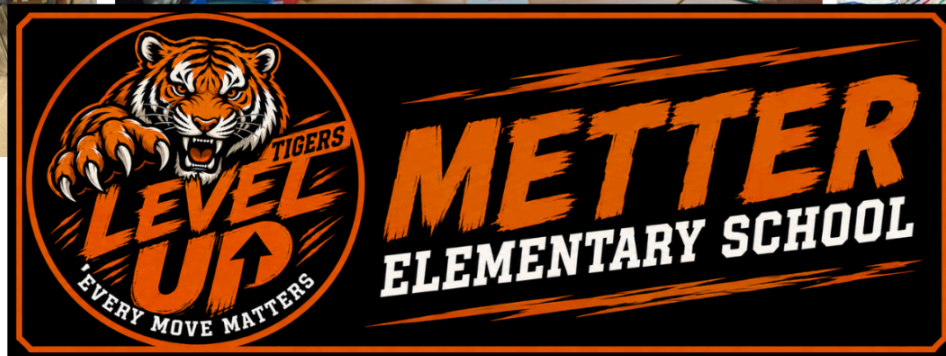




STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

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Metter Elementary School

2026-2027 Student Handbook

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2026-2027 School Calendar

August 3	First Day of School
September 7	Labor Day- School Holiday for Students and Staff
September 8	School Holidays for Students/Professional Learning for Staff
September 8	Title 1/Family Welcome Night
October 19-20	School Holidays for Students and Staff
October 21	School Holiday for Students/Professional Learning for Staff
October 21	MES Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 23- 27	Thanksgiving Break- School Holidays for Students and Staff
December 17	School Holiday for Students/Professional Learning for Staff
December 18 - January 4	School Holidays for Students and Staff
January 5-6	School Holidays for Students/Professional Learning for Staff
January 7	School Resumes
January 18	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day- School Holiday
February 24	School Holiday for Students/Professional Learning for Staff
February 25-26	School Holidays for Students and Staff
March 22	School Holiday for Students/Professional Learning for Staff
March 22	MES Parent/Teacher Conferences
April 9	School Holiday for Students/Professional Learning for Staff
April 12-16	Spring Break- School Holidays for Students and Staff
May 25	Last Day of School
May 26	Post Planning/Professional Learning for Staff

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Candler County Vision/Mission

Vision - Our vision for Candler County Charter School System is for all students to meet or exceed Georgia Accountability measures, for the graduation rate to continuously improve, exceeding 90% and above, and for the system to perform on or above state averages in all subject areas.

We will accomplish this vision with high expectations inclusive of acceleration opportunities, high impact literacy practices, multiple interventions, student, community and parent engagement and alignment from Pre-K-12.

As a result of our success, we will attract high performing teachers and new business and industry, and our graduates will be prepared to continue post-secondary options and/or pursue gainful employment through a variety of CTAE (Career, Technology, and Agriculture Education) offerings and a broad based soft skills curriculum.

Mission - To stimulate growth in student achievement by continuing efforts to advance the development of all stakeholders-students, parents, staff, and the community-thus creating outstanding citizens and employees.

Belief/Commitment Statements

We believe and are committed to...

- Continuously improving the graduation rate;
- An aligned standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment that provides for extended learning opportunities for **all** students;
- Innovative learning opportunities in the areas of Fine Arts, CTAE (Career, Technology, Agriculture Education) offerings and Acceleration with emphasis on a broad based soft skills curriculum to enhance career opportunities for students;
- Effective teaching that energizes and maximizes active learning for **all** students;
- Significantly improving the literacy level of all students;
- Data driven collaborative decision making;
- Professional growth for all of our colleagues;
- Student, parent and community involvement to enhance learning.

All Visitors

Sign-In --- All visitors (including Parents/Guardians) are required to **sign in and obtain a visitor's pass** from the office before entering any area on campus. Parents should **not** make phone calls to students during school hours. Parents may leave a message with office personnel who will communicate with teachers and staff. Parents must notify the school of any changes in student information such as address, home phone number, emergency contacts, etc.

Georgia Code 20-2-1180 regarding loitering at or disrupting schools to require that immediately upon entering the campus, "any person who is not a student at such school, an employee of the school system, a school board member, an approved volunteer following the established guidelines of the school or a person who has been invited to or otherwise authorized to be at the school by a principal, teacher, counselor, or other authorized employee of the school shall check-in at the designated location as stated on posted signs and provides a reason for his or her presence at the school immediately upon entering the campus." Reminder: It is against the law for any sex offender to be on a public school campus.

All Candler County Schools are **Tobacco-free** campuses and it is illegal to engage in the possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs while on the premises.

Administration reserves the right to ask any visitors causing a disruption to learning or safety of the students or staff to leave the campus. Visitors that have disruptive behavior may be prohibited from coming onto the campus.

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Enrollment and Withdrawal Information

Enrollment:

Note: All new and returning students must have updated information submitted through our online platform on Infinite Campus yearly. Proof of residency is required for all students each year, regardless of permission to attend Candler County Schools. Parents/guardians will receive a unique login code to complete this registration in lieu of first day packets.

New Students: If your child is enrolling for the first time or returning to Candler County Schools, parents/legal guardians must submit the following documents through the virtual enrollment platform. If you need additional help or support, please contact the MES Registrar.

1. **Proof of Residency** at the time of enrollment. Documents that prove residency must show an in-county address and can include one of the following: utility bill, bank statement, insurance policy, mortgage/lease papers, tax assessment, or professional licenses. **Important note: Cell phone bills are not acceptable.**
2. **Certified Birth Certificate**- mandated by Georgia law
3. **Student's Social Security Number**
4. **Certificate of Ear, Eye, and Dental Examination**
5. **Certificate of Immunization**- mandated by Georgia law. Immunizations and health certificates can be obtained from the Candler County Health Department or from a private physician. (Out of state certificates must be converted to Georgia certificates.) The immunization requirements for school and childcare facility attendance are outlined in the Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231) and the Policy Guides 3231INS and 3231REQ. Childcare facility operators, school personnel, healthcare providers and parents are responsible for seeing that these rules and laws are enforced. Required vaccines:
 - a. Diphtheria-The "D" part of the DTaP, Tdap or Td vaccines protects against diphtheria.
 - b. Hepatitis A and B
 - c. Haemophilus influenzae Type B (Hib)- The first "M" in the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine protects against this disease.
 - d. Mumps- The second "M" in the MMR vaccine protects against this disease.
 - e. Pertussis (whooping cough)- The "P" part of the DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) and Tdap vaccines protects against this disease.
 - f. Polio- Inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) or oral polio vaccine (OPV) protects against this disease.
 - g. Rubella (German measles)- The "R" in the MMR vaccine protects against this disease.
 - h. Tetanus (lockjaw) -The "T" in DTaP, Tdap or Td vaccine protects against this disease. Everyone needs a tetanus booster every 10 years.
 - i. Varicella zoster (chickenpox)
 - j. Pneumococcal

Transferring Students: If you are transferring a student from another school, you will need to provide the above mentioned items along with the following:

1. **Withdrawal Form** from the previous school including the school's name, address, city, and phone number
2. **Records from the previous school** including:
 - a. Current grades
 - b. Current discipline file
 - c. Current Individual Education Plan (IEP)
 - d. State standardized test scores

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- e. Any other information pertaining to educational needs

Withdrawal: Parents/Legal Guardians needing to withdraw a child from school must notify the school as soon as possible before the student's withdrawal date. Please understand all school books (textbooks and books checked out from the media center) must be returned.

Student Arrival/Dismissal

Arrival

All parents will be able to walk their children to their classroom for grades Pre K – 5 for the first three days of school. After the first three days of school, all parents will be able to walk their children to the front doors of the school at which time the students will walk themselves to class with assistance from multiple staff members along the routes to various hallways. Special circumstances will be handled by calling the school Principal and then reporting to the front office. Examples might include students carrying heavy/bulky projects to class, students having experienced recent emotional trauma at home, physical limitations such as wheelchair etc. Parents are always encouraged to set up parent/teacher conferences and school personnel will be glad to schedule a time to meet in the front office. School personnel are at each entrance to welcome students and are able to assist students as needed. Limiting the number of guests in the building in the morning arrival time will help ensure a safer environment for all students.

Staff supervision of children begins at 7:20 AM. Please do not drop your student off at school prior to 7:20 AM. After 7:20, there are designated areas for dropping off students. The three separate locations for car rider drop off are the Main Entrance (for Metter Middle School students and their siblings), Oak Tree, and the Pond (for students at MES). **Please follow the directions of the faculty/staff supervising the drop off process.**

Please note: **The drop off lines should be moving consistently and constantly** to get vehicles in and out of the parking lot and to prevent backup onto Highway 129 and Oak Tree. In order to help the process run smoothly, do not exit your car to aid students-we have staff in place for this. Should you need to speak to a teacher or bring something into school for your child, park in the lot out in front of the school to do so. We ask that parents do not “park” out back around the Oak Tree drop off as this is designated for staff parking only** Park in the front of the building* if you are coming inside with your child. When dropping off middle school students at Oak Tree the middle school students walk along the canopy to enter into the middle school hallway. No middle school students are allowed to walk through the elementary school area.

Dismissal

Note: A signed note from home must be sent to change your child's transportation. **No changes in transportation will be accepted by phone or after 1:00 PM.** *For safety reasons, if a child is unsure of their destination or bus route and staff is unable to verify the information with a parent/guardian, the student will be kept at school until a parent/guardian is able to pick them up.*

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Student dismissal is at 3:10 PM. Students begin transitioning to their dismissal locations around 2:45, therefore, there will be strict enforcement of no one called to the front office to go home beginning at 2:30 PM.

