

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Houston County Schools

2022-2023 Edition





Ashford High School



Principal – Dr. Donnie Chambers
Assistant Principal – Mr. Ben Turvin
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Heather Turvin
Address - 607 Church Street
Ashford, AL 36312
Phone Number- 334-899-5411
Website- www.hcboe.us

Ashford Middle School

Principal – Mr. Jarod Andrews
Assistant Principal – Dr. Stephanie Alexander
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Jennifer Johnson
Address- 607 Church Street
Ashford, AL 36312
Phone Number- 334-899-6073
Website- www.hcboe.us

Ashford Elementary School

Principal – Mrs. Sharon LeRoy
Assistant Principal – Mr. Kole Skinner
Guidance Counselor- Mrs. Mandy Strickland
Address- 100 Barfield Street
Ashford, AL 36312
Phone Number- 334-899-3458
Website- www.hcboe.us



Cottonwood High School



Principal – Mr. Darren Stewart

Assistant Principal – Mr. Randy Meadows

Guidance Counselor – Ms. Tambria McArdle

Address- 663 Houston Street

Cottonwood, AI 36320

Phone Number- 334-691-2587

Website- www.hcboe.us

Cottonwood Elementary School

Principal – Mr. Paul Strange

Assistant Principal – Mrs. Lindsey Andrews

Guidance Counselor – Ms. Kala Hamilton

Address - 663 Houston Street

Cottonwood, AI 36320

Phone Number- 334-691-6072

Website- www.hcboe.us



Houston County High



Principal- Ms. Lisa Towns
Assistant Principal- Mr. Roy Dawkins
Guidance Counselor- Mrs. Joy Pitchford
Address – 200 West Church Street
Columbia, AL 36319
Phone Number- 334-696-2221
Website- www.hcboe.us



Webb Elementary School



Principal – Mrs. Jodie Shelley
Assistant Principal – Mr. Daniel Bristow
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Molly Maloy
Address- 178 Depot Street
Webb, AL 36376
Phone Number- 334-792-5744
Website- www.hcboe.us



Rehobeth High School



Principal – Mr. Mil Tatum
Assistant Principal – Dr. Holly Lane
Assistant Principal – Mr. Spencer Pybus
Guidance Counselor- Mrs. Allison Tucker
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Sheri Bristow
Address- 373 Malvern Road
Rehobeth, AL 36301
Phone Number- 334-677-7002
Website- www.hcboe.us

Rehobeth Middle School

Principal – Mr. Mark Fairris
Assistant Principal- Mr. O’Shawn McClendon
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Trevis Scott
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Jamie Dean
Address- 5631 South Co. Rd 203
Rehobeth, AL 36301
Phone Number- 334-677-5153
Website- www.hcboe.us

Rehobeth Elementary School

Principal- Mrs. Dusty McKinley
Assistant Principal- Mrs. Jami Whillock
Assistant Principal- Mr. Michael Stevens
Guidance Counselor- Ms. Lydia Walker
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Shanel Stewart
Address- 5525 South Co. Rd 203
Rehobeth, AL 36301
Phone Number- 334-677-3838
Website- www.hcboe.us



Wicksburg High School



Principal – Mr. Lee Hyde
Assistant Principal – Mr. Nathan Rainey
Guidance Counselor - Mr. Roger Sanders
Address- 1172 South State Hwy 123
Newton, AL 36352
Phone Number- 334-692-5549
Website- www.hcboe.us

Wicksburg Elementary School

Principal – Mr. Jason Blissett
Assistant Principal – Mrs. Mary Hudson
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Tori Strickland
Address- 1172 South State Highway 123
Newton, AL 36352
Phone Number- 334-692-5549
Website- www.hcboe.us



Houston County Career Academy



Principal – Dr. Chris Kennedy
Assistant Principal/Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Niki Apida
Address- 662 West Main Street
Dothan, AL 36301
Phone Number- 334-899-3308
Website- www.hcboe.us

Houston County Virtual School

Principal- Mr. Delbert Bradley
Guidance Counselor – Mrs. Cathy Keasler
Guidance Counselor – Ms. Carole Cobb
Address- 662 West Main Street Dothan, AL 36301
Phone Number- 334-702-4168
Website- www.hcboe.us

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**HOUSTON COUNTY
SCHOOLS**

404 West Washington Street
Dothan, Alabama 36301
(334)792-8331
www.hcboe.us

HOUSTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Mr. Scott Long
Mr. Vince Wade

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Mr. Joshua Robertson – Secondary Curriculum Director
Mr. Greg Yance – Elementary Curriculum Director

Code of Conduct developed by local school and district committees:
Mrs. Cheryl Smith, Chairman

HOUSTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT 2022-2023

INTRODUCTION

The Houston County Board of Education recognizes fully the constitutional rights of students enrolled in its schools. The board recognizes equally, however, its obligation to establish policy related to student behavior and discipline which assures that a proper atmosphere for learning will be maintained within every school serving the Houston County School System.

