of bus riding privileges, or referral to a disciplinary tribunal.

B. Pickens County School Bus Rules

Students shall:

1. Comply with the Student Code of Conduct, including school specific rules of conduct and consequences.
2. Be at the bus stop preferably five (5) minutes before the bus arrives, waiting in a safe place, away from traffic, and 12 feet from where the bus stops.
3. Cross the roadway in the morning only after the bus has stopped, look at the bus driver for the hand signal, and look in both directions for traffic. Before exiting the bus in the afternoon, students will look in both directions, especially to their right at the bottom of the steps.
4. Cooperate with the driver by sitting in the assigned seat. Students must remain properly seated against the back of the seat keeping their hands to themselves. Stay seated until the bus driver's command, the air brakes have been applied, and the service door opens.
5. Signal the driver with a waving motion if something is dropped outside the bus and wait for the driver to give a signal before picking up the object.
6. Never lose sight of the driver or do anything that would make the driver lose sight of the student. This is a mandatory safety procedure.

7. Never use loud voices, profanity, and/or obscene gestures. Students will be totally silent at railroad crossings (The driver is required by law to look and listen after establishing silence on the bus. This is a non-negotiable safety issue and is a major offense when broken).
8. Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus, and store all personal items out of the aisle.
9. Assist in maintaining a clean bus by refraining from eating or drinking on the bus, excluding students participating in extracurricular activities. Students who receive food from the Weekend Snack Program are not allowed to have food open during transportation on the school bus.
10. Refrain from using electronic devices that interfere with the bus communication equipment or the safe operation of the bus; therefore, electronic devices may be used only with headphones. The bus driver may restrict the use of these devices, as he/she deems necessary for the order and safe operation of the bus.
11. The PCSD is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen property.
12. Never use a mirror, laser, flash camera, or any other light or reflective device in a manner that might interfere with the driver's operation of the bus.

C. Transporting Projects and Prohibited Items on School Bus

Occasionally school projects and band instruments are transported to school. The following guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of students during a possible evacuation of the bus as well and to maintain the comfort, well-being, and safety of all students:

1. Only projects, band instruments, and sporting equipment/bags small enough to hold in student's lap, without interfering with the safety and comfort of others in the seat, may be transported.
2. Items, including large display boards, should not exceed 18" x 24" and must not contain sharp edges, corners, or sharp display objects.
3. Glass, animals, chemicals, flammable/hazardous items, skateboards, or similar items are prohibited and will not be transported.
4. No items should be stored in the aisle, driver's compartment, or in front of emergency exits.

D. Medication Transport

1. All medications other than those listed below, whether prescription or over-the-counter, may not be transported on Pickens County school buses. All medication that must be administered during the school day shall be taken directly to the office by the parent or guardian in accordance with school district drug policy and guidelines. Refer to page 17 for complete medication guidelines.
2. Students who have on file at their school, supporting medical documentation, may carry at all times with parental/guardian permission, inhalers for asthma, auto-inject Epinephrine for allergic reactions, insulin for diabetes, and Diastat for seizures.

[STATE REF.: Georgia Board of Education Policy EBCB/JCDAD (Rule 160-5-3-.13) State Standards B 1(1a.23) LEGAL REF.: O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-50; 20-2-59; 20-2-188; 20-2-751.5]

E. Students Who Miss the Bus in the Morning

1. If a student misses his/her assigned bus in the morning, the student will need to be transported to his/her school by a parent or guardian.
2. For the safety of all students, students shall not be taken to another bus stop to board the bus. Drivers will be looking for students at their assigned bus stop and do not need to be distracted.
3. If your family is under an Attendance Support Team Contract and your child misses the bus (in the morning or afternoon), contact the Student Services Department at (706) 253-1700 and emergency transportation will be provided. This is not to be used on a regular basis in place of normal bus transportation.

F. No One Home in the Afternoon to Receive Students

A student under the age of nine (9) years old or a rider of a special needs bus may not be left at their afternoon drop-off location if no authorized person is there to receive him/her.

1. The driver will return the student to the school where the parent may pick him/her up.
2. The parent/guardian will be charged an after-school program fee.
3. After the third return of a student to school due to no one home, a referral will be made to the district School Social Worker, which may result in a referral to the Department of Family and Children Services.

