



**2026-2027**  
**CODE OF**  
**STUDENT CONDUCT**

*The Right to Opportunity*  
*The Responsibility to Learn*

# ***CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT***

*The Right to Opportunity  
The Responsibility to Learn*

Latest Revision: 2026-2027

GADSDEN CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
GADSDEN, ALABAMA

The Gadsden City Public Schools are obligated to provide an atmosphere in which high performance can be achieved within a framework of high expectations. This task can be achieved only if an appropriate amount of time and resources are given to maintaining an environment of discipline conducive to the teaching/learning process. Parents and students are urged to be supportive of the CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT and committed to the concept of the student's "right to opportunity and responsibility to learn."

The Gadsden City Schools 2026-2027 Code of Conduct will be available online through the Gadsden City Schools main website and individual school websites. The Code of Conduct is subject to change as new information is received from the ALSDE. Any new revisions will be added to the current handbook and reposted as needed.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                                                          |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Additional Policies .....                                                                                | 32 |
| Allergies, Medication, & Health Policies .....                                                           | 47 |
| Anti-Harassment/Bullying Policy & Complaint Form .....                                                   | 37 |
| Artificial Intelligence (technology).....                                                                | 42 |
| Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Policy .....                                                      | 47 |
| Bad Check Policy .....                                                                                   | 46 |
| Board Members & Administrative Staff .....                                                               | 4  |
| Cell Phone & Personal Electronic Device Policy .....                                                     | 33 |
| Child Nutrition Program.....                                                                             | 51 |
| Classification of Violations .....                                                                       | 27 |
| Compulsory Attendance & Attendance Policy .....                                                          | 9  |
| Curriculum .....                                                                                         | 14 |
| Disciplinary Actions/Minor Offenses-Class I .....                                                        | 28 |
| Disciplinary Actions/ Intermediate Offenses-Class II .....                                               | 28 |
| Disciplinary Actions/Major Offenses-Class III.....                                                       | 29 |
| Distribution .....                                                                                       | 32 |
| Dress Code .....                                                                                         | 34 |
| Drug-Free School Policy .....                                                                            | 9  |
| Due Process .....                                                                                        | 6  |
| Early Dismissal/Temporary Closing of School.....                                                         | 47 |
| Early Warning Truancy Prevention Program .....                                                           | 12 |
| Equal Opportunity Statement .....                                                                        | 6  |
| Expulsion of Students.....                                                                               | 23 |
| Field Trip Policies.....                                                                                 | 21 |
| F.O.C.U.S.E D.....                                                                                       | 20 |
| Formal Disciplinary Actions and Procedures .....                                                         | 22 |
| Free Speech/Expression .....                                                                             | 15 |
| Grades .....                                                                                             | 15 |
| Grading System.....                                                                                      | 15 |
| Grade Placement & Promotion Requirement .....                                                            | 16 |
| Graduation Prerequisites .....                                                                           | 16 |
| Guidance Services .....                                                                                  | 13 |
| Internet Safety Policy.....                                                                              | 44 |
| Introduction .....                                                                                       | 6  |
| Jurisdiction of the School Board .....                                                                   | 8  |
| Literacy Act & Elementary Promotions.....                                                                | 15 |
| Middle School Graduation .....                                                                           | 15 |
| Photographic and Video Images.....                                                                       | 46 |
| Policy regarding the Legal and Ethical Use of Technology Resources,<br>Electronic Mail and Internet..... | 39 |
| Privacy and Property Rights.....                                                                         | 21 |
| Procedures for the Administration of Suspension and Expulsion .....                                      | 23 |
| Report Cards.....                                                                                        | 15 |
| Roles of Parents, Students, School & School Personnel.....                                               | 7  |
| School Directory .....                                                                                   | 5  |
| School Wide Enrichment Referrals .....                                                                   | 14 |
| Secondary Alternative Educational Center.....                                                            | 26 |
| Special Education.....                                                                                   | 13 |
| Student Attendance Policy.....                                                                           | 9  |
| Student Grievances.....                                                                                  | 22 |
| Student Records.....                                                                                     | 21 |
| Suspension of Students.....                                                                              | 23 |
| Technology Resource Agreement-.....                                                                      | 43 |
| Testing Information.....                                                                                 | 19 |
| Textbooks.....                                                                                           | 20 |
| Title IX Policy Statement .....                                                                          | 6  |
| Transcripts.....                                                                                         | 20 |
| Transportation Regulations .....                                                                         | 44 |
| Use of Digital Devices During the Administration of a Secure Test.....                                   | 50 |
| Vaping, Awareness, Education, Prevention.....                                                            | 30 |

## **GADSDEN CITY SCHOOLS**

1026 Chestnut Street  
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| <b><u>SCHOOL</u></b>           | <b><u>PRINCIPAL</u></b> | <b><u>SCHOOL PHONE</u></b> |
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# **GADSDEN CITY SCHOOLS CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT INTRODUCTION**

The Gadsden City Board of Education believes that instruction should occur in an environment that is conducive to learning. Effective instruction requires good order and discipline, which may be described as the absence of distractions, frictions, and disturbances that interfere with the effective functioning of the student, class, and school. Schools should maintain a friendly, yet business-like atmosphere in which students and school personnel work cooperatively toward mutually recognized and accepted goals.

As students' progress in our public schools, it is reasonable to assume that an increase in age and maturity will result in the students' assuming greater responsibility for their actions. It is recognized that differences in age and maturity require different types of disciplinary actions.

To assist parents, administrators, and faculty in maintaining such an environment, the *Code of Student Conduct* is designed to accomplish the following:

- describe roles of the home, student, school and school personnel
- identify student rights and responsibilities
- define student discipline in the context of the Board of Education's philosophy
- identify formal disciplinary actions
- identify classifications of violations and describe procedures for disciplinary actions
- standardize procedures for administering formal disciplinary actions
- conform to the mandates provided in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Please read over the *Code of Student Conduct* carefully. There is an acknowledgement provided which both parents and the student are required to sign and return to the school.

## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

It shall be the policy of the Gadsden City Board of Education that the school district shall provide on a nondiscriminatory basis, educational opportunities for children. No person shall be denied the benefits of any education program or activity on the basis of race, color, disability, creed, national origin, age, or sex. All programs offered by schools within the school district shall be open to all students in compliance with statutory and judicial requirements.

## **TITLE IX POLICY STATEMENT**

In compliance with Federal law, it is the official policy of Gadsden City Schools that no person, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program offered by Gadsden City Schools.

## **DUE PROCESS**

Due process within the Gadsden City School District is intended to insure fair and reasonable approaches to all areas of student governance and discipline on the parts of all school officials.

The Gadsden City Board of Education recognizes that observance of applicable substantive due process entails two basic considerations in every area. One is to produce, through the use of fair procedures, more accurate results: to prevent the wrongful deprivation of interest. The other goal is to make people feel that the school district has treated them fairly by, say, listening to their side of the story. To assure compliance with these two due process aspects, the Gadsden City Board of Education has endorsed the following as applicable to all policies, rules and regulations considered necessary to accomplish the district's interest of maintaining a proper atmosphere for learning in each school.

1. Each local school policy, rule or regulation must spell out its purpose, relating same to accomplishment of a legally defensible objective.
2. Each local regulation must be consistent with the established policies of the Gadsden City Board of Education.

3. All policies, rules and regulations at any level must be consistent with local ordinances, statutes of the State of Alabama, administrative regulations of duly authorized agencies; i.e., State Board or State Department of Education; Department of Human Resources.
4. Both policies of the Gadsden City Board of Education and regulations designated by local school administrators must be specific and precise. Vague and overly broad regulations do not adequately meet the due process requirement of adequate notice.
5. No board policies or local school codes of conduct can deny any students constitutional rights; neither policies nor rules or regulations can violate due process of law under the Fourteenth Amendment nor their rights under the Bill of Rights.
6. All discharge of administrative responsibilities and exercise of authority must recognize applicable legal parameters placed upon positions of school officials.
7. All exercise of administrative authority or that of other school officials, i.e., classroom teachers, must be capable of surviving close judicial scrutiny relative to freedom from arbitrary, capricious, discriminatory or otherwise illegal practices.
8. Students, parents, citizens, teachers, and administrators should be participants in developing local school codes of conduct.

Procedural due process within the school district shall relate primarily to the area of discipline measures, e.g., short-term suspension, long-term suspension and expulsion.

The degree of procedural due process afforded in each of the above situations shall be dependent upon: (1) the gravity of the offense a student is alleged to have committed; and (2) the severity of the contemplated penalty.

Before being punished for violation of board policies or school regulations, a student shall have the right of the following minimum due process procedures:

1. The student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student.
2. The evidence against the student shall be explained to them.
3. The student shall be given an opportunity to present his own version of the facts concerning the charges.

When a student is facing possible long-term suspension or expulsion, the Board shall afford the student the following:

1. The right to obtain counsel,
2. The opportunity for cross examination of witnesses,
3. A record of the hearing; and
4. A written record of the decision.

## **ROLES OF PARENTS, STUDENTS, SCHOOL AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

In order for effective teaching and learning to take place in our schools, there must be a cooperative relationship among students, parents and guardians, and educators. This relationship may be described as:

### **PARENTS AND GUARDIANS WHO:**

- maintain communication with the school authorities concerning their child's progress and conduct.
- insure that their child is in daily attendance and promptly report and explain an absence or tardiness to school officials.
- provide their child with the material needed to complete all school work.
- assist their child in being healthy, neat and clean.
- inform school authority of any problem or condition which affects their child or other children.
- discuss report cards and work assignments with their child.
- provide the school with current emergency information relating to their child; including phone numbers, physician, and hospital, etc.
- attend scheduled parent-teacher conferences.

**STUDENTS WHO:**

- attend all classes daily and are punctual in attendance.
- come to class with appropriate working materials.
- show respect for all individuals and property.
- refrain from profane or inflammatory statements.
- conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner.
- are clean, neat and appropriately dressed.
- are responsible for their own work, classroom and the school.
- show a positive, cooperative attitude toward school.
- seek change in an orderly and acceptable manner.
- refrain from bringing distracting or unsafe items to school.

**SCHOOLS THAT:**

- encourage the use of effective guidance procedures.
- maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- exhibit an attitude of respect for students.
- maintain effective discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students.
- welcome and encourage participation by parents and guardians in the school affairs.
- encourage the school staff, parents and guardians, and students to use the services of community agencies.
- encourage parents and guardians to maintain regular communications with the school.
- seek to involve students in the development of policies.
- endeavor to involve the entire community in order to improve the quality of life within the community.

**SCHOOL PERSONNEL WHO:**

- are regular in attendance and punctual.
- are prepared to perform their duties with appropriate materials and lesson plans.
- respect all individuals and property.
- refrain from profane or inflammatory statements.
- conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner.
- are clean, neat, and appropriately dressed.
- abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the school and School Board.
- seek change in an orderly and recognized manner.
- strive to use a variety of informal disciplinary actions including:
  - ♦ student's program adjustment
  - ♦ referral to guidance personnel for group or individual counseling with counselors, peer counseling, psychological evaluations, and other services deemed appropriate.
  - ♦ conferences and/or contacts between administrators, parents, & guardians, teachers and students.
  - ♦ referral to special education or appropriate agencies for special problems.
  - ♦ continuous improvement of professional knowledge and skills.
  - ♦ positive, cooperative attitudes toward parents and guardians, students, coworkers, and the total school program.

**JURISDICTION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD**

Gadsden City School students are subject to the rules of the Gadsden City Board of Education during the school day, while in attendance at school-related activities, and while being transported to and from school or school-related activities. Jurisdictional control over the student may be extended to the immediate vicinity of the

school whenever the conduct of the student is deemed to have a detrimental effect on the health, safety and welfare of the school community.

## **DRUG-FREE SCHOOL POLICY**

### **Overview**

The Gadsden City Board of Education (the "Board") has adopted the Gadsden City Board of Education Drug-Free School Policy, (the "Policy"), a random alcohol and drug testing policy to promote the safety considerations noted herein and to deter the use of alcohol and drugs among high school and middle school students.

This policy will apply to three categories of students: (1) Activity students, consisting of students participating in (a) athletics or cheerleading (defined as any student, male or female, in grades seven through twelve, who is a member of any Board sponsored school sports team or cheerleading/dance squads), and (b) other school related extra-curricular activities (defined as any student, male or female, in grades seven through twelve, who is a participant of a Board sponsored extra-curricular activity during the school day or after school); (2) Parking students, consisting of students operating or parking a motor vehicle on campus (defined as any student, male or female, grades nine through twelve, who operates or parks a motor vehicle "at school" as defined herein); and (3) Volunteer students who have been voluntarily added to the random pool with the consent of his or her parent(s).

Participation in extra-curricular activities or operating/parking a motor vehicle on campus is a privilege, not a right. Students in these activities represent the school and the school system in interscholastic competition, public performances, and various other activities. They are role models for other students. Their use or abstinence from the use of alcohol or illegal drugs is likely to influence the choices of other high school and middle school students. In addition, the use or abuse of alcohol and/or illegal drugs by athletes or cheerleaders is likely to increase student injuries to the user or others with whom he or she is playing. Student drivers are inexperienced and pose a substantial risk to the safety of themselves and others should they operate a motor vehicle on campus or elsewhere while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

## **COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE**

The Gadsden City Board of Education shall enroll in school all students residing within the school district between the ages of six and seventeen years, not otherwise receiving instructions in a private school, church school, or being taught by a private tutor in accordance with state law. An accurate record of attendance for each pupil shall be maintained by the classroom or homeroom teacher or other designated person. This record shall be kept in the official register, or through other officially approved documentation provided or approved by the State Department of Education.

It is the policy of the Gadsden City Board of Education that students in grades 9-12 must register and begin attending classes no later than ten (10) days from the beginning of the semester in order to receive Carnegie unit credit for that semester. Ref: Ala. Code 16-28-3

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY**

It is the belief of the Gadsden City Board of Education that regular school attendance is important to all students and to the school system. It is further believed that course content and grading procedures should be structured in such a fashion that regular attendance is necessary in order to successfully complete course requirements.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians and students to maintain regular and punctual student attendance. An absence is defined as non-attendance in a regularly scheduled class or activity, regardless of the

reason for non-attendance. A student must be in attendance one-half day to be counted present. Remember to contact the school if you receive a **calling post or text/email message** that your child is not present at school and should be.

