GRADY COUNTY SCHOOLS

Student Handbook

2026-2027



Middle School Student Handbook

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MISSION STATEMENT:
To inspire and challenge each student through equitable educational opportunities, maximizing their potential college and career readiness.

Vision: Leader in education, striving for excellence daily.

School Beliefs

We Believe in:

Growing college and career ready learners through academic, arts, and athletic excellence
Recruiting, retaining, and preparing high-caliber teachers, recognizing their value as the foundation of quality instruction
Assuring a safe and supportive learning environment
Developing effective communication and partnerships with all stakeholders
Your best every day

Student achievement is the school's number one priority. Students are entitled to an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. High expectations and a supportive, nurturing, knowledgeable staff encourage high student achievement. A variety of instructional techniques are utilized to support diverse needs and varied learning styles. Teachers, students, administrators, support staff, parents, and members of the community are collectively responsible for the attainment of our students' educational goals. Students are assisted in the pursuit and development of their career goals. The curriculum should provide opportunities for developing positive character traits, building self-esteem, and examining cultural diversity. A well-prepared faculty, adequately equipped facility, and up-to-date materials are paramount for learning. Continued self-assessment and awareness of current trends are essential to instructional improvement. Evidence of mutual respect among students and staff exists.

Grady County Schools Calendar 2026 – 2027

Teacher Pre-Planning	Monday, July 27th-July 30th
First Day Students	Friday, July 31st
Labor Day Holiday	Monday, September 7th
Midterm	Thursday, September 10th
Midterms Go Home	Monday, September 14th
End of 1st 9 Weeks	Friday, October 2nd
Grades Stored (Q1)	Monday, October 5th
Fall Break (Students)	October 7th-13th
Fall Break (Faculty & Staff)	October 7th-9th
Professional Development	Monday, October 12th
Teacher Workday	Tuesday, October 13th
Report Cards Go Home	Wednesday, October 14th
Midterm	Tuesday, November 10th
Midterms Go Home	Friday, November 13th
Thanksgiving Holidays	Monday, November 23rd-27th
End of 2nd 9 Weeks	Friday, December 18th
Winter Break (Staff & Faculty)	Monday, December 21st-Jan 1st
Winter Break (Students)	Monday, December 21st- Jan 5th
Professional Development	Monday, January 4th
Teacher Workday	Tuesday, January 5th
2nd Semester/Students Return	Wednesday, January 6th
Grades Stored (Q2, S1)	Wednesday, January 6th
Report Cards Go Home	Friday, January 8th
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	Monday, January 18th
Midterm	Wednesday, February 10th
Midterms Go Home	Friday, February 12th
Presidents Day	Monday, February 15th
End of 3rd 9 weeks	Thursday, March 11th
Teacher Workday	Friday, March 12th
Grades Stored (Q3)	Monday, March 15th
Report Cards Go Home	Wednesday, March 17th
Spring Break	Monday, April 5th-9th
Midterm	Tuesday, April 21st
Midterms Go Home	Friday, April 23rd
End of Second Semester/Last Day of School	Friday, May 21st
K-8th Report Cards Go Home	Friday, May 21st
Teacher Workday/Post Planning	Monday, May 24th
9th-12th Grades Stored (Q4, S2, Y1) 12:00 p.m.	Monday, May 24th
9th-12th Report Cards Go Home	Wednesday, May 26th

Washington Middle School

1277 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SW Cairo, Georgia 39828

Telephone: 229-377-2106/Fax: 229-377-7779

wms.grady.k12.ga.us



School Motto: "Our Best Today for a Better Tomorrow"

School Colors: Kelly Green and Gold

School Mascot: Tiger

School Song: *"Hail to thee our Alma Mater Always brave and bold. Hail to thee our Alma Mater Stands the Green and Gold Forward ever be our goal We'll conquer and prevail Hail to thee our Alma Mater Wash-ing-ton all Hail!"*

Principal:

Ms. Kiara G. Jones

Assistant Principals:

Mr. Brandon Joiner

Mrs. Anna Merchant

Instructional Coordinator:

Mrs. Lynlee Barret

Principal - Kiara Jones		
Assistant Principal Anna Merchant	**Assistant Principal** Brandon Joiner	**Instructional Coordinator** Lynlee Barrett
Media Specialist Anatole Cloud	**School Counselor** Nicole Lamoute	**School Counselor** Vann Cato
Reading Interventionists Krystal Cullivan Tamara Johnson	**Math Interventionists** Krystal Cullivan Lisa Daniels	**Office Staff** Cindy Brock- Receptionist Lisa Hester- Bookkeeper Lytresa Sanders- Registrar
6th Grade Teachers	**7th Grade Teachers**	**8th Grade Teachers**
Sandra Vernon - ELA/SS Daphne McClendon - ELA Michele Barber- ELA Deana Jones - ELA Anna Seymore - ELA Dylan Johnson - Math Angela Collier- Math Laryn Cox- Math Andy Wolfrum- Science Travis Harrison- Science/SS Jackie Powell- Social Studies	Catherine Evans - ELA Heather Clark- ELA Rachel Griner - ELA Deana Jones - ELA Brianna Harrell - Math Lincoln Dawson- Math Tynesee Butler - Math Abigail Hooks - Science Monica Velazquez - Science Brookelyn Key - Social Studies Timothy Helms - Social Studies	Dana Turk - ELA Caitlin Donalson - ELA Trinidad Pascual- ELA Deana Jones - ELA Virginia Meadows - Math Jake Parmer - Math Owen Taylor - Math Audrey Hawks- Science Monica Velazquez - Science Joseph Fowler - Social Studies Brookelyn Key - Social Studies
ESOL Deana Jones Heather Wise	**ISS** Lucas Turner	**School Nurse** Jane McAulay
Connections Jalen Norwood - PE Jason Blair - PE Vershawn Mannings - Health Elaine Harlow - Music Kendrick Jacobs - Band Tara Rojas - Agriculture Kim Harrell - Computers Heather Wise - ESOL Tamara Johnson - Reading Horizons Krystal Cullivan- Math 180 Angelita Perry - Exploring Careers	**Special Education** Kalyn Humphries McKynleigh Harrell Theresa Jones Regina Mitchell Ynesia Vieux Donta' Stephens Destiny Tise Crystal Owens	**Paraprofessionals** Deloris Williams Kimberly Fortner Teresa Battle Patricia Brooks Sundra Wilder Dondria Cooper Ophelia Greene
Custodial Staff Dealzena Bell Tearrence Gordon Stephanie Davenport Triva Clark	**Migrant** Donna Odom Daisy Hernandez **Resource Officer** Officer Sadbery	**Cafeteria Staff** Donna Davis- Manager Jennifer Adkins Delores Brown Donald James Shawna Miller

School Information

Athletics, Clubs, and Organizations

The faculty and administration of Washington Middle School encourage all students to participate in extracurricular activities. Participation in clubs, organizations, and athletic programs provides opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, explore interests, build positive relationships, and represent their school.

Availability of clubs, organizations, and athletic programs may vary from year to year based on student interest, staffing, and school resources.

Athletic Programs

Washington Middle School offers the following athletic opportunities:

- Baseball, Basketball, Cheerleading, Golf, Soccer, Track and Field, Wrestling

Students participating in extracurricular activities are expected to maintain appropriate academic performance, attendance, and behavior. Eligibility requirements for participation in clubs, organizations, and athletics are governed by school and district policies.

Clubs and Organizations

Washington Middle School offers a variety of clubs and organizations, including:

- Band, Chorus, Drama, Yearbook, Student Council, Future Farmers of America (FFA), Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), National Junior Honor Society (NJHS), STEAM Club, Chess Club, Helping Hands, Ladies of Excellence

Arrival Procedures

Once a student arrives on campus, he or she must follow all established arrival procedures and remain under school supervision unless accompanied by a parent, guardian, or authorized adult. Students are not permitted to leave campus after arriving at school unless checked out through the front office by a parent, guardian, or other authorized adult. Unauthorized departure from campus will be considered a violation of school rules and may result in disciplinary action.



- Bus drop-off and parent drop-off begin at 7:15 AM.
- Parent drop-off is located in front of the school. Two drop-off lanes are available with faculty assistance. Parents should enter the drop-off area from the main entrance on 13th Street. Signage will be posted to designate the entrance.
- Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:15 AM until 7:50 AM.
- Students who choose to eat breakfast should report directly to the cafeteria upon arrival and will remain there until dismissal to homeroom.

Student Holding Areas

- All 6th-grade students will report to the cafeteria each morning and remain there until dismissal to homeroom.
- 7th- and 8th-grade students who are not eating breakfast will report to the gymnasium.
- 7th- and 8th-grade students who choose to eat breakfast will remain in the cafeteria until dismissal to homeroom.

Students will begin reporting to their homeroom classrooms at 7:40 AM.

Pledge - Moment of Quiet Reflection

- Each morning at Washington Middle School the day begins with a "moment of quiet reflection" (State Bill 396), the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States, and the announcements.
- The moment of quiet reflection is not intended to be and shall not be conducted as a religious service or exercise but shall be considered as an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day.

Band Program

Students enrolled in the band program are required to provide their own instrument through purchase, rental, or other approved arrangements.

Band is a year-long commitment, and students are expected to participate fully in all class activities and performances. If a student chooses to withdraw from the band program, he or she will remain enrolled in the course until the beginning of the next grading period, at which time a schedule change may be considered based on administrative approval and course availability.

Participation in the band program requires consistent attendance, preparation, and adherence to all school and classroom expectations.

Book Bags/Gym Bags

All book bags and gym bags brought to school must be transparent/clear or mesh.

Students are expected to keep their book bags with them at all times during the school day and should not leave them unattended.

Mesh book bags may be purchased from Washington Middle School for $15.00, and WMS gym bags are available for $5.00.