Car riders Dismissal:

To enhance organization, safety, and accountability during our afternoon dismissal, we will continue the use of parent pickup identification tags.

At open house, parent pickup identification tags will be issued to parents of car riders that do not have one. The numbers displayed on these tags will be used to match students with tag holders. Once a vehicle enters the pickup line with its tag on display, school staff will add the appropriate student(s) to a car line cue. When the vehicle enters the pickup zone, students will be released to a designated spot for pickup.

Car Riders Arrival:7:20-7:45 AM

Main Entrance Drop Off/Pick Up: 7:20-7:45 AM/3:05-3:20 PM

1. This area is for Metter Middle School students and their MES siblings to be dropped off/picked up.
2. Please proceed slowly into the drop off lane directly in front of the school.
3. Please pay attention to directions given by Candler County BOE faculty/staff including the following:
 - a. Pull as far around as you can toward the end of the circle so we can fit as many vehicles in the front as possible
 - b. Stop for pedestrians when staff directs you to do so.
 - c. Do not stop directly in front of the building if there is room to pull further around the half circle.
 - d. Do not stop in the middle of the crosswalk.
 - e. Please be considerate of the others in the drop off line

Oak Tree Drop Off/Pick Up:

1. This area is for Metter Elementary School students to be dropped off/picked up.
2. Please proceed slowly into the drop off lane.
3. Please pay attention to directions given by Candler County BOE faculty/staff including the following:
 - a. Pull as far around as you can toward the end of the circle so we can fit as many vehicles in the circle as possible.

The Pond Drop Off/Pick Up:

1. This area is for Metter Elementary School students and MMS siblings to be dropped off only.
2. Please proceed slowly into the drop off lane.
3. Please pay attention to the directions given by Candler County BOE faculty/staff including the following:
 - a. Pull as far around as you can toward the end of the circle so we can fit as many vehicles in the circle as possible.

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- b. Do not stop directly in front of the walkway to the door if there is room to pull further around the half circle
- c. Please be considerate of others in the drop off line

Bus Riders:

Parents should request bus transportation for their child by contacting Travis Lanier at 685-5713, ext. 0568. Students riding the bus are required to abide by Candler County BOE rules.

Every effort is made by school staff and bus drivers to get your child home safely. Please be aware of the following bus guidelines:

1. It is vital that a responsible adult be at home to meet your child's bus. Our bus drivers' responsibility ends at the bus stop. If bus drivers are aware that no adult is home, your child will be returned to the school until a parent/guardian can pick them up.
2. Parents should call the school if their child does not arrive home at the expected time.

Oak Tree Road: Public access to Oak Tree Road will be closed during school days between the hours of 8:15 am and 2:15 pm. Oak Tree Road will still be a vital access for arrival time and departure time but will be inaccessible from 8:15 am to 2:15 pm for the purpose of creating a safer campus. We apologize for any inconveniences this might cause the public.

Parent/Guardian Information

CANDLER COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM SCHOOL GOVERNANCE TEAM

A School-Based Governance Team was established at the Candler County School System on March 13, 2015. The name of this governing body will be the Metter K-5 School Governance Team, hereinafter referred to as the SGT, organized under the authority of Georgia law (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2063.2, et seq.) and the Charter entered into between the State Board of Education and the Candler County School System Board of Education with a commencement date of July 1, 2015 ("Charter").

The purpose of the SGT is to make decisions that support the continuous improvement of the school in accordance with the provisions of the Charter. The members of the SGT are accountable to the constituents they serve and will perform those functions and duties and have those responsibilities of a school governance team as are set forth in the Charter. The SGT understands that the Charter governs the operations of Candler County School System. To the extent that there is any inconsistency between these bylaws and the Charter, the Charter will govern.

Parent Responsibilities

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Parent/School Communication: Parents should check your student's book bag **every single day**. Please make sure that any communication regarding academics, behavior issues, transportation changes, excuses for absences, etc. are in your student's book bag. Also, please check for any communication from the school. Communication may include student agendas, informational letters, permission slips, changes of transportation, lunch money, requests for conferences, discipline referrals, fliers regarding upcoming events, etc. Please remember that a signature may be required on many of these items. Make sure that all money sent to school is in a sealed labeled envelope.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parents will be advised of their student's progress in two formal conferences (Fall and Spring) with their child's teacher(s). Parents will be notified in advance of a schedule for conferences. At the conferences, parents will be given ample time to discuss every aspect of their student's learning. Parents may request additional conferences on other dates by contacting the student's teacher(s) to schedule an appointment. Teacher(s) and/or administration may request additional conferences if deemed necessary due to academic and/or behavioral concerns.

Visitors On Campus: All visitors (including parents/legal guardians) are required to sign in and obtain a visitor's pass from the main office before entering any area on campus. All teacher meetings will be held in the front office suite. This includes parent conferences. Visitors should enter the PreK-8 Complex at the front entrance.

Parents may celebrate their child's birthday at school in one of the following ways:

- 1- Send food to be shared with the entire class during lunch
- 2- Pre-arranged time with teacher to have a celebration in the courtyard

Administration reserves the right to ask visitors to leave campus if they are causing disruption to learning or endangering the safety of students or staff. Visitors who display disruptive behavior may be escorted off campus by the SRO and/or prohibited from coming onto campus.

All Candler County Schools are tobacco-free campuses and it is illegal to engage in the possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs while on the premises---this includes while in the line for drop off or dismissal - the CAMPUS is tobacco and smoke-free.

Loitering in or on a school safety zone

§ 20-2-1180. Loitering in or on a school safety zone; penalty; required to check in of visitors; posting signs of required check-in

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to remain in or on any school safety zone in this state or to remain in or on any such school safety zone when such person does not have a legitimate cause or need to be present thereon. Each principal or designee of each public or private school in this state shall have the authority to exercise such control over the buildings and grounds upon which a school is located so as to prohibit any person who does not have a legitimate need or cause to be present thereon from loitering upon such premises. Each principal or designee of each public or private school in this state shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency to prohibit any person who does not have a legitimate need or cause to be present therein from loitering within the school safety

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zone.

Cause

(b) Any person who:

(1) Is present in or on any school safety zone in this state and willfully fails to remove himself or herself from such school safety zone after the principal or designee of such school requests him or her to do so; or

(2) Fails to check-in at the designated location as required by subsection (c) of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.

(c) Upon entering any school building between the official starting time and the official dismissal time, any person who is not a student at such school, an employee of the school or school system, a school board member, an approved volunteer following the established guidelines of the school, or a person who has been invited to or otherwise authorized to be at the school by a principal, teacher, counselor, or other authorized employee of the school shall check-in at the designated location as stated on posted signs and provide a reason for his or her presence at the school.

(c.) Subsections (b) and (c) of this Code section shall not apply to:

(1) Law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians or paramedics, or any public safety or emergency management officials in the performance of an emergency call or to other persons making authorized deliveries to the school;

(2) Any person entering a school on election day, for purposes of voting, when the school serves as an official polling place; or

(3) Any person attending or participating in an academic or athletic event while remaining in the authorized area or a parent, grandparent, or guardian listed on a child's pick-up list who fails to sign-in while delivering school supplies, food, clothing, other legitimate business and who has not previously been sanctioned by school officials for disrupting a school.

(d) A school administrator or his or her designee may ask any visitor to explain his or her presence in the school building at any time when the school is in official session.

(e) If the school posts signs on entrances to the school requiring visitors to check-in at the designated location, such signs shall be deemed prima-facie evidence that persons entering the school were on notice of the requirements of this Code section.

(f) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to prohibit school administrators from prohibiting the admission of any person who has violated school policy or state law.

(g) As used in this Code section, the term "school safety zone" shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code

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§ 20-2-1182. Persons other than students who insult or abuse school teachers in presence of pupils may be ordered to leave school premises

Any parent, guardian, or person other than a student at the public school in question who has been advised that minor children are present and who continues to upbraid, insult, or abuse any public school teacher, public school administrator, or public school bus driver in the presence and hearing of a pupil while on the premises of any public school or public school bus may be ordered by any of the above-designated school personnel to leave the school premises or school bus, and upon failure to do so such person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$500.00.

History Code 1981, § 20-2-1182, enacted by Ga. L. 1989, p. 1394, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 4, § 20.

Deliveries to Students: Students may not receive deliveries of balloons, flowers, fast food meals, etc.

Attendance, Absences, Dismissals

Attendance Requirements of the Candler County Board of Education shall be consistent with State of Georgia compulsory attendance laws.

Attendance, Absences, and Excuses: It is the expectation of the Candler County Board of Education that no child accumulates more than five (5) absences, including those excused and unexcused, during the school year. It is mandatory that students attend school on time and stay throughout the school day. Tardiness and leaving school early are strongly discouraged.

Candler County Schools require students to be in attendance in accordance with requirements of the compulsory school attendance law. Attendance at school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and child. Any child subject to compulsory attendance, who during the calendar year has more than **five** days of **unexcused absences**, is considered high risk for truancy by the Candler County Board of Education policy. *School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused for the purpose of determining student truancy.* The school is responsible for informing the parent/guardian of the child's absence and/or truancy. After a student accumulates **ten (10)** days of **unexcused absences** and is deemed to be truant by the state board policy, and after required parent and student notification, the school Truancy Officer/Social Worker may refer the student to CHINS (Children in Need of Services) Hearing. At the CHINS Hearing a Plan of Action will be initiated for the student and parent. If the student and/or parent does not adhere to the action plan set forth, a referral will be made to appear before the Judge of the Department of Juvenile Justice.