VISION STATEMENT

Houston County Schools, in partnership with our stakeholders, will prepare students to lead productive lives and meet the high expectations of a competitive global society. In this pursuit, we will strive to become innovative, exemplary, and technology-rich centers for learning. We will inspire, challenge, and empower students to become responsible citizens and lifelong learners who are excited by the challenges of tomorrow.

By implementing high-quality, research-based education strategies in a safe, secure, and nurturing environment, we will ensure the success of our students to compete in the twenty-first century. While sharing this vision, we will shape the future through perseverance, dedication, and teamwork.

“Sharing the Vision, Shaping the Future.”

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Houston County Board of Education that no student will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity on the basis of sex, race, religion, belief, national origin, ethnic group, disability, or age.

HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS ENROLLMENT POLICY

Pursuant to the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, Plyer vs. Doe, 457 U.S. 202, Title VI of the Civil Rights of 1961, and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act of 2001, ***all homeless, migrant, immigrant, foster care, and English Learners*** must have equal access to the same free appropriate education, including public preschool education, provided to other children and youth. This shall be the policy of the Houston County School System. Such children will be provided the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content and state student performance standards to which all students are held without being stigmatized or isolated.

CHILD FIND

Help us locate children with disabilities by contacting Houston County Schools 334-792-8331 for ages 3-21, the Interagency Coordinating Council 1-800-543-3098 (V/TDD) for birth through two, or Alabama Relay Service 1-800-543-2547 (voice only).

HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOL CALENDAR 2022 - 2023

August 3, 2022	Institute - Civic Center - <i>Begins @ TBA</i>
August 1-8, 2022	Teacher Professional Development/Workdays
August 2-8, 2022	<i>OPEN HOUSE: To be Chosen by Each School</i>
August 9, 2022	First Day for Students (Full Day) <i>First Grading Session Begins</i>
September 5, 2022	<i>Labor Day (schools closed)</i>
October 10-14, 2022	<i>Fall Break (student holiday)</i>
October 17, 2022	Teacher Professional Development/Workday
October 18, 2022	<i>Second Grading Session Begins</i>
November 11, 2022	<i>Veteran's Day (schools closed)</i>
November 21-25, 2022	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday (schools closed) *</i>
*Dec. 21, 2022-Jan. 2, 2023	<i>Christmas Break (schools closed) *</i>
January 3, 2023	Teacher Professional Development/Workday
January 4, 2023	<i>Third Grading Session Begins</i>
January 16, 2023	<i>Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday (schools closed)</i>
February 20, 2023	Teacher Professional Development/Workday
March 27-31, 2023	<i>Spring Break (schools closed)</i>
April 3, 2023	<i>Fourth Grading Session Begins</i>
April 7, 2023	<i>Good Friday (schools closed)</i>
May 25, 2023	<i>Last School Day for Students</i>
May 26, 2023	Teacher Professional Development/Workday
May 29, 2023	<i>Memorial Day Holiday (schools closed)</i>
May 30-31, 2023	Teacher Professional Development/Workday

** Schools will dismiss at 1:00 P.M. on the Friday preceding the holiday*

NOTE: Teacher Professional Development/Workdays (schools are closed to students)

*****177 Students Days*****

*****189 Teacher Days*****

Student Sessions

1st Nine Weeks - August 9, 2022 - October 7, 2022	43 days
2nd Nine Weeks - October 18, 2022 - December 20, 2022	40 days
3rd Nine Weeks - January 4, 2023 - March 24, 2023	56 days
4th Nine Weeks - April 3, 2023 - May 25, 2023	38 days

1st Semester - August 9, 2022 – December 20, 2022

2nd Semester - January 4, 2023 – May 25, 2023

Progress Reports Dates

September 7, 2022

November 16, 2022

February 15, 2023

May 3, 2023

Report Cards Dates

October 19, 2022

January 4, 2023

April 5, 2023

May 25, 2023 (Grades K-6th)

June 1, 2023 (Grades 7th-12th)

1st Semester Exams – December 16 – 20, 2022 (Grades 7th-12th)

2nd Semester Exams – Seniors Exams – May 17-19, 2023

Grade 7-11 Exams – May 23-25, 2023

Kindergarten Graduation – May 24, 2023

Senior Commencement – May 26, 2023

COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY

Houston County Schools understands that the use of technology has become an integral part of today's society, however, it is also imperative that students develop and use their social and verbal communication skills. For this reason, cell phones and other digital devices[^] will not be permissible during the school day – from the first bell to the final bell [of school] unless it is authorized by the school administration for instructional purposes.