G. Student Safety

Safety is our number one priority in providing bus transportation. Students are expected to learn their stop, understand their driver's expectations, and practice safe riding, walking, and waiting habits as they travel to and from school and at their assigned stop. Drivers need to establish safe, orderly, and respectful routines that include knowing their students and developing positive relationships with them.

1. The PCSD's Transportation Department provides basic transportation service for students to their assigned stops in the mornings and afternoons.
2. School and district administrators, along with transportation staff, have determined that, for safety reasons, changes in bus transportation will not be permitted.
3. Students who board a bus other than their assigned bus or who request to get off the bus at other than their assigned stop will be returned to the school where the parent/guardian may pick them up.
4. Please cooperate with the school and make car transportation arrangements whenever students need to be picked up or taken to any location other than their regular assigned bus stop.

H. Questions and Answers Regarding Bus Transportation

Q: How are bus stops assigned to students?

A: The assignment of bus routes and stops is made by Transportation Department staff to transport students to school effectively, on-time, and ready to learn. Students are assigned based on the closest route/stop and/or most appropriate for their residence.

For students in elementary school, a daycare provider may be chosen as the student's "residence" for morning or afternoon routes, as long as it is in the student's "home attendance zone" and as long as the Transportation Department can provide a safe route and bus stop for the location. Changes to the assigned stop may be requested by the parent or guardian on a "Change Request for Student School Bus Transportation Form." Students shall be assigned one stop location in the morning and one stop location in the afternoon.

The safety of students is the first consideration when determining bus stop locations; however, the safety of any school bus stop is evaluated with the understanding that the parent/guardian will provide supervision appropriate to the maturity level of the student(s) at the bus stop.

Daycare providers are required to be at the designated stop when the bus arrives to receive students. If they are not present, students will be returned to school where the daycare representative or parent/guardian may pick them up.

Q: Why must students ride their assigned buses to their assigned stops?

A: PCSD provides basic transportation services for students. Our goal of safe, orderly, and respectful transportation service can only be achieved when all partners (drivers, students, parents, and school staff) develop safe, consistent habits and procedures concerning riding, loading/unloading, supervision at the stop, and walking to and from the stop.

The driver and student assigned to the bus develop a relationship that includes an understanding of expectations and requirements for safety on the assigned bus and at the bus stop. When safe routines are

disrupted, the driver, student, or parent may be distracted and potentially place students at risk. Drivers must focus on the assigned students who are loading and unloading the bus to ensure their safety. Students who board a bus other than their assigned bus or who request to get off the bus at other than their assigned stop will be returned to the school where parents/guardians may pick them up.

UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTION AND VIOLENT CRIMINAL OFFENSES

Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an "Unsafe School" according to the provisions of the State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16, Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO). Also, under USCO provisions, School District guidelines are in place to facilitate the timely and appropriate requested transfer of students who are victims of "violent criminal offenses" and/or students enrolled in schools determined to be "persistently dangerous" (as determined by the same State Board Rule).

WEAPONS IN SCHOOL

It is the policy of the PCSD that a student shall not possess, use, handle, or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

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

Students who possess any weapon described above will be in violation of this policy and will be subject to a minimum of one calendar year expulsion. The superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one-year expulsion under circumstances where the one-year expulsion appears excessive to the superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment.

Finally, in any tribunal decision appealed to the Pickens BOE, the Pickens BOE may reduce the mandated punishment but shall consider whether the superintendent and/or tribunal considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction. Students who possess any weapon as described in #2 above will be subject to discipline as specified in the Student Code of Conduct.

A. Reporting Requirements

An employee who believes a student possesses a weapon or is involved in an assault using a weapon while on campus, must immediately report such violations to the school principal/assistant principal. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that such report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the superintendent and the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney.

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

B. Students with Disabilities Related to Misbehavior (weapons violation); 45 Day Interim Alternative Placement


Any child with a disability who is determined to have brought a weapon to school may be placed in an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days, as determined and ordered by a special education committee qualified to make special education decisions under 20USC1401 (a) (20). If a parent or guardian requests a due process hearing under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the child shall nevertheless remain in the alternative educational setting referred to above during the pendency of any proceeding conducted in connection therewith, unless the parents and duly authorized school system representatives agree otherwise.