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It is the policy of the Candler County Board of Education that students must attend school each day during the school year that school is in session for the entire school day, unless the student is absent due to one or more of the reasons specified in law and State Board of Education Rule 160-5 -1 -.10 as follows:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others.
2. A serious illness or death in the 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 to vote in a public election, which shall not exceed one day.
7. A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or National Guard, and such parent/guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five (5) school days per school year.
8. Students shall be counted present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly and/or while representing the school in an activity approved by the school.
9. Foster care students are counted present when attending court proceedings related to their foster care.

The student must submit to the principal documentation in the form required by the principal within 3 days after returning to school. Documentation will be evaluated by the principal or a designee to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. If the required documentation is not furnished or the reason for the absence is other than stated above, the absence shall be considered as unexcused.

If a student is found guilty of Truancy, The Court may find the parent guilty of violation of the mandatory school attendance law and impose the penalties of that law. Ga. Law 20-2-690.1 states that "Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of a child or children and who shall violate this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school in violation of this part after the child's school system notifies the parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of a child of five unexcused days of absence for a child shall constitute a separate offense."

Tardy: Class begins promptly at 7:45 AM. Students are considered tardy and must have a note from the front office to enter class at 7:45 . If a student at MES wishes to eat breakfast then they must be at school by 7:35.

Students must be accompanied by the parent/guardian and report to the office upon arrival if it is at or after 7:45 AM. If a student comes in after 11:30 AM, they will be counted absent for the day. If a student has four (4) unexcused tardies, parents/guardians may be contacted by school personnel including, but not limited to a counselor or administrator, to address the concern. When making appointments for children, please plan ahead to prevent students from being tardy, if possible. **Frequent tardiness will be reported to the Candler County Board of Education Truancy Officer.**

Early Dismissals: Any student picked up during the school day must be signed out by a parent/guardian in the front office. Students leaving before 11:30 AM will be counted absent for the day. The end of the school day is a

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very busy time. Therefore, students will not be allowed to be dismissed from class after 2:30 PM. When making appointments for children, please plan ahead to prevent leaving school early, if possible. Frequent early dismissals will be reported to the Candler County Board of Education Truancy Officer.

Health, Wellness, and Nutrition Information

School Nutrition: All students at Metter Elementary School are eligible to receive a free breakfast and lunch every day. There are snacks that are available for purchase through the cafeteria as well as through Snack Shack or other fundraisers. *Pre-K students will also receive a snack and drink due to a CEP form required to be completed by parents.*

School Lunch Guidelines:

1. Fast food meals are prohibited.
2. No sodas are allowed.
3. All lunches brought from home should be packed in appropriate containers for proper food safety.

Lunchroom Rules:

1. Practice good table manners.
2. Place all paper products, trays, trash, and utensils in the appropriate places when you are finished.
3. Make sure the area you sit in is clean when you leave.
4. Students should not share food (from the lunchroom or from home).

All questions regarding the School Nutrition Program should be addressed to Kerri Dennis (kdennis@metter.org) or Michelle Holloway (mholloway@metter.org) in the School Nutrition Office. Their phone number is 912-685-5050 ext. 0390/0391.

Health and Wellness

Social and Emotional Wellness

School Counselor - Teachers, parents, or students themselves, may make referrals to the counselors. The counselor educates students about communication, coping skills, decision-making, study skills, managing anger, etc. The counselors also visit classrooms and work with small groups. Parents may contact the counselors (Alesha Warner, awarner@metter.org, ext. 0443 or Kristen Cason kcason@metter.org ext. 0373) if they have questions or feel they need to refer their student. Communication between the counselors and parents is encouraged. Counselors must adhere to national, state, and local statutes, policies, and regulations and the ethical standards of the American School Counselor Association. The counselors are accessible for all students and their parents during the entire school day.

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Medical Wellness

School Nurse - The school nurses will perform health screenings, basic first aid, dispense medications, and provide health instruction to students. Contact the school nurses (Brittany Hendrix bhendrix@metter.org ext. 0393 or Melissa Crooms mcrooms@metter.org ext. 0394) for further information on this program.

The school nurse can:

1. See all children with permission slips signed by their parents/guardians granting permission for treatment by the school nurse. (Nurses will not refuse to treat a child in the case of an emergency, even if a form is not on file.)
2. Administer ALL prescribed medications that must be taken between the hours of 7:30AM and 3:00PM. Parents must send a letter specifying when the medicine is to be given at school. All prescription medication must be in its original container with all appropriate information including the patient name, name of medication, prescribing doctor's name, all administration instructions, pharmacy name and information, and the date the prescription was filled.
3. Counsel students, parents, and teachers as well as provide additional information needed to resolve issues.
4. Administer Tylenol (from clinic stock) as needed, up to two times per week, unless there is an extreme case need.
5. Administer over the counter medicines for misc. minor health issues (stomach aches, headaches, sour stomach, treatment for minor scrapes and cuts, etc.)
6. Administer emergency care to students/staff.
7. Evaluate minor illnesses, rashes, etc.
8. Conduct vision and hearing screenings.
9. Provide blood pressure screenings.
10. Provide information on nutrition and healthy weight management.
11. Monitor children with chronic illnesses.
12. Check for head lice. Regular class checks are conducted. The school nurse will check students entering school for the first time. Candler County has a no nit policy. Parents/Guardians will be notified to pick a child up if an infestation is detected. After appropriate treatment, a parent/guardian must bring the child in for re-examination by the school nurse. A child may not ride the bus or attend school until they are given a "clear" rating by the school nurse. **The school nurse is the medical expert at school and will have the final say on head lice.**
13. Teachers will not contact the parent or guardian regarding medical illness or injury unless instructed to by the nurse or school administrator.

Head Lice Policy

Candler County Schools has a no-nit policy. All nits have to be removed from the hair to be cleared for school attendance. Monthly class checks are conducted when deemed necessary. Students entering for the first time will be checked.

Parents/guardian will be notified to pick the child up if he/she is infested. After treatment, the parent/guardian must have the student cleared by the school nurse. The infected student cannot ride the bus until given the "clear" by the nurse. Rechecks will be the following morning at 8:00 A.M. and the student must be accompanied by a parent/guardian during the lice check.

Bed Bug Policy

If a bed bug is found present on a student or in a student's belongings, the student must have clearance to return to school.

To be cleared to return, the student's home must be inspected by a licensed exterminator. 10 days are allotted for having a clearance or treatment to the home. After 10 days, the student will be considered absent. A letter from the exterminator will need to be presented to the school nurse or counselor. If bed bugs are found, notification of treatment of the home is also

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needed. If a student moves to a different location before clearance, a clearance letter from the exterminator will need to be presented for the new location.

Sick Policy

Student must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication to return to school.

Student must be free of vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.

Student must be free of diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.

Any student sent home by the nurse for illness will be given an excused absence for the day sent home and one day following. Any missing days after that will require a doctor's note. The school nurse is the medical expert and will let parents know when a child needs clearance from a doctor to return.

Note: Students may not share any medication (prescription or over the counter) from the nurse or brought from home, with any other students.

Medication Administration Protocol: The school nurse will have mandatory meetings with the parents/guardians of children who will be taking medication at school. These meetings will consist of the student's parent/guardian, student's teachers, and the school nurse or designated person responsible for the medication being administered. Most meetings will be scheduled during pre-planning or the first week of school, depending upon when the parent/guardian is able to attend. Other meetings may be called should problems occur.

During the meeting, discussion will include the student's diagnosis and what medications he/she will be taking. This protocol applies to all problems such as ADHD, ADD, asthma, food allergies, seizures, and diabetes. Forms will be signed and questions will be addressed during the meetings. The parent and physician sheet will be explained and signed. A valid phone number for the student's physician and parent/guardian are expected at that time and will be included in the student's file. The nurse will be granted permission to call/write to the physician with any concerns, at any time during the school year. The parent/guardian is responsible for making sure that the supply of medicine is refilled and given to the nurse in a timely manner.

Please note that the nurse may not transport any child anywhere. If necessary, other staff members may transport a student to the nearest medical facility. The principal must be notified in writing, if a parent objects to his/her child being transported during an emergency situation.

Dental Van: Candler County has a dental program for school children. The Dental Van comes from Atlanta at least four times a year to provide dental care to students. Applications are sent out at the beginning and middle of the school year.

Sleep: Elementary students require approximately 8-12 hours of sleep each night. Students are expected to remain awake and attentive during school hours to ensure they benefit fully from their educational experience. Sleeping in the classroom, hallways, or other areas of the school grounds is not safe or permitted. If a student feels unwell or overly tired, the teacher will send them to the nurse. Parents will be contacted if necessary. Repeated incidents of sleeping in school will result in the student being sent home and placed on a behavior contract. Parents and guardians will be contacted to discuss the situation and to work on strategies to address any underlying issues.

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*1-3rd offenses: Student will see counselor and have an opportunity for a short nap before returning to class;
Parent/guardian will be contacted
4th offense and beyond: Parent/guardian will pick up the child
Before returning to school, a meeting will be held with the Intervention team to provide necessary strategies to ensure the student is successful.*

Odor of Prohibited Substances or Other Disruptive Odors

If a student arrives at school with a strong odor reasonably suspected to be associated with marijuana, tobacco, vaping products, alcohol, another prohibited substance, or any odor that substantially disrupts the learning environment, school administration or designee will address the concern in a private and respectful manner.

The school may investigate the concern, contact the student's parent or guardian, and take reasonable steps to minimize disruption to the learning environment. Such steps may include temporarily relocating the student to a supervised setting, allowing or requiring the student to change clothes, removing or securing items carrying the odor, or accessing appropriate school-based support. Any search of a student or the student's belongings will be conducted in accordance with district policy and applicable law.

Each occurrence will be documented by school administration, including the observed concern, steps taken, parent/guardian contact, and any support(s) offered. Repeated occurrences may result in a parent/guardian conference and development of a support or intervention plan.