NOTE: The HCBOE and/or local school is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen devices. The school will not investigate these incidences; therefore, students bring their personal device at their own risk.

Cell Phone Consequences:

- **1st-** Administrative warning and parent/guardian must pick up the device
 - **2nd-** Parent must pick up the device and 1 day ISS or Saturday School
 - **3rd-** Parent must pick up the device and 3 days Alternative School
 - **4th-** Parent must pick up at Central Office and 5 days Alternative School
 - **5th-** Student referred to Superintendent and/or Board of Education
- Students using a digital device to video and/or record on campus will result in automatic Alternative School (reference page 32)
- Students whose actions violate State and/or Federal laws (sexting, pornography, etc.) will be turned over to law enforcement agencies and may be prosecuted in addition to school punishment.

[^]Digital Devices – including but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, MP3 players, cameras, or any other telecommunication devices capable of capturing or relaying information.

USE OF DIGITAL DEVICE DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF A SECURE TEST
(Alabama State Department of Education Policy)

- Strictly prohibited
- 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 until all tests are completed at the school. (ALSDE/Test Company rules)
 - If a student is observed using a digital device during the administration of a secure test:
 - 1) testing for the student will cease;
 - 2) the device will be confiscated and is subject to search;
 - 3) the student will be dismissed from testing;
 - 4) the student's test will be invalidated by the testing committee.
 - Violations (possession or use) will result in a minimum of **3 Days** assignment to the Houston County Alternative School

NOTE:* Digital Devices will be allowed on the school bus; however, privileges will be taken away and disciplinary action assigned for videoing, recording, or causing a disruption on the bus.

- * Cell phones are strictly prohibited in Alternative School
- * Students who loan his/her cell phone to another student may receive the same punishment as the student in possession of the cell phone

**** When enforcing the student code of conduct, the term "school" will be applicable; but not limited to, the following:**

1. School Grounds
2. School Sponsored Field Trips
3. Athletic Events
4. School Sponsored Social Events

ATTENDANCE

All students enrolled in the Houston County School System are to be in continuous attendance. The principals shall enforce the compulsory attendance laws of the State of Alabama.

1. Each teacher shall be responsible for checking the rolls daily in their assigned classes and properly recording the student's attendance.
2. A student approved by the principal to participate in or attend a school-sponsored or other approved activity during the school day shall be counted present. Students are responsible for all assignments missed while participating in or attending said activities. Failure on the part of the student to complete assignments shall result in the student receiving a zero for that class.
3. The principal shall notify the teacher, in advance, of students who will be attending approved activities and will be counted present.
4. In case of prolonged absence due to illness, injury, or other emergencies, the parent/ guardian shall seek assistance from the principal or counselor of the school for the best option for the student.

ABSENCES

NOTE: All documentation for absences must be received within **three (3) days or the absence will be unexcused.**

Excused: An absence may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Student is too ill to attend school.
2. Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the student if he/she attended school.
3. Legal quarantine.
4. Death in the immediate family.
5. Emergency conditions as determined by the superintendent or principal.

Students may make up work if the absence is excused. This work must be made up within five (5) school days.

Unexcused: Any absence other than those listed above are unexcused.

DOCUMENTATION OF PROLONGED ABSENCES

All absences must be documented by a note from the student's parent or guardian. Absences beyond five (5) days per semester for grades K-12 must be accompanied by additional documentation as follows:

- Death in the immediate family – Approved by the principal
- Legal Quarantine – Quarantine notice
- Doctor's Excuse – Note from the doctor's office signed by the doctor or his designee

Blanket excuses for multiple nonconsecutive absences will not be accepted. Any absence must be documented per absence with appropriate date(s).

All other absences are to be submitted to the principal in written form for consideration. The principal may request additional documentation as necessary. **All documentation for absences must be received within three (3) days or the absence will be unexcused.**

TARDINESS

A student is considered tardy when he/she is not in class when the tardy bell rings. Unexcused tardiness to class will result in the loss of perfect attendance and will be subject to disciplinary actions. Excused tardiness to school shall not count against perfect attendance.

Excessive tardiness to school will be considered as truancy from class and may consequently result in the student being referred to Saturday School, After School Detention, Early Morning Detention, ISS and/or Alternative School at the principal's discretion.