## **EXCUSED ABSENCE**

### **Parent(s)/ guardian(s) must provide the following:**

A written parent note or doctor's excuse must be sent to school within three (3) days of the student's return to school to be counted as an excused absence. **Excused absences are per student. Parents having more than one child absent must have a valid excuse for each child.**

### **"EXCUSED ABSENCES" are defined as the following reasons:**

1. Personal illness without a doctor's excuse – with a written parent note, NO MORE THAN 10 PARENT NOTES ARE ACCEPTABLE.
2. Personal illness – Students who are sick and whose illness would endanger their health and the health of others. A doctor's statement is required.
3. Student sent home by the nurse for the following: - Fever, Vomiting and Diarrhea is excused. 24 hours free from illness is recommended before returning to school.
4. Death in the immediate family – excused from school for a reasonable length of time.
5. Weather - preventing attendance (would endanger student's health).
6. Legal – Will be excused with documents from court officials.
7. Prior permission by the principal at the request of the parent/guardian.
8. Legal quarantine.
9. Recognized Religious Holidays - Students will be temporarily excused from attendance on special and recognized religious holidays.
10. School Sponsored Activities – Students are excused when participating in a school sponsored activity away from the school campus.

## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCE**

**If no legal or written excuse has been provided to the school within three (3) days after absence(s) the absence will be coded UNEXCUSED and the following will occur:**

1. First (1st) unexcused absence – school will telephone parent/guardian. Please update telephone number.
2. Third (3rd) unexcused absence – a letter will be sent home. If a student's address changed during the school year, parents must inform school officials immediately.
3. Fifth (5th) unexcused absence – Student's name will be reported to the Board of Education, Office of Student Services/ Attendance. Parents/Guardian will be contacted to set up a conference. Failure to attend conference will result in filing of a complaint/petition with the courts.

4. Seventh (7th) unexcused absence – complaint/petition filed with the court against the parent/guardian under: Code of Alabama (1975), §16-28-12(c) (failure to cooperate), or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.

5. Five unexcused tardies will require the parent/guardian to attend a conference with the principal/attendance officer. Excessive unexcused tardies can affect classroom grades and attendance records.

### **STUDENTS ARE TARDY AT THE FOLLOWING TIMES:**

**Elementary Schools 7:50 a.m.**

**Middle Schools 7:45 am.**

**High School 7:50 a.m.**

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### **ATTENDANCE POLICY PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):**

Alabama law requires all children between the ages of six and seventeen to attend school. If any child fails to attend school without legal excuse, that child and the person having custody of that child will be referred to the juvenile court.

Any child who is prosecuted for truancy may be placed in a juvenile facility or in long-term residential care. Any custodial adult who is prosecuted for failing to require a child to attend school may be jailed for up to 90 days or fined. *Ala Code § 16-28-12, Amended by Acts 1994, 1<sup>ST</sup> Ex. Sess., No. 94-782, p. 70, §1.*

A free public education is one of the greatest benefits available to the children of our State. Please ensure that your child achieves their full potential by attending school regularly.

---

#### **Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Attendance Policy**

I have read the above letter and am fully aware of my responsibility to see that my child attends school daily and of the penalty for my failure to do so.

**Name of School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Parent/Guardian**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed Name of Parent/Guardian**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

#### **I. ISS (In-School Suspension)/Focus Room**

- A.** For the purpose of this policy, the Focus Room is **not** considered a class absence.
- B.** If the Focus Room is not available, detention or Saturday school could be used when deemed appropriate by the administration.

#### **II. ABSENCES/ACADEMIC WORK**

- A.** Class work missed during unexcused absences may not be made up. An Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) is an unexcused absence and work may not be made up unless the school principal creates opportunities after school hours to earn credit for missed assignments. Any student having more than

**ten** early check-outs or check-ins will not be allowed to make up their missed school work for that day without an excuse from their physician.

- B. Students will have the opportunity to make up assignments with an excused absence. However, the teacher has the option to require that tests and exams be administered during a separate, teacher monitored session which must be scheduled through the respective teacher. Students will have three days to turn in missed assignments (could be longer if approved by principal).
- C. Kindergarten with 20 unexcused absences could be withdrawn from school.  
Any student having more than ten early check outs or check ins will not be allowed to make up their missed school work for that day without an excuse from their physician.

### **III. PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS**

School administrators are required under state law to enforce compulsory school attendance laws. Regular attendance by students facilitates the development of the skills and knowledge necessary to function in a modern democratic society.

#### **Student Responsibilities are:**

- To take advantage of educational opportunities by attending all classes daily and punctually.
- To provide the school with an adequate explanation and appropriate documentation indicating the reason for an absence.
- To promptly request make-up assignments for each excused absence and to complete these assignments within a reasonable length of time or a zero (0) will be issued for the assignment(s).

#### **Students Rights are:**

- To be informed of School Board policies and individual school rules regarding absenteeism and tardiness.
- To appeal a decision pertaining to an absence.
- To make up class work with a specific length of time when there is an excused absence.
- Principal: Evaluation of student absences may be appealed to the school principal.

### **TRUANCY/ABSENTISM**

Truancy is the habitual and unlawful absence from school. In accordance with Alabama School Law, the parent or legal guardian is responsible for requiring any student under his control or charge and under seventeen (17) years of age to attend school regularly except for legal absences as defined by Alabama School law and State Board of Education rules and regulations. Provided a student under seventeen (17) years of age becomes a truant, the parent or guardian of said student may be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to punishment by law.

### **EARLY WARNING TRUANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM**

#### **TRUANCY DEFINITION**

A parent, guardian, or other person having charge of any child officially enrolled in Alabama public schools (K-12) shall explain in writing the cause of any and every absence of the child no later than three (3) days following return to school. A failure to furnish such explanation shall be evidence of the child being truant each day he is absent. The child shall also be deemed truant for any absence determined by the principal to be unexcused based upon the State Department of Education's current School Attendance manual. **Seven (7) unexcused absences within a school year constitute being truant for the purpose of filing a petition with the Court.** The Interagency Committee on Youth Truancy Task Force recommendations known as the Early Warning Truancy Prevention Program timeline for reporting truancy shall define the truancy status of any student as follows:

#### **1. FIRST TRUANCY/UNEXCUSED ABSENCE (WARNING)**

- A. Parent/guardian shall be notified by the school principal or his/her designee that the student was truant and the date of the truancy.

#### **2. NO EARLIER THAN THE FIFTH UNEXCUSED ABSENCE (CONFERENCE)**

- A. The parents, guardian, or person having control of the child shall: (1) attend a conference with the attendance officer and principal or his/her designee and/or (2) participate in the early warning program provided by the juvenile court.
- B. Attendance at one of these conferences shall be mandatory except where prior arrangements have been made or an emergency exists.
- C. Parent/guardian shall also be provided with a copy of Alabama's compulsory school attendance laws and advised of the penalties that can be applied and the procedures that shall be followed in the event that other unexcused absences occur.
- D. Failure to appear at the school conference and/or to appear at the early warning program shall result in the filing of a complaint/petition **against the parent under Code of Alabama (1975), §16-28-12(c) (failure to cooperate), or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.**
- 3. **NO EARLIER THAN SEVENTH UNEXCUSED ABSENCE, BUT WITHIN TEN (10) SCHOOL DAYS (COURT)** file complaint/petition against the child and/or parent/guardian, **if appropriate.**
- 4. **CHILD UNDER PROBATION**
  - A. The school attendance officer should be notified **by the juvenile probation officer** of all children in the school system under probation supervision by the juvenile court as **consistent with state statute, Code of Alabama (1975) § 12-15-100 and 105.**
  - B. Where a child under probation is truant, the school attendance officer should immediately notify the juvenile probation officer.

## **GUIDANCE SERVICES**

The mission of Gadsden City School System's comprehensive school counseling and guidance program is to prepare every student socially, academically, and emotionally for present and future challenges. Students are provided with opportunities to gain an understanding of self and others, to participate in educational and occupational exploration, and to pursue career planning opportunities in an environment that is safe, caring, and encouraging. Counselors work in collaborative partnerships with students, educators, parents, and community members to empower students to reach their highest level as productive members of society. The comprehensive counseling and guidance programs provided by counselors in Gadsden City Schools are based on the following tenets:

- 1. Every student has the right to experience respect and dignity as a human being and to benefit from the counseling and guidance services.
- 2. Every student has the right to participate in activities that promote self-direction and self-development.
- 3. Every student has the right to make choices and accept responsibility for choices made.
- 4. Every student has the right to participate in a comprehensive school counseling and guidance program designed to assist all students in attaining their maximum potential in academic, career, and personal/social development.

The comprehensive school counseling and guidance program is an essential integrated component of the total instructional program through which students have maximum opportunity for academic, career, and personal/social development. In this regard, the school counseling and guidance program involves a planned, purposeful, and sequential program of activities that begins in kindergarten and continues through the twelfth grade. Comprehensive school counseling and guidance programs are data-driven by student needs and provide outcome-based accountability measures that align the school counseling and guidance program with the school's overall academic mission.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

### **Philosophical Basis:**

Schools will provide appropriate special education services for any eligible student residing within the city unless the student is residing and/or receiving services in a state facility or institution.

### **Student Responsibilities are:**

To use special education for educational and personal improvement.

### **Student Rights are:**

To be informed of the least restrictive environment needed for appropriate education.

To have access to appropriate instructional designs recommended in the students individualized educational program.

**Gadsden City Schools, Special Education Department is seeking to locate children (Birth to age 21) who may need special education services. Evaluation and services are free. Please call (256) 549-2914, for further information.**

## **SCHOOL WIDE ENRICHMENT REFERRALS**

Enrichment Students are those who perform at or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. These students require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Students possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or any other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities may refer a student. Additionally, all 2nd grade students will be observed as potential enrichment referrals using a gifted behavior checklist.

For each student referred, information is gathered in the areas of Aptitude, Characteristics, and Performance. The information is entered on a matrix where points are assigned according to established criteria. The total number of points earned determines if the student qualifies for enrichment services. To make a referral, contact the administrators at your child's school.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **Philosophical Basis:**

Student opinion regarding curriculum offerings is extremely important and, therefore, deserves careful analysis and consideration. The degree of student involvement in curriculum development is determined by the student's age, grade level and maturity. Final determination for course requirements and program consistency will rest with the professionals who are assigned the curriculum development responsibility.

### **Student Responsibilities are:**

- To request participation in academic programs and extra-curricular activities compatible with their ability.

- To seek assistance in course selection from informed professional in the school.

- To contribute to an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice. To cooperate fully and exert every effort to achieve mastery of the basic skills.

### **Student Rights are:**

- To have equal access to educational opportunities.

- To receive system-wide curriculum course descriptions that will facilitate informed choices.

- To receive instruction in courses of study under competent instructors in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice.

### **Curriculum Review:**

The curriculum for each subject is based upon each subject's current Alabama State Department Course of Study where the state minimum standards are taught and extended upon. The curriculum is posted on the Gadsden City Schools website. Additionally, curriculum may be reviewed in person upon a written request to the Gadsden City Schools' superintendent.

### **Pre-AP Curriculum:**

Gadsden City middle schools are dedicated to provide the students with the best educational opportunities. It is important to ensure that students are ready for the rigors of high school. Therefore, Gadsden City middle schools offer a pre-AP/**advanced** curriculum for advanced **7th and 8th grade** students. The **advanced curriculum** will be designed to follow College Board guidelines and prepare students for the AP curriculum at Gadsden City High School. The middle school teachers will work with the high school teachers and curriculum specialists in developing a challenging curriculum which will prepare the students who will be taking AP classes. The administrators will consider student's grades, test scores, and teacher recommendations to determine placement in pre-AP classes. Middle school guidance counselors and administrators will be able to answer any questions regarding the pre-AP program.

## **AP Curriculum:**

Gadsden City High School's AP program follows the College Board guidelines and teaches the rigorous standards outlined by the College Board. The curriculum for prerequisite honors courses likewise follows College Board guidelines and extends upon the ALSDE Courses of Study's minimum standards primarily focusing on developing higher order thinking skills needed for students to succeed in AP courses.

## **FREE SPEECH/EXPRESSION**

### **Philosophical Basis:**

Citizens in our democracy are guaranteed self-expression under the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the Constitution of the United States; therefore, in a democratic society, one of the basic purposes of education is to prepare students for responsible self-expression.

### **Student Responsibilities are:**

To become informed of the method of grade determination in each class.

To maintain a level of academic performance equal to ability, and to make every effort to improve performance upon notification of unsatisfactory progress.

To present reports of academic performance to parents/guardians.

### **Student Rights are:**

To receive the grading criteria at the beginning of each year or course.

To receive periodic progress reports.

## **GRADES**

### **Philosophical Basis:**

An academic grade should reflect the teacher's most objective assessment of the student's academic achievement. Academic grades will not be used as a means of maintaining order in a classroom.

### **Student Responsibilities are:**

To become informed of the method of grade determination in each class.

To maintain a level of academic performance equal to ability, and to make every effort to improve performance upon notification of unsatisfactory progress.

To present reports of academic performance to parents/guardians.

### **Student Rights are:**

To receive the grading criteria at the beginning of each year or course.

To receive periodic progress reports.

## **REPORT CARDS**

It is the policy of the Gadsden City Board of Education that report cards concerning progress shall be made to the parent or legal guardian of all students at the end of each nine-week grading period. A progress report will be sent home after four and a half weeks for all students. If a school decides to send more than one progress report, that is certainly acceptable.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

A=90-100 ♦ B=80-89 ♦ C=70-79 ♦ D=60-69 ♦ F=59 and below

## **ELEMENTARY PROMOTIONS**

In accordance with the Literacy Act, students in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade must have a passing score on ACAP testing to be promoted to the next grade level, regardless of their final report card grade.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTION/RETENTION**

### **GRADES 6 – 8**

GRADES 6 – 8: The promotion/retention policy has been developed for the purpose of complying with Alabama State Law. In keeping with this law, a student will be promoted to the next grade level when the

student has successfully completed existing course work, and acquired skills and competencies determined by the following standards:

#### I. CORE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

Students should demonstrate mastery of all core academic subjects (language arts, math, science, and social studies). Indicators of mastery include the following:

- i. Obtaining a minimum passing grade (60%) in the teacher evaluation for each C.A.C. course.
- ii. Passing the locally developed system subject exam. The semester exam at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> nine weeks will be averaged as ten percent (10%) of the first semester's grade average. The final exam will be averaged in as ten percent (10%) of the second semester's grade.