If the odor cannot be reasonably resolved at school and continues to substantially disrupt the learning environment, or if there is concern that the student may be impaired, unsafe, or exposed to illegal substances, the parent or guardian may be required to pick up the student. Any temporary relocation, removal from class, or removal from school will be documented in accordance with applicable attendance, discipline, and special education requirements.

When there is reasonable cause to believe that a student's welfare or safety may be at risk, or that a violation of law may have occurred, the school may refer the matter to the appropriate school system personnel, the School Resource Officer, the Department of Family and Children Services, and/or other appropriate authorities in accordance with law and district procedures.

Student Expectations

Dress Code:

Note: Please mark your child's belongings, including school supplies and clothing, to prevent loss/theft. Unclaimed clothing and other items are donated or discarded if not identified in a timely manner.

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1. Clothing needs to be clean, neat, and worn and sized properly. Immodest clothing is prohibited.
 - a. This includes, but is not limited to low-cut necklines,
 - b. Clothing with holes exposing skin, including below the knees (i.e., slashed/torn shirts or pants/shorts), and
 - c. Skirts and shorts must be at least mid-thigh in length.
2. Sheer lace, cropped tops, sunglasses, hats, bandanas, headscarves, headpieces, or chains are not acceptable. Tights, leggings, jeggings, or yoga pants are prohibited unless the top garment is at least mid-thigh.
3. Bare midriffs or midriffs that show when arms are raised or in a bent body position are prohibited.
4. Tops that leave the shoulder bare are not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to tank tops, halter-tops, muscle shirts, and spaghetti straps.
5. Sleeveless tops must fit properly on the shoulder and around the underarm opening.
6. Facial piercings and unnatural hair colors are prohibited (other than pink during the month of October).
7. Shoes must be worn at all times.
8. Students may dress up during designated spirit/dress up days, but they may not dress in scary costumes.

Prohibited Apparel:

- Trench coats
- Clothing with derogatory, terrorist, insulting, sexual, violent, or insinuating messages
- Clothing with advertisements for drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Clothing or jewelry related to gang activity
- Cleated shoes and shoe skates

NOTE: The administration has the authority to determine appropriate or inappropriate appearance.

If children are inappropriately dressed for school, they may be asked to add clothing to cover up the dress code violation, or parents may be notified to immediately bring a change of clothes that will comply with the dress code. If the student is unable to make the necessary corrections to his/her clothing, the student will remain isolated for the remainder of the school day.

Discipline

Student Threats: Any student who demands money or property of another student by threatening the other student with physical harm or intimidation of any sort is punishable by suspension and may be reported to local authorities.

Bullying: Candler County Board of Education believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All schools within the district have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance among students, staff, and volunteers. Behavior that infringes on the safety of any student will not be

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tolerated. A student shall not bully, harass, or intimidate another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes but is not limited to: direct physical contact such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults such as teasing or name-calling; the use of electronic methods to harass, threaten, or humiliate, and social isolation and/or manipulation. The school district policy prohibiting bullying is included in the student code of conduct and includes but is not limited to the following:

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

Prohibited Behaviors/Bullying Policy: Bullying, harassment, and intimidation may include many different behaviors which targeted and repeated ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate another student or school employee. Prohibited behaviors must occur on the property of the public school, at an event within the jurisdiction of a public school, or at a school-sponsored event. Disciplinary action may also be necessary if off-campus behavior results in a disruption to the school environment. Examples of prohibited behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. Unwanted teasing
2. Threats, taunts, and intimidation through words and/or gestures
3. Physical violence and/or attacks
4. Extortion
5. Destruction of school or personal property
6. Theft of money and/or personal possessions
7. Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
8. Public humiliation
9. Social exclusion, including incitement and/or coercion
10. Rumors or spreading of falsehoods
11. Stalking
12. Cyberstalking or engaging in conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to the victim
13. Cyberbullying or the willful, hostile and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, email, blogs, social networking websites (e.g. Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, SnapChat, etc.) chat rooms, texts, and instant messaging
14. The use of cameras or camera phones to take embarrassing photographs of students or school employees and posting them online
15. Sending abusive or threatening text messages or instant messages

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16. Using websites to circulate gossip and rumors to other students

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be taken after each incident of bullying and upon a finding of guilt. Disciplinary action after the first incident of bullying may include but is not limited to the following (not listed in any specific order):

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

If necessary, counseling and other interventions should also be provided to address the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of students who are victims of bullying and students who commit an offense of bullying.

Students, parents/guardians, or other stakeholders may report incidents of bullying to an administrator, teacher, counselor, or other staff member by using the school district's complaint procedures or by calling the Georgia Department of Education's 1-877-SAY-STOP (1-877-729-7867) School Safety Hotline. Please note: Any form of electronic bullying (cyberbullying) using school equipment, school networks, e-mail systems, or committed at school is strictly prohibited. The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

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

The following actions will be taken when bullying is reported:

1. **Investigate-** Upon receipt of any report of bullying, schools will direct an immediate investigation involving appropriate personnel. The investigation should begin no later than the following school day. The investigation shall include interviewing the alleged perpetrator(s) and victim(s), identified witnesses, teacher(s), and staff members and reviewing video surveillance, if available. School police, school counselors, school social workers, and/or other support staff should be utilized for their expertise as determined by the circumstances of the matter.
2. **Notify-** At an appropriate time during or after the investigation, parents/guardians of the accused and the victim should be notified. If the incident involves an injury or similar situation, appropriate medical attention should be provided and the parent/guardian should be notified immediately.

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3. **Discipline-** Upon confirming that bullying has occurred, the accused student should be charged with bullying and given an age-appropriate consequence which shall include, at minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling as appropriate under the circumstances. Students in grades six through twelve found to have committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year shall be assigned to an alternative school through appropriate due process by disciplinary hearing officers, panels, or tribunals. Schools should clearly communicate to all parties that retaliation following a report of bullying is strictly prohibited and may result in strong disciplinary action.
4. **Follow Up-** Follow up is important to the accused and the victim. Implement a planned method to provide after-care and follow up. Reiterate to all the previously stated prohibition on retaliation. Discipline for any act of bullying shall be within the discretion of the principal, which may range from a reprimand to out-of-school suspension. However, upon a finding that a student has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, at a minimum, the student shall be assigned to the alternative school or other alternative education program. The Superintendent shall develop rules and procedures, which carry out the provisions of this policy. In addition, the Superintendent shall provide that students and parents of students are notified of this prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by the posting of such information in each middle and high school and by the inclusion of such information in student and parent handbooks.

Cyber-Bullying:

Bullying, including cyberbullying, is strictly prohibited. Bullying is defined consistent with Georgia law and includes any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury, any intentional display of force that causes fear of immediate bodily harm, or any intentional written, verbal, physical, or electronic act that a reasonable person would perceive as intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate and that causes harm, substantially interferes with a student's education or rights, creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school."

This policy applies to acts that occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, at school-related functions or activities, including extracurricular activities, and through the use of data, software, or electronic technology accessed through Candler County Schools technology resources.

Cyberbullying means bullying that involves the use of electronic communication, including communication devices and services such as cellular telephones, computers, computer platforms, social media platforms, text messages, chat platforms, and internet sites. Cyberbullying using school equipment, school networks, district accounts, or school-sponsored online activities is strictly prohibited.

Reports of bullying or cyberbullying may be made anonymously or by name to a teacher, counselor, administrator, or other staff member. Anonymous reports will be reviewed and investigated to the extent possible.

When a student is found to have committed an act of bullying or cyberbullying, or when a student is identified as a target or suspected victim, the principal or designee shall notify the parent or guardian by telephone, written notice, or electronic communication, as appropriate.

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Candler County Schools may use technology resources, including filtering and monitoring tools, to help prevent, identify, and respond to possible cyberbullying involving school equipment, district networks, or school-issued accounts.

Confirmed incidents of bullying or cyberbullying may result in age-appropriate disciplinary action, counseling, interventions, loss of privileges, suspension, or other consequences as determined by the principal or designee.

The MES Student Handbook shall be interpreted and applied in alignment with Candler County Board Policy JCDAAG: Bullying and Cyberbullying.

All students and/or staff shall immediately report incidents of bullying, harassment, and intimidation to the school principal or designee. School staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. Each complaint of bullying shall be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling on a school bus to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, and during a school sponsored activity.

Drug Searches: In the continuing effort to maintain drug-free and weapon-free campuses, classrooms, student lockers, and vehicles located on or near campus shall be subject to a drug-sniffing/weapon-sniffing canine search at any time or under any circumstances deemed by school officials to be appropriate.

Crime Violation by Students: Georgia Law states that any child that engages in any criminal acts of aggravated battery, specific weapons offense, any drug related offense, or any sex related offense at school must be reported to the principal. The principal must report these alleged crimes to local law enforcement and the district attorney.

Child Abuse or Neglect: State law dictates that teachers and school staff must report to a child welfare agency any child under 18 years of age who is believed to have suffered abuse or neglect.

Sexual Harassment Policy: It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the district staff to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate oral, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the school staff to a student or when made by any student to another student constitutes sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of an individual's education; or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment.

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

1. Verbal Harassment
2. Pressure for sexual activity
3. Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demanding implications
4. Unwelcome touching
5. Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.

Any person who alleges sexual harassment by a staff member or student in the school district may complain directly to a principal, guidance counselor, or other individual designated to receive such complaints. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future employment, grades, or job assignments. A student or any other person associated with the school who believes he/she or anyone else at school or a school activity has been the victim of sexual harassment should immediately report the incident to a teacher, the principal, or any other staff member on campus.