Failure to attend Saturday School as assigned could result in Alternative School placement.

Any student being tardy six (6) times in one class during a semester will be subject to disciplinary action (reference page 32).

THE FOLLOWING SHALL APPLY TO CHECK-INS AND CHECK-OUTS

CHECK-INS

- A. The student reports to the main office for an admission slip to enter the classroom.
- B. The student must bring a written statement from his/her parent/guardian indicating the reason(s) for the tardiness.

CHECK-OUTS

- A. A student may be allowed to check-out with the written consent of parent/guardian and the advance approval of the principal.
- B. Any student not having advance written approval may not leave campus unless a parent/guardian or designated person comes to the school and checks the student out. (In case of extenuating circumstances, a principal may, with verbal approval from the parent or guardian, allow the student to check out.)
- C. Check-outs remain unexcused until documentation is presented. Documentation must be submitted within three (3) days of the check-out.
- D. Unexcused check-outs will count as tardies.**

ELEMENTARY/ MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTION RESTRICTED ON THE BASIS OF EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Upon the eleventh unexcused absence, promotion may be withheld. Unexcused absences could result in mandatory attendance to Saturday School to make up the number of days missed. One day of Saturday School is required to make up one day of regular school.

In individual cases where an extended illness or other extreme emergencies have existed and can be verified, the principal may extend the maximum number of days per semester that a student may be absent before credit is withheld.

The parent/guardian may appeal a decision to withhold credit for an individual student based upon excessive absences to the superintendent by setting forth the reasons for the absences and attaching any supporting documentation.

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT RESTRICTED ON THE BASIS OF EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

A student (grades 9-12) with five (5) or more unexcused absences per semester from class may not receive credit for that course. These are unexcused absences and must not exceed 10 days per year. In individual cases where extreme emergencies have existed and can be verified, the principal may extend the maximum number of days per semester that a student may be absent before credit is withheld. Excessive absences may result in student being required to attend Saturday School or Summer School to make up absences. A minimum of one (1) semester of Summer School may be required to make up excessive absences.

The parent/guardian may appeal a decision to withhold credit for an individual student based upon excessive absences to the superintendent by setting forth the reasons for the absences and attaching any supporting documentation.

The principal shall develop and implement local school procedures necessary for the proper implementation of these procedures and may require one (1) day of Saturday School to make up one (1) day of regular school.

TRUANCY
IT'S THE LAW
(Parental Responsibility (Act 94-782))

Your student, _____, is considered truant
(Child's Name)
due to his/her unexcused absence/absences on _____.
Read "Parental Responsibility" printed below and sign and return this
form to your student's teacher.

(Teacher's name/date)

(Parent's signature/date)

The Alabama Legislature passed Act 94-782 stating that parents are responsible for enrolling their children in school, ensuring that they attend school regularly, and that they conduct themselves properly as students.

The Houston County School System recognizes the privilege and responsibility of parents and guardians in supporting and demanding responsible behavior from their children. In an effort to ensure parental awareness and acceptance of that responsibility, reasonable efforts will be made to contact parents regarding Class II and III misconduct. Reasonable efforts will be made on Class I offenses also if such misconduct is continuing and notification is needed.

Reasonable efforts may include one or more of the following: telephone calls, copies of referrals, parental conferences, letters to parents, registered mail, and, when possible, home visits. In the event of continued misbehavior, parents may be asked to sit in class with their child. Petitions may be filed with Juvenile Court if the child is in need of supervision beyond that given by the parent or guardian. Warrants may be filed requiring the arrest of parents and guardians who do not require their children to properly conduct themselves in school.

Alabama Act 94-782 requires each local school board of education to adopt and distribute to parents, guardians, and others a written policy of its school behavior standards; requiring parents, guardians, and others to document receipt of this plan. Each parent or guardian or other person having custody or control of any student required to attend school who fails to require the child to regularly attend the school or tutor or fail to compel the child to properly conduct him or herself as a pupil in any public school in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education pursuant to this session and documented by the appropriate school official which conduct may result in suspension of the student, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction, shall be fined not more than one

hundred dollars (\$100.00) and may be sentenced to hard labor for the county for no more than 90 days. The absence of a child without the consent of the Principal, teacher of the public school he or she attends or should attend; or, of the tutor who instructs or should instruct the child, shall be prima facie evidence of the violation of this section.