C. Students with Disabilities Unrelated to Misbehavior

Any student with a disability whose behavior is unrelated to the disability shall be subject to the one-year expulsion requirement for a “firearms” violation as defined above the same as a student without such a disability, except to the extent that such expulsion is inconsistent with the Department of Education’s final guidance concerning state and local responsibilities under the Gun-Free School Act of 1994, as amended.

[LEGAL REF.: O.C.G.A. § 16-11-106; 16-11-127.1; 20-2-1184 (GA. Laws 1990, Vol. I, p.1834); Improving America’s Schools Act of 1994, Title I, S14501; Title III, S 314, amending 20 USC 1415(e) (3); Honig v. DOE, 484 U.S. 305 (1988)]

School Contact Information

<p>Harmony Elementary 550 Harmony School Rd Jasper, GA 30143 Phone: (706) 253-1840 Fax: (706) 253-1845</p> <p>Principal: Kanyon Petti Asst. Prin: Stephen Hunter</p>	<p>Hill City Elementary 600 Hill Circle Jasper, GA 30143 Phone: (706) 253-1880 Fax: (706) 253-1885</p> <p>Principal: Angela Kretschmar Asst. Prin: Ashley Patterson</p>	<p>Tate Elementary 5630 Highway 53 East Tate, GA 30143 Phone: (706) 253-1860 Fax: (706) 253-1865</p> <p>Principal: Scott Stephens Asst. Prin: Ann Long</p>																					
<p>Jasper Middle 158 Stegall Drive Jasper, GA 30143 Phone: (706) 253-1730 Fax: (706) 253-1735</p> <p>Principal: Corey Thompson Asst. Prin: Dr. Rose Nelson</p>	<p>Pickens Jr. High 1802 Refuge Road Jasper, GA 30143 Phone: (706) 253-1830 Fax: (706) 253-1835</p> <p>Principal: Dr. Josh Heath Asst. Prins: Miranda Combs and Duane Cronic</p>	<p>Pickens High 500 Dragon Drive Jasper, GA 30143 Phone: (706) 253-1800 Fax: (706) 253-1815</p> <p>Principal: Matt Combs Asst. Prins: Dr. Wendy Arnold, Brandon Tippens, Richard Goble, and Chris Williams</p>																					
	<p><u>School Start and End Times</u></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">School Name</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Start Time</th> <th style="text-align: center;">End Time</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Harmony Elem.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8:30 a.m.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3:00 p.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hill City Elem.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8:30 a.m.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3:00 p.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tate Elem.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8:30 a.m.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3:00 p.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jasper Middle</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8:30 a.m.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3:00 p.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pickens Jr. High</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7:45 a.m.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2:15 p.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pickens High</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7:45 a.m.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2:15 p.m.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		School Name	Start Time	End Time	Harmony Elem.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	Hill City Elem.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	Tate Elem.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	Jasper Middle	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	Pickens Jr. High	7:45 a.m.	2:15 p.m.	Pickens High	7:45 a.m.	2:15 p.m.
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Phone Numbers

- Bus Information/Transportation – 706-253-1727
- Central Registration (change of address/phone) – 706-253-1770
- Infinite Campus Login Information – Email: parentportal@pickenscountyschools.org
- Breakfast and Lunch / School Nutrition – 706-253-1700
- Emailing your child’s teacher or school administrator –
FirstNameLastName@pickenscountyschools.org (example:
JohnDoe@pickenscountyschools.org)

Addressing Concerns and Understanding Roles

Roles and Responsibilities of a Board Member:

Board members focus on the "big picture" of the school system with their focus being on improving student achievement for all students.

The day-to-day operational responsibilities are delegated to the superintendent. However, responsibilities of a public-school board also include duties that cannot be delegated, such as (this is a partial list):

- Buying and selling school property (including the power of condemnation)
- Making the policies and rules necessary to govern the school system
- Authority to hire employees on the recommendation of the superintendent
- Hire a superintendent
- Adopt annual budget
- Review district expenditures and variances
- Approve annual auditor report
- Approve contracts over a certain monetary threshold
- Approve salary schedules
- Approve facility plans
- Adopt, revise and review policies
- Approve school year calendar
- Make final decisions on due-process hearings when required
- Participate in community-wide school/district events
- Promote high levels of student achievement
- Recognize staff and student success
- Engage the community in school/district initiatives