The administration reserves the right to inspect any book bag or gym bag brought onto campus to ensure compliance with school policies and to maintain a safe learning environment.

Purses and Personal Carrying Pouches

Students may carry small pouches for feminine hygiene products and other personal necessities.

All purses must be small enough to fit completely inside the student's clear or mesh book bag. Large purses, tote bags, backpacks, or other carrying bags that do not fit inside the student's clear or mesh book bag are not permitted on campus.

The administration reserves the right to inspect any purse, pouch, or personal bag brought onto campus to ensure compliance with school policies and to maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

Bus Transportation and Student Conduct

Transportation by school bus is a privilege, not a right. Only students who are assigned to a bus route and approved for transportation may ride a school bus.

The bus driver is the authority on the bus and is responsible for maintaining a safe environment. Students are expected to follow all school and bus safety rules while traveling to and from school and during any school-sponsored activity requiring bus transportation.

Any student who fails to follow bus rules or engages in inappropriate behavior may lose transportation privileges. Bus discipline referrals will be submitted to a school administrator for review and appropriate disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians will be notified of disciplinary concerns involving bus conduct. Consequences may include suspension of bus privileges for a period of one to ten school days. Repeated or ongoing misconduct may result in the loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the semester or school year.

Serious misconduct on a school bus may also result in additional school disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, in accordance with district policies and the Student Code of Conduct.

Cafeteria Expectations

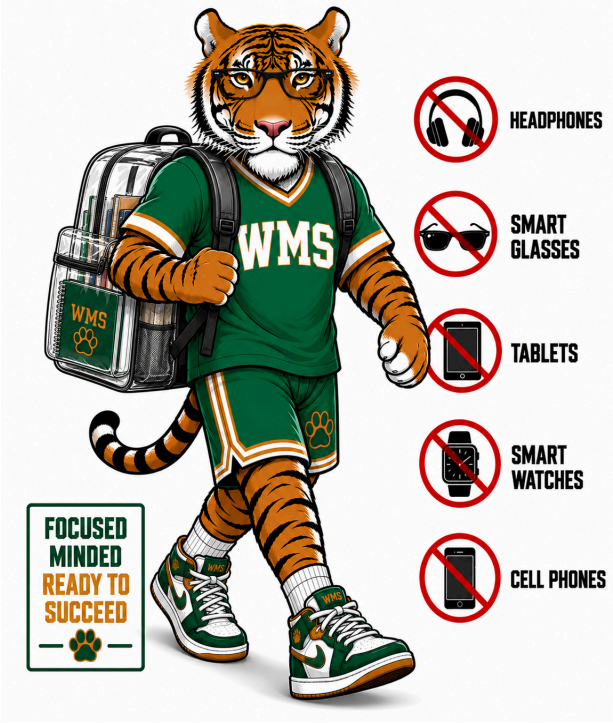
Students are expected to demonstrate courtesy, good manners, and respect for others while in the cafeteria. Students should help maintain a clean environment by disposing of trash properly and keeping their eating area orderly.

Students must remain in the cafeteria until they are dismissed by school personnel. Food and beverages may not be taken outside of the cafeteria unless authorized by school staff. During their lunch period, students are not permitted to enter hallways, classrooms, or other instructional areas unless they have received permission from a staff member.

A breakfast and lunch are available at no cost to all Washington Middle School students, and participation is encouraged. Students may also bring lunch from home; however, food deliveries from restaurants, delivery services, or other outside sources are not permitted.

Students are expected to follow all cafeteria rules and directions from school personnel. Excessive noise, disruptive behavior, or failure to follow expectations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices



In accordance with **Georgia's Distraction-Free Education Act (HB 340)**, students in grades 6–8 are prohibited from using personal electronic devices during the school day. Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, smart glasses, earbuds, headphones, and other communication devices. **Washington Middle School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices brought to campus.**

All personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored in the student's book bag from the beginning of the school day until dismissal. Students may not use electronic devices during instructional time, class changes, lunch periods, assemblies, restroom breaks, or any other school-sponsored activity occurring during the school day. * Administrators/School law enforcement will not conduct classroom/area searches for missing items.

Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary consequences, including confiscation of the device and parent notification. Repeated violations will result in additional disciplinary action in accordance with the Grady County Middle School Student Code of Conduct.

CONSEQUENCES:

1st Offense: Device confiscated. Administrator conference and/or parent contact. Device returned at the end of the day.

2nd Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 1 day In-School (ISS). Device pickup by the parent is required. Electronic Device Contract.

3rd Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 2 days ISS. Device pickup by the parent is required.

4th Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 1 day Out of School Suspension (OSS). Device pickup by the parent is required.

5th Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 2 days (OSS). Device pickup by the parent required.

6th Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 2 days OSS & 2 days ISS. Device pickup by the parent required.

Refusal to Surrender Device:

If a student refuses to turn in their electronic device when directed by an administrator, the student will be suspended until a parent conference is held. During the conference, the parent will be required to sign a contract acknowledging the progressive consequences for future violations.

Second refusal: 3 days OSS

Third refusal: 5 days OSS

Confiscation of Electronic Devices:

Confiscated devices will be securely stored in a locked area labeled with the student's name and the name of the parent or guardian. Only a parent or guardian listed in the district's student database may retrieve the device with proper identification.

Class Transitions

Students are expected to move between classes in a quiet, orderly, and timely manner. Students should proceed directly to their next class and arrive before the tardy bell rings.

Disruptive behavior during class transitions, including running, shouting, horseplay, or loitering in the hallways, is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, including an office referral.

All students are expected to enter their assigned classrooms promptly and be prepared to begin learning when class starts.

Communication

We are committed to keeping families informed, involved, and connected throughout the school year. Families are encouraged to regularly review school communications and stay connected through our various communication platforms. Washington Middle School utilizes school newsletters, email, the Washington Middle School Facebook page, flyers, the Grady County Schools website, Kinvo, and other school communication tools to share important information regarding academics, events, activities, and school updates. Regular communication between home and school is essential to student success, and we encourage families to review these resources frequently.

To ensure you receive important updates, please keep your contact information current at all times. Accurate phone numbers, mailing addresses, and email addresses are necessary for receiving school announcements, emergency notifications, academic updates, and other important information.

If your contact information changes at any time during the school year, please notify the school office immediately so your records can be updated.

Washington Middle School Front Office: (229) 377-2106

Dismissal Procedures

Students must remain in their assigned classroom until their designated dismissal time and may leave only when directed by school personnel. Leaving the classroom or campus without authorization before dismissal will be considered skipping and may result in disciplinary action, including an office referral. Students designated as parent pick-up riders/walkers will be dismissed from class at 2:50 p.m. and should report directly to the designated pick-up/walkers area. Once a student has left campus, he or she may not return

that day without administrative approval. Students who leave campus before the end of the school day will not be permitted to return to ride a school bus home.

Dismissal Timeline

- **2:00 p.m.** – Deadline to change afternoon transportation arrangements. Parents/guardians must contact the front office.
- **2:30 p.m.** – Early dismissal deadline. No student sign-outs will be permitted after this time.
- **2:50 p.m.** – Walkers and Car Riders Dismissal
- **2:55 p.m.** – First Bus Bell
- **3:00 p.m.** – Second Bus Bell
- **3:30 p.m.** – All students must be picked up.
- **4:00pm** – Main office is closed

Eighth Grade (8th) Grade Promotion Ceremony

Eighth-grade students will have the opportunity to participate in the Promotion Ceremony at the end of the school year. Participation is a privilege, and students must meet the following eligibility requirements:

Eligibility Requirements

To participate in the Promotion Ceremony and promotion ceremony activities, a student must:

- Pass at least three (3) of the four (4) core academic subjects; must pass ELA and Math.
- Earn passing grades in at least half of their connection classes.
- Have no more than ten (10) unexcused absences during the school year.
- Not be assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) during the final ten (10) school days of the year.
- Attend graduation practice
- Comply with the Promotion Ceremony dress code.

All eligibility requirements are subject to the review and discretion of school administration.

Promotion Ceremony Dress Code

Students participating in the Promotion Ceremony must follow the Grady County Schools Middle School Dress Code. **School administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of attire for the ceremony.**

Academic Recognition

Students earning a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher will receive special recognition during the Promotion Ceremony.

A student's cumulative GPA will be calculated using all year-end academic averages earned from sixth through eighth grade, through the end of the third nine-week grading period of the eighth-grade year.

Top Tiger Recognition

The two students with the highest cumulative GPAs will be recognized as the class Top Tigers.

To be eligible for Top Tiger recognition, students must:

- Have one of the two highest cumulative GPAs in the class.
- Be enrolled at Washington Middle School for at least four (4) consecutive semesters.

Food and Drinks

Students may bring a clear water bottle or other clear container containing water only. No other beverages are permitted unless approved by school administration for medical reasons.

Fast food or restaurant meals may not be delivered to students during the school day. Students who choose not to eat a school-provided meal should bring their lunch with them when they arrive at school.

Students are expected to consume food and beverages only in designated areas and to help maintain a clean school environment by disposing of trash properly.

Failure to follow food and beverage guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

Hallway Expectations

Students are permitted in the hallways only during scheduled class transitions unless they have received permission or have been assigned a duty by a teacher or administrator.

When a student must be out of class during instructional time, a signed Tiger Passport must be carried and presented upon request. The Tiger Passport serves as the student's official hall pass.

Students are expected to move through the hallways in a safe, orderly, and respectful manner. Students should keep to the right, be courteous to others, and follow all directions from school personnel. Running, shouting, horseplay, or any behavior that disrupts the learning environment is prohibited. Failure to follow hallway expectations may result in disciplinary action.