#### II. TEACHER EVALUATION

Failure to obtain a passing grade (60%) in two subjects may be cause for retention at present grade level.

If a student fails two subjects in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade, one subject may be taken during summer school and the other subject may be made up in place of the elective during the next school term. Therefore, both classes can be made up within one year's time without the student being retained. If a 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade student does not attend summer school, the student will be retained since two credits cannot be made up during the school year alone. If a student fails two subjects in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the student will be retained.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADUATION

All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students must pass all six classes in order to participate in the graduation exercises. The Promotion and Retention Board Policy will be in effect for all students not participating in graduation exercises.

### GRADE PLACEMENT AND PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS HIGH SCHOOL

| <b>Diploma Types:</b>         | <b><u>STEP Academy</u></b><br># credits needed for<br>grade level promotion | <b><u>Standard Diploma</u></b><br># of credits needed for<br>grade level promotion | <b><u>Advanced &amp; Honors<br/>Diploma</u></b><br># of credits needed<br>for grade level<br>promotion |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Promotion to 10 <sup>th</sup> | 6                                                                           | 6                                                                                  | 6                                                                                                      |
| Promotion to 11 <sup>th</sup> | 12                                                                          | 12                                                                                 | 13                                                                                                     |
| Promotion to 12 <sup>th</sup> | 17                                                                          | 18                                                                                 | 20                                                                                                     |
| Total to Graduate             | 24                                                                          | 26                                                                                 | 28                                                                                                     |

### GRADUATION PREREQUISITES

- To be classified as a senior, eighteen (18) earned credits are required prior to the fall term of the senior year.
- During the second semester of the junior year, the school counselors will schedule an appointment for a conference with students (and their parents) who have not met required course credit for graduation and develop a plan for remediation.
- Students may participate in graduation exercises if he or she has earned a total of 25 of the 26 credits required for graduation or completed alternate diploma requirements for students with disabilities. Special Education students must complete the requirements stipulated in the Alabama State Department of Education Administrative Code.
- Prior to graduation, in order to participate in graduation exercises, a student will be required to pay tuition cost for credit recovery or summer school for course requirements.

- A student will not receive his/her actual diploma until the summer school course or a credit recovery requirement for earning the needed credit for graduation is completed.
- Distance-Learning- Alabama students will be required to complete an online/technology enhanced course or experience prior to graduation. Exceptions through Individualized Education plans will be allowed.
- Minimum Graduation Requirements are as follows (please see chart):

| <b>Gadsden City High School Diploma Options</b>                     |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Alabama High School Diploma</u></b>                           | <b><u>Alabama High School Diploma - Advanced Endorsement</u></b>                                                                    |
| 4 Credits of English*                                               | 4 Credits of Advanced, Pre-AP, or AP English*                                                                                       |
| 4 Credits of Social Studies*                                        | 4 Credits of Social Studies*                                                                                                        |
| 4 Credits of Math*                                                  | 4 Credits of Math (Must take Pre-Cal, and have been on the Advanced Math Track in Middle School)                                    |
| 4 Credits of Science*                                               | 4 Credits of Science (Must take Chemistry)*                                                                                         |
| 1 Credit of Career Preparedness                                     | 1 Credit of Career Preparedness                                                                                                     |
| .5 Credit of Health                                                 | .5 Credit of Health                                                                                                                 |
| 3 Credits of Fine Art and/or Foreign Language and/or Career Classes | 3 Credits of Fine Art and/or Foreign Language and/or Career Classes                                                                 |
| 1 Credit of Physical Education                                      | 1 Credit of Physical Education                                                                                                      |
|                                                                     | Students must be College and Career Ready by the time of graduation. If not, the student drops back to Alabama High School Diploma. |
| Electives                                                           | Electives                                                                                                                           |
| Total 24 Credits                                                    | Total 26 Credits                                                                                                                    |

\* Some 11 and 12 Grade Classes can be replaced by Dual Enrollment classes.

## **Advanced Endorsements**

All Students who choose an endorsement are still required to complete requirements for either diploma in addition to specific classes for each endorsement. Any endorsement will only be honored if a student is College and Career Ready by the date of graduation in their senior year. Specific diploma honors such as stickers or cords for graduation will only be honored for those who are College and Career Ready.

| <b><u>Honors Endorsement*</u></b> |                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| English                           | 4 Credits to include AP-Prep 9, 10, AP English 11 and AP English 12***                                                                    |
| Social Studies                    | 4 Credits to include AP-Prep 9, 10, AP US History, AP Government/Economics***                                                             |
| Math                              | 4 Credits to include AP-Prep Geometry, AP-Prep Algebra II with Stats, Pre-Calculus, AP Statistics, AP Computer Science, AP Calculus AB*** |

|                    |                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Science            | 4 Credits to include AP-Prep Biology, AP Prep Chemistry, AP Chemistry, AP Biology, AP Physics, Anatomy, Forensics*** |
| Electives          | AP Art History, AP Euro, AP Music Theory, AP Computer Science A, AP Foreign Language, AP Psychology (ACCESS Only)    |
| Foreign Language** | 2 Credits in the same Language in Sequence in back to back years.                                                    |

\* Honors Endorsement Can only be obtained on the Advanced Diploma

\*\* Foreign Language requirement counts as 2 of 3 credits towards the Fine Arts and or Foreign Language and or Career credit requirements.

\*\*\* Some 11th and 12th grade classes can be replaced by Dual Enrollment classes

^^ Honors Endorsement Requires being College and Career Ready by graduation of Senior Year

^^^ Honors Endorsement Requires 4 AP Classes in 3 Core Areas

%%\$^ Students may double up with the Honors Endorsement and/or the Career Endorsement

| <b><u>Fine Arts Endorsement Advanced*</u></b> |                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| English                                       | 4 Credits of Advanced, Pre-AP, or AP English*                                                                                                    |
| Social Studies                                | 4 Credits of Social Studies*                                                                                                                     |
| Math                                          | 4 Credits of Math (Must take Pre-Cal, and have been on the Advanced Math Track in Middle School)                                                 |
| Science                                       | 4 Credits of Science (Must take Chemistry)*                                                                                                      |
| Electives                                     | 3 Credits of Fine Arts and or Foreign Language and or Career                                                                                     |
| Fine Arts                                     | Students must take 3 courses in one of the following concentrations: Visual Arts (i.e Ceramics, Drawing) or Performing Arts (i.e Band, Theater)* |

\*Students do not have to be on the Honors Endorsement

\*\* Students may double up with the Honors Endorsement and/or the Career Endorsement

| <b><u>Career Endorsement Advanced</u></b> |                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| English                                   | 4 Credits of Advanced, Pre-AP, or AP English*                                                                                                              |
| Social Studies                            | 4 Credits of Social Studies*                                                                                                                               |
| Math                                      | 4 Credits of Math (Must take Pre-Cal, and have been on the Advanced Math Track in Middle School)                                                           |
| Science                                   | 4 Credits of Science (Must take Chemistry)*                                                                                                                |
| Electives                                 | 3 Credits of Fine Arts and or Foreign Language and or Career                                                                                               |
| Career Classes                            | Students must take 3 courses in one of the Career concentrations in sequence. Students must also Pass a Career Readiness Indicator in that concentration.* |

\*This is in addition to any beginner class in any concentration.

| <b><u>Fine Arts Endorsement Advanced*</u></b> |                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| English                                       | 4 Credits of English*                                                                                                                            |
| Social Studies                                | 4 Credits of Social Studies*                                                                                                                     |
| Math                                          | 4 Credits of Math*                                                                                                                               |
| Science                                       | 4 Credits of Science*                                                                                                                            |
| Electives                                     | 3 Credits of Fine Arts and or Foreign Language and or Career                                                                                     |
| Fine Arts                                     | Students must take 3 courses in one of the following concentrations: Visual Arts (i.e Ceramics, Drawing) or Performing Arts (i.e Band, Theater)* |

| <b><u>Career Endorsement Advanced</u></b> |                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| English                                   | 4 Credits of English*                                                                                                                                |
| Social Studies                            | 4 Credits of Social Studies*                                                                                                                         |
| Math                                      | 4 Credits of Math*                                                                                                                                   |
| Science                                   | 4 Credits of Science*                                                                                                                                |
| Electives                                 | 3 Credits of Fine Arts and or Foreign Language and or Career                                                                                         |
| Career Classes                            | Students must take 3 courses in one of the following concentrations: Visual Arts (i.e., Ceramics, Drawing) or Performing Arts (i.e., Band, Theater)* |

- In order for a senior to participate in graduation ceremonies, all debts must be cleared from time of enrollment with the Gadsden City School System. Debts include, but are not limited to, uniform cost, class fees, club fees, textbook costs, returned checks, etc.
- Students following the Essential Pathway Diploma will adhere to state requirements for required courses and number of credits earned, in accordance to Alabama Administrative Code.
- **Students may not participate in the graduation ceremony if they are in Alternative School 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.**

## **TESTING INFORMATION**

| <b>ALABAMA COLLEGE – AND CAREER – READINESS ASSESSMENT SYSTEM</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACT WorkKeys<br>Grade 12                                          | ACT WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system that helps employees select, hire, train, develop, and retain a high-performance workforce. This series of tests measures foundational and soft skills and offers specialized assessments to target institutional needs. As part of ACT's Work Readiness System, ACT WorkKeys has helped millions of people in high schools, colleges, professional associations, businesses, and government agencies build their skills to increase global competitiveness and develop successful career pathways. |
| ACT Plus Writing<br>Grade 11                                      | The ACT college readiness assessment contains five curriculum-and standards-based assessments: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| an optional Writing Test. The assessment is used as a college admissions and placement test and measures the skills and knowledge needed for first-year college success. Additionally, the ACT includes a career exploration component that stimulates students’ thinking about future plans and related personal characteristics to career options. |                                                                                                                                                                   |
| ACAP<br>Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program<br>Grades 2 – 8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | The Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program is a computer-based and computer adaptive assessment that is fully aligned with Alabama State Educational Standards. |

### TRANSCRIPTS

Official transcripts are available to order on Parchment.com. Seniors must also order a final transcript to be sent to the college they will attend after the process of transcript finalization is completed in June.

### TEXTBOOKS

The parent, guardian, or other person having custody of a child to whom textbooks are issued shall be held liable for any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from the normal use of the textbooks. In computing the loss or damage of a textbook which has been in use for a year or more, the basis of computation shall be a variable of 50 to 75 percent of the original cost of the book to the local board of education. If the parent, guardian, or person having custody of the child to whom the textbook was issued fails to pay the assessed damages within 30 days after notification, the student shall not be entitled to further use of the textbooks until remittance of the amount of loss or damage has been made. State-owned textbooks are loaned for the period the student uses them and must be treated as borrowed property. In cases of abuse or loss of textbooks, a student must pay for the textbook in accordance with the scale set by the State Department of Education. Any lost textbooks must be cleared before books can be issued for the next school year.

### F.O.C.U.S.E.D. PROGRAM

(Following Our Commitment Until Students Earn a Diploma)

The purpose of the F.O.C.U.S.E.D. program is to ensure that every student has the opportunity to become college-and-career ready. This program addresses three specific areas: attendance, behavior, and academics. After a student receives his/her second out-of-school suspension or their seventh unexcused absence, the student and parent/guardian will be required to attend an F.O.C.U.S.E.D. meeting. This meeting will be held at a designated site with the Chief of Police, District Attorney, and the Superintendent of Gadsden City Schools. This meeting will be designed to assist the parent/guardian concerning the student’s particular problem areas. If the student’s behavioral misconduct continues after the meeting, a warrant will be filed against the parent or legal guardian according to the law.

The Alabama Mandatory Attendance Act, Alabama Code 16-28-1 et seq., mandates that a parent or guardian must enroll his or her child in school, requires that the child attends, and that the parent or guardian ensures that the child behaves while in school. Alabama Code 16-28-12(a) states that a parent or guardian must “require the child to properly conduct himself or herself as a pupil in public school in accordance with the written policy of school behavior”.

Violation of this law is a CRIME and is punishable up to 90 days in the Etowah County Jail with a fine of \$100. Failure to follow this law may result in the issuance of a warrant for your arrest.

## **PRIVACY AND PROPERTY RIGHTS**

### **Philosophical Basis:**

Federal and state laws provided persons with a reasonable expectation of privacy in addition to freedom from unreasonable search and seizure of property. Such guarantees are not unlimited and must be balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students.

### **Student Responsibilities are:**

To attend school-related activities without bringing materials or objects prohibited by law or School Board policy or which detract from the educational process.

To respect the property rights of the public at large, as those of individuals, and to refrain from destruction of, or damage to, such property.

### **Students Rights are:**

To maintain privacy of personal possessions unless appropriate school personnel have reasonable cause to believe a student possesses any object or material which is prohibited by law or School Board policy.

To attend school in an educational environment in which personal property is respected.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

### **Philosophical Basis:**

Student records will be maintained by the schools and will be used in making appropriate educational decisions for the students. All information regarding students and their families will be collected, maintained and distributed under safeguard of privacy. These safeguards may be obtained through informed consent, verification of accuracy, limited access, selective discard and appropriate use. The superintendent of schools will institute specific procedures for the implementation of this policy as dictated by the Right to Privacy Act.

### **Student, Parent and Guardian Responsibilities are:**

To provide the school with any information that may be useful in making appropriate education decisions.

To authorize release of pertinent information to those individuals or agencies who are working actively and constructively for the benefit of the student.

### **Student, Parent and Guardian Rights are:**

To inspect, review and challenge the information contained in records directly relating to the student.