**The information above is provided directly from GSBA and Official Code of Georgia Annotated (school law).*

Roles and Responsibilities of the Superintendent:

- Manage the day-to-day operations of the school district
- Serve as the liaison between the State School Superintendent and subordinate local school officers
- Procure such school equipment and materials
- Ensure that the prescribed textbooks are used by students
- Enforce all regulations and rules of the State School Superintendent and of the local board according to the laws of the state and the rules and regulations made by the local board that are not in conflict with state laws
- Visit every school within the local school system to become familiar with the studies taught in the schools, observe what advancement is being made by the students, counsel with the faculty, and otherwise aid and assist in the advancement of public education.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS

Pickens County School District desires to respond to concerns and/or questions as quickly and effectively as possible. In a school system, the chain of command refers to communication levels of authority in the school district. School Districts institute the Chain of Command to provide stakeholders at all levels with a person they may ask questions or report complaints. The value of having an established Chain of Command is an efficient tool that provides a roadmap when reporting concerns or communicating with school staff members.

WHERE DO I BEGIN THE PROCESS IF I HAVE A CONCERN?

Most questions/concerns are quickly and completely answered by communicating directly with the staff member involved with or responsible for the area of concern. An in-person or telephone conversation is almost always better than an email conversation, as it allows true two-way communication with less opportunity for misunderstandings. Each situation is different. See the chart on the next page to know who you should contact and in what order.

WHY CAN'T I START RIGHT AT THE TOP WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD?

It is the school board's legal obligation to be the judge and jury, making an impartial judgment in any concern brought to them for consideration. This means the school district has a legal obligation to provide due process for both students and employees. If the school board has prior knowledge, or has made a judgment, the concern could be dismissed. The board will only review concerns that are unresolved after completing the complaint process and progressed through the chain of command.

I HAVE A FRIEND / RELATIVE / NEIGHBOR ON THE SCHOOL BOARD...WHY CAN'T I JUST GO TO THEM?

As explained in the previous question, that board member would have prior knowledge about a situation that may come before the board later, which is like "jury tampering." The board member may have to recuse them self from any related action. Keep in mind that school board members have no legal authority as individual board members. They only have authority when acting as a member of the full board when the board is in session.

I FIND IT HARD TO VISIT FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE PERSON I HAVE A CONCERN WITH, WHAT CAN I DO?

Find a trusted individual (such as a friend, family member, or a school employee who you are comfortable with) to go with you. In any case, remember it cannot be a school board member.

WHO DO I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Area of Concern	First Contact	Second Contact	Third Contact	Fourth Contact	Fifth Contact
Assessment (Local and State)	Teacher	Principal	Director of Assessment	Chief Academic Officer	Superintendent
Athletics	Coach	Athletic Director for grade level	Principal	Superintendent	
Board Agendas and Policies	Superintendent				
Cafeteria / Foodservice	Cafeteria Manager at the School	Principal	Director of School Nutrition	Chief Operations Officer	Superintendent
Changes to Student Information	(change of address, phone #, email, etc.) Send an Email to registration@pickenscountyschools.org	Call 706-253-1770			
Curriculum	Teacher	Principal	Director of Curriculum	Chief Academic Officer	Superintendent
District Budget	Chief Financial Officer	Superintendent			
Employees with Concerns	Principal or Direct Supervisor	Director of Human Resources	Superintendent		
Health Services and School Clinics	School Nurse	Director of Health Services	Chief Operations Officer	Superintendent	
Families with Staff Member Concerns	Person with whom you have a concern	Principal	Director of Human Resources	Superintendent	
Special Education	Teacher	Lead Teacher / Principal	Special Education Coordinator for the school	Chief of Student Services	Superintendent
Student Behavior / Discipline	Teacher	Principal	Director/Chief	Superintendent	
Transportation	Bus Driver	Transportation Supervisor	Director of Transportation	Chief Operations Officer	Superintendent

Pickens County School District

Be In.

*Attend today ,
Achieve tomorrow.*



*Design created by Allie Tlaci
PHS Class of 2019*

Board of Education

Tommy Gartrell, Chair
Steve Lowe, Vice Chair
Sue Finley, Member
Amy Gibson, Member
Joe Wigington, Member