Infinite Campus Parent Portal:

Parents and guardians are encouraged to utilize the Infinite Campus Parent Portal to monitor student grades, attendance, schedules, assignments, and other important information. Parent Portal activation information is provided using the email address on file with the school. To ensure continued access to the Parent Portal and other school communications, parents and guardians should maintain a current and accurate email address with the school. Parents who need assistance accessing or setting up their Parent Portal account should contact the school office.

Instructional Schedules:

Washington Middle School operates on a structured instructional schedule designed to maximize student learning and academic achievement. Students receive daily instruction in the four core academic subjects: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. In addition, students participate in connection classes such as Physical Education, Health, Fine Arts, Technology, Career Exploration, and other enrichment opportunities.

The schedule provides dedicated instructional time for core content, intervention, enrichment opportunities, and grade-level activities. Teachers utilize a variety of instructional strategies, technology resources, and collaborative learning experiences to engage students and support academic growth. The instructional day is designed to promote student success while providing a well-rounded middle school experience.

Instructional Day – 6th Grade

As students arrive on campus, they will report directly to the cafeteria and remain there until dismissed to their homeroom classes.

7:40: Teachers will pick up homeroom students and report to homeroom class.

7:40: Tiger Time

7:55: Bell rings; announcements begin.

8:00: 1st Block begins

8:05: Student must have a tardy slip

8:45: 1st Skinny ends; Fridays only

9:30: 1st Block ends.

9:35: 2nd Block begins

10:20: 1st Skinny ends; Fridays only

11:10: 2nd Block Ends

11:15: 1st Connection begins

12:00: 1st Connection ends

12:05: Lunch rotation begins

12:25: Lunch ends

12:30: 2nd Connections begins

1:15: 2nd Connection ends

1:20: 3rd Block begins

2:05: First Skinny ends; Fridays only

2:50: Pick up/ Walkers

2:55: 2nd Bell 1st Bus Riders

3:00: 3rd Bell 2nd Bus Riders

Instructional Day – 7th Grade

As students arrive on campus, those who wish to eat breakfast will report directly to the cafeteria and remain there until dismissed to their homeroom classes.

Students who are not eating breakfast will report directly to the gymnasium and remain there until dismissed to their homeroom classes.

7:40: Teachers will pick up homeroom students and report to homeroom class.

7:40: Tiger Time

7:55: Bell rings; announcements begin

8:00:1st block begins

8:05: Student must have a tardy slip

8:45: 1st Skinny ends; Fridays only

9:30: 1st Block ends

9:35: 1st Connections begins

10:20: 1st Connections ends

10:25: 2nd Connection begins

11:10: 2nd Connection ends

11:15: Lunch begins

11:35: Lunch ends

11:40: 3rd Block begins

12:25: 1st Skinny ends; Fridays only

1:15: 3rd Block ends

1:20: 4th Block begins

2:05: 1st Skinny ends; Fridays only

2:10: 2nd Skinny Begins Fridays only

2:50: 1st Bell Pick up/ Walkers only

2:55: 2nd Bell 1st Bus Riders only

3:00: 3rd Bell 2nd Bus Riders only

Instructional Day – 8th Grade

As students arrive on campus, those who wish to eat breakfast will report directly to the cafeteria and remain there until dismissed to their homeroom classes.

Students who are not eating breakfast will report directly to the gymnasium and remain there until dismissed to their homeroom classes.

7:40: Teachers will pick up homeroom students and report to homeroom class.

7:45:Tiger Time

7:55: Bell rings; announcements begin

8:00: 1st block begins

8:05:Student must have a tardy slip

8:45: Skinny ends; Fridays only

9:30: 1st Block class ends.

9:35: 2nd Block class begins.

10:20: Skinny ends; Fridays only

10:30: Start to lunch room

10:35: Lunch Begins

10:55: Lunch Ends

11:35: 2nd Block class ends

11:40: 3rd Block begins

12:25: Skinny ends; Fridays Only

12:30: Skinny begins; Fridays Only

1:15: 3rd Block Ends

1:20: 1st Connections Begin

2:10: 2nd Connections Begin

2:50: 1st Bell Pick up/ Walkers only

2:55: 2nd Bell 1st Bus Riders only

3:00: 3rd Bell 2nd Bus Riders only

Personal Property and Unauthorized Sales

Students are prohibited from selling, trading, or soliciting unauthorized items on school grounds or during school-sponsored activities.

Students are strongly encouraged not to bring large amounts of money, valuable jewelry, electronic devices, or other personal valuables to school. While reasonable precautions are taken to maintain a safe environment, Washington Middle School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property, including cell phones. Students are responsible for safeguarding their personal belongings at all times.

School Counseling Program

The purpose of the School Counseling Program is to support each student's academic, social, emotional, and personal growth. The school counselor works collaboratively with students, families, teachers, and administrators to help students reach their full potential and achieve success in school.

Counseling services are provided through individual counseling, small-group counseling, classroom guidance lessons, and school-wide programs and initiatives designed to promote student well-being and academic achievement.

Students may be referred to the School Counseling Program by parents or guardians, teachers, administrators, or through self-referral. The counselor is available to assist students with academic concerns, peer relationships, goal setting, conflict resolution, personal challenges, and other school-related needs.

Visitors and Student Check-Out Procedures

All visitors are required to register in the front office upon arrival. Visitors will be issued a visitor's pass, which must be worn at all times while on campus.Parents and guardians are always welcome to visit the school; however, students are not permitted to bring visitors to school.

Parents or legal guardians who need to check out a student must report to the front office and sign the student out before the student will be called from class. For the safety of our students and staff, early check-outs are not permitted after 2:30 p.m. This policy also helps maximize instructional time.

Georgia law permits only the parent, legal guardian, or an authorized designee listed in the student's records to check out a student under the age of 16 before the end of the school day. If an early dismissal is necessary, please notify the school by 8:30 a.m. whenever possible so the information can be included on the daily attendance report.

School personnel will recognize and follow the custodial information on file in Infinite Campus. The individual who enrolled the student and is currently listed as the custodial parent or guardian in Infinite Campus will be recognized unless legal documentation indicates otherwise.

Washing Middle School Contact Information

	Contact Personnel	Phone #
Access to grades online	Cindy Brock/ Lisa Hester, Main Office	377- 2106
Attendance	Vann Cato/Nicole Lamoute, School Counselor Katina Cooper, District Social Worker	377-4003 / 378-1125 307-1711
Busing	Administrator: Brandon Joiner, Kiara G. Jones, Anna Merchant Transportation Coordinator: Robert Dykes	377-2106 377-2124
Computers or Equipment	Anatole Cloud, Media Specialist	378-1141
Concerns or Problems	Brandon Joiner, Kiara G. Jones, Anna Merchant	377-2106
Student Discipline	Brandon Joiner, Kiara G. Jones, Anna Merchant	377-2106
Gifted Education	Lynlee Barrett, Instructional Coach Danielle Jones, ALPHA/Gifted Director	377-7729 307-1710
Media Center Procedures	Anatole Cloud, Media Specialist	377-3502
Medication	Jane McAulay , School Nurse	378-1216
Out-of-District Information	Kiara G. Jones, Principal	377-2106
Special Education	Kiara G. Jones, Principal Blair Ethridge, Special Education Director	377-2106 377-7402
School Safety	Kiara G. Jones, Principal	377-2106
School Registration **Student Records** **Verification Information**	Lytresa Sanders, Registrar	377-1209
Transportation Changes	Cindy Brock/ Lisa Hester (Must call before 2:00 pm)	377-2106
Volunteer Training	Vann Cato/Nicole Lamoute, School Counselors	377-4003 / 378-1125

ATTENDANCE

2026-2027 GRADY COUNTY SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL	
1-3 unexcused absences (UNA)	● Automated call system will notify parent/guardian of student's absence. ● School Attendance Letter will be mailed, or parents/guardians will be contacted via school communication system.
4 unexcused absences	● See prior section for foundational interventions. ● Parent/guardian will be contacted regarding a conference. ● Refer to the School Counselor for additional interventions. ● School Counselor will provide supportive documents for Mandated Parent Conference/Forum
5 or more unexcused absences	● **Mandated Parent Conference/Mandated Parent Forum**. A mandated parent conference/forum will be held to discuss preventative actions to deter further absences.
Additional unexcused absences after Mandated Parent Conference or Mandated Parent Forum	● **Referral to Criminal/Juvenile Court**. A warrant and/or juvenile complaint will be issued for violation of the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law.
* Excuses	● Handwritten excuses/Doctors' excuses submitted within **3** days of student returning to school. ● Each school will only accept **5** days' worth of parent/guardian handwritten excuses.
Grady Online Virtual School	● Incorporate attendance protocol in conjunction with program criteria to address students' lack of compliance with online instruction.
*Previous school year: 10 UNA or more	● **Mandated Parent Conference/Forum**. A mandated parent/forum will be held when your child reaches 5 UNA if he or she had 10 UNA or more from the previous school year.

Excused Absences

It is the policy of the Board to excuse students from school for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or when 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. The observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. Registering to vote or voting in a public election, which shall not exceed one day.
7. A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U. S. armed forces or National Guard, and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, will be granted up to 5 days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the parent's leave.

The principal may in certain circumstances require students to present appropriate medical or other documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused.

School days missed as a result of out of school suspension shall not be counted as unexcused for the purpose of determining student truancy, but shall be counted as unexcused for all other purposes.

Grades and Absences

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

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

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENT

Students placed in alternative school by a tribunal or through parent waiver are not allowed to attend any activities and events held at the student's school. Students returning to their home school from alternative school will do so under contract. Students may be sent back to alternative school if attendance, behavior, or grades become an issue.