Notice of Weapons: It is unlawful for any person to carry, possess, or have under control any weapon at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school. The term "weapon" means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind; or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, or any other knife, especially those knives having a blade three or more inches, straight-edge razor or razor blade, spring stick; metal knucks, blackjack; or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a way to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chuck or fighting chain; throwing star, or oriental dart, or any weapon of the like kind; any stun gun or taser.

Punishment for weapons violations may include a fine of not more than \$10,000 and/or mandatory imprisonment for not less than two years. Students or others who violate the provisions of this law shall be referred to appropriate law enforcement officials {O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1}. State law now mandates that a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school should be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year.

The ultimate administrative responsibility for the school system is vested in the superintendent and the ultimate administrative responsibility for the school is vested in the principal. Each of whom must treat each situation, whether disciplinary or administrative, from their perspective of what is in the best interest of the individual employee concerned, the other employees in the system, and the school and the outgoing educational mission of the School and of the Candler County School System.

Student Expulsion for Physical Violence Against a Teacher or School Employee: Students shall be prohibited from acts of physical violence (as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6), bullying (as defined in Code Section 20-2-751.4), physical assault, or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior.

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Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and,

Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Code Section 20-2-751.6 Definition of Physical Violence: Subsection (a) relating to disciplinary policy for students committing acts of physical violence against teachers defines physical violence as either: (1) intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person, or (2) intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or physical harms were in defense of himself or herself, as provided for in Code Section 16-3-221. These two definitions of physical violence become important as the punishment for committing such an act varies according to which type of physical violence has occurred.

Code Section 20-2-751.6 Penalties for Physical Violence; Mandated Tribunals Instead of Hearing Officers: Subsection (b) of this Code Section mandates that local board policies shall provide for the penalties to be assessed against a student found by a tribunal to have committed any act for physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee. Local boards shall appoint a tribunal consisting of three teachers (or certified education personnel) to determine all issues of fact and intent relative to incidents of alleged physical violence. This provision mandating appointment of a tribunal removes the option of a local board to use hearing officers or panels in cases of alleged physical violence. The tribunal shall submit its findings and recommendations to the local board for imposition of punishment in accordance with the requirements of this law. If appropriate under paragraph (1) of subsection (c) of this Code Section, the tribunal's recommendations shall include a recommendation as to whether a student may return to public school and, if return is recommended, a recommended time for the student's return. The local board of education may follow the recommendations of the tribunal or impose penalties not recommended by the tribunal.

Code Section 20-2-651.6 Discipline to Be Imposed: Subsection (c) of this Code Section provides that a student found by a tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or school employee involving intentional physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature shall be disciplined by expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension. In cases where the physical violence involves intentionally making physical contact, which causes physical harm (unless such contact is in self-defense), the student shall be expelled from the public school system for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school. It is further mandated that students who are found guilty of the "causing physical harm" variety of physical violence be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior. The local board may, at its discretion, permit the student found guilty of either type of physical violence to attend an alternative educational program for the period of the student's expulsion. If an act of such physical violence is committed by a student in kindergarten through grade eight, the local board may, at its discretion and on the recommendation of the tribunal, permit the student to re-enroll in the regular public school program for grades nine through twelve.

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Code Section 20-2-751.7 Expulsion Exception for K-6 Students: In the case of an act of physical violence committed by a student in kindergarten through grade six, if the school district does not have an alternative education program for students in these grades, the local school board may permit the student to re-enroll in the public school system.

Corporal Punishment: State law delegates specific authority and responsibility to school officials concerning the control and discipline of students. **A school principal or his/her designee has the authority, by law, to administer corporal punishment to students.**

Corporal punishment will be administered by the principal or principal's designee(s) and is done only after all other resources have been exhausted in correcting the behavior. Corporal punishment will always be administered in the presence of another professional staff member. **Parents requesting that corporal punishment not be used must put their objections in writing and deliver it to the principal's office within the first week of school.**

Progressive Discipline Policy: This progressive discipline model is divided into five levels. Each level represents progressively more serious misbehavior and consequences. The level of discipline imposed shall be based on the severity of the misbehavior.

Level I Discipline - Level I discipline is used for minor acts of misconduct which interfere with orderly school procedures, school functions, extracurricular programs, approved transportation, or a student's own learning process. Students may be disciplined by the professional staff member involved or may be referred directly to the principal. Professional staff members may utilize any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation including (but not limited to) the following:

1. Classroom detention **during or after school**
2. Loss of recess or other free choice time
3. Isolation during lunch
4. Classroom isolation from peers
5. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian and teacher
6. Participation in in-school service project, which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)
7. Development of written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the related character trait(s), and an action plan for student improvement
8. Placing student in another teacher's classroom for a portion of the day

The principal may utilize any of the above discipline management techniques and/or may employ:

1. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian, teacher, and/or principal
2. Restriction from school programs and special assemblies
3. Assignment to after-school detention hall
4. Partial day in-school suspension
5. Full day in-school suspension for one school day
6. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment

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7. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s)

Level II Discipline - Level II discipline offenses are intermediate acts of conduct that require administrative intervention. These acts include, but are not limited to, repeated, unrelated acts of minor misconduct and misbehavior directed against persons or property but which do not seriously endanger the health, safety, or well-being of others. Consideration of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided.

Students guilty of Level II offenses may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee including (but not limited to) the following:

The principal may utilize any of the above discipline management techniques (from Level I) and/or may employ:

1. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian, teacher, and/or principal
2. Restriction from school programs and special assemblies
3. Assignment to after-school detention hall
4. Assignment to lunchtime detention hall
5. Partial day in-school suspension
6. Full day in-school suspension for up to five school days

The principal may utilize any of the above discipline management techniques and/or may employ:

1. Suspension from school for up to three school days which shall include any time during which the student was subject to suspension pending investigation
2. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
3. Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
4. Development of written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the related character trait(s), and an action plan for student improvement
5. Participation in in-school service project, which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)
6. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s)
7. Corporal punishment

Note: Level II differs from Level I in that it omits classroom detention, classroom isolation, loss of recess, and lunch isolation, while adding assignment to lunch detention hall, increasing the maximum number of days in ISS from one to five, adding financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment, providing for out-of-school suspension for up to three days, and prompting consideration of behavior support services.

Level III Discipline - Level III discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature; serious disruptions of the school environment; threats to health, safety, or property; and other acts of serious misconduct. These offenses must be reported to the principal. Offenses that threaten the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension of the student

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from school and/or school-sponsored activities for up to three school days, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the principal is a required element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided.

Students guilty of a Level III offense receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee including (but not limited to) the following:

The principal may utilize any of the above discipline management techniques (from Level I or Level II) and/or may employ:

1. Restriction from school programs and special assemblies
2. Suspension from school for up to five school days which shall include any time during which the student was subject to suspension pending investigation
3. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
4. Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
5. Development of written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the related character trait(s), and an action plan for student improvement
6. Participation in in-school service project, which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)
7. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s)
8. Corporal punishment

Note: Level III differs from Level II in that it requires student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the principal for any discipline incident in this category, omits assignment to detention hall, omits partial day assignments to ISS, increases the maximum number of days in ISS from five to ten, provided an option to immediately suspend a student from school for up to three school days in situations under investigation, and increases the maximum numbers of out-of-school suspension days from three to five.

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

Students guilty of a Level IV offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee including (but not limited to) the following:

1. Restriction from school programs and special assemblies

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2. Suspension from school for up to ten school days which shall include any time during which the student was subject to suspension pending investigation
3. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
4. Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
5. Development of written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the related character trait(s), and an action plan for student improvement
6. Participation in in-school service project, which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)
7. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s)
8. Placement in Learning from Home environment.
9. Expulsion as determined by the disciplinary team and/or tribunal if deemed necessary.

Note: Level IV differs from Level III in that it increases the maximum of days suspended from school from five to ten.

Statement: The school has action steps and strategies in the RTI/MTSS plan to decrease ISS and OSS incidents among subgroups with a focus on disproportionately and the suspension rates of black male students. In addition, schools will guide faculty and staff on evidence-based practices to address instructional time loss through overuse of discipline practice that remove students from the classroom.

Chronic Disciplinary Student

A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur defines a chronic disciplinary student. **Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary student, the principal shall notify the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.** Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan. The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited below, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs, or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

[Legal Ref: O.C.G.A. 20-2-764, 20-2-765, 20-2-766, 20-2-766.1]

Behavior support processes consistent with the Discipline Rule (Georgia RULE 160-4-7-.10) will be made available to all students.

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All schools in the Candler County School District are deemed Safe Public Schools. If at any time, any school in this district is named an Unsafe School as outlined in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16, students will be allowed to transfer to a safe public school outside of the district.

All office referrals will be processed in a timely manner by the principal or principal's designee and written notification will be sent to the teacher and parents/guardians of the student. A reasonable attempt shall be made to confirm receipt of such written notification by the student's parents or guardians. Written notification will include information on how to contact the principal or principal's designee.

Any staff member participating in the Tribunal process in the Candler County School District as a Tribunal Hearing Officer or a Panel Member shall complete a mandatory initial training course and have an annual update to continue to serve in such capacity.

The Candler County School District has established disciplinary hearing officers, panels, or tribunals of school officials to impose suspension or expulsion for students who have committed infractions that warrant removal from the normal school environment. If a student transfers from another school system and has been subject to the tribunal process of that school system, the consequence imposed upon that student will be honored by the Candler County School District until the consequence issued prior to enrollment has been served.

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

Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor	School Community Service (clean/repair damage caused to the school-related environment)
Loss of Privileges	Financial restitution for repair of any damage (school-related environment or private)
Isolation or Time Out	Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
Temporary Removal from Class or Activity	Short-term Suspension
Notification of Parents	In School Suspension (ISS)
Parent Conference	Out of School Suspension (OSS)
Behavior Contract	Alternative School Placement
Corporal Punishment	Referral to a Disciplinary Tribunal
Detention/Saturday School	Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials
Referral to Attendance Officer, Attendance Support Team, and/or Truancy/Juvenile Court	The 7th office referral for a student may result in referral for a tribunal hearing.
Confiscation of items not allowed at school	Learn from Home Placement

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(Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The School will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.)