Houston County Board of Education Truancy Procedures

Per School / Academic Year:

1. 3rd Unexcused Absence – Notify guardian (phone call or letter)
2. 4th Unexcused Absence – Meeting with guardian (telephone conference)
3. 5th Unexcused Absence – Local school refers the student directly to the “Houston County Truancy Prevention Project” provided by SpectraCare
4. 6th Unexcused Absence – Refer to Early Warning Court
5. 7th Unexcused Absence – File a complaint with Juvenile Court Services, or the DA’s office

INFORMATION FOR CLOSING SCHOOL IN THE EVENT OF BAD WEATHER

It sometimes becomes necessary, usually because of inclement weather, to close school early. This decision is made after consulting with agencies such as the Emergency Management Agency, the police department, state trooper office, and weather officials. While most authorities agree that children are usually safer in school buildings than elsewhere, we are sometimes requested to close early to prevent traffic problems caused by blocked streets, slick road surfaces, or congestion.

When the decision is made to close schools, we immediately utilize our **school messaging system** and contact the local radio and TV stations and ask them to begin making announcements. We also begin contacting bus drivers to get buses operating as soon as possible. A sufficient number of school employees remain on duty at the school to provide supervision of students until all have safely departed.

There are certain things that you, as a parent or guardian, are requested to do:

1. Please instruct your child as to what he/she should do if schools close early. For example: he/she should know if he/she is to wait to be picked up or if he/she should ride a school bus.
2. If no one is likely to be at home be sure your child knows where he/she should go, whether to a neighbor’s house, to stay with a relative, or to his/her own home.
3. If your child does not ride a bus, or drive, please make arrangements to have him/ her picked up immediately if schools close early.

4. Do not depend on a telephone call to your child's school to give him/her instructions when school closes early. The school's telephone lines are flooded with calls and it is very difficult to get a call through. Also, telephones are sometimes out of order due to weather.

Normally, we do not close schools because of severe thunderstorms or tornado alerts. However, we follow procedures recommended by the Emergency Management Agency.

1. **It is recommended that parents not pick up children during these alerts.**
2. **It is strongly recommended that students be allowed to remain at school.** However, if a parent comes to the school and asks for his/her child, we will release him/her, if possible. We can assure you that we will do everything possible to provide for the safety of your child. Your cooperation in carrying out the suggestions listed above will help us greatly.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM POLICY ON CHARGED LUNCHES

Federal regulations prohibit CNP from charging meals to anyone. All meals and extra items must be paid for at the point of service. We encourage parents to pay for their child's lunch in advance, daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, or on a nine-week basis to ensure that there will be adequate money in the child's account. The lunchroom manager/School Messaging System will notify the parent when his/her account becomes low.

All free or reduced applications must be renewed each school year. If your student received free or reduced meals last school year, he/she will continue to receive these benefits for the first 30 school days of this school year. Failure to submit a new application will result in loss of benefits.

If your student did not have a free or reduced application last school year or is a new student to this district, please submit an application as soon as possible. Until you have received approval, your child will need to pay full price for any meals.

Online applications can be completed and submitted at the following site location: **www.hcboe.us**
(click on parent resources)

STUDENTS SELLING PERSONAL ITEMS

Students are prohibited from selling goods/products, toys, etc., to other students at school unless approved by the school administration.
(Reference Class II Offenses page 32)

MEDICATION

A student non-compliant with this policy is subject to disciplinary actions as determined by the school administration/superintendent.

Medication Guidelines

If possible, all medications should be administered at home. When it is necessary for medications to be given at school, the following guidelines apply:

- A medication can be administered at school only if the Physician/Parent Authorization (PPA) to administer is on file with the school nurse. This includes prescription medications, cough drops or other over-the-counter medicines/products. Separate medicines require separate permission forms. Permissions expire at the end of the school year.
- All medications, whether prescribed or over-the-counter, must be brought to the school by the parent or guardian.
- Over-the-counter medications must be in the **unopened original packaging** and be appropriate for the student's age, weight, and condition.
- A medication can be given only to the child for whom it is prescribed or purchased. Students, even from the same family, may not share medications.
- If prescription medications are brought to the school, both the parent and a staff member designated by the principal must count them together.
- Please make your pharmacist aware of your need to have a "School Bottle" as well as a home bottle for your child's medication. Most will provide separate packaging.
- Students may carry and use inhalers **ONLY** with a physician's order that is given to the school nurse.
- Medications not picked up by the last day of school or which go out of date during the school year will be destroyed. Prescription medications must be counted, measured and destroyed in the presence of at least two school staff members.