AMENDMENTS

During the school year it may become necessary to change or add to the policies, rules, and regulations found in this handbook. The principal, the superintendent, and the board of education, or their designee reserve the right to amend or modify the policies, rules, and regulations at any time. If situations occur which are not covered in this handbook, the principal will make decisions based on the merits of the individual situation. The primary purpose of these policies, rules, and regulations is to foster a safe atmosphere conducive to learning and to increase student responsibility.

AUTOMATED CALL SYSTEM

Our schools are equipped with an automated call and text system that can notify all contacts in the database simultaneously. This system is an extremely effective way to communicate with the community after hours for reminders of events, school cancellations for weather, etc. The system will be used in the event of an actual emergency which involves the school or its students. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT PARENTS KEEP ALL PHONE NUMBERS CURRENT IN ORDER FOR THIS SYSTEM TO WORK EFFECTIVELY.**

BREAKFAST/LUNCH

Meals for the 2026-2027 school year will be served at NO CHARGE to all students. This includes BREAKFAST and LUNCH. Meals are self-serve with several choices of entrée, fruit, vegetable, bread, milk, and juice for lunch and several choices of entrée, cereal, fruit, bread, yogurt, juice and milk for breakfast.

Food from outside sources may not be delivered to school.

BOOKBAGS

Per the Grady County Board of Education, all backpacks and bags must be a mesh or clear material. Bookbags will be taken and available for parent pickup after 3:00 p.m. if not clear or mesh.

BULLYING

The Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Such prohibition shall be included in the Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system. Bullying is defined as an act that is:

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

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

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 immediately report it to the school principal. Any report will be appropriately investigated by the administration 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 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 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 will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at each school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In accordance with **Georgia's Distraction-Free Education Act (HB 340)**, students in grades 6–8 are prohibited from using personal electronic devices during the school day. Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, smart glasses, earbuds, headphones, and other communication devices.

Washington Middle School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices brought to campus.

All personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored in the student's book bag from the beginning of the school day until dismissal. Students may not use electronic devices during instructional time, class changes, lunch periods, assemblies, restroom breaks, or any other school-sponsored activity occurring during the school day. * Administrators/School law enforcement will not conduct classroom/area searches for missing items.

Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary consequences, including confiscation of the device and parent notification. Repeated violations will result in additional disciplinary action in accordance with the Grady County Middle School Student Code of Conduct.

A student whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Section 504 Plan, or medical plan explicitly mandates the use of a personal electronic device shall be permitted access to the device as necessary to fulfill the requirements of the respective program or plan. Parents wishing to reach their child during school hours should contact the front office.

The district or individual schools within the district shall not assume any responsibility or liability for the theft, loss, or damage to a personal electronic device.

CONSEQUENCES:
1st Offense: Device confiscated. Administrator conference and/or parent contact. Device returned at the end of the day.
2nd Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 1 day In-School (ISS). Device pickup by the parent is required. Electronic Device Contract.
3rd Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 2 days ISS. Device pickup by the parent is required.
4th Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 1 day Out of School Suspension (OSS). Device pickup by the parent is required.
5th Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 2 days (OSS). Device pickup by the parent required.
6th Offense: Device confiscated. Parent contact required. 2 days OSS & 2 days ISS. Device pickup by the parent required.

Refusal to Surrender Device:
If a student refuses to turn in their electronic device when directed by an administrator, the student will be suspended until a parent conference is held. During the conference, the parent will be required to sign a contract acknowledging the progressive consequences for future violations.
Second refusal: 3 days OSS
Third refusal: 5 days OSS
Confiscation of Electronic Devices:

Confiscated devices will be securely stored in a locked area labeled with the student's name and the name of the parent or guardian. Only a parent or guardian listed in the district's student database may retrieve the device with proper identification.

Headphones/Earbuds can only be used outside of the building and in the seating area of the cafeteria before school, at lunch and after school. Headphones/earbuds are **NOT** to be worn inside of other buildings. Speakers that broadcast for others to hear are **not** allowed on campus.

Consequences:

1st Offense: 2 days Administrative Detention; upon completion of Administrative Detention, a parent may pick up headphones/earbuds
2nd Offense: Headphones/earbuds collected and kept until parent picks up items

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

All employees of the Grady County Board of Education, as well as persons who attend to a child pursuant to their duties as a volunteer for the school system, who have reason or cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred shall notify the principal or the school system's designee, who shall report such abuse immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred, in accordance with Georgia law and the protocol for handling child abuse cases for Grady County, Georgia. Under no circumstances shall the principal or designee to whom a report of child abuse has been made exercise any control, restraint, modification or make any other change to the information provided by a mandated reporter, although the reporter may be consulted prior to the making of a report and may provide any additional, relevant and necessary information when making the report.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Students shall adhere to the 2026-2027 Grady County 6th-8th Code of Conduct**.**

COMPLAINTS, CRITICISM, GRIEVANCES, AND COMMENTS

Should any issues arise between a student and teacher, the first course of action is to make an appointment with the teacher through the counseling office to discuss the issue. Each student is encouraged to register complaints and criticism which foster school improvement. Students should discuss their complaint with their teacher, counselor, or an administrator. Grady County Schools welcomes parents or guardians to our schools; however, to maintain an orderly and safe school environment, we require that parents check in and obtain administrative approval.

DISCIPLINE

In-School Suspension (ISS)

In-School Suspension is assigned for behavioral infractions. Removal from ISS for disciplinary reasons may result in out-of-school suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

Students may not attend any school related activities while suspended.

SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE

The Grady County Board of Education recognizes the importance of safe and orderly buses during their routes to and from school and other activities. **School bus transportation is a privilege, not a right!** The transportation of any student is subject to the compliance with the lawful rules and regulations adopted by the school board. A student will be subject to disciplinary action for those violations within this policy and those covered in the safe riding behaviors of students. Discipline for exceptional children will follow state and federal guidelines.

Passengers may be suspended from riding the bus and/or school, at the discretion of the school administrators and/or bus administration.

Safe Riding Behaviors:

1. Students are expected to follow the directions and requests of the bus driver. The bus driver is responsible for all students and the safe operation of the vehicle. The driver also has the right to assign seating as appropriate. Always look to the driver before crossing the front of the bus.
2. Be courteous; use no profane language. This includes respecting others on the bus, the bus driver, and/or administrators.
3. Keep the bus clean. Do not leave trash on the floor; use a trash can located at the front of the bus. No eating or drinking on the bus!
4. No smoking, vaping or drug use on the bus.
5. Do not be destructive to the bus or other people's property.
6. Stay in your seat while the bus is in motion.
7. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus, and keep the aisle clear.
8. No inappropriate touching or physical contact. Keep your hands to yourself.
9. Absolutely NO FIGHTING! This is unsafe for EVERYONE on the bus.

Minor Offenses:

- Failure to keep bus clean
- Loud and boisterous talking
- Disruptive and inappropriate behavior or language
- Refusing to meet the bus on time (5 minutes before scheduled pickup); this delays the schedule
- Failure to remain seated while bus is in motion
- Inappropriate dress and sagging pants
- Distracting the driver’s attention while bus is in operation

Protocol for Minor Offenses:

1. **Verbal Warning-**The parent or legal guardian will be notified and the student may be assigned a seat.
2. **Suspension-**Student suspended for 1-2 days.
3. **Suspension & Conference**-Student suspended for 3-5 days; parents may be required to conference with administrators.
4. **Four or more minor infractions will be treated like a major offense.**

Major Offenses:

- Using, being under the influence, or having in possession alcohol, tobacco products (vaping), and/or illegal drugs.
- Vandalism/theft of the bus or property of others.
- Bullying and any form of harassment stated in this handbook.
- Throwing items on or off the school bus.
- Use or possession of a weapon.
- Verbal or physical abuse to another student, the bus driver, or other school personnel.
- Tampering with any part of the bus. This includes the emergency windows and exits. This also includes the camera system. No one should tamper with the surveillance equipment!
- Having your head, arms, legs or hands out of the window.
- Throwing objects on the bus or at the driver.
- Refusing to sit in an assigned seat.
- Sexual activity on the bus. This also includes excessive displays of affection and inappropriate touching.
- Fighting on the bus.
- Unauthorized leaving of the bus while in route. Students must unload at the assigned stop. A note from school is required for alternative deliveries.

Protocol for Major Offenses:

1. **3-day Suspension:** Parents will be notified.
2. **5-day Suspension:** Parents may be required to conference with administrators.
3. **10-day Suspension:** Parents **will be** required to conference with administrators.
4. **Indefinite Suspension:** Students will be suspended for the remainder of the semester. Once a conference is held, students may return during the following semester following the protocol for major offenses.

Grades 6-12 may receive additional disciplinary action by school administrators at their discretion. Students are subject to all school rules while riding the bus at any time for any reason. The driver is subject to the direction of the transportation administration and is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and order of the school bus. Students should obey the driver! Bus conduct/referrals and discipline actions are cumulative for the year.

Student Tribunal (Student Disciplinary Hearing)

For the purpose of conducting certain student discipline hearings, as defined below, rendering a decision and imposing punishment, the Board of Education hereby adopts the following procedures:

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a hearing in the following cases:

Where a student has committed an alleged assault or battery upon a teacher, other school official or employee. Where a student has violated any school or system rule or engaged in

any other act of misconduct or insubordination for which the student's principal recommends a suspension or expulsion longer than ten school days.

The Board of Education hereby designates its administrative staff to serve as members of hearing tribunals. When the principal of a school or his or her designee refers a student to the Superintendent or his or her designee for a hearing, the Superintendent or his or her staff shall choose three of these members to serve as the hearing tribunal. No member of the hearing tribunal shall be a member of the staff at the school which the student attends.