To be protected by legal provisions which prohibit the release of personally identifiable information to anyone other than legally authorized persons without the consent of the parent(s), guardians or eligible student.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

All Gadsden City School field trips must have prior approval of the superintendent based on the following:

Local – 30 days prior

In State (1 day) – 30 days prior

In-State (overnight) – 30 days prior

Out of State (1 day) – 30 days prior

Out of State (overnight) – 45 days prior and requires Board approval

**\*Only students enrolled in the class or program scheduling the field trip are permitted to participate.**

**Pre-school children, siblings, or guests are not permitted to accompany teachers, parents or other chaperones on the trip.**

**\*Local field trip costs should be reasonable and affordable to the student population. To the extent feasible, steps should be taken to ensure that field trip costs are not a deterrent to eligible students.**

**\*Incomplete or late field trip requests may result in requests being denied.**

The Gadsden City Schools Field Trip Form must be submitted to the school administrator for approval before being sent to the Central Office for final approvals. Arrangements must be made well in advance to ensure appropriate accommodations for qualifying students are met. The Field Trip Request Form for ALL field trips must be accompanied by a detailed itinerary and other pertinent information, including complete plans for transportation, chaperones and accommodations, as applicable. No financial commitments shall be made and no money shall be collected for field trips until appropriate approval has been obtained. The recommended ratio for chaperones is **one** chaperone for every **fifteen** elementary school students and **one** chaperone for every **twenty** secondary students unless prior approval is granted by the designated Central Office Director. **All field trips shall be supervised by school personnel.** School Nurses **MUST** be informed of the field trip and be present on field trip, if applicable. Students will not be permitted to take part in field trips or off campus activities without first submitting written authorization on a system form that has been completed and signed by the student's parent or legal guardian. Students must abide by school rules and policies while on the field trip. **No field trip should ever be taken before the final approval request has been returned to the school.**

A Safety Plan should be developed for each field trip activity and a copy should be maintained in the school office. The plan should include:

- 1) list of students on the trip, with current emergency phone numbers
- 2) permission to travel forms signed by parent/guardian
- 3) medical information pertaining to the trip participants who require specific medical assistance
- 4) trip itinerary
- 5) carrier information, if applicable

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCES**

The belief of the Gadsden City Board of Education is that the students have both the right and responsibility to express school-related concerns and grievances to the faculty and the administration. Therefore, students shall be assured the opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of grievances.

To be granted discussion and consideration of a grievance, any student or group of students should request an appointment with the principal which will not interfere with regularly scheduled classes or school-related activities. The faculty and administration will make an honest effort to resolve student grievances at the most immediate level of supervision.

## **FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND PROCEDURES**

### **AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION HALL**

The principal or his/her designated person(s) has the authority to assign students to a designated room (detention hall) on campus at the end of the regular school day for a reasonable and specified period of time as a disciplinary action. The parent(s) or guardian is responsible for providing transportation in these cases. A reasonable attempt will be made to notify the parent(s) or guardian prior to the assignment of a student to detention hall. If the parent(s) or guardian can be notified on the day of the misbehavior, the student will be assigned on that day; if not, the student will be assigned following notification of parent/guardian.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION**

Disciplinary probation is a period of time specified by the principal or his designated person(s) during which a student must correct his behavior while abiding by all regulations that govern student behavior. The principal or his designated person(s) has the authority to place a student on disciplinary probation for a reasonable and specified period of time. The staff members involved in the action will assist in monitoring the student's adjustment to the school environment.

### **FOCUS ROOM PROGRAM**

The Focus Room is a structured disciplinary action in which a student is isolated or removed from regular classroom but is not dismissed from the school setting. The principal or his designated person(s) has the authority to assign students to the Focus Room program for a reasonable and specified period of time. The principals and their staffs should determine the scope of the Focus Room in their respective schools.

## **WORK ASSIGNMENT**

The principal or his designated person(s) has the authority to assign supervised activities related to the upkeep and maintenance of school facilities as a disciplinary action for a reasonable and specified period of time. Work assignments are not intended to interfere with any student's regular class schedule. The parent(s) or guardian will be responsible for providing transportation in these cases. The parent(s) or guardian will be notified prior to the student's placement in a work assignment.

## **SCHOOL BUS SUSPENSIONS**

The principal or his designated person(s) has the authority to deny a student the privilege of riding a school bus based on the misconduct of the student. This action will be for a reasonable and a specified period of time.

## **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

The principal or his designated person(s) has the authority to use reasonable physical force to restrain a student from abusing or attempting to abuse himself, other students, teachers, administrators, parents, guardians, or other staff members. This action may be taken when it is necessary to maintain discipline or to enforce school rules. This must be done in a reasonable fashion and in compliance with Alabama State Law to protect all parties involved. Law enforcement officials may be called to assist in the enforcement of this action.

## **HOME REFERRAL**

Home referral is defined as the temporary removal of a student from classes until a parent/guardian meets with the principal or his/her designated person(s). The student will be eligible for readmission to class upon completion of the conference. Failure to comply with the home referral may result in more serious disciplinary actions being taken.

## **SUSPENSION**

The Gadsden City Board of Education defines suspension as "the temporary removal of a student from school for violation of school policies, rules, or regulations, or otherwise causing interference with or disruption of the orderly operations of the school." The school principal or his designated person(s) will have the authority to suspend a student from school. The suspensions will be enacted in accordance with the prescribed policy procedures. (See "Procedures for the Administration of Suspension and Expulsion.")

## **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is defined as "the removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend public school under conditions set by the School Board." The principal has the final authority to recommend to the Superintendent's office the expulsion of a student.

## **SCHOOL BOARD HEARING OFFICER**

The Superintendent or his designated person(s) will review recommendations from principals for expulsions and request a conference with the person(s) involved, which may include principals, teachers, parents, guardians, and students.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING-EXPULSION**

An administrative hearing involving expulsion recommendations will be conducted by the Superintendent and/or his designated person(s) to determine whether the expulsion recommendation is valid for presentation to the Board of Education.

## **SCHOOL BOARD HEARING**

The School Board hearing involving expulsion recommendations will be conducted in accordance with School Board policy. (See "Hearing" in "Procedure's for the Administration of Suspension and Expulsion.")

# **PROCEDURES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

A student recommended for suspension or expulsion will be made aware of the charges and given an opportunity to respond. His parent(s) or guardian will be sent written notification of the action that will take place. Any time a referral that warrants suspension or expulsion is submitted, a reasonable effort will be made by the school to either contact the parent(s) or guardian by a telephone call made during school hours or by written notice delivered by the student or the U.S. mail.

The student is responsible for notifying his parent(s) or guardian of all written communications from school. Failure to do so may result in further disciplinary action.

# **SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS**

## **AUTHORITY**

The school principal or his designated person(s) has the authority to suspend students from school.

## **NOTIFICATION**

Prior to suspension, the student will be made aware of the charges and given an opportunity to respond to them. Written notice will be sent to the parent or guardian stating the reasons such action was taken. Immediate suspension of a student is justified when the student's presence would threaten himself, endanger school property, or seriously disrupt the orderly educational process. Principals are given the authority to have law enforcement remove uncooperative students. If immediate removal is necessary, the parent or guardian will be notified by phone or by school personnel. The necessary notice and conference will follow within twenty-four hours of the action.

## **LENGTH**

The suspension of a student is not to exceed five (5) days except as follows:

1. Any student suspended more than one time during a school year may be referred to the Superintendent's office for a conference prior to the student's readmission to school. Under this disciplinary action, the referral to the Superintendent's office and readmission to school must take place within an eight (8) day time frame. The referral to the Superintendent's office will not alter the number of days that the student is suspended by the principal or his designated person(s) unless extenuating circumstances agreed upon by the Superintendent and principal warrant such an alteration. For students who are suspended and referred to the Superintendent's office, the Superintendent or his designated person(s) will schedule a conference with the parent(s)/guardian and the student within seven (7) days. The problem will be resolved within eight (8) days unless extenuating circumstances, such as physical or mental examination or incarceration by court action, warrant additional time.
2. Any student who has been determined eligible for special education may be suspended or expelled, but all procedural safeguards set forth in federal and state statutes and regulations must be adhered to.
3. If an incident or violation causes the principal or his designated person(s) to recommend the expulsion of a student, the suspension shall remain in effect until such time that action upon the recommended expulsion is taken as outlined.
4. If a student is suspended from school and is not referred to the Superintendent's office, he/she must comply with the full length of the suspension unless the principal approves an alternative.

## **TERMS**

1. If a student attends a parent school and a special school and is suspended from either school, the suspension will include both schools.
2. During the suspension period, suspended students cannot attend school functions or enter school property for any reason.
3. When a student is suspended, his teacher must be notified concerning the date of suspension and the number of days suspended.
4. A student who has been suspended from school is not eligible to enroll in any other school in the system until such time that he is reinstated in the school from which he was suspended.

## **READMISSION**

When a student returns to school after suspension, the readmission must be preceded by a conference with the principal or his designated person(s). The conference must include the parents(s) or guardian unless otherwise approved by the principal. If the student is returning after a conference with the Superintendent or his designated person(s), the Superintendent or his designated person(s) may choose to attend the readmission conference.

## **EXPULSION OF STUDENTS**

In accordance with the Alabama state law requiring compulsory attendance, the Gadsden City Board of Education makes the final disposition of an expulsion recommendation.

The school principal is initially responsible for determining that an offense for which expulsion may be warranted has been committed. The procedures listed must be followed:

### **NOTIFICATION**

1. Immediately following any incident or violation of school regulations which may result in a recommendation by the principal to expel a student, the principal is authorized to suspend the student for as many as ten (10) school days pending a hearing for expulsion. The principal will notify the student and the parent(s) or guardian of the suspension and will also notify the student and parent(s) or guardian that the information or data obtained by the principal's investigation of the incident will be made available. This notice should be given to the parent(s) or guardian prior to the expulsion recommendation.
2. After the completion of the full investigation of a violation which may result in a recommendation for expulsion, the principal will, based on the facts, specify whether to recommend student expulsion. He will immediately notify the student and the parent(s) or guardian of the findings and the reason for the recommendation. The principal will attempt to give this notice to the student and parent(s) or guardian in a personal conference. He will also confirm this notice in a letter to the parent(s) or guardian. The principal's conclusions should be based on the documentation of the facts pertaining to the incident. Said documentation will include all information available including, but are not limited to, the following categories:

- A. an operational definition of the offense(s)
- B. a detailed description of the offense(s)
- C. the time, date and location of the alleged offense(s)

The above documentation will be forwarded to the Superintendent or his designated person(s).

After a review of the principal's recommendation, the Superintendent or his designated person(s) will, within the suspension period imposed, request a conference with the parent(s) or guardian of the student. The purpose of the conference is:

1. To explain the procedure orally and in writing to the parent(s) or guardian and student.
2. To determine if a mutually agreeable alternative to expulsion is appropriate. Such an alternative may be:
  - A. Placement in an alternative education center will be subject to the System Alternative School Committee, and when necessary, the IEP team recommendation. The date of admission to the center and the length of time spent at the center will be determined through the admission procedures.
  - B. Placement of special education student on a partial day schedule in an alternative school or in-home study will be subject to IEP team recommendation and the System Alternative School Committee.
  - C. Voluntary withdrawal of the student from the Gadsden City system for a period of not less than one (1) semester and not more than one (1) regular school term not including summer school.
  - D. Placement of the student in a juvenile facility by a governmental agency independent of the Gadsden City School System. The School Board should concur that the action taken is adequate as an appropriate remedy for the problem. Under this arrangement, there must be mutual agreement between the School Board and the agency in terms of the extent to which the action resolves the problem. The School Board, in compliance with civil law, will have the right and responsibility to determine the action that constitutes the resolution of the problem.

### **HEARING**

1. Upon receiving a school principal's recommendation to expel a student, the Superintendent or his designated person(s) will provide the parent(s) or guardian an opportunity to request that the matter be resolved at an administrative hearing conducted by the Superintendent or his designated person(s).

2. During the administrative hearing, the principal or the Superintendent may conclude that disciplinary action other than expulsion is warranted because of extenuating circumstances. If the Superintendent or his designated person(s) agrees that extenuating circumstances exist, the student can be readmitted to school. Re-admittance is subject to the Superintendent's approval.
3. If the matter is not resolved at the administrative hearing and the Superintendent makes the decision to recommend expulsion of a student, he will place the matter on the agenda for the next School Board meeting, unless such a setting would be too soon to provide time for the parent(s) or guardian person(s) and student to comply.
4. The Superintendent or his designated person(s) will give notice by registered mail or hand delivery to the parent(s) or guardian that expulsion is recommended. The Superintendent's notice will state the exact time and place of the hearing and inform the students and parent(s) that the student has a right to attend the hearing to be represented by an attorney or other representative, and to present matters relating to the recommended expulsion.
5. This notice from the Superintendent will be mailed at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which the student's expulsion will be recommended. In the notice, the student and the parent(s) or guardian will be informed that a desire to present matters at the hearing must be made known to the Superintendent within five (5) days after receipt of the notice, and that failure to express such a desire within the prescribed period of time will waive the right to present such matters.
6. At the School Board meeting in which expulsion of a student will be considered, the Board will first give to the principal, the Superintendent, and to any witness who might present testimony relevant to the recommended expulsion an opportunity to describe the incident or violation and to report findings which resulted in the recommendation. Each school official or witness will be limited to a reasonable amount of time in describing the incident or violation, or in presenting other testimony.
7. Upon completion of the presentation of findings by school officials and relevant testimony by other witnesses, the student or his representatives will be given a reasonable amount of time to present any matters which the student or his representatives consider relevant to the student's expulsion.
8. Immediately following the presentations by the student or his representatives, the Superintendent will recommend to the School Board the formal action which he deems appropriate and just. Thereupon, the School Board is to expel the student, the action will specify a period of time for the expulsion.

## **TERMS**

1. The expulsion of a student will prohibit the student from attending any school in the Gadsden City School System during the period of the expulsion.
2. A student may lose his academic credit if:
  - A. The student is expelled prior to taking nine-week or semester examinations.
  - B. The student is removed from the school attendance roll through the expulsion process.
3. A student will not be allowed to make-up work if he is expelled from school.
4. An expelled student is prohibited from being on any school system property during or after school hours (including extra-curricular activities such as athletic events).

## **SECONDARY ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM (Alternative Educational Center)**

1. The Gadsden City Alternative Program will have complete authority over students and classroom instruction during student placement. Students must comply with all alternative school rules and guidelines. These rules will be reviewed with students and parents during the student's initial intake meeting.
2. Students must follow all rules/policies of the Gadsden City Board of Education.
3. Students are not permitted to drive to school during alternative placement. Arrangements must be made by the parent/guardian.
4. Students are not permitted to bring cell phones to school while completing alternative placement.
5. Students not complying with the above will be subject to immediate out-of-school suspension, extra days/time added, or expulsion.