BUS DISCIPLINE

Bus Safety and Regulations

The **privilege** of riding a school bus to and from school carries with it an expectation that the student will behave in the following ways:

1. Students will use quiet voices.
2. Students shall respect the bus driver and follow all instructions and requests given by the bus driver.
3. Students will not fight, rough house, push, shove, slap, pinch, or kick others on the bus.
4. Students are prohibited from having drugs, alcohol, weapons, or fireworks in their possession while riding the bus.
5. Students will remain in their assigned seats while the bus is moving.
6. Students will keep their hands and feet out of the aisle and will sit facing forward.
7. Students will keep their hands and feet to themselves and away from other students' property.

Students unwilling to behave on the bus will face the following progressive disciplinary actions unless otherwise determined by administration:

1st offense may result in a phone call and/or warning letter to parents.

2nd offense may result in a three-day suspension from riding the bus.

3rd offense may result in suspension from the bus for up to five days.

4th offense may result in suspension from the bus for up to ten days.

5th offense may result in suspension from the bus for the remainder of the school year.

The Transportation director will determine the number of days a child is suspended from the bus. Violent behaviors that jeopardize the safety of others (fighting, possession of weapons, etc.) will result in immediate removal of the child from the bus. Parents will be contacted to pick their child up from the school. **While a child is suspended from riding the bus, parents are responsible for getting the child to and from school and any other school related event (such as field trips, etc.)**

School Bus Behavior Contracts - Local school board policy shall require a meeting, for the purpose of forming a school bus behavior contract for the student, between appropriate school district officials and the parent or guardian of any student found to have engaged in bullying, physical assault, or battery on a school bus. The contract must provide for progressive, age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for the student's

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misconduct on the bus. These provisions are not to be constructed to limit the instances when a school code of conduct or local board of education may require use of a student bus behavior contract.

Behavior Definitions

1. **Disorderly Conduct-** Conduct that disturbs the peace or endangers the morals, health or safety of a community or person; actions, threats or words that breach the peace or alarm others. This would include chronic disruptions, repeating behaviors that violate school and classroom rules and procedures.
2. **Physical Aggression** - behavior causing or threatening physical harm towards others. It includes shoving, pushing, biting.
3. **Fighting** - to contend in battle or physical combat; to strive to overcome a person by blows or weapons. To engage in battle, attempt to defend oneself against or to subdue, defeat, or destroy an adversary.
4. **Bullying** - unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. There are 3 types of bullying.
 - a. **Verbal Bullying** is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting and threatening to cause harm.
 - b. **Social Bullying** is sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involving hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes: leaving someone out on purpose, telling other children not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone, embarrassing someone in public
 - c. **Physical Bullying** involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes: hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, making mean or rude hand gestures.

MES Defined Levels of Behavior

Level 1 Behaviors

Handled by the driver witnessing such behavior. May use a driver behavior management plan here. Parent contact will be made and the incident will be documented in Educator's Handbook using the Minor Incident Report.

1. Inappropriate Language
2. Horseplay
3. Defiance
4. Disrespect
5. Non-compliance
6. Lying or cheating
7. Class Disruption, Excessive Talking
8. Not completing class work/assignments
9. Petty Theft

Level 2 Behaviors

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Level 2 Offenses are automatic referrals that are completed using Educator's Handbook.

1. Repeated or Excessive Theft
2. Making Threats (threat of violence)
3. Physical Aggression
4. Disorderly Conduct (*Excessive Horseplaying, defiance, disrespect, class disruptions that have been addressed previously in Level 1 but are now chronic or more serious*)
5. Sexually Inappropriate Behavior (written, gestures, verbal)
6. Destruction of Property-vandalism
7. False Alarm (pulling school Fire Alarm)
8. Possession of Medicine/ Drugs- OTC meds, etc.
9. Possession of an electronic device

Level 3 Behaviors

Level 3 offenses are automatic referrals that are completed using Educator's Handbook.

1. Fighting
2. Firearms, Guns (overheard talking about bringing guns or firearms)
3. Weapons (knives, toy guns, fireworks, etc.)
4. Sexual Battery (inappropriate touching or grabbing)
5. Alcohol
6. Arson - (possession of matches or lighter)
7. Tobacco/Vaping

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Media Center: The Pre-K-8 Media Center and the Innovative Learning Center have merged to become one Innovative Learning Facility. The purpose of the Innovative Learning facility is to provide enrichment and acceleration opportunities for learners. Teacher and ILC Coordinator planning results in a fluid movement of individual students, small groups of students, and/or classes in and out of the ILC.

Teachers and students are loaned books and are expected to take care of the books and return them undamaged. It is school policy and procedure that damaged or lost books be paid for in order to replace the damaged or lost copy.

Field Trips: The permission for in-town field trips is included on the Student Information Sheet. Information will be sent home when a field trip is scheduled. Parents must sign the permission section of the field trip form and return it to the classroom teacher. **Students must ride the bus to all field trips.** Parents may write a note in advance for their child to ride home with them. **Siblings of students are not permitted to join them on any field trips. If a student has had chronic discipline problems, they will not be allowed to attend the field trip unless a parent attends the field trip with their student.**

School Animal Habitats: Our school offers reinforcement for its hands-on curriculum through the inclusion of a variety of animals including rabbits, hamsters, fish, and reptile habitats such as snakes, lizards, and turtles.

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Habitats are housed within some of the classrooms. Habitats are kept neat, clean, and safe through the efforts of a community volunteer. In some instances, students are sometimes given the opportunity in adult-supervised situations to touch, feed, or handle these reptiles. If parents have any objections to children handling or touching these animals, they should submit a written statement to their child's teacher alerting the school about this decision.

EIP: Early Intervention Program is designed for at risk students in K-5. Several models are being used in the schools. Students are served in smaller classes or receive small group instruction. Students also receive periodic interventions and individual help in reading and math to increase basic skills.

PROBE: Students, grades first through twelve, in the Candler County School District who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual, academic, and/or creative ability are provided with special instructional services by the Program for Gifted Students. Eligibility criteria for placement in this program are determined by the State Board of Education. Referrals for consideration for eligibility for gifted services may be made by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. For a summary of eligibility criteria or for further information about Candler County's Program for Gifted Students, please visit the website at <http://www.metter.org>, contact the Gifted Specialist at your child's school.

Special Education (PEC) Services: A variety of special education services are provided to meet the needs of all students who qualify. We have programs for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD), Intellectual Disabilities (mild, moderate, severe/profound), Other Health Impairments (OHI), Significant Developmental Delays, Specific Learning Disabilities, or Speech/Language Impairments. Teachers are trained to provide instruction in these specific categories of eligibility. Training in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is being used to meet some students' individual educational needs. Occupational and Physical Therapy (OT and PT) are also available for qualifying students.

Migrant Education: We have Family Migrant paraprofessionals that serve as interpreters and tutors to migrant students. Migrant students will be served in the regular classroom for extra academic support.

ELL: Students are given extra reading instruction based on language needs determined by a screening test by the ELL instructor.

Pre-K Curriculum: Georgia's Pre-k Program was established in 1993 through the Georgia Lottery for Education to provide Georgia's four-year old children with high-quality preschool experiences aligned to the Georgia Early Learning Standards. The goal of every Georgia Pre-K classroom is to provide Pre-K students with the learning experiences they need to prepare for Kindergarten.

Candler County Child Find

In accordance with IDEA regulations, the Candler County School District seeks to ensure that all disabled students (ages birth-21) who are in need of special education within its jurisdiction are identified, located, and evaluated, including those attending private school and home school. Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by a Multidisciplinary Placement Team.

If the "child find" process indicates that a student may require special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, the student shall be referred to the Multidisciplinary Placement Team to determine the student's eligibility for special education services. If you know a child with a disability who is not being served, please notify:

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Dr. Robbie Dollar
Special Education Director/CTAE Director
Candler County School District
Special Education, Response to Intervention, and Assessment
210 South College Street
Metter, Georgia 30439
(912) 685-5713 Ext. 0590
Fax: (912) 685-3755
rdollar@metter.org

Connections Offerings

Health and Physical Education: Students learn healthy life-style habits and practice good physical health during PE times. Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing and shoes and participate daily in required activities.

Music: Music instruction is provided for our students. Music appreciation and knowledge of sound, melody, and rhythm are taught in addition to musical theater and opportunities for school and community performances. The music opportunities are a feeder into the MMS and MHS band and performing arts programs.

Art: Art instruction is provided at the K-5 level. Art appreciation and knowledge of basic techniques will inspire your child's imagination and self-expression with hands-on art activities.

Agriculture: Agriculture exploration is offered at the K-5 level. Knowledge of educational requirements and job responsibilities will be experienced through real world opportunities throughout the class.

Computer Lab/Technology: Students are taught keyboarding, research, and creative writing skills. Students will be using a variety of software programs in our lab this year to provide standards specific remediation, interventions, and advanced learner projects.

STEM/Careers: Students will learn how to design and create structures, products, and systems by using math and science and engaged in hands-on, problem-solving linked to literacy. This offering will expose students to careers and opportunities in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields as well.

GRADING SYSTEM

Overview: The Candler County School Board believes that all students should have the opportunity to learn at their highest possible level. Learning will occur because of focused work with the Student Learning Cycle (SLC) in the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and subject-like planning. Attention to question #4 on the SLC will ensure mastery through sound Differentiated Instruction (DI). It is imperative that students be assessed via a

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variety of assessment types inclusive of balanced standard assessments and that work relating to content standards is completed by students.