Whenever a principal or his or her designee refers a student discipline matter to the Superintendent or his or her designee, the Superintendent or his or her designee shall send a letter by regular or certified mail to the student and his or her parents or guardians containing a statement of the time, place and nature of the hearing, a short and plain statement of the matters asserted and charges against the student, a list of potential witnesses, a statement setting forth the right of the student to present evidence, cross-examine witnesses and be represented by legal counsel. The hearing must be held no later than ten school days after the beginning of the suspension unless the school system and parents or guardians mutually agree to an extension.

The school principal or his or her 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 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.

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 days of the close of the record and shall furnish a copy of the decision to the student, his or her parents or legal guardians, the principal or his or her designee and the Superintendent. The decision of the hearing tribunal shall be final and shall constitute the decision of the Board of Education unless either party should appeal the decision to the Board of Education. In any case where the tribunal finds that the student has committed an act of physical violence as that term is used in O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.6, any recommendation of the tribunal as to when and whether the student may return to school in accordance with the code section shall constitute the decision of the Board of Education unless there should be an appeal of the decision to the Board.

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 school's 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 rule violation; the date and 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.

Any party may appeal the decision of the hearing tribunal to the Board of Education by filing with the Superintendent a written notice of appeal within twenty days from the date the decision is rendered. 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 may suspend the disciplinary action imposed by the hearing tribunal pending the outcome of the appeal.

The Board of Education 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 days 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 find the facts to be different than those found by the hearing tribunal and the Board may change the punishment, in accordance with state law.

Any decision of the local Board may be appealed to the State Board of Education by filing an appeal, in writing, within thirty (30) days after the local Board renders its decision.

Any student subject to a disciplinary hearing who withdraws from the school system prior to the hearing must appear before a Disciplinary Hearing Tribunal to determine the student's eligibility to return to the school system in the event the student ever seeks to return to the system. Alternatively, the school district may, in its discretion, proceed with the tribunal in accordance with Board policy despite the student's withdrawal from school.

Students placed in a Grady County Alternative School Program may not be on Grady County School property, its campuses, schools, sporting events, field trips, and/or other functions sponsored by or directed by Grady County School System.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS & CRISIS ALERT

The school has an approved emergency management plan on file in the principal’s office. This plan has provisions for tornadoes, fire, and terroristic situations. Grady County Schools utilizes the Crisis Alert Monitoring System. It enables each staff member at each school to initiate an alert and automatically disseminate critical information quickly and

reliably anywhere on the school campus, inside or outside the building. This technology provides immediate visual and audio notification of an emergency to all building occupants.

ENROLLING YOUR STUDENT

The following documentation is required for all new enrollees:

- **Verification of Residency** – The property address given must be the **actual location** where the student and parent/guardian live full time. Proof of residency is required and must be approved by the principal.
- **Written Verification of Age** – Copy of the birth certificate, passport, or other written proof of age. Students enrolling in PreK must be 4 years old and in Kindergarten must be 5 years old before September 1.
- **Certificate of Immunization (GA form 3231)**
- **Ear, Eye, and Dental Examination – EED (GA form 3300)**
- **Social Security card or signed waiver**
- **Disclosure of previous enrollments and discipline history**

ENROLLMENT: Out of District

Parents/Guardians of out-of-district students must request enrollment with the principal of the out-of-district school EACH YEAR of out-of-district enrollment. **An Out-of-District contract must be approved and signed by the principal of the requesting school prior to enrollment.** Guidelines for out-of-district enrollment are reviewed each quarter. Students that fail to meet the guidelines may be required to transfer to their in-district school.

Contract completion does not guarantee enrollment in the requested school.

OUT OF DISTRICT GUIDELINES

Transportation: Parent/guardian will be responsible for providing transportation to and from school within the set school hours.
Attendance: **No more than five (5) unexcused absences and fifteen (15) tardies per nine weeks.** Early pick-ups causing the student to miss instruction and any pick-ups past the dismissal time will also be considered in continued eligibility for out-of-district enrollment.
Enrollment is subject to availability based on in-district student enrollment.
Behavior: Student and parent will agree to abide by the Grady County Student Code of Conduct. Tribunal offenses resulting in Alternative School placement will violate the contract. Excessive disciplinary referrals (3 or more per 9 weeks grading period) will be considered when determining acceptance and continued enrollment.

ENROLLMENT: Transfers

The front office should be notified of students transferring to another school system. Parents/guardians will sign a withdrawal form, pay any outstanding fees or fines, and return any school property, including library books. The new enrolling school will send us a records request. At that time, our registrar will send all academic records to the new school.

ESOL PROGRAM

It is the intent of the Grady County Schools that every student in the system who has a primary home language other than English and who is identified as limited English Proficient be provided with the opportunity to participate in an English Language Learner Program.

PROGRAMA DE E.S.O.L.

Es el proposito de las Escuelas de Grady County que todos los estudiantes que hablan idiomas aparte de ingles en casa y con el titulo "Dominio limitado delldioma Ingles" tengan la oportunidad de participar en un programa para los principiantes del lenguaje Ingles que se llama English Langusa Learner Program.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Cairo High School, with certain exceptions, obtain a parent/guardian's written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records. However, the school may disclose appropriately designated "directory Information" at the discretion of the school unless the principal or designee has been notified in writing by August 31 of each school year by the parent/guardian or eligible student that some or all of this information shall not be designated as directory information. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to include this type of information from the student's education records in certain school publications. Directory information includes student name, address, email, year of birth, enrollment, dates of attendance, grade level, degrees and awards received, date of graduation, photograph, name of secondary school most recently attended, scholarship eligibility, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and height and weight of members of interscholastic athletic teams.

FINES

Fines or damage charges may be levied for lost, unreturned, damaged, or defaced laptops, textbooks, library books, materials, or other equipment.

Recognized School Fines include, but not limited to are:

1. Fines for overdue library books;
2. Charges for lost, damaged, or destroyed computers, laptops, laptop chargers, textbooks, library books, workbooks, or other school property;

Students who destroy, damage, or lose school property, including but not limited to buildings, school buses, books, equipment, and records, will be responsible for the actual cost of replacing or repairing such materials or equipment.

GIFTED

ALPHA/Gifted (K-12)

The ALPHA/Gifted (Advancement in Learning & Performance for Higher Achievement) is a county-wide (K-12) program that offers our gifted and talented students a deeper level of learning and adds the breadth and acceleration needed in the classroom. Our school

system currently has over 40 teachers who are gifted-endorsed and/or hold College-Board™ AP certification. Our ALPHA/Gifted students are surrounded in their classrooms by like-minded students on similar journeys, who are challenged by their teachers and administrators not just academically, but also to get involved and grow personally. Our students excel academically, participate in scholarly competitions, and engage in numerous extracurricular activities. We want our ALPHA/Gifted students to gain the confidence to find their voice and take rigorous courses. By providing extended learning opportunities that develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, we aim to foster intellectual curiosity, advance their scholarship, and help them realize their greatest potential. For more information, please contact Mrs. Danielle Jones, District Gifted Coordinator, at the Grady County Board of Education (229) 377-3701.

ALPHA/Programa para alumnos superdotados (K-12)

El programa ALPHA/Gifted (*Advancement in Learning & Performance for Higher Achievement* o Avance en el Aprendizaje y el Rendimiento para un Logro Superior) es un programa de ámbito condal (para los grados K-12) que ofrece a nuestros estudiantes dotados y talentosos un nivel de aprendizaje más profundo, aportando la amplitud y la aceleración necesarias en el aula. Nuestro sistema escolar cuenta actualmente con más de 40 maestros que poseen la certificación de especialización en educación para estudiantes dotados y/o la certificación AP (*Advanced Placement*) del College Board™. En sus aulas, los estudiantes de ALPHA/Gifted conviven con compañeros afines que recorren trayectorias similares, y son motivados por sus maestros y administradores no solo a nivel académico, sino también a involucrarse y crecer personalmente. Nuestros estudiantes sobresalen académicamente, participan en concursos académicos y toman parte en numerosas actividades extracurriculares. Queremos que los estudiantes de ALPHA/Gifted adquieran la confianza necesaria para encontrar su propia voz y cursar asignaturas de alto nivel académico. Mediante oportunidades de aprendizaje ampliado que desarrollan el pensamiento crítico y las habilidades de resolución de problemas, buscamos fomentar la curiosidad intelectual, impulsar su excelencia académica y ayudarles a alcanzar su máximo potencial. Para más información, por favor comuníquese con la Sra. Danielle Jones, Coordinadora Distrital del Programa para Estudiantes Dotados, en la Junta de Educación del Condado de Grady llamando al (229) 377-3701.

SPARK
(Sharpening Potential to Advance and Refine our Kindergartners)

SPARK is a talent development program in Grady County that stands for “Sharpening Potential to Advance and Refine our Kindergartners.” Shortly after the new year, kindergartners will be selected for this program based on their top MAP assessment scores. This talent development program is designed to provide learning opportunities that challenge our kindergartners through critical-thinking activities, creativity lessons, and problem-solving skills. The kindergartners are being pulled once a week to participate in classes taught by a gifted-endorsed teacher to help all students reach their highest potential and to introduce them to components of creativity, such as fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. By offering a variety of exercises and activities each week that involve divergent and convergent thinking skills, the SPARK lessons provide students with a weekly outlet to develop cognitive and creative talent. For more

information, please contact Mrs. Danielle Jones, District Gifted Coordinator, at the Grady County Board of Education (229) 377-3701.