School personnel are permitted only to use soap and water to clean cuts and abrasions. They may not use peroxide, alcohol or other antiseptics.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY

If a parent/guardian needs to change the usual method of afternoon transportation for a student, the parent/guardian is required to provide a written request to school personnel the morning of the desired change. School personnel will ensure that the request to change the means of student transportation is honored.

In the case of an emergency, the parent/guardian may contact the school office before 1:00 p.m. and verbally request the desired change. School personnel will verify the identity of the person requesting the change before any change is made in student transportation.

If an emergency arises after 1:00 p.m., the parent/guardian must speak directly with a school administrator before the child's usual afternoon means of transportation is changed. Only the school administrators can authorize a change in transportation after 1:00 pm.

Once a request is received and approved, school personnel will provide written or verbal notification to the classroom teacher(s), the bus driver(s), and if applicable, the car line supervisors. The student will be notified verbally of the change.

AUTOMOBILE USE

Students driving cars to school must park them in the area designated by the principal. Students are not to sit in parked cars after arriving in the morning. Cars are not to be moved during the day without administrative approval. The Houston County School System will not assume any liability for damage that might occur to student automobiles.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

The Houston County Board of Education encourages and solicits parent involvement in our schools. Please feel free to contact the school administration and faculty at any time concerning your child's education. Parent-teacher/principal conferences may be made by calling your child's school office at the number listed in the front of the handbook.
(Requires 24 hour notice)

Classroom Observations and Visits Procedure for Parents and Visitors

1. In order to maintain orderly, respectful, and secure educational environment for the students and staff of Houston County Schools, it is essential that all parents and visitors to our buildings and campuses be aware of their responsibilities and adhere to the policies set forth in the Houston County Schools' Policy Manual.

2. **Campus Visits:** All visitors must present a form of ID prior to being admitted beyond the office.
- a. All visitors must have the consent and approval of the principal/designee. Visitors are not permitted to go to any location on the school campus unannounced.
 - b. All visitors must report immediately to the front office. They will be required to sign a visitor's register and obtain a visitor's pass. The pass must be displayed at all times while on campus. The visitor must sign out and return the visitor's badge/pass prior to the visitor's departure from campus.
 - c. Children who are not enrolled in the school are not to be on the campus unless prior approval of the principal/designee has been obtained.
 - d. Visitors will not willfully interfere with the discipline, order, or conduct in any school, classroom, or activity.
 - e. Visitors will not disrupt class work, extracurricular activities or cause substantial disorder in a place where a school employee is required to perform his/her duties.
 - f. Teachers are expected NOT to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors. Those visitors should be sent to the main office to schedule appointments.
 - g. Parents/guardians who come to the school building to drop off an item for a student must leave the item in the school office. Parents/guardians are not permitted to walk the item to the student, nor are they permitted to walk a student to his/her classroom.

TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are furnished to Houston County students free of charge. Any textbooks issued to students shall remain the property of Houston County Schools. The parents or legal guardians of a student to whom textbooks are issued will be held liable for any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from normal use. The following guidelines will be used to make an assessment for lost or damaged textbooks:

1. Loss of a textbook will be assessed at replacement cost.
2. Damage of a textbook two-years old will be assessed at 75 percent of the original cost.
3. Damage of a textbook three-years old or older will be assessed at 50 percent of the original cost.

If payment is not received within 30 days after notification, students will not be entitled to future use of textbooks until remittance is made.

HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Numeric Grade	100-97	96-93	92-90	89-87	86-83	82-80	79-77	76-73	72-70	69-67	66-63	62-60	59-0
Standard GPA	4.33	4.00	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.67	1.33	1.00	0.67	0.00
Weighted GPA	5.33	5.00	4.67	4.33	4.00	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.67	0.00

S	N	U
100 - 80	79 - 65	64 - 0

ELEMENTARY PROMOTION (Grades 1st – 5th)

Kindergarten Students will receive a skills-based report card.

1st Grade: Numerical grades are not given for ELA and Math. All other subjects will receive a letter grade of S, N, or U. Students must pass ELA and Math for promotion.

2nd Grade – 5th Grade: A student shall be promoted on the following criteria:

- 1) pass ELA and Math
- 2) pass one (1) of the following: *social studies, science, or health*
- 3) meet the attendance requirements

Note: ELA (English Language Arts) – Reading, Language, and Spelling

Alabama Literacy Act #2019-523

According to the Alabama Literacy Act #2019-523, commencing with the 2023-2024 school year (delayed two years), third grade students shall demonstrate sufficient reading skills or qualify for a ‘good cause exemption’ for promotion to fourth grade. The following are considered the four ‘good cause exemptions’ included in the Alabama Literacy Act.