6. All students are to report by 7:45 a.m. with all books and materials (pen, pencil, paper, etc.). Teachers are not responsible for student materials or books. Alternative school instructors will provide daily instruction and assignments to students in each core subject area.
7. Students are responsible for completing all assignments during alternative school placement.
8. If a student is tardy or absent from school, the front office staff must be notified by a parent before 8:00 a.m. In case of an emergency causing tardiness or absence, the school administration will judge whether or not time missed will need to be made up.
9. A doctor's excuse is required for any illness preventing the student from attending. Two unexcused absences will result in a report to the attendance officer. Absences beyond five days for high school and ten days for middle school may result in being dropped from the roll.
10. Students cannot attend extra-curricular or regular school functions (without written prior approval from the home school principal in special cases only). Students should not be on any school campus for any reason (without prior written approval from the home school principal).
11. Students will remain at the alternative school for a minimum of (25) days.
12. Possession, selling, or use of an illegal substance will result in a minimum of forty-five (45) days at alternative school for first offense. Second offense or selling of illegal substances may result in expulsion.

The alternative educational center committee will review the records of the student (attendance, behavior, grades, prior offense, etc.) to determine if a student is eligible to return to the home school.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF VIOLATIONS**

Violations of the Code of Student Conduct are grouped into three classes-minor, intermediate and major. Before determining the classification of a violation, the principal or his designated person(s) will implement the disciplinary procedure.

Each classroom teacher will deal with general classroom disruption by taking in-class disciplinary action, by making a personal call to the parent(s) or guardian when feasible, and/or by scheduling conferences with the parent(s) or guardian and other school staff. Only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective, or the disruption is severe, should the student be referred to the principal or his designated person(s). Failures to bring notebook, pencil, books, or required materials and equipment to class, failure to do homework, or failure to do work in class are not cause for disciplinary referrals; however, defiance of a teacher in regard to these areas is cause for disciplinary referral. Parents and guardians should be notified by the teacher of students who consistently exhibit poor work habits, and/or these students should be referred to a guidance counselor.

## **MINOR OFFENSES – CLASS 1**

### **1.01 Excessive distraction of other students**

Any conduct and/or behavior which is disruptive to the orderly educational process in the classroom or any other instructional setting. Examples: talking excessively, interrupting class function, moving without authorization, provoking other students, writing notes, running, scuffling, or shouting in hallways.

### **1.02 Written, verbal, or physical intimidation of a student**

The intentional, unlawful threat by word or act to do harm to another student, coupled with an apparent ability to do so, and the performance of some act which creates a well-founded fear in the person that such harm is likely.

### **1.03 Tardiness**

Reporting late to school or class. (Refer to Tardy Policy for penalties)

### **1.04 Non-directed use of profane or obscene language**

### **1.05 Non-conformity to dress code (See “Additional Policies: Dress Code”.)**

**1.06 Inappropriate public display of affection**

Including, but not limited to, embracing and kissing.

**1.07 Inappropriate use or possession of electronic devices****1.08 Failure to follow instructions/ complete assignments**

Examples: Failure to carry correspondence home, failure to obey directions in hallways, assemblies, etc.

**1.09 Any violation which the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances****DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS/MINOR OFFENSES – CLASS I****ELEMENTARY STUDENTS****First Offense**

In-school conference and parental contact when warranted

**Second Offense**

Parental contact and disciplinary action

**Subsequent Offenses**

In-school disciplinary actions such as probation, detention, completion of extra academic assignments, work assignments before or after school, or suspension at the discretion of the principal or his designated person(s). Special circumstances may warrant a recommendation to the School Board's hearing officer for an alternative educational program apart from the normal setting.

**SECONDARY STUDENTS****First Offense**

In-school conference and parental contact when warranted. Special circumstances may warrant disciplinary action as outlined under subsequent offenses.

**Subsequent Offenses**

In-school disciplinary actions such as probation, detention, completion of extra academic assignments, work assignments before or after school, in-school suspension, or suspension at the discretion of the principal or his designated person(s).

**INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES – CLASS II****2.01 Defiance of School Board employee's authority, including but not limited to teachers, administrators, bus drivers, or other school officials**

Any verbal or non-verbal refusal to comply with a lawful direction or order of a School Board employee.

**2.02 Possession and/or use of tobacco products or e-cigarettes**

Possession on the person, in the locker, or in any other effects of a student; or the use of any tobacco products or e-cigarettes

**2.03 Exhibit unsafe driving practices on School Board property****2.04 Fighting – includes instigating or encouraging a fight (Elementary Students)**

An exchange of physical contact (hitting, kicking, slapping, pushing, and shoving). Students who instigate fights, put others up to fighting, video, or carry information back and forth between individuals who subsequently fight **MAY** submit themselves to the same consequences of those who are involved in the fight.

**2.05 Vandalism**

Intentional and deliberate action resulting in injury or damages of less than \$200.00 to public property or the real or personal property of another.

**2.06 Stealing – Larceny – Theft**

The intentional, unlawful taking and/or carrying away of property valued at less than \$100.00 belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another.

**2.07 Possession of stolen property with the knowledge that it is stolen****2.08 Threats**

Verbal, written, or electronic communication threatening injury to person(s), property, or reputation of another. **Note:** Level of threat will be determined by administration.

### **2.09 Trespassing**

Willfully entering or remaining in any structure, conveyance, or property without being authorized, licensed, or invited; or having been authorized, licensed, or invited, is warned by an authorized person to depart and refuses to do so.

**2.10 Obscene manifestations (verbal, written, electronic, gestures) directed toward another person. To include those sexual in nature.**

**2.11 Leaving class or campus without permission**

**2.12 Behaving dishonestly in relation to grades and/or student information**

**2.13 Any other offense which the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstance**

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS/INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES – CLASS II ELEMENTARY STUDENTS**

### **First and Second Offense**

Parental contact and disciplinary action

### **Subsequent Offenses**

In-school suspension or suspension for one (1) to five (5) days

## **SECONDARY STUDENTS**

### **First Offense**

Focus Room and/or extended work assignments before or after school, and/or suspension for one (1) to three (3) school days.

### **Subsequent Offenses**

Suspension for three (3) to five (5) school days. Special circumstances may warrant a recommendation for expulsion. If so recommended, the expulsion procedures will be followed.

## **FIGHTING**

The Gadsden City Board of Education realizes the need to ensure the safety of students and school personnel. Fighting will be any physical conflict between two or more individuals.

**Disciplinary Action: 45 Days Alternative Education Center**

## **MAJOR OFFENSES – CLASS III 45 Days Alternative Education Center**

### **3.01 Drugs**

Unauthorized possession, transfer, use, sale, or under the influence of drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcoholic beverages.

### **3.02 Arson**

The willful and malicious burning of any part of School Board property and/or the burning of any substance or material on School Board property.

### **3.03 Verbal and/or physical assault/battery upon a School Board employee**

Directing obscene, profane or threatening language to a School Board employee and/or the unlawful and intentional touching or striking of a School Board employee against his or her will, or the intentional causing of bodily harm to a School Board employee.

### **3.04 Robbery**

The taking of money or other property which may be the subject of larceny from the person or custody of another by force, violence, assault or instilling the fear of same.

### **3.05 Stealing – Larceny – Grand Theft**

The intentional unlawful taking and/or carrying away of property valued at \$100.00 or more belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another.

### **3.06 Gambling**

The intentional, unlawful participation in gambling activities involving amounts of more than \$100.00.

### **3.07 Burglary of school property**

Entering or remaining in a structure or conveyance with the intent to commit an offense therein during the hours the premises are closed to the public.

### **3.08 Possession of firearms or weapons**

Any firearm (including a starter gun) which will, or is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosion; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device. A knife, metallic knuckles, tear gas gun, chemical weapon or device; or any other weapon, instrument, or object with the intent to be armed.

### **3.09 Discharging of any pistol, rifle, shotgun, air-gun, or any other similar device**

### **3.10 Bomb Threats**

Any such communication(s) concerning School Board property which has the effect of interrupting the educational environment.

### **3.11 Sexual acts**

Acts of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, battery, intercourse, attempted rape or rape.

### **3.12 Aggravated battery**

Intentionally causing great bodily harm, disability or permanent disfigurement; use of a deadly weapon.

### **3.13 Possession and/or igniting fireworks, firecrackers or smoke bombs, or other explosives on School Board property**

### **3.14 Inciting or participating in major student disorder**

Leading, encouraging, or assisting in (major) disruptions which result in destruction or damage of private or public property or personal injury to participants or others.

### **3.15 Unjustified activation of a fire alarm system**

### **3.16 Offensive touching of another person, including that of a sexual nature**

### **3.17 Any other offenses which the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances.**

### **3.18 The School Psychologist will meet with Students weekly.**

**3.19 No student shall distribute, display, solicit, possess, or produce a sexually or pornographic explicit image of any individual, including sexually explicit images of a child. This probation applies whether or not the image is of an identifiable person nor whether the age of the individual can be determined. The prohibition includes images of known and unknown individuals and those generated by artificial intelligence.**

## **VAPING, E-CIGARETTE & TOBACCO**

### **Section 28-11-13 Unlawful for minors to purchase, use, possess, or transport tobacco, tobacco products, or alternative nicotine product.**

(a) It is unlawful for any minor to purchase, use, possess, or transport tobacco, tobacco product, or alternative nicotine product within this state. It shall not be unlawful for a minor employee of a tobacco, tobacco product, or alternative nicotine product permit holder to handle, transport, or sell tobacco, tobacco product, or alternative tobacco product if the minor employee is acting within the line and scope of employment and the permit holder, or an employee of the permit holder who is 21 years of age or older, is present.

- (b) It is unlawful for any minor to present or offer to another person proof of identification which is false, fraudulent, or not actually his or her own proof of identification in order to buy, receive, or otherwise obtain, or attempt to buy, receive, or otherwise obtain, any tobacco, tobacco product, or alternative nicotine product.
- (c) If a minor is cited for any violation under this section, the citing agency shall notify a parent, legal guardian, or legal custodian of the minor unless the minor has been emancipated by court order or operation of law.
- (d) 45 days Alternative Education Center and Vaping Early Warning Program will be required to be completed by parent(s) and student(s) before returning to school.

#### Vape Awareness, Education, and Prevention

The purpose of this policy is to establish a vape awareness, education, and prevention program to prohibit the possession and use of prohibited tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products by students in public K-12 schools.

- A. **Prohibition**: The possession or use of tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products is prohibited by any student at a public K-12 school, on a school bus, or at any school sponsored function.
- B. **Violation**: Any student who violates the prohibition contained within this policy shall be subject to graduated consequences, which may include:
1. Notification of the student's parent or legal guardian shall be made regarding the violation.
  2. Required participation in the Alabama State Board of Education approved vaping awareness, education, and prevention class.
  3. In-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or placement in an alternative school.
  4. Referral of the matter to the juvenile court for disposition.
  5. Or, any combination of the foregoing.

Disciplinary actions for violations of this policy will be administered in accordance with the current Student Code of Conduct.

- C. **Complaint procedure**: When a complaint is lodged against a student for violating the prohibition, the complaint must be memorialized using the model complaint form (attached). An anonymous report may not be used as the sole basis for imposition of formal disciplinary action. Once a complaint is made against a student for a violation, the complaint form is then to be forwarded to the principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer for investigation. The complaint form must include all the following information:
1. Name of student who has violated the policy.
  2. Date, time, and location of violation.
  3. Description of conduct that violates the policy.
  4. Name(s) of witness(es) to violation of the policy.
  5. Any other pertinent information.
- D. **Investigation Procedure**: Once a principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer receives a complaint of a serious violation, they must then promptly investigate the violation. The principal, assistant principal, or school resource officer must be the individual responsible for the investigation.
- E. **Response Procedure**: If the student has violated the prohibition, the student shall immediately, and without delay, be subject to the graduated consequences. Any and all consequences shall conform with applicable disability, antidiscrimination, education laws, and school discipline policies. Additionally, a copy of the complaint form and the disposition shall be placed in the student's permanent record.
- F. **Notice Requirement**: The policy adopted by a local school board shall be included in the code of conduct policy of the local board of education and included in the student handbook so as to give adequate notice to students and parents of prohibited behaviors occurring on school property, school buses, and at school sponsored events and the punishments attached thereto.

- G. **Applicability to Employees**: The use of tobacco, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products by any teacher, administrator, or other school employee on the campus of any public K-12 school is prohibited.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe on any right provided to a student pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, provided that student information related to this policy shall be included as necessary into any and all Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), behavioral intervention plans, and other similar documents.

[Reference: Ala. Act 2025-403]

## DISTRIBUTION

Distribution of any psychoactive/mind-altering substance such as gummies, medications, etc. will result in automatic 45 days of alternative school for the distributor. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense will result in expulsion from Gadsden City Schools. **This discipline is for the duration of the students Gadsden City Schools tenure, not each individual school year.**

*(Acts 1997, No. 97-423, p. 721, §13; Act 2009-578, p. 1697, §1; Act 2013-383, §1.)*

Refer to **Policy JGFM** for specific policy guidelines.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION/MAJOR OFFENSES – CLASS III ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS

The disciplinary action for such offenses will be suspension, referral to Alternative Educational Center, and/or recommendation for expulsion by the principal as authorized in the procedures previously stated. In the event of recommendation for expulsion, pending final determination of the matter by the School Board, the student may be offered the opportunity to attend the Alternative School.

## ADDITIONAL POLICIES

### 1. TARDY POLICY

Gadsden City Schools strives to maintain an orderly environment for students' education. Students who arrive late not only miss valuable class time, but also interrupt the educational setting of the classroom. Students who are tardy to school must check in with the designated personnel for a pass. **Tardies to class will be handled by each school.** Tardies will be coded excused or unexcused. The designated administration will assign penalties as follows:

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Students who are late to school **MUST** have a PARENT check them in at the school office.

Penalties will be:

**Fifth Tardy:** Parent Notification—phone call/referral with parent signature

**Eighth Tardy or more:** Home Referral—the parent must come to school

**Excessive Tardiness:** Students with 10 or more unexcused tardies will not receive perfect attendance.

### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

**Fifth Tardy:** Parent Notification—phone call/referral with parent signature

**Eighth Tardy:** Home Referral—the parent must come to school

**Tenth Tardy or more:** Will be ISS/Focus Room or OSS

A student is considered tardy after the tardy bell. Parent signatures may be required, or documentation from (doctor, dentist, court, etc.).