Grading Criteria

Grades and Progress Reporting (Grades 1–5)

Students in grades 1–5 will receive numerical grades to communicate academic progress and mastery of grade-level standards. Grades are based on classroom assignments, assessments, participation, and other instructional measures as determined by the teacher and school guidelines. The grade scale matches that of Metter Middle School and Metter High School/MCCA numerical scales:

90-100 A
80-89 B
70-79 C
0-69 F

Students in Kindergarten will not receive a numerical grade, but rather the state reporting GKIDS scale. Pre-K students will not receive grades as progress is shared based on GELDS (Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards).

Progress reports will be issued every nine (9) weeks for 1-5 grade students to provide families with updates regarding academic performance and student progress. Report cards will be distributed at the conclusion of each grading period according to the district calendar.

Metter Elementary School utilizes Infinite Campus as the official student information and grade reporting platform. Parents and guardians are encouraged to regularly monitor student grades, attendance, and teacher communication through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

Student Progress and Parent:

Students in grades K through 5 will be evaluated on their progress to meet mastery on the Georgia Standards of Excellence. Progress will be communicated frequently and a report card will be sent home every 9 weeks.

Academic Definitions

A. Intervention/Remedial instruction - challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic concerns in reading and/or mathematics. This instruction is designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level, as defined by the Office of Student Achievement, to meet grade-level standards in the shortest possible time.

B. Accelerated instruction - challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic strengths in reading and/or mathematics. This instruction is designed to enable a student to go further in their understanding of Georgia Performance Standards/Common Core Standards through project-based instruction.

C. Additional instruction - academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes that is designed to bring students not performing on grade level, as defined by the Office of Student Achievement, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before and after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer/intersession instruction.

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D. Differentiated instruction - instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.

E. Grade level - standard of performance, as defined by the (Office of Student Achievement) on Georgia Milestone Tests.

F. Placement - the assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

G. Placement committee - the committee established by the local school principal or designee to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not meet expectations on the Georgia Milestone Test(s). This committee shall be composed of the principal or designee, the district administrator, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) or designee in the content area(s) in which the student did not achieve grade level on the Georgia Milestone Test(s).

H. Promotion - the assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade.

I. Retention - the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

Promotion/Retention: The mission of the Candler County Schools is to stimulate growth in district achievement by continuing efforts to advance the development of all stakeholders. Candler County Schools are committed to providing a curriculum that both accelerates and provides for extended learning opportunities, enhances learner engagement in daily lessons, significantly improves the literacy level of our students, and significantly increases the graduation rate.

***Learning builds upon previous learning and each student must be well prepared to meet the rigor and challenge of a new grade level as he/she progresses through the school years. Promotion to a new grade level is an accomplishment for a student because promotion demonstrates that the student has learned the requisite skills and knowledge and is prepared for the next challenge.

***The Candler County Schools Promotion Policy describes how the school system determines the promotion of students from kindergarten through grade twelve. The policy also states the consequences for students who do not meet the promotion criteria outlined for the specific grade level. Information is given stating the means by which the criteria may be achieved.

***The Candler County Schools Promotion Policy shall be applied to all duly enrolled students regardless of the number of days enrolled in Candler County Schools. Transfer students must meet all requirements for promotion.

***A quality education requires a joint effort by Candler County Schools, students, and parents/guardians. This partnership will help all children achieve and meet promotion criteria.

Criteria for Promotion in Grades 1-8: Students shall be expected to continuously achieve at a rate commensurate with their ability for achievement. Promotion/retention for all grade levels K-11 will be determined at the end of the extended learning sessions.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, grades PreK- 12: Grading for LEP students, who have had residency in the United States three years or less, will be determined by progress made from the initial LAB assessment. LEP students, in the first three years of residence in the United States, will be promoted/retained based on recommendation by the ESOL Placement Committee. After three years residency in the United States, LEP

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students will be subject to all provisions of the Candler County Board of Education promotion/retention policy unless otherwise documented by the ESOL Placement Committee.

Factors to be considered for LEP students may include, but are not limited to: LAB score, academic progress since the initial LAB assessment, mastery of ESOL objectives, formal assessments (G-KIDS, CRCT, ITBS, GHSGT, EOCT, Georgia Milestones Tests), attendance, age, previous education, and length of residency in the United States.

Standards for Promotion Grades 1st-2nd

1st Grade: Mastery in 4/5 core subjects and make typical growth on grade level testing.

2nd Grade: Mastery in 4/5 core subjects and make typical growth on grade level testing.

Standards for Promotion Grades 3-5

3rd Grade: Mastery in 4/5 core subjects and meet/exceed Georgia Milestones Tests in Reading, Math, and Language Arts by the end of summer school. Implement Tier 2 and/or 3 interventions for students not meeting standards in Reading, Math, and Language Arts.

4th Grade: Mastery in 4/5 core subjects and meet/exceed Georgia Milestones Tests in Reading, Math, and Language Arts by the end of summer school. Implement Tier 2 and/or 3 interventions for students not meeting standards in Reading, Math, and Language Arts.

5th Grade: Mastery in 4/5 core subjects and meet/exceed Georgia Milestones Tests in Reading, Math, and Language Arts by the end of summer school. Implement Tier 2 and/or 3 interventions for students not meeting standards in Reading, Math, and Language Arts.

ADDITIONAL PROCESS: When a student does not perform at grade level on the 3rd – 5th grade Georgia Milestone test in reading/language arts or math the following shall occur:

- A. The parent or guardian of the student shall be notified in writing by the school principal or principal's designee regarding the student's performance below grade level on the assessment instrument; the retest to be given to the student; the differentiated or additional instruction program to which the student is assigned; and the possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.
- B. The student shall be re-tested with a criterion-referenced assessment or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the local board of education; and
- C. The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject.

When a student does not perform at grade level on any criterion-referenced assessment specified above and also does not perform at grade level on a second opportunity as provided for above then the following shall occur:

- A. The school principal or principal's designee shall retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided in this subsection;
- B. The school principal or the principal's designee shall notify in writing the parent or guardian of the student regarding the decision to retain the student. The notice shall describe the option of the parent or guardian to appeal the decision to retain the student and shall further describe the composition and functions of the placement committee as provided

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for in this subsection, including the requirement that a decision to promote the student must be by a majority vote of the committee;

- C. If the parent or guardian appeals the decision to retain the student, then the placement committee composed of the principal or principal's designee, the student's parent or guardian, a district administrator, and one teacher or designee appointed by the principal, shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the time and place for convening the placement committee. No review meeting will be held without representation by the above parties.
- D. The placement committee shall:
 - a. Review the overall academic achievement of the student in light of the performance on the criterion-referenced assessment and the standards and criteria as adopted by the local board of education and make a determination to promote or retain.
 - b. Refer the student to the SST Committee for appropriate interventions.

For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Committee shall serve as the placement committee.

Automatic Review

An automatic review process, by a team of Candler County School educators to review and make decisions affecting promotion or retention of specific students is expressly authorized. The following students qualify for and shall receive an automatic review:

1. Any student previously retained in any grade kindergarten through five who does not meet the promotion criteria to the next grade level.
2. Any student previously retained in grade six, seven, or eight who does not meet the promotion criteria to the next grade level.
3. Any student in grades one through eight who earned a final passing grade of 70 in reading/language arts and mathematics but does not meet the Georgia Milestones Tests criteria.
4. Any student in grade eight who will attain the age of 16 by the last day of school and who does not meet the promotion criteria.
5. Any student in grades K-8 that does meet the state testing criteria but fails to meet the schools promotion criteria for course work.

The review team shall have a full range of options in making a decision including promotion, retention, mandatory summer school attendance, and Performance Learning Center assignment. The decision of the review committee is final and not subject to appeal.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

JCDAF- Candler County Board of Education Policy

Access to the Candler County District's wireless network, including the Internet, shall be made available to students primarily for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations. Limited personal use of the system shall be permitted if the use:

- Imposes no tangible cost to the District including but not limited to theft damage or loss;

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- Does not unduly burden the District's computer or network resources;
- Has no adverse effect on a student's academic performance;
- Has the approval of both the Technology Director and Building Administrator prior to use.

The use of personal electronic devices, including, but not limited to cell phones, and other personal communication devices (PCDs) must follow all directions given by school personnel in regards to display and usage of PCDs. Failure to comply with directions or refusal to give PCDs to a school board employee when directed will be viewed as insubordination and will result in appropriate disciplinary actions.

Access to the District's electronic communications system is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and guidelines. Noncompliance with applicable regulations may result in suspension or termination of privileges and other disciplinary action consistent with District policies. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the District. **This also applies to staff.**

Student Agreement BYOT:

BYOT / Personal Device Prohibition Policy

Students are not permitted to bring, use, or connect personal electronic devices to the school network or school-owned technology systems.

- Personal laptops
- Tablets
- Cell phones
- Smartwatches
- Gaming devices
- Personal hotspots
- USB storage devices
- Any privately owned device capable of network access, data storage, or communication

All instructional technology needs must be met using school-issued devices and approved school systems.

Students who bring unauthorized devices may be required to turn them in to school administration. Repeated violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the student code of conduct. Exceptions may only be granted by school administration for documented medical, accessibility, or instructional needs.

Consequences

Failure to comply with this policy will be viewed as insubordination and will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

1st offense-Device confiscated for remainder of the school day

2nd offense-Device confiscated-Parent/Guardian retrieves that afternoon

3rd offense and ensuing infractions-Device confiscated for 1 week and must be retrieved by Parent/Guardian

The School Administrator will have full discretion on the disciplinary actions for all offenses.