1. Student with an IEP who is exempt from participating in the state reading assessment program.
2. Student identified as English language learner who has had less than two years of instruction in English as a second language.
3. Student with IEP or 504 Plan who participates in state reading assessments, has received intensive reading intervention for more than two years but still demonstrates reading deficiencies, AND was previously retained in grades K, 1, 2, or 3.
4. Student (without an IEP) who has received intensive reading intervention for two or more years but still demonstrates a reading deficiency AND has been retained TWO times in grades K, 1, 2, or 3.”

PROMOTION FOR Grades 6th – 8th

6th – 8th Grade: A student shall be promoted if he/she meets the following criteria:

- 1) pass ELA and Math
- 2) pass either social studies or science
- 3) have a 70% cumulative average in all the core subjects*
* ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science

NOTE: This policy does not apply if the student has an average of **60%** in each of the course attempted.

PROMOTION FOR GRADES 9 THROUGH 12

Credits required for promotions in grades 9-12: One credit of math, English, science, history, and four other credits are required to pass to the next grade level.

9th to 10th: earn **7** units of credit

10th to 11th earn **14** units of credit

11th to 12th.....earn **24** units of credit

*12th to Graduation..... earn **34** units of credit

*** Beginning with the Class of 2024 - Students will need 32 units of credit to graduate.**

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS FROM OTHER ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

All students (grades K-12th) transferring into the Houston County Schools from an alternative program or home-school program will be given a grade level benchmark test in ELA and mathematics for correct grade placement. This will ensure that the student receives instruction according to his/her education level.

GRADUATION POLICY

Effective {since the} 2017-2018 school year, in order to earn an Alabama High School Diploma, pupils must earn a minimum of the following Carnegie Units and complete all requirements and assessments as directed by the ALSDE.

NOTE: The Classes of 2022-2023 must earn 34 credits to graduate. Beginning with the Class of 2024, graduates will need to earn 32 credits to graduate in Houston County Schools.

Alabama High School Graduation Requirements

English Language Arts - Four credits to include:

English 9.	1 credit
English 10.	1 credit
English 11.	1 credit
English 12.	1 credit

English Language Arts-credits eligible options may include: Advanced Placement /International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/ SDE-approved courses.

Mathematics - Four credits --Three to include:

Geometry with Data Analysis or its equivalent/substitute.....	1 credit
Algebra I with Probability or its equivalent/substitute	1 credit
Algebra II with Statistics or its equivalent/substitute.....	1 credit

Mathematics-credit eligible options may include: Career and Technical Education/ Advanced Placement /International Baccalaureate/ postsecondary courses/ SDE-approved courses.

--One credit to include:

Alabama Course of Study: A specialized mathematics credit or mathematics-credit eligible courses from Career and Technical Education/ Advance Placement Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses SDE-approved courses.....1 credit

Science – Four Credits --Two credits to include:

- Biology1 credit
 - A Physical Science (Chemistry, Physics, or Physical Science).....1 credit
- Science-credit eligible may include: Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/ post- secondary courses/ SDE-approved courses.

--Two credits to include:

Alabama Course of Study: Science or science-credit eligible courses from Career and Technical Education/ Advanced Placement /International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses SDE-approved courses..... 2 credits

Social Studies - Four credits to include:

- World History 1 credit
 - United States History I 1 credit
 - United States History II 1 credit
 - United States Government 0.5 credit
 - Economics..... 0.5 credit
- Social Studies-credit eligible options may include: Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/ SDE-approved courses.

Other Required Courses

- Beginning Kinesiology or one JROTC..... 1 credit
- Health Education0.5 credit
- Career Preparedness.....1 credit
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) and/or Foreign Language and/or Arts Education.....3 credits

Electives

2022-2024 Graduates.....12.5 credits

* Beginning with the Class of 2024, all graduates must earn 10.5 elective credits.

Houston County Schools Total Credits Required for Graduation

2023 Graduates 34 credits

2024 Graduates 32 credits

2025 Graduates..... 32 credits

LEA Academic Honors Endorsement:

In order to earn an Alabama High School Diploma with LEA Honors Endorsement, pupils must complete all core academic honors courses (listed below), and must earn a minimum of the required (see above) Carnegie Units, and complete all requirements and assessments as directed by the Alabama State Department of Education.

***LEA ACADEMIC HONORS ENDORSEMENTS**

Completion of the Alabama High School Diploma requirements listed above, including the following: Honors English 9, 10, 11, & 12; Honors Math 9, 10, 11, & 12 including Algebra II Trigonometry & Pre-Calculus; Honors Science 9, 10, 11, & 12; Honors Social Studies 9, 10, 11, & 12 and/or Dual Enrollment courses that are the equivalent and approved by the superintendent.