## **HIGH SCHOOL**

In order to benefit fully from the instructional program, students should be punctual to school and to every class.

**SCHOOL TARDY:** A student is considered tardy to school after **7:50 a.m.** A parent/guardian is required to check in a student after 7:50 a.m. unless a note from a proper authority (doctor, dentist, court, etc.) is presented at check in.

**First Tardy: Warning**

**Second Tardy:** Student placed on referral and must bring parent/guardian for conference

**Third/Subsequent Tardies: One (1) day ISS/Focus Room**

**Students tardy six or more times will receive additional days OSS**

## **2. CELL PHONE AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY**

Gadsden City Schools will follow the guidelines of the FOCUS Act (HB166) by implementing a districtwide policy on personal electronic devices. The goal is to minimize distractions, protect instructional time, reduce academic dishonesty, and support a safe learning environment. This policy is based on the values of digital responsibility and maintaining a space where students can learn without distractions.

### **General Guidelines**

Students may not use cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, gaming devices, AirPods, or other personal devices that have the capability of exchanging voice messaging or other data during instructional time.

Devices must be turned off and stored in lockers, vehicles, or designated areas—not on the student.

Device use before/after school, during PE, or at lunch is not allowed unless with permission.

School officials reserve the right to examine or inspect the contents of any such device upon reasonable suspicion that the device contains evidence of a violation of Board policy, the Code of Student Conduct, or other school rules.

### **Disciplinary Action**

**First Offense** – The device will be taken, and a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the device in person. The parent/guardian will sign a Cell Phone Policy Consequences Form.

**Second Offense** –The device will be taken, and a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the device in person. The student will receive 2 days of ISS/Focus Room.

**Third Offense**—The device will be taken, and a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the device in person. The student will receive 2 days OSS/Extended ISS/Focus Room.

**Fourth Offense**—The device will be taken, and a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the device in person. The student will receive 3 days OSS/Extended ISS/Focus Room. The parent/guardian will be referred to the District Attorney's Office.

**Subsequent Offenses** can result in a referral to the Alternative Educational Center.

Any student who refuses to give a cell phone/communication device in compliance with Gadsden City School's Cell Phone Policy, and in accordance with HB166, will be considered defiant and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the system handbook.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor their students' digital use and support the system's policy. Students are expected to follow the policy and understand the consequences of misuse. Devices are brought at the student's own risk, and the system is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage.

Authorized exceptions include the use of a device required by a student's IEP, 504 plan, or health plan.

**Disciplinary action for inappropriate or disruptive use will be based on the specific act of misconduct in accordance with the code of conduct guidelines.**

### **3. STUDENT PREGNANCY**

Upon the request of a pregnant student and the student's husband (or parent(s)/guardian if the student is unmarried), a pregnant student will be permitted to attend school and to participate in regular school programs. An alternative curriculum is also available for the single parent. Attendance and participation will be permitted until such time the student's physician determines that such endangers the health and safety of the student. Although school officials cannot exclude a pregnant student from enrollment in school solely because of pregnancy, they do have the authority and responsibility to discipline the student for any action or misconduct on school grounds that is either disruptive or in violation of school regulations. If the pregnant student chooses to remain in school during semester in which she expects to deliver the child, her attendance will be governed by the same attendance policies, rules, and regulations that govern other students. The absence immediately preceding and following the delivery will be an excused absence. Pregnant teens may qualify for Step Academy, Virtual School, or Homebound Services on a case-by-case basis based on medical and family needs. The student will be able to earn course credit only if minimum course requirements are met, as determined by the principal through consultation with the student's teacher. The pregnant student who remains in school during the pregnancy should be under the direct care of a licensed physician. Also, the pregnant student will be excused to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- a. Notify the school principal or counselor after the pregnancy is confirmed.
- b. Provide the principal with a written statement from the physician. The statement should include the physician's recommendations concerning school attendance for the pregnant student and confirmation of the expected date of delivery.
- c. Participate in a joint conference with the principal and the pregnant student's husband (or parent(s)/guardian if the student is unmarried). This required conference will be held for the purpose of determining the duration of the student's school attendance before the delivery date, based upon the physician's recommendation.
- d. Consult monthly with the school counselor or school nurse. To be readmitted to school following delivery, the student should have a written statement of authorization from her physician.

### **4. DRUG ABUSE**

The intent of the Gadsden City Board of Education is to comply and to cooperate fully with the law regarding illegal drug use and drug abuse.

The School Board understands that there are times when prescription drugs must be used by students for medical reasons. Under these conditions the student or his parent(s) or guardian should register the prescription with the principal or his designated person(s) in order to protect the student.

### **5. STUDENT SURVEYS**

Periodically, it is necessary for students to participate in surveys to collect information for needs assessment for various programs.

### **6. DRESS CODE**

The Board recognizes that dress and grooming affect the behavior of students and that there are sanitation and safety factors directly related to proper dress and grooming. The manner in which a student dresses for school each day is primarily the responsibility of the student and his or her parents. However, when a student's style of dress or appearance presents a danger, causes an interruption of the instructional program, or violates the dress code he or she will be denied class admission until the condition is corrected. Therefore, the Board establishes the following expectations for student dress and appearance in order that school administrators,

teachers, and parents will have clear dress and grooming guidelines to ensure that rules and discipline can be enforced consistently.

### **Specific Dress Regulations:**

1. Good personal hygiene is to be observed at all times. Proper undergarments and shoes are mandatory. (House slippers are not suitable)
2. Head apparel such as hats, toboggans, and bandanas will not be worn inside buildings. Any other head apparel that causes a distraction to the school environment will not be allowed.
3. Nose, lip, or other body piercing that cause a distraction to the school environment will not be allowed.
4. Sunglasses and colored shades will not be worn inside buildings.
5. No see-through, backless, or strapless shirts; no spaghetti straps or muscle shirts; no midriff or tube tops will be allowed. Tops made from spandex, mesh, or fishnet will not be allowed. Sports bras cannot be worn as outerwear on school campus. No part of the bra or any undergarment should be visible at any time.
6. Any pants/skirts/dresses, etc. that cause a distraction to the school environment will not be allowed. Pants with holes in inappropriate places will not be allowed. No underwear should be visible at any time.
7. **NO SAGGING PANTS.** All shirts must be within the area of the hipline (waistline), and belts must be worn.
8. All shorts, skirts, skorts, or dresses must come to or extend below the tips of the fingers. Tight fitting garments (stretch pants, leggings, etc.) must be accompanied by a shirt that extends below the fingertips.
9. Clothing must not contain any writing, drawing, labels, or decals which could be offensive to others. No clothing will be allowed that displays antisocial, immoral or illegal behavior nor should clothing promote products which students may not legally buy, such as alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
10. All oversized clothing made for outdoor wear must be placed in the locker first thing in the morning. With the instructor's permission, lightweight jackets and sweaters will be allowed in class.
11. In addition to articles previously mentioned: accessories, backpacks (must be clear or mesh and left in the locker upon arrival), notebooks, patches, haircuts must not display or promote racial/ethnic slurs/symbols; gang, satanic, or occult affiliations; violence or mutilation, vulgar, subversive or sexually suggestive language; or products such as alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs.
12. Any student's appearance that causes a disruption to the school climate will not be allowed in school.
13. Cheerleaders and dance team members will be allowed to wear uniforms with opaque tights on game days. It is believed that such a practice will help foster school spirit, as well as make others aware of athletic events.
14. Hair should be kept in an appropriate manner conducive to the education environment.
15. The principal has the authority to add or delete any of the above regulations as emergency problems or concerns arise.

Evaluations of dress not covered by the fourteen (14) specific regulations will be done on an individual basis through referral to a counselor or principal. School "Dress Up" days are provided for in the regular calendar of activities during the year on a planned basis. The use of school time for initiation days by groups or organizations not sponsored by the school is prohibited.

### **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH DRESS CODE WILL RESULT IN:**

#### **Middle School**

- **First Offense:** Student warning
- **Second Offense:** Parent conference
- **Third Offense:** Home referral
- **Fourth Offense:** Three (3) days of ISS/Focus Room
- **Fifth Offense:** One (1) day of OSS
- **The next infraction will result in In-School Suspension (ISS)/Focus Room or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) and parent will be required to bring the child back to school and meet with an administrator the day following the last day of the Focus Room or OSS.**

### **High School**

- **First Offense:** Warning or home referral
- **Second Offense:** One (1) or more days ISS/Focus Room
- **Third Offense:** Three (3) days OSS
- **The next infraction will result in In-School Suspension (ISS)/Focus Room or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) and parent will be required to bring the child back to school and meet with an administrator the day following the last day of ISS/Focus Room or OSS.**

### **8. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of the School Board that all students have the right to study and pursue their education in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive, including sexual harassment.

The School Board's position is that sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the learning opportunities of all students. No student – either male or female – should be subject to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that debilitates morale, and that, therefore, interferes with the learning process. Such behaviors may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Students committing any acts of sexual harassment will be referred for counseling to assist him/her in correcting this behavior. Severe acts of this nature may require referral to professional counseling services outside the school setting.

## 9. ANTI-HARRASSMENT/BULLYING POLICY

### See Board Policy Manual JCDD

No student shall be engaged in or be subjected to harassment, violence, threats of violence, or intimidation by any other student that is based on any of the specific characteristics that have been identified by the Gadsden City Board of Education in this policy. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary sanctions.

### FILE: JCDD

### Complaint Form

School System: \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

| INFRACTION REPORTED BY: __STUDENT PARENT/GUARDIAN |  |      |  |
|---------------------------------------------------|--|------|--|
| Date of Incident                                  |  | Time |  |
| Specific Location of Incident                     |  |      |  |
| <b>DESCRIPTION</b>                                |  |      |  |
|                                                   |  |      |  |
| <b>OTHER INFORMATION</b>                          |  |      |  |
|                                                   |  |      |  |

The *Jamari Terrell Williams Student Bullying Prevention Act*, No. 2018-472, defines bullying as a continuous pattern of intentional behavior that takes place on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to, cyberbullying or written, electronic, verbal, or physical acts that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student, or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic, if the characteristic falls into one of the categories of personal characteristics contained in the policy adopted by the local board. To constitute bullying, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:

- a. Place a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
- b. Have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student.
- c. Have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of the school.
- d. Have the effect of creating a hostile environment in the school, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function.
- e. Have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment or a student.

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

OR

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that the submission of a complaint does not automatically substantiate that misconduct has occurred. The school administration has the prerogative to investigate any allegations of wrongdoing.

## ***I. Policy Provision for Threat of Suicide:***

*If a threat of suicide is reported, the principal will inform the student's parent or legal guardian of the report and document the threat and administrative response to the threat of suicide on this form.*

### **10. POSSESSION OF FIREARMS**

The Gadsden City Board of Education is cognizant of the extreme danger posed to other students and staff members by students who bring firearms to school. The board believes that possession of a firearm is totally unacceptable in an educational setting and establishes a minimum two-year expulsion for any student bringing a firearm onto any school campus or to any school function. In addition, any student displaying or using a weapon in a menacing fashion will be recommended for permanent expulsion.

Possession of any weapon will be treated as a major disciplinary infraction in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct for the Gadsden City Schools. Any incident of weapon possession will be turned over to law enforcement authorities.

**Gun Free Schools Act (GFSA):** When it is determined that a student possesses a firearm at school, on school property, or at a school event/activity, the following procedures must be followed immediately:

The student must be expelled and the expulsion noted on records transferred to any other school. The LEA must determine the procedures and steps needed to reach the expulsion status, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Report to law enforcement and other appropriate authorities.
- Contact parent/guardians
- Suspend from school immediately pending investigation
- Complete an investigation as soon as possible with documented written report(s)
- Expel student according to LEA policy

Following the expulsion determination, the student cannot attend any regular public school for one calendar year. The LEA can modify the expulsion on a case-by-case basis as allowed by the Code of Alabama 1975 §16-1-24.3.

Discipline of students with disabilities who violate the firearm possession policies shall be determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

GFSA and other state required disciplinary data will be reported to the SDE through School Incident Reporting (SIR)

### **11. SEX OFFENDER VISITATION**

It is the policy of the Gadsden City Board of Education that no adult sex offender, after having been convicted of a sex offense involving a minor, shall enter onto the property of a Gadsden City school while school is in session or attend any Gadsden City school activity unless the adult sex offender does all of the following:

- A. Submits to the principal of the school, or his/her designee (by mail, received at least one week prior to the visit) a written request for approval, to enter the property or attend a school activity; (request forms are available from school principals)
- B. Immediately reports to the principal of the school, or his/her designee, upon entering the property or arriving at the school activity; and,
- C. Complies with any procedures established by the school to monitor the whereabouts of the sex offender during his or her presence on school property or at a school activity.

Ref: Alabama Code 16-12-3; Legislative Act 2014-421

### **12. SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

**Personal Searches: Periodic searches of personal effects may occur without notice to promote and insure school safety.** A student's person and /or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or

unauthorized materials. If a pat down search of a student's person is conducted, it will be conducted in private by a school official of the same gender and with an adult witness present, when feasible.

**Locker Searches:** Student lockers are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. Periodic general inspections of lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

**NOTE:** Book bags, purses, and other large bags may be searched prior to entering the building.

## **Policy Regarding the Legal and Ethical Use of Technology Resources, Electronic Mail, and the Internet**

### **INTRODUCTION**

To ensure that students receive a quality education and that employees are able to work in a professional and intellectually stimulating environment, it is the policy of Gadsden City Schools to provide all students and employees with the opportunity to access a variety of technology resources.

The creation of a large and varied technology environment demands that technology usage be conducted in legally and ethically appropriate ways, consistent with the instructional goals of the Gadsden City Schools.

Thus, it is the intention of the Gadsden City Schools that all technology resources will be used in accordance with any and all school system policies and procedures, as well as local, state and federal laws and/or guidelines governing the usage of technology and its component parts. Additionally, it is implied that all students and employees of the Gadsden City Schools will use the provided technology resources so as not to waste them, abuse them, interfere with or cause harm to other individuals, institutions, or companies. Gadsden City School technologies may not be utilized for personal gain.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The primary goal of the technology environment is to support the educational and instructional endeavors of the students and employees of the Gadsden City Schools.

Individuals may only use accounts, files, software, and computer resources that are assigned to those individuals under their password. Individuals must take all reasonable precautions to prevent unauthorized access to accounts and data and any other unauthorized usage within and outside the Gadsden City Schools.