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Parents Right to Know

Every Student Succeeds Act Sec. 1112

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

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

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/ or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the school principal, Mrs. Jennifer Lewis at 912-685-5050.

Jennifer Lewis
Principal

Metter Elementary School Family Engagement Commitment

Parents and teachers share the responsibility for student success in the areas of social/emotional learning and academic achievement.

1. Communication and collaboration between home and school is vital to a child's school progress. MES will ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. Parent-school communication will take the form of notes, MES website, newsletters, calendars, phone calls, conferences, Class Dojo, Remind 101, and/or other home visits.
2. MES teachers and administrators will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school in:
 - a. understanding Georgia's Milestones content descriptions
 - b. understanding state and local academic assessments
 - c. monitoring a child's progress, and
 - d. working with educators to improve the achievement of their children.
3. MES will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement. Such training may include literacy training and technology training.

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4. With the assistance of parents, all personnel at MES will be educated in the value and utility of parent contributions and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners to implement and coordinate parent programs and to build ties between parents and the school.
5. MES will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, the Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teacher Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
6. MES teachers will initiate contacts with parents regarding their child's school needs. Parents should communicate to teachers their child's health and personal needs.
7. Parents are required to attend a minimum of two formal parent/teacher conferences – as scheduled by the teacher. Each conference will focus on student progress, strengths, weaknesses, and home-help strategies.
8. Parents will be given various opportunities to become involved in our school. Opportunities include, but are not limited to:
 - a. formal conferences initiated by teachers or parents
 - b. informal conferences at times requested by parent or teacher
 - c. field trips
 - d. lunch requests
 - e. volunteering at school events or PTO events
 - f. community committees such as crisis or school improvement
 - g. parent training meetings which promote awareness of the importance of emphasizing education and learning
 - h. Parents will be provided with information regarding community support resources that will strengthen student learning.
9. Parent meetings will be made as attractive as possible by student performances, food, and/or door prizes.

MES School Parent Compact 2026-2027

Revised: (06/15/2026)

What is a School-Parent Compact?

Our annual school-parent compact offers ways that we can work together to help our students succeed. This compact provides strategies to help connect learning at school and at home.

Effective Compacts:

- Link to academic achievement goals
- Focus on student learning
- Share strategies that staff, parents, and students can use
- Explain how teachers and parents will communicate about student progress
- Describe opportunities for parents to observe, volunteer, and participate in the classroom

Jointly Developed

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The parents, students, and staff worked together and shared ideas to develop the school-parent compact. Quarterly Parent-Teacher Academic Meetings and Title I Committee meetings are held each year to review and revise the compact based on the school's academic achievement goals and students' needs.

Parents are welcome to provide feed-back at any time. All feedback will be collected and reviewed during the annual revision meeting with parents.

Building Partnerships

There are many opportunities at our school for parents to volunteer and play a role in their child's education. (See our parent & family engagement plan event appendix or the Annual Title I Parent & Family Engagement Calendar.) Please consider joining the faculty, staff, and fellow parents through some of the following events and programs:

- Academic Family Nights
- Grandparents and Family Day
- Christmas Dinners
- Parent Workshop and Lunch and Learns: day/night time meetings to increase parent capacity on varied topics
- Other events as planned

Communication about Student Learning

Metter Elementary is committed to frequent two-way communication with families about children's learning. Some of the ways you can expect us to reach you are:

- Class DOJO
- Daily Communication Agendas
- Weekly communication/homework folders
- Current grades available through Infinite Campus Student Information System
- Parent-teacher conferences in Fall and Spring
- Frequent progress checks and report cards once per quarter
- School website, app and Facebook
- You may contact your child's teacher at any time. Please call the school at (912) 685-5050 or email the teacher directly. Emails can be found on the school website.

<https://www.metter.org/o/mes>

Student Achievement

District Goal

- 90% of students will graduate on time
- 100% of Students will be career or college ready
- CCSD will increase the percentage of students reading on Lexile by 3% as measured by the FY27 Georgia Milestones ELA Assessments on grades 3-11.

School Goals and Focus Areas

- At MES, we will foster a passionate and inclusive environment where every student is empowered to reach their fullest potential. We are dedicated to nurturing a love for literacy and numeracy, encouraging continuous growth, and celebrating achievements.
- 75% of MES students will show growth in the area of Reading and Math from fall to spring benchmark as measured by Beacon

Teachers

- Will model instruction and provide parents with reading materials and strategies by grade level during parent workshops, newsletters, parent/teacher academic meetings (up to 3 per year) and on the school website
- Will share with parents and students a portfolio containing the student reading level and tips/resources on how to choose the right book
- Will send home to parents math goals and materials to help parents understand problem solving
- Will host academic math and reading nights to provide hands on experiences and share strategies with parents

Parents

- Will practice grade level reading strategies for comprehension and fluency building with my child using the materials sent home daily in the communication folders.
- Will read with my child at least 20 minutes each day
- Will use application problems and other strategies to help my child make real world/math concept connections
- Will practice math facts with my child at least 3 times per week
- Will use school website resources by grade level and attend parent workshops and academic nights to learn tips and strategies to practice with their child/children

Students

- Will keep a reading log of weekly readings
- Will read at least 20 minutes each day
- Will practice math facts for fluency (repetitive practice) using manipulatives or online resources

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- Will find ways of using math concepts at home – use Google Classroom videos, resources, and collaboration blogs to practice and communicate understanding

Metter Elementary School Parent Engagement Compact

PART I: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

2026-2027 School Parent and Family Engagement Plan

Revised: (06/15/2026)

School: Metter Elementary School **District/LEA:** Candler

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, each school that receives Title I, Part A funds must develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to parents of participating children a written parent and family engagement plan, agreed on by such parents, that contains information required by section 1116 (b) and (c) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The plan establishes the school's expectations for parent and family engagement and describes how the school will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the school's plan submitted to the local educational agency (LEA).

The school agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement plan and the joint development of the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114 (b) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Update the school parent and family engagement plan periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school, distribute it to the parents of participating children, and make the parental engagement plan available to the local community.
- Provide full opportunities, to the extent practicable, for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114 (b) of the ESSA is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the

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school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.

- Be governed by the following statutory definition of parental and family engagement and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parent and family engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- (A) That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.
- (B) That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school.
- (C) That parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.
- (D) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED SCHOOLWIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN COMPONENTS

Metter Elementary School will take the following actions to involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including engagement in the decisions regarding how the 1% of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement will be used.

- Local School Governance Team
- Parent Surveys
- Parent Conferences

Metter Elementary School will take the following actions to conduct an annual meeting, at a convenient time, and encourage and invite all parents of participating children to attend to inform them about the school's Title I program, the nature of the Title I program, the parents' requirements, the school parent and family engagement plan.

- PTO Meetings
- Parent Involvement Nights
- School Webpage
- Multiple written communications home

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Metter Elementary School will take the following actions to offer a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide with Title I funds, transportation, child care or home visits, as such services relate to parental engagement.

- Parent Surveys
- Parent Conferences
- Group Conference with Translator
- Phone Conferences
- Home visits by Social Worker & Teachers
- County Transit Transportation
- Child Care

Metter Elementary School will take the following actions to provide parents of participating children the following:

- Timely information about the Title I programs.
- Description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
- Opportunities for regular meetings, if requested by parents, to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

- Parent Academic Lunches/Evenings
- Monthly Newsletters
- School Website
- District Wide Calling and Text Messaging
- Class DOJO

Metter Elementary School will take the following actions to jointly develop with parents of participating children a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards.

- Local School Governance Team (LSGT)
- Parent Surveys
- Parent Conferences
- Leadership Team

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Metter Elementary School will build the parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following activities specifically described below.

- A. Metter Elementary School will provide assistance to parents of participating children, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph:

- The State's academic content standards.
- The State's student academic achievement standards.
- The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments.
- The requirements of Part A.
- How to monitor their child's progress.
- How to work with educators.

- B. Metter Elementary School will provide materials and training to help parents to work with their child to improve their child's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental engagement by:

- Parent Academic Nights
- Parent-School Computer & Resource Center
- Parent Portal
- Instructional Newsletters for Specific Units
- Parent/Teacher Conferences

- C. Metter Elementary School will provide training to educate the teachers, pupil services personnel, principal, and other staff in how to reach out to, communicate, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and the school by:

- Kindergarten Readiness Program
- Parent Lunch and Learns
- Grade Level Performances

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- Parent Resource Center

D. Metter Elementary School will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with Head Start, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

- Professional Development
- District support through professional development
- Kindergarten Readiness Program
- Parent Lunch and Learns
- Grade Level Performances

E. Metter Elementary School will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

- System translator
- Bilingual Staff
- Electronic Translator Devices (headsets)

F. Metter Elementary School will provide other reasonable support for parental and family engagement activities under Section 1116 as parents may request by:

- Utilize Community Members to translate
- Community Members to volunteer in the Media Center

PART III. DISCRETIONARY SCHOOL PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN COMPONENTS

Indicate which of the following discretionary school parental and family engagement plan

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components the school will implement to improve parent engagement:

- Involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training.
- Provide necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds if the school has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training.
- Pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent and family engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
- Train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.
- To maximize parent engagement and participation in their child's education, arrange school meetings at a variety of times or conduct in-home conferences with teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children and parents who are unable to attend conferences at school.
- Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parent engagement;
- Establish a schoolwide Parent Advisory Council to provide advice on all matters related to parent engagement in Title I, Part A programs.
- Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental engagement activities.

- Academic Night(s)
- Provide transportation for parent meetings
- Provide childcare
- Provide books for families
- Phone conferences
- Home Visit Conferences
- Group Conferences w/ Translator
- Before & After School Conferences