SPARK
(*Sharpening Potential to Advance and Refine our Kindergartners* o Potenciando y Refinando las Capacidades de nuestros Alumnos de Kindergarten)
SPARK es un programa de desarrollo de talentos del Condado de Grady cuyo nombre significa "Potenciando y Refinando las Capacidades de nuestros Alumnos de Kindergarten". Poco después de comenzar el año nuevo, se seleccionará a alumnos de kindergarten para este programa basándose en sus puntuaciones más altas en la evaluación MAP. Este programa de desarrollo de talentos está diseñado para ofrecer oportunidades de aprendizaje que desafíen a nuestros alumnos de kindergarten mediante actividades de pensamiento crítico, lecciones de creatividad y ejercicios de resolución de problemas. Los alumnos seleccionados asisten una vez por semana a clases impartidas por un maestro especializado en educación para estudiantes dotados; el objetivo es ayudar a todos los estudiantes a alcanzar su máximo potencial e introducirles en componentes de la creatividad, tales como la fluidez, la flexibilidad, la originalidad y la elaboración. Al ofrecer cada semana una variedad de ejercicios y actividades que implican habilidades de pensamiento divergente y convergente, las lecciones de SPARK brindan a los estudiantes un espacio semanal para desarrollar su talento cognitivo y creativo. Para más información, por favor comuníquese con la Sra. Danielle Jones, Coordinadora del Programa para Estudiantes con Altas Capacidades del distrito, en la Junta de Educación del Condado de Grady al (229) 377-3701.

SPARK1
(Sharpening Potential to Advance and Refine our Kids - 1st Grade)
SPARK1 is a continuation of SPARK from the previous school year. If some SPARK students are not quite ready for gifted testing at the end of their kindergarten year, they will be offered to become a SPARK1 talent development student in 1st grade. Thus, the process expands our SPARK talent development program to other grade levels beyond kindergarten to broaden students' cognitive abilities and creativity. For more information, please contact Mrs. Danielle Jones, District Gifted Coordinator, at the Grady County Board of Education (229) 377-3701.

SPARK1
(Potenciando las capacidades para el desarrollo y perfeccionamiento de nuestros niños: 1.er grado)
SPARK1 es una continuación del programa SPARK del año escolar anterior. Si algunos estudiantes de SPARK aún no están listos para las pruebas de identificación de altas capacidades al finalizar el jardín de infancia, se les ofrecerá participar en SPARK1, un programa de desarrollo de talentos para 1.er grado. De este modo, el proceso amplía nuestro programa de desarrollo de talentos SPARK más allá del jardín de infancia, abarcando otros niveles escolares para fomentar las habilidades cognitivas y la creatividad de los estudiantes. Para más información, por favor comuníquese con la Sra. Danielle Jones, Coordinadora del Programa para Estudiantes con Altas Capacidades del distrito, en la Junta de Educación del Condado de Grady al (229) 377-3701.

HARASSMENT

The Grady County Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race, ethnic group, color, disability, religion, belief, or national origin in the educational programs, activities, or admissions to facilities operated by GCSS or in the employment practices of the school system. Grady County School Systems (GCSS) does not and will not tolerate harassment of our students or employees. The term “harassment” includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual’s race, ethnic group, color, gender, religion, belief, national origin, citizenship, age, or disability. “Harassment” also includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome or offensive touch, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

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

All allegations of harassment shall fully be investigated and immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated by the superintendent. A substantiated charge against an employee shall subject such person to disciplinary action. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject that student to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

It is the duty of employees to promptly report harassment forbidden by this policy. All supervisors will instruct their subordinates as to the content of this policy and, through appropriate professional learning activities, enlighten employees as to the varied forms or expression of prohibited harassment. The principal of all schools shall ensure that students and parents are informed through handbooks and verbally that such harassment is strictly forbidden, and how it is to be reported.
Grady County School District’s nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at https://www.grady.k12.ga.us/page/gcs-title-ix.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

To the extent practical and as required by federal law through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the Grady County School System will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless

students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education programs for students with limited English proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including children who experience one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Abandoned in hospitals;
5. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations, or similar settings;
7. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples;
8. Unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Homeless children and unaccompanied youth will be identified through three main sources:

1. School personnel will be trained to inquire about homelessness upon enrollment and withdrawal of students. School personnel will notify the homeless liaison of any students determined to be homeless.
2. School staff will be trained on the identification of children in class who may be experiencing homelessness and appropriate procedures to follow.
3. Partnerships will be created between community agencies and the school system to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness. Outreach material will be provided to partner agencies by the homeless liaison to provide public notice of the rights of homeless students.

Each homeless student has the right to remain at his or her school of origin, to the extent feasible, or to attend school in the attendance area in which he or she is currently residing. Students identified as homeless have the right to immediate enrollment in school.

Homeless students are also entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the parent/guardian requests transportation, the school shall notify the district liaison.

If a dispute arises over any issue related to the rights of any homeless student, then the student shall be immediately enrolled and provided all services until the dispute is resolved in accordance with federal law. The school must provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and inform him/her of his/her right to appeal with the district homeless liaison. The liaison shall ensure enrollment

and appropriate services until the dispute is resolved. All records of disputes shall be kept. The state level appeals process will also be provided following the district level appeal.

Homeless students shall be provided comparable services to other students including the following: transportation, Title I, education services where they meet eligibility criteria, vocational and technical education program, gifted and talented program, and school nutrition. Upon being identified as homeless, students automatically qualify for free school meals. Title I services should also be made available to all homeless students regardless of the school of enrollment's Title I status.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youth and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. The district's liaison will also review and seek revisions to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

For any concerns regarding the rights of homeless students, please contact the Grady County School District's Homeless Liaison at 229-307-1711.

HEAD LICE

Head lice are very contagious because of the ease with which it can be transmitted from one person to another. In the event that a child is found to have head lice or nits, a parent or guardian will be contacted to pick up the child for treatment. All siblings will be checked as well. Before returning to school the child must have NO NITS. Upon returning to school, the child must be accompanied by a parent and must show the school nurse proof of treatment. The students must not have any nits in order to be readmitted to school.

HOSPITAL HOMEBOUND

Hospital Homebound (HHB) instruction is designed to provide continuity of education between the school, home, and healthcare facility for students enrolled in Grady County Schools whose medical conditions, either physical or psychiatric, prevent them from attending school for a minimum of ten consecutive or intermittent days during the school year. Eligibility for HHB requires the submission of forms and must be certified by the licensed physician or psychiatrist who is currently treating the student for the diagnosis presented. Completed forms are reviewed for approval. The student's guidance counselor is the first point of contact for HHB forms. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to request HHB services as soon as possible. HHB services are temporary and are not intended to supplant regular school services. While the goal of HHB is to sustain continuity of instruction and to facilitate the student's transition back to school, HHB instruction is not a guarantee that the student will always progress in the academic program.

INFINITE CAMPUS

Parents and students can view attendance and grades for their students using the Infinite Campus Portal apps (Campus Student and Campus Parent) at

https://campus.grady.k12.ga.us/campus/portal/grady.jsp.Please contact the school for any questions.

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE REGULATIONS

The Grady County School System believes student learning and engagement can be enhanced through the effective use of technology. Therefore, both face-to-face and virtual students will have access to many digital learning tools. Face-to-face students' access to and use of the Internet will be under teacher direction and monitored as any other classroom activity. Virtual students' online activity will be monitored using GoGuardian, which is a Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) approved program. The use of technology equipment and digital tools in the Grady County School System is a privilege that requires all users to act responsibly. All users are accountable for any violations of the Internet Acceptable Use Regulations.

As required by CIPA, Grady County Schools has an Internet filtering system in place to protect the students in our schools. The filtering system blocks unacceptable sites that fall into the following categories: violence, pornography, drugs, chat, free email, hate/discrimination, etc. However, it is impossible to control all materials on a global network, and an industrious user may discover inappropriate information. The school system cannot completely prevent the possibility that some users may access material that is not consistent with the educational mission, goals, and policies of the school system. Violations of the Internet Acceptable Use Regulations may result in disciplinary action.

Guidelines for Internet Usage

- Internet use must be in support of education and research consistent with classroom curriculum.
- Use of the Internet must be consistent with the rules appropriate to any network being used or accessed.
- Unauthorized use of copyrighted material is prohibited, including accessing and/or downloading pirated music, movies, and television shows.
- School equipment shall not be used for accessing, sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading obscene materials, child pornography, or material that is harmful to minors.
- Distribution of material protected by trade secret is prohibited.
- Product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Commercial activities are not acceptable.
- Non-instructional games are prohibited on school computers.
- Staff and students shall not download software from home or unauthorized programs from the Internet.
- The use of proxy sites and/or VPN services to access Internet sites which are blocked by Grady County Schools is prohibited.

● Nothing should be posted on the Internet that would be inappropriate for students, parents, teachers, etc. to read. The Internet is a public forum. Any blog post or social networking post, including photographs, which are posted on the Internet are there permanently. Any post that is deleted may be cached in a search engine, school system server, or Internet archive. Internet posts that are a violation of the Acceptable Use Regulations may result in disciplinary action.
● Faculty, staff, and students should refrain from the use of personal social networking sites including, but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat, during working and school hours.
● Faculty and staff should not post pictures of students or school activities to their personal social networking sites.

Privileges

● Access to the Internet is a privilege.
● Unacceptable and/or inappropriate usage will result in the suspension of the user's GCS network account and/or GCS Google account.
● Administration reserves the right to regulate any particular use of computing resources based on CIPA standards.
● An administrator, faculty member, or staff member may request the denial, revocation, or suspension of specific user(s) GCS account(s).
● In the event student laptops and/or iPads are issued to students for at-home use, recipients will be required to sign a parent and student's User Agreement. Students are required to adhere to all policies set forth in the User Agreement and Internet Acceptable Use Regulations.

Appropriate Digital Citizenship

● Use of profanity, vulgarities, or other inappropriate language is prohibited.
● Users should not reveal their own or anyone else's personal information including, but not limited to, home address, phone number, credit card number, Social Security number, or student identification number.
● The network should not be used in a way that would disrupt the use of the network by others.
● Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
● Students should not use personal or school-issued devices or accounts in a way that would threaten, harass, abuse, intimidate, or embarrass others.
● The use of websites or other types of electronic communication to circulate gossip and rumors about staff or students is prohibited.
● The use of cameras, camera phones, or other camera devices to take or exchange threatening, inappropriate, or potentially embarrassing photographs of staff or students is prohibited.