Duplication of any copyrighted software is prohibited unless specifically allowed for in the license agreement.

Individuals are expected to report any violations of this policy and/or problems with the security of any technology resources to the Principal or System Technology Coordinator.

Any use of technology resources that reduces the efficiency of use for others will be considered a violation of this policy.

Students and employees of the Gadsden City Schools must not attempt to modify technology resources, utilities and/or configurations, or change the restrictions associated with their accounts, or attempt to breach any technology resources security system, including internet content filtering, either with or without malicious intent.

The Principal of each school will be responsible for establishing specific practices to enforce this policy at individual schools.

The legal and ethical practices of software and hardware usage will be conveyed to all students and employees in the system (i.e., during computer lab orientation; during faculty meetings, etc.)

All Gadsden City Schools technology resources, regardless of purchase date or location, are subject to this policy.

Any questions about this policy, its interpretation, or specific circumstances, shall be directed to the Systemwide Technology Coordinator. Violators of this policy will be handled in a manner consistent with comparable situations requiring disciplinary action, including, but not limited to: (1) loss of access; (2) additional disciplinary action to be determined at the individual school in line with the Code of Student Conduct for the Gadsden City Schools or other board policy; and (3) legal action, when applicable.

## **ELECTRONIC MAIL**

The Gadsden City School System provides access to electronic mail for many of its employees and **students**. That access is for their use in any educational and instructional business that they may conduct. Staff personal use of electronic mail is permitted as long as it does not violate Gadsden City School policy or adversely affect others. Contents and usage of electronic mail shall be the property of the Gadsden City School System.

Electronic Email is available for support of educational, instructional, extracurricular, and administrative activity. With that purpose in mind, electronic mail accounts are available to students according to the following guidelines:

- a. Students receiving email accounts, Google Apps for Education, must use these accounts for instructional purposes only.
- b. Students are responsible for not sharing the password for their account with others. Students will be held responsible if another person utilizes their account.
- c. All student email accounts are subject to monitoring, archiving, and acceptable use policies.
- d. The Board cannot guarantee the privacy, security, or confidentiality of any information sent or received via electronic mail. Contents of electronic mail cannot be considered private. All contents of electronic mail are the property of the Board. Students will not be allowed to use the district e-mail account to communicate outside the school district.
- e. Students receiving email accounts must use these accounts for instructional purposes only and while at school, should only use mail accounts provided by the district.
- f. Students assigned an email account will use that account as long as they are attending a school within the Gadsden City Schools.

## **INTERNET**

Information from electronic sources alters the educational environment by opening unlimited resources. The intent of the Gadsden City Schools is to provide access to resources available via the Internet with the understanding that faculty, staff, and students will access and use information that is appropriate for their various curricula. The Gadsden City Schools have taken precautions to restrict access to inappropriate materials. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials. We believe that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material

that is not consistent with the educational goals of the District. Internet access is provided to allow students to conduct research and to communicate with others. Parents of students under the age of 17 may request that their child not be allowed to independently access the Internet by notifying the principal in writing within fifteen (15) school days of the student's first day of attendance each school year. This restriction will apply to the student independently operating any Board owned, leased, or controlled technology resource to access the Internet. It does not prohibit the student from viewing Internet sites presented by school personnel or by other students as part of a lesson, or from using Internet-hosted software used by the school. In these cases, school personnel will take appropriate and reasonable steps to, as much as possible, restrict the student from using computers to access the Internet independently.

All school rules and guidelines for appropriate technology usage shall apply to usage of the Internet. Because communications on the Internet are often public in nature, all users should be careful to maintain appropriate and responsible communications.

To maintain system integrity and to insure that the system is being used responsibly, the Gadsden City Schools reserve the right to review files and network communications. Users should not expect that files stored on the Gadsden City Schools's servers will be private.

All home pages (starting point for a group or individual directory of Internet sites and/or other information) will be reviewed by the System Technology Coordinator for approval before being publicly posted.

Internet access is a privilege, not a right. All Internet users are expected to act in a considerate and responsible manner.

The following are not permitted on any Gadsden City Schools Network or the Internet:

1. sending, displaying, or downloading offensive messages or pictures
2. using obscene language
3. harassing, insulting, or attacking others
4. damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks (this includes changing workstation and printer configurations)
5. violating copyright laws
6. using other user passwords
7. trespassing in other user files, folders, or work,
8. intentionally wasting limited resources, or
9. plagiarizing.

### **PLAGIARISM**

Definition: To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source. (n.d.). Retrieved Oct. 28, 2011, from Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary Website:

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarizing> .

Plagiarism is expressly prohibited by students and staff of the Gadsden City Schools.

### **INTERNET SAFETY**

1. Students are not to access inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web.
2. Students are not to use school system equipment or resources to electronically communicate with individuals for non-instructional purposes. This includes e-mail correspondence, chat rooms, instant/real time messenger services, or any other form of electronic direct communication. Such contacts may only be made with the approval and supervision of school system personnel and be conducted solely for instructional purposes.

3. Students are prohibited from participating in any unauthorized access (“hacking”) of computer systems or any other unlawful technological activities.
4. Students and school system employees are prohibited from the unauthorized electronic disclosure of personal student information such as name, home address, phone number, age, or race.
5. The Gadsden City Schools have taken filtering and supervisory precautions to restrict intentional or accidental access to inappropriate sites on the Internet.

**Ref: TITLE XVII – Children’s Internet Protection Act.**

## **PHOTOGRAPHIC AND VIDEO IMAGES**

Periodically, photographs and video of student activities may be placed in public venues, including but not limited to, newspaper, magazine, websites, Facebook, and cable television channels. Full names are not typically included with these images, If there is any reason a parent DOES NOT want images (Photo or Video) of their child to appear, they must annually notify the school principal and submit a request for non-participation of these types of activities. Specific reasons are not required of the requesting parent. NOTE: The school district does not have distribution control of photos or videos taken at public activities such as athletic events.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (A.I.)**

***This section outlines the acceptable use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and applications within Gadsden City Schools to ensure their safe, ethical, and responsible use.***

Gadsden City Schools acknowledges that technology is ever-changing and has a tremendous impact on our global society, local community, and classrooms. Artificial intelligence (AI), including generative forms of AI, is becoming more a part of our everyday lives. It is our responsibility to educate and train students to utilize AI in an ethical and educational way. Therefore, Gadsden City Schools is not banning the student or teacher use of AI, but each student will need to be aware of the limitations and guidelines of its usage:

- Gadsden City Schools student email accounts and Chromebook access to specific open AI software, such as ChatGPT, are blocked due to data and security concerns. Any misuse of AI tools and applications, such as hacking or altering data, is strictly prohibited.
- Teachers may allow the use of AI for curriculum purposes. Access to specific websites will be granted on an as-needed basis, adhering to specific data and privacy guidelines regarding age restrictions and usage.
- College Board and Dual Enrollment college and university classes may have additional restrictions and limitations regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence.
- Students must acknowledge the use of AI in any capacity related to their school work: text, image, multimedia, etc.
- The use of AI could be subject to disciplinary action based on the Gadsden City Schools Code of Student Conduct policy.
- Students should acknowledge that AI is not always factually accurate, nor seen as a credible source, and should be able to provide evidence to support its claims. All users must also be aware of the potential for bias and discrimination in AI tools and applications.

ADOPTED: July 2, 2024

## TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES AGREEMENT

**STUDENT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHOOL:** \_\_\_\_\_

The Gadsden City School System provides access to electronic mail for many of its employees and some student classes. That access is for their use in any educational and instructional business that they may conduct. Staff personal use of electronic mail is permitted as long as it does not violate Gadsden City Schools' policy or adversely affect others. All contents and usage of electronic mail shall be the property of the Gadsden City School System.

I understand that Internet access is provided for educational purposes. The Gadsden City Schools have taken precautions to eliminate controversial material. However, I also recognize it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial materials, and I will not hold them responsible for materials acquired on the network. I understand, that as an Internet user, I am responsible for my actions and that I am responsible for acting considerately and appropriately, in accordance with the following rules. When using any Gadsden City Schools Technology Resources, including the Internet, I will not:

1. send, display, or download offensive messages or pictures
2. use obscene language
3. harass, insult, or attack others
4. damage computers, computer systems, or computer networks (this includes changing workstation and printer configurations)
5. violate copyright laws
6. use other user passwords
7. trespass in other user files, folders, or work, or,
8. intentionally waste limited resources.
9. plagiarizing.

### **PLAGIARISM**

Definition: To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source

Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary Web site:  
<http://www.m-w.com>

I understand that any or all of the following sanctions could be imposed if I violate any of the policies and procedures regarding the use of Gadsden City Schools Technology Resources, including the Internet.

1. Loss of access
2. Additional disciplinary action to be determined at the individual school in line with existing practice regarding inappropriate language or behavior.
3. Legal action, when applicable.

**PARENT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Gadsden City Schools Internet Safety Policy**

### **Adoption of Rules and Regulations**

The Superintendent is authorized to develop and present to the Board for approval, additional or more specific rules and regulations governing access to and the use of the district's technology resources. All rules and regulations must align with the requirements of the federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and Alabama's Freeing Our Classrooms of Unnecessary Screens for Safety Act to ensure safe, appropriate, and educationally focused technology use in all school settings. In compliance with The Focus Act (HB166) and Section 5.

Gadsden City Schools is committed to maintaining a safe, secure, and age-appropriate digital environment for all students and staff. This policy outlines the safeguards, responsibilities, and tools in place to promote responsible technology use.

### **Digital Safety and Access Control**

#### **Internet Filtering and Access**

- Student access, as possible, is limited to educational, age-appropriate content.
- Securly is used to block or filter content that is obscene, harmful, or inappropriate.
- Social media use is prohibited.

#### **Communication Safety**

- Email and messaging tools are limited to approved platforms under staff supervision.
- Chat rooms and unauthorized communication tools are not allowed.
- Staff must ensure student safety in all digital interactions.

#### **Prohibited Activities**

*Students may not:*

- Access or share unlawfully obtained information (e.g., hacking).
- Use unauthorized websites, apps, or software that collect or misuse personal data.
- Engage in cyberbullying or inappropriate online behavior:
- Disclose or share personal information without permission.

#### **Digital Citizenship and Education**

- Students are taught appropriate online behavior, including safe interactions on social media and cyberbullying prevention.

#### **Oversight and Enforcement**

- School principals oversee policy enforcement.
- Violations result in disciplinary action per the Gadsden City Schools Code of Conduct.

#### **Staff Compliance**

- All certified staff must complete an annual anonymous survey to assess policy implementation and compliance.

## **TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS**

1. Students should be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.
2. Students should board the bus only when signaled by the bus driver.
3. Students should remain seated when the bus is moving.
4. Students should follow all bus safety rules and be aware that eating, drinking, excessive talking, throwing objects, fighting, and any other violation and/or disruptive behavior while on the bus is prohibited.
5. Students should only get off at approved drop-off bus stops unless prior written permission by the parent/guardian for a different drop-off is given to the school official.
6. The school principal or designee has the authority to suspend a student from the bus for a major violation.

Parents/guardians are responsible for their children on the way to the bus stop, at the bus stop, and on the way home from the bus stop. Children should arrive at their bus stop at least five minutes before the established pick-up time. Parents/guardians are responsible for children once they arrive at the afternoon bus stop and should plan to meet the bus or arrange for a caretaker or other responsible adult to accompany the children safely home or to the child care provider. Parents/guardians should instruct their children where to get off the bus and familiarize them with unique aspects of the bus stop.

**Please note: Bus operators do not know all of the possible contacts who might be picking up a student on a particular day, and are unable to match each child with a specific adult. When students get off the bus, they are entirely in the care of the parent/guardian or other approved contact. They are on their own to walk home if no parent/guardian or caregiver is present. Therefore, students will use the same stop for both mornings and afternoons.** If you usually meet your child at the bus stop and cannot make it on a given day, call the school well before dismissal time and ask that your child be kept at the school to be picked up rather than placed on the bus at the end of the school day. This is an emergency back-up plan that should be used only in those rare circumstances when you are unexpectedly and unavoidably delayed in making it to the bus stop. Keep the school phone number in your cell phone or other convenient place should an emergency arise. Establishing a buddy plan for your child with an older sibling or classmate is advised, in case your child arrives at the afternoon bus stop without meeting you or another contact. Bus schedules are approximate and may vary due to traffic, weather conditions, and student changes. It is best to be present at the bus stop ahead of the normal arrival time.

If you want your child to be supervised by an adult while walking home from the afternoon bus stop, we recommend the following:

- \* Plan for you or another contact/caregiver to be at the bus stop ahead of the normal drop-off time, as the bus may arrive early on any given day.
- \* Plan in advance for another adult who is normally at the bus stop to care for your child if you are not there.
- \* If you have an emergency and cannot make it to the bus stop, call the school well before dismissal time, so your child will be kept at school for pickup rather than put on the bus. Be sure you always have the school phone number with you in case of an emergency.
- \* Be sure your child knows and can identify the proper bus stop and understands not to get off the bus at any other stop.
- \* Arrange for an older student “buddy” to walk home with your child, or allow your child to stay at the older student’s house until you are able to pick up your child. Be sure to work with the other student’s parent/guardian when arranging this plan.
- \* Be sure your child knows to tell the bus driver, before getting off the bus, if something is “not right.” This includes a parent/guardian or caregiver who is usually at the stop not being visible; missing the stop; or getting on the wrong bus and not recognizing any stop or familiar adults.

**Once the student gets off the bus, only you can ensure your child is appropriately supervised.**

Buses follow a routine schedule and typically arrive at their stops within a few minutes of the schedule. Except for snowy or icy mornings, parents and students should wait at the bus stop for at least 15 minutes past the scheduled arrival time before calling the appropriate school. On days of inclement weather, students and parents should expect some delays due to road and traffic conditions.

During snowy or icy weather conditions, school officials may close school all day, delay opening by two hours, or close early. Parents should have contingency plans in place to take care of children on such days.

These decisions are announced on local radio and television stations, and respective school websites.

**Delayed opening**

If the opening of school is delayed, buses will pick up students at their normal stops two or three hours later than usual. Typically, such decisions are announced prior to the effected school day or before the start of the school day.

Because weather or road conditions may deteriorate further after a delay is announced, parents and students should continue to monitor media announcements for a possible change from a delay to a closure.

**Early closing**

When a snow storm or other weather-related emergency begins in the morning after students arrive at school, the school system may find it necessary to close schools early. This ensures that students will arrive home safely in a reasonable amount of time. When this occurs, students will be taken to their respective bus stops once school is dismissed.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Safety is a system priority; therefore, proper conduct on school buses by all transported students is required. Transportation is a privilege granted to students, contingent upon the exhibition of proper behavior. Each student and their parent/guardian is responsible for the behavior of the student before, after & while on school provided transportation.

A student's privilege to ride the school bus or in school provided transportation may be suspended or revoked. The system does not provide alternative transportation for a student that has lost his/her riding privilege. Decisions regarding special education students will consider their IEP needs/requirements.

Parents/guardians are also responsible for their child's behavior while they are at their designated bus stop.

Discipline will be determined based on the severity of the offense and could range from a warning to riding privileges being revoked.

When suspended, the student is not allowed to ride any school system bus during the specific time period of the suspension.

**PHOTOGRAPHIC AND VIDEO IMAGES**

Periodically, photographs and video of student's activities may be placed in public venues, including but not limited to, newspaper, magazine, websites, Facebook, and cable television channels. Full names are typically not included with these images. If there is any reason you DO NOT want images (photo or video) of your child to appear, annually notify your school principal and submit a request for non-participation for these types of activities. Specific reasons are not required of the requesting parent. NOTE: The school district does not have distribution control of photo or videos taken at public activities such as athletic events.

**BAD CHECK POLICY**

The Gadsden City Board of Education has an agreement with Envision for the collection of all returned checks issued to all locations. The Board will require the following on all checks:

- Full Name
- Street Address
- Home Phone Number
- Drivers Licenses Number (with State)

If your check is returned, it will be automatically forwarded by the Gadsden City Board of Education's bank to Envision. Envision will contact you in order to collect the face amount of the worthless check plus a collection fee. The amount of the collection fee is currently \$35.00. This fee is subject to change as allowed by law. If you do not properly respond to Envision, or Envision is unable to contact you, they will re-present your check to the bank electronically. Fees could also be deducted from the same account.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL/TEMPORARY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS**

The Superintendent of Education has the authority to temporarily close schools or dismiss early in the event of severe weather, inadequate heat, or other conditions, which threaten the safety and well-being of the student. Parents should listen to local radio stations for information. Also, make sure a current telephone number is registered with your child's school. This will allow Gadsden City's notification system to contact a parent/guardian in the event of school closings and/or early dismissals. Please arrange for your child to be picked up at the specified time given when closings arise. Every child will need to be signed out by their parent, guardian, or the designee of the parents. If an early dismissal occurs, all after-school activities will be canceled.

## **AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) POLICY**

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is used to treat victims who experience sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). It is only applied to victims who are unconscious, not breathing and showing no signs of circulation, such as normal breathing, coughing, or movement. The AED will analyze the heart rhythm and advise the operator if a shock-able rhythm is detected. If a shock-able rhythm is detected, the AED will charge to appropriate energy level and advise the operator to deliver a shock. It is the policy of Gadsden City Board of Education that an automated external defibrillator (AED) be placed and maintained at each school. The Superintendent will designate at least one employee at each school to be trained in the use of an AED. Each building-based user shall be made aware of the location of the device in the building and shall maintain proper CPR/AED certification. All AEDs will be maintained and tested according to manufacturer's operational guidelines by the Gadsden City School System's Lead Registered Nurse. The local fire department and medics will be kept informed about the presence and location of the AEDs in school buildings. A licensed physician or other medical professional is to be included in creation or modification of any AED program or guidelines related to the program.

**FILE: JGFHA**

## **ANAPHYLAXIS PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM POLICY**

It is the policy of the Gadsden City School System that the Anaphylaxis Preparedness Program be implemented as part of the school health services. The program shall incorporate three levels of preparedness:

1. Primary Prevention: Education programs that address food allergies and anaphylaxis through both classroom and individual instruction for staff and students.
2. Secondary Prevention: Identification and management of chronic illness which could lead to anaphylaxis.
3. Tertiary Prevention: The development of a planned response to anaphylaxis-related emergency in the school setting.

Each school campus, in collaboration with a supervising physician, shall develop and maintain a protocol for emergency response that shall include a supply of premeasured auto-injectable epinephrine to treat a life-threatening allergic reactions. *Gadsden City School System will stock epinephrine on our campuses provided the funds are available.*

*References: Code of Alabama 16-1-48(D), Alabama Legislative Act 2014-405*

**ADOPTED: 4/10/2018**

## **MEDICATION AT SCHOOL**

### **Medication Forms**

Prescribed and/or over-the-counter (OTC) medication is administered only upon receipt of a correct, current, completed School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form (PPA). The prescribing physician must fill out the prescriber authorization section and sign the PPA for prescription medication to be given at school. This form is available in the nurse's office or on the school's website under nurse section. Please ensure that the

**PPA matches the pharmacy label. Over the Counter medication may not be kept for more than 2 weeks without written authorization from an authorized licensed healthcare provider.**

### **Delivery of Medication**

All prescription medication must be in a current, pharmacy-labeled prescription container. All OTC medications must be in an unopened (sealed), manufacturer-labeled container and identified with the student's name written in permanent ink. The parent/guardian or parent-designated responsible adult (not the student) should deliver to school nurse. No expired medication will be accepted.

### **Acceptance of Medication**

Both the parent/guardian or authorized adult and the licensed nurse or medication assistant will sign the back of the Medication Administration Daily Record (MAR) to verify amount received or retrieved. Students must not deliver or carry any type of medication to and from school except those authorized for self-administration/self-carry (inhalers, EPI-Pens, and insulin are allowed for self -carry/self-administration with current PPA on file with nurse).

### **Storage of Medication**

All medications must be stored in the nurse's office according to ABN guidelines. Exceptions to this rule are medications prescribed to prevent or treat medical emergencies. Per ABN guidelines, Gadsden City Schools do not stock over the counter medications (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Hydrocortisone, etc.) for student or staff use. First aid supplies including calamine lotion, antibacterial ointment, saline wound wash, and eye wash may be maintained in the school nurse office.

### **Emergency Medication**

A student may carry his/her emergency medication (insulin, glucagon, epi-pen, or rescue inhaler) with proper authorization on the School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form (PPA) and after demonstration of proper administration to the nurse.

### **Expired Medication**

The parent/guardian or authorized adult will be notified when medications expire. Expired medication must be picked up within two (2) weeks of notification. If not picked up, medication will be destroyed in accordance with federal and state guidelines.

### **End of each School Year**

The parent/guardian or authorized adult (not the student) must pick up all medications on or before the last day of classes, or the medications will be destroyed. Medication cannot be kept at the school between the end of the regular school year and the start of the next school year.

**STUDENTS FOUND TO BE IN POSSESSION OF MEDICATION (PRESCRIBED OR OVER THE COUNTER WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION ON FILE IN THE SCHOOL NURSE OFFICE) OR WHO GIVE AWAY, SELL, OR ATTEMPT TO GIVE AWAY OR SELL MEDICATION, MAY BE SUBJECT TO SUSPENSION, PROBATION, OR EXPULSION.**

## ALABAMA CERTIFICATE OF IMMUNIZATION

Every student enrolled must have and maintain a current Alabama Certificate of Immunization or an authorized exemption on file at the school according to **Alabama Code Section 16-30-4**. Non-compliance may result in a delayed start date for the student.

### POLICY/PROCEDURE FOR PEDICULIS CAPITIS (HEAD LICE)

Purpose: To define the steps that will be taken by Gadsden City Schools' staff in the event of a suspected case of head lice.

Rationale: The goal of Gadsden City Schools' Health Services is to keep students in the classroom as long as medically safe. As head lice are not at a risk for carrying communicable disease; are primarily spread through direct head to head contact, and can only live less than a day off a host, the subsequent steps will be followed:

1. Students suspected of having head lice will be sent to the school nurse/designee for evaluation. Mass screenings are no longer recommended.
2. A parent/guardian will be contacted and a lice information sheet will be sent home with any student found to have nits. **FOCUS WILL BE ON THE REMOVAL OF NITS TO BREAK THE LIFE CYCLE, PREVENTING OUTBREAKS.**
3. The principal will be advised of any student found with live head lice. It will be at the principal's discretion whether the student with live head lice may remain at school until the end of the school day.
4. Students with live head lice must be treated and be free of lice/nits before returning to school. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice.
5. The process of a student returning to school after live head lice are found will be:
  - A. A parent/guardian must accompany student to school.
  - B. The school nurse/designee will check the student's head before student can return to class.
  - C. If no lice/nits are found; the student may stay at school.
  - D. If lice are found; the parent/guardian will take the student home. A student will not be allowed to stay at school with live head lice.
  - E. If nits are found, it will be at the principal's discretion whether the student may remain at school.
6. Students are excused the first two (2) days for treatment of lice for the first incident only. All subsequent absences due to lice are unexcused.

References: CDC Division of Parasitic Disease: <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/schools.html>  
National Association of School Nurses: <https://www.nasn.org/nasn/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-head-lice>  
American Academy of Pediatrics: <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/AAP-Updates-Treatments-for-Head-Lice.aspx>

### PREVENTATIVE HEALTH MAINTENANCE

The Alabama State Department of Education and the Alabama Department of Public Health requires that school districts in Alabama offer and provide scoliosis screenings for all students in grade 5 through age 14, including special education students. The goal of this program is early detection of spinal deformities.

**\*\*Meningococcal meningitis** is inflammation of the lining around the brain and spinal cord that is caused by a very serious bacterial infection. This infection can lead to brain damage, hearing loss, learning disabilities, and even death. The meningococcal vaccine (MCV4) is recommended for all children 11-12 years of age. Older teens need a second shot at 16 years of age. For more information, please refer to:  
<http://www.adph.org/Immunization/assets/MeningococcalDiseaseAndVaccineFlyer.pdf>

**\*\*The Influenza "flu" vaccine** is recommended for all age groups. For more information, please refer to:  
<http://www.alsde.edu/sec/pss/Communicable/Flu%20Flyer.pdf>

**\*\*Backpack Act 2017-19** urges all school administrators, teachers, parents & students to be educated about the potential health impact of heavy backpacks and to take proactive measures to avoid injury. More information

can be found at: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Backpack-Safety.aspx>

**\*\*Sunscreen Act 2017-278** allows any student to self-carry & apply a FDA approved sunscreen without any type of consent/paperwork. However, if a parent requests a school employee apply the sunscreen then the parent must contact the school nurse for appropriate paperwork to be completed.

**\*\*COVID-19** (coronavirus disease 2019) is a disease caused by a virus named SARS-CoV-2. It can be very contagious and spreads quickly. Covid-19 most often causes respiratory symptoms that can feel much like a cold, the flu, or pneumonia but may attack more than your lungs and respiratory system. If you are exposed to or test positive for Covid-19, contact your health care provider or go to: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/ if-you-were-exposed.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/if-you-were-exposed.html) and complete the CDC Isolation and Exposure Calculator for guidance. Please notify your school nurse.

**\*\*Effective hand washing** is the most powerful weapon available to fight the transmission of most infections.

**\*\*Open wounds** must be covered at all times while at school.

**\*\*If your child is sick**, please keep them home. We are committed to sending sick children home to decrease exposure to the rest of our students thus preventing outbreaks of preventable illnesses. If your child has a rash, it is recommended they be evaluated by a medical professional with a note saying when they can return to class.

### **STUDENT EXCLUSION DUE TO ILLNESS**

Should a child develop any contagious signs or symptoms (SEE BELOW) while at school, school personnel will contact the parent/guardian or authorized adult and request that the child be taken home. If symptoms persist longer than two (2) days, consider taking your child to a physician. In the absence of a medical diagnosis or a physician-signed clearance to return to school, students who are ill should be excluded from school for 24 hours after the last episode or until illness subsides according to the following guidelines:

| <b>Symptom</b>                  | <b>Recommended Exclusion Period</b>                                          |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fever (100.4 degrees or higher) | Until 24 hours after the last episode of fever without anti-fever medication |
| Diarrhea                        | Until 24 hours after the last episode of diarrhea                            |
| Vomiting                        | Until 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting                            |

### **ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION POLICY USE OF DIGITAL DEVICE DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF A SECURE TEST**

#### **Student Policy**

The possession of a digital device (including but not limited to cell phones, MP3 players, cameras, or other telecommunication devices capable of capturing or relaying information) is strictly prohibited during the administration of a secure test. If a student is observed in possession of a digital device during the administration of a secure test, the device will be confiscated. If a student is observed using a digital device during the administration of a secure test, testing for the student will cease, the device will be confiscated and is subject to search, the student will be dismissed from testing, and the student's test will be invalidated. Local education agency (LEA) personnel will make all students, parents, and/or guardians aware of this prohibition through inclusion of this policy in the Code of Student Conduct Handbook and other regularly used modes of communication.

## **CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM**

All students enrolled in Gadsden City Schools will receive free breakfast and lunch for the 2026-2027 school year. The cost for employee/guest meals is as follows:

### **Employee**

**Breakfast - \$3.25**

**Lunch - \$5.25**

### **Guest**

**Breakfast - \$3.25**

**Lunch - \$5.25**

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

As we prepare for the upcoming academic term, I want to take this opportunity to share important information regarding the Code of Student Conduct for Gadsden City Schools.

The Code of Student Conduct serves as a guide outlining the expectations and standards of behavior that we uphold at Gadsden City Schools. It is our commitment to provide a safe, respectful, and nurturing learning environment for all students enrolled in Gadsden City Schools.

We believe that fostering a positive school culture requires collaboration between school staff, students, and families. Your involvement and support in reinforcing the principles outlined in the Code of Student Conduct are crucial. By working together, we can ensure that every student understands and upholds these standards, promoting a school environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

I encourage you to take the time to review the Code of Student Conduct with your child before the start of the school year. Discussing these expectations at home provides an excellent opportunity to reinforce the importance of integrity, respect, and responsible decision-making. Our goal is to ensure all students are well-prepared to contribute positively to Gadsden City Schools from day one.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership in creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all students at Gadsden City Schools. Together, we can make this school year successful and fulfilling for every member of our school community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KB' followed by a large, stylized loop.

Keith Blackwell  
Gadsden City Schools, Superintendent