Social Media Access and Restrictions (SB 351)

Prohibition of Social Media on School Devices: Students are strictly prohibited from accessing social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) on school-owned devices, including computers, tablets, and smartphones. Access to social media may only be allowed when explicitly directed by staff for educational use, with supervision and parental notification.

Parental Consent for Off-School Use: Students may use social media on personal devices for school-related purposes only with explicit parental consent.

Security

- Security problems should be reported to the school administrator immediately.
- Account passwords should be kept confidential.
- Users should use the network via the account assigned to them.
- Users must not interfere with or disrupt network users, services, traffic, or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, the distribution of unsolicited advertising, downloading and/or streaming music or videos that slow the network, propagation of computer viruses, and using a network to make unauthorized entry to any other machine accessible via a network.
- Attempts to log on as another user or log-in to any accounts belonging to another user will result in cancellation of privileges.
- Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access.
- Vandalism is prohibited. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Internet or other networks. This includes, but is not limited to, creating and/or uploading computer viruses.
- Vandalism also includes the attempt to harm or destroy computer hardware and the unauthorized installation of software.
- Students should carefully handle all technology equipment, including, but not limited to iPads, laptops, desktop computers, and all specialty equipment in labs or other specialized areas.
- Users should report damages to the technology department in their schools and not attempt to make the repairs themselves.
- Vandalism and/or harassment will result in the cancellation or revocation of the offender's privileges and disciplinary action will result.
- Google for Education accounts are provided for all employees and students in grades K-12. Google for Education accounts include Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Sheets, Google Classroom, etc. as a part of the grady.k12.ga.us domain.
- Google for Education accounts are provided for professional and academic purposes. These accounts should not be used for personal gain, personal business activities, or to solicit for non-school system business. Broadcasting of unsolicited messages is prohibited.

● All users, including students, should not use school-issued email accounts to sign up for personal accounts on websites, including, but not limited to, social media and gaming websites.
● All electronic communication created, sent, or received via the Grady County Schools email system is property of Grady County Schools. Employees and students shall not have any expectation of privacy regarding this information. The Board reserves the right, as deemed necessary, to access, read, review, monitor, and copy all messages and files on its computer system without notice. Grady County Schools reserves the right to disclose text, video, audio, or image files to law enforcement and social service agencies without the employee's or student's consent.
● Student-related messages should be guarded and protected in compliance with FERPA in order to protect the privacy of students. Employees must abide by copyright laws, ethics rules, and applicable state and federal laws.
● Email messages should only contain professional and appropriate language. Employees and students shall not send abusive, harassing, intimidating, threatening, discriminatory, or otherwise offensive messages.
● Grady County Schools has a SPAM filter in place to prevent inappropriate email messages, viruses, malware, etc. However, this does not guarantee that this type of email message will not make it through, and those who make use of electronic communication will occasionally receive messages that are found offensive or annoying. When this happens, the employee should delete the messages. The Grady County School System is not responsible for the items employees or students may view via links to other web pages if the employee chooses to open and read these messages.
● Student Google accounts are monitored for inappropriate usage through GoGuardian. Inappropriate use of Google accounts is reported to school and system administrators and handled as a disciplinary violation. It is permissible for parents to request to review the logs of platforms accessed by their student. In addition, parents have the right to request that their child not participate in online activities.
CAUTION: The GoGuardian software will monitor all student activity on school-issued devices, both used on campus and/or at home.

Penalties

● Users violating applicable state laws, federal laws, classroom rules and district rules are subject to the loss of network privileges as well as other system disciplinary actions and criminal prosecution if applicable.

The Grady County Schools Acceptable Use Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with all Georgia State Department of Education technical standards and policies. In accordance with Senate Bill 351, this policy will be submitted annually to the Georgia Department of Education as required.

MEDICATION

Medication Guidelines for School

To help ensure the safety of all students, the following guidelines must be followed regarding medications during the school day:

Medication Delivery and Required Forms

All medications must be brought to school by a parent or guardian, and the front office will give further instructions.

A completed Request for Administration of Medication Form, signed by both the parent or guardian and the prescribing physician, must be submitted before any medication may be administered during school hours.

Original Containers Required

Prescription medications will only be accepted in the original pharmacy-labeled prescription bottle.

The medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, Physician's name, name of medication, and the dosage instruction for the child.

Administration During School Hours

If possible, medication should be given at home, however if it is necessary for your child to receive medication during the school day, medication guidelines must be followed.

All medications must be picked up by a parent or guardian on the last day of school. Any medication not picked up by that time will be properly disposed.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Grady County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law and prohibits discrimination, including harassment, in any education program, activity, or admissions to facilities operated by GCSS or in the employment practices of the school system. Retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, makes a report of harassment or discrimination, files a complaint of harassment or discrimination, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation or grievance process is also a violation of Grady County School District's nondiscrimination policy and is prohibited.

Grady County School District has designated the following individual(s) to coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out its nondiscrimination responsibilities, and questions regarding Grady County School District nondiscrimination commitments, as well as related laws, regulations, and District policies, may be referred to the designated employee(s):

Ashley Griner
Title IX Co-Coordinators
985 1st Street NW
Cairo, GA 39828

Email:a.griner@grady.k12.ga.us

Phone: (229) 377-1701

Grady County School District is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex by Title IX and its implementing regulations. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to Grady County School District's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the district's website at https://www.grady.k12.ga.us/page/gcs-title-ix. Any person may also report sex discrimination, including harassment, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

Grady County School District's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at https://www.grady.k12.ga.us/page/gcs-title-ix.

NOTICE OF RIGHTS OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS UNDER SECTION 504

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

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your system's Section 504 Coordinator at the following address: Blair Ethridge at (229) 377-7402 or b.ethridge@grady.k12.ga.us.

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

1. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs.
5. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students.

6. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility.
7. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child.
8. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
13. You have the right to examine your child's educational records.
14. 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.
15. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request.
16. 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.
17. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

SECTION 504 PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Grady County Schools notifies parents and students that Section 504 student rights and procedural safeguards are included in their entirety in our student handbooks and on our website. Parents and students are entitled to Section 504 student rights and procedural safeguards on request.

1. **Overview**: Any student, parent, or guardian may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding a child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system's Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial

hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.

2. **Hearing Request**: The Request for the Hearing must include the following:
   a. Student name
   b. Address of student
   c. School student is attending
   d. Reason for request of the hearing
   e. Decision objecting to
   f. Remedy suggested
   g. Name and contact information of person requesting a hearing

Within 10 business days from receiving the Request for Hearing, the 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request from the parent, guardian, or student is incomplete, the 504 Coordinator will tell the grievant what specific information is needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will stop until the Request for Hearing contains all the above noted information.

3. **Mediation**: The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues. Mediation is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. If mediation is terminated without an agreement, procedures for conducting an impartial hearing will be followed without an additional Request for Hearing.
4. **Hearing Procedures**:
   a. The 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official and hearing within 45 calendar days unless a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
   b. A continuance request in writing to all parties may be granted by the hearing officer with good cause.
   c. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.
   d. The grievant may be represented by legal counsel at his/her own expense. The grievant may participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If represented by legal counsel at the hearing, the grievant or legal counsel must notify the 504 Coordinator in writing at least 10 calendar days before the hearing. Failure to do so will constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.
   e. The burden of proof will be on the grievant. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the school or 504 Coordinator to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A school or 504 Coordinator shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the system unless it is demonstrated by the school or 504 Coordinator that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be

achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R.§104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.

f. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.
g. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence.
h. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
i. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.
j. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.
k. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the system. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the system.
l. Unless otherwise required by law, the impartial review official shall uphold the action of the school system unless the grievant can prove that a preponderance of the evidence supports his or her claim.
m. Failure of the grievant to appear at a scheduled hearing unless prior notification of absence was provided and approved by the impartial review official or just cause is shown shall constitute a waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the impartial review official.

5. **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.
6. **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 him or her under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Student progress is very important to faculty and staff. Teachers, counselors, and administrators are available for parent conferences. Conferences during a planning period or after school may be arranged by contacting your student's counselor via phone or email.

PARENT VOLUNTEERING

Parent participation is encouraged at Grady County Schools. We encourage parents to participate in their student's school life. A Child Abuse Mandated Reporter training is required prior to attending any school field trip, volunteering in the school, or working around students in school in any capacity. Once the training has been completed, bring your Certificate of Completion to your child's school. You will be provided a card that fits in your wallet to verify you've completed the training. The training is located on the Grady County School website www.grady.k12.ga.us.

PLEDGE

Georgia Code Title 20. Education § 20-2-310 (c)(1): Each student in the public schools of this state shall be afforded the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America during each school day. It shall be the duty of each local board of education to establish a policy setting the time and manner for recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Such policy shall be established in writing and shall be distributed to each teacher within the school.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A student shall be promoted when the student has met promotion criteria.

In the event that the Georgia Milestones Assessment or the Georgia Milestones Assessment retest is not available at one or more grade levels, or the Georgia Milestones Assessment scores are not returned in time to make a decision regarding grade placement, placement shall be determined by the remaining criterion for that grade(s).

The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) shall establish promotion standards for students with disabilities. The IEP Committee shall serve as the Placement Committee for these students. Members of the committee should include the general education teacher, the special education teacher, the parent/ guardian, and the Local Educational Administrator (LEA). Others may be asked to attend as needed.

Grades 6-8 - Promotion will be based on the student having passed both Reading (ELA) and Math (on grade-level material) classes; at least one out of the following: science or social studies and 50% of connections. In grade 8, a student must score "On or Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones in Reading (ELA) and as a Developing Learner or higher in the area of Math.

SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT POLICY

As part of the emergency procedures in place in our schools, any student who poses an imminent risk of injury to him/herself or others may be physically restrained by school staff in accordance with Grady County Board of Education policies. Law enforcement may be contacted in a restraint situation. Significant violations of the law including assaults on students and staff will be reported to law enforcement. Within a reasonable time, not to

exceed one school day, parents or guardians will be informed in writing when any of these actions occur.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Grady County Special Education department provides support for children identified with disabilities. A child is considered to have a disability if they have been assessed and found eligible for specialized educational services due to conditions such as intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments including deafness, speech or language impairments, visual impairments including blindness, emotional disturbances, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injuries, other health impairments, and specific learning disabilities. Special education consists of tailored instruction offered at no cost to parents, aimed at addressing the individual needs of each identified student with a disability. This includes classroom instruction, home-based instruction, education in hospitals or other institutions, physical education, and vocational training. Related services encompass supports like transportation and developmental or corrective services necessary to help children with disabilities fully benefit from their special education. The determination of eligibility, decisions about the least restrictive environment, and the provision of services are made by a committee comprising individuals who collaborate closely with the child and their parents or guardians. For more information, parents can reach the Grady County Special Education Department at 229-377-7396.

Grady County Child Find

In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Grady County Schools is committed to identifying, locating, and evaluating all children ages 3 through 21 who may have disabilities and are in need of special education and related services. This Child Find responsibility includes children enrolled in public schools, private schools, and home school programs who reside within the district's jurisdiction.

If the Child Find process indicates that a student may require special education and related services to benefit from their educational program, the student may be referred for a comprehensive evaluation. Eligibility for special education services, decisions regarding placement in the least restrictive environment, and the development of individualized educational services are determined by a multidisciplinary team that includes parents or guardians, educators, and other qualified professionals. Eligibility and services are provided only after appropriate evaluations have been completed and the student is determined eligible under state and federal criteria.

Grady County Schools also conducts annual consultations with representatives of private schools and parents regarding participation in Child Find activities and the use of proportionate share funds for eligible students with disabilities attending private schools.

If you know of a child who may have a disability and is not currently receiving services, have concerns regarding a child's development or educational progress, or would like additional information about Child Find services, please contact:

Blair Ethridge
Director of Special Education / Section 504 Coordinator
Grady County Schools
Phone: (229) 377-7402
Email: b.ethridge@grady.k12.ga.us

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

Grady County Schools is committed to ensuring its schools are safe and orderly. The school system takes a very proactive approach to ensuring the safety of students, staff members and campus visitors. The officers respond to the needs of our students, staff, and community. In addition to enforcing the laws of the State of Georgia, officers are available to teach classes during the school day to students and to community groups in the evenings. The officers are P.O.S.T. certified and attend the necessary training to maintain their certification.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Tops

- Shirts that expose the midriff or lower back are prohibited (no crop tops or belly shirts). Coverage must be maintained while sitting, standing, or bending.
- Tank tops, halter tops, muscle shirts, sleeveless T-shirts, and spaghetti-strap tops are prohibited.
- Blouses, dresses, and sweaters that are backless, low-cut, or strapless are prohibited.
- Clothing with graphics or messages that advertise or depict alcohol, tobacco, drugs, weapons, violence, death, inappropriate language, or suggestive content is prohibited.

Bottoms

- Students may wear capris, blue jeans, long pants, shorts, dresses, and skirts.
- Shorts, dresses, and skirts must be mid-thigh length or longer.
- Shorts must be clearly visible below the shirt.
- Leggings, jeggings, tights, yoga pants, bike pants, and similar garments are not considered pants and may not be worn as pants, regardless of shirt length.
- Clothing with holes or tears above the knee must not expose skin.
- Pajamas are prohibited.
- All pants must be worn at the natural waistline. Sagging pants or pants worn below the waist are not permitted.
- If a belt is worn, it must be properly fastened. Zip ties may be provided when necessary.

Shoes

- All shoes, including sandals, must have a back.
- Shoes requiring laces must be tied.
- Bedroom shoes, slippers, flip-flops, and slides are prohibited.
- Shoes with cleats or rollers are not permitted.
- Depending on the activity, Crocs, sandals, or boots may be deemed inappropriate for safety reasons. Students wearing inappropriate footwear may be required to participate in alternate activities.

**For safety reasons, students are encouraged to wear tennis shoes or sneakers for Physical Education (PE).*

STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

The Grady County Board of Education authorizes the schools to withdraw a student who:
1. has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences; and
2. is not receiving instructional services from the local school system through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and/or
3. is subject to compulsory attendance if the local superintendent or designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program.

Students shall be withdrawn retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

Grady County designated personnel will verify student absences before withdrawing.

SURVEILLANCE CAMERA POLICY

Grady County Schools recognizes a need to strike a balance between the individual's right to be free from invasion of privacy and the school's duty to promote a safe environment for all students and faculty.

The purpose of video surveillance is to:
- Promote a safe environment by deterring acts of harassment or assault.
- Deter theft and vandalism and assist in the identification of individuals.
- Assist law enforcement agencies regarding the investigation of any crime that may be depicted.
- Assist in the daily monitoring of student conduct and behavior.

Any person purposely touching, blocking, damaging, and/or causing a surveillance camera to malfunction will be charged with vandalism of school property.

Surveillance cameras operate 24 hours per day, seven days a week and record continuously for several months. Cameras are monitored by designated school officials who may include, but are not limited to, administrators, teachers, and School Resource Officers (SRO).

Surveillance DVDs will not be viewed by or provided to students or parents. However, this does not preclude an administrator or deputy sheriff (SRO) from obtaining the aid of students, faculty, and staff in identifying persons of interest who may be implicated in a surveillance recording. Request to view surveillance evidence will require Grady County School Board approval.

Surveillance evidence may be used to corroborate or verify an act has taken place, identify a specific person(s) involved in an act/incident, and/or to witness the extent of which an act

has been committed.

TEACHER/PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS - PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, the Grady County School District will provide, upon request, certain information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

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

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact your student's principal.

Derecho de los padres a conocer la información

De conformidad con los requisitos de la Ley Cada Estudiante Triunfa, usted puede solicitar información sobre las calificaciones profesionales de los maestros y/o paraprofesionales de su(s). Se puede solicitar la siguiente información:

- Si el maestro del estudiante- o ha cumplido con los criterios estatales de calificación y licencia para los niveles de grado y las áreas temáticas en las que el maestro proporciona instrucción;
- Está enseñando bajo emergencia u otro estatus provisional a través del cual se han renunciado a los criterios estatales de calificación o licencia; Y o está enseñando en el campo de la disciplina de la certificación del maestro.
- Si el niño recibe servicios de paraprofesionales y, en caso afirmativo, sus cualificaciones. Si desea solicitar información sobre las calificaciones del maestro y/o paraprofesional de su hijo, comuníquese con la escuela de su hijo o con la oficina del Título I.

TRANSPORTATION

The school district provides free transportation to and from school for students living in Grady County. Once a student boards the bus, he/she becomes the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day. All students using bus transportation must abide by the rules which are established to ensure the safety of all passengers.

VISITORS

Grady County Schools welcomes parents, guardians, and other interested members of the community to visit the school. Visitors must bring a valid I.D. and are required to first sign-in at the school office to obtain a visitor's pass.

WATER SAFETY

HB 402 - Edna Mae McGovern Act

At the beginning of each school year, each public school or local school system shall provide the parents and guardians of each child enrolled in such school or school system with information on the important role water safety education courses and swimming lessons play in saving lives. Such information shall be provided in electronic or hard copy format. Such information shall include options, if available within the vicinity of the public school or local school system, for age-appropriate water safety education courses and swimming lessons that can result in a certificate indicating successful completion, including courses and lessons offered for free or at a reduced price; provided, however, that such information shall be provided directly to students who are 18 years of age or older. Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to require public schools or local school systems to: (1) Provide water safety education courses or swimming lessons to students; or (2) Excuse students from all or part of any school day to attend water safety education courses or swimming lessons.

Why Is Water Safety So Important?

It only takes a moment. A child or weak swimmer can drown in the time it takes to reply to a text, check a fishing line or apply sunscreen. Death and injury from drownings happen every day in home pools and hot tubs, at the beach or in oceans, lakes, rivers and streams, bathtubs, and even buckets. Working together to improve water competency– which includes swimming skills, water smarts and helping others– water activities can be safer… and just as much fun.

Take these sensible precautions when you're around water (even if you're not planning to swim):

1. Know your limitations, including physical fitness, medical conditions.
2. Never swim alone; swim with lifeguards and/or water watchers present.
3. Wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket appropriate for your weight and size and the water activity. Always wear a life jacket while boating, regardless of swimming skill.
4. Understand the dangers of hyperventilation and hypoxic blackout.
5. Know how to call for help.
6. Understand and adjust for the unique risks of the water environment you are in, such as river currents, ocean rip currents, water temperature, shallow or unclear water
7. Underwater hazards, such as vegetation and animals.

Swimming Skills

Learn how to perform these 5 skills in every type of water environment that you may encounter (such as in home pools, oceans, lakes, rivers and streams):

1. Enter water that's over your head, then return to the surface.
2. Float or tread water for at least 1 minute.
3. Turn over and turn around in the water.
4. Swim at least 25 yards.
5. Exit the water.

These actions will help your family avoid emergencies– and help you respond if an emergency occurs:

1. Paying close attention to children or weak swimmers you are supervising in or near water.
2. Knowing the signs that someone is drowning.
3. Knowing ways to safely assist a drowning person, such as "reach or throw, don't go".
4. Knowing CPR and first aid.