Note: A student that fails an honors course will not be eligible for an Honors Endorsement.

GRADUATION ACTIVITIES

Graduation activities and procedures for awarding exit documents (including diplomas or certificates) shall be integrated and identical with no distinctions/differentiations made in regard to the way the exit document is awarded or presented. Students will not be able to participate in graduation ceremonies if all graduation requirements are not met.

ASSIGNING WEIGHTS TO COURSES-Valedictorian, Salutatorian, & Honor Students

Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Honor Students will be determined according to a Standard Grade Point Average (GPA) of 9th-12th Grade courses [taken]. One whole point will be added to the earned Standard Grade Point Average-to establish the Weighted Grade Point Average.

EXAMPLE: A student who receives a 100% {Standard GPA = 4.00} will receive a Weighted GPA of 5.00. The Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Honor Students will be determined when grades are posted after the 1st Semester of his/her Senior Year. Computation for determining the Valedictorian and Salutatorian shall be carried out to a minimum of 4 decimal points. Honor Court must earn a minimum Standard GPA of [a] 3.67 or higher-in grades 9th-12th when grades are posted after the 1st Semester of his/her Senior Year. The Honor Court will consist of the Top 20% of the Senior Class.

NOTE: 1) **Houston County Virtual Academy Senior Students will be ranked for Graduation Ceremonies within their zoned school's ranking [of Seniors].**

2) Honor Court cannot be attained via HOPE School or the Alabama Extended Standards.

3) Home School Students and transfer students must enroll in a Houston County School by the first day of the school year his/her Junior (11th grade) Year for eligibility as Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and/or Honor Court.

COURSES TO BE WEIGHTED

ENGLISH	All Honors English
SCIENCE	All Honors Science
MATHEMATICS	Pre-Calculus, Algebra II with Trigonometry, Calculus, All Honors Math
HISTORY	All Honors History
HEALTH SCIENCE	*All Courses Weighted
PRE ENGINEERING	**All Courses Weighted
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	All Foreign Language Courses
DUAL ENROLLMENT/AP	All Dual Enrollment & Advanced Placement Courses

*Honors Science Credit

**Honors Physics Credit

FINAL EXAMS

All students in grades 7th-12th will take a FINAL EXAM. The FINAL EXAM will count as **10% of the FINAL AVERAGE** in each core class.

EXAM EXEMPTIONS

- 1. PERFECT ATTENDANCE** – Any 7th -12th grade student may EXEMPT one (1) FINAL EXAM, each semester, in his/her course of choice. EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS:
 - a. The student must have perfect attendance and a minimum of a 75% average-for the semester/year-in the class from which the exemption is requested. (No tardiness or absences from class.)
 - b. Perfect attendance policy applies to students transferring into the Houston County School System, if there is proof that the record was maintained, prior to transfer and that no time was lost between schools during transfer.
- 2. All A's**- A student may exempt FINAL EXAMS, each semester/year, in the course in which he/she has maintained a minimum of a 90% for either:
 - a. Each of the two grading sessions in a semester long course
 - b. Each of the four grading sessions in a yearlong course.
- 3. CREDENTIALING IN A CAREER TECHNICAL COURSE** - A student may exempt ONE core course exam in which he/she has maintained at least an 80 average for the semester the credential was earned. The exemption can only be used during the semester the credential is earned.

HOPE PROGRAM CONTRACT ATTENDANCE

The purpose of participating in the HOPE School Program, which is based out of the Houston County Virtual Academy (HCVA), is to provide an alternative educational format in assisting high-risk students with passing the Alabama High School Course Requirements and Assessments. By signing this contract, the student agrees to the following conditions:

1. I will attend school for three (3) hours each day Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:45a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
2. I will not have more than three (3) unexcused absences and will provide written and oral communication (phone call) by a parent/guardian, when absent.
3. I will continue to attend school each day until the required number of credits is earned.
4. I will not work on the day or days absent from school. I will

notify my employer of an absence the day of the absence and will furnish documentation to HCVA of the action.

5. I understand that a warning letter may be sent to my parents and employer on the 4th absence from school. A conference will be scheduled with my parent/guardian to discuss my status in the Hope School Program. A phone call or personal visit may be made by the school administrator to my place of employment to discuss truancy and work attendance.
6. I understand that failure to comply with these rules will result in termination from the Hope School Program. No exclusions or exceptions will be granted.
7. I understand that the all guidelines within the Houston County Schools Student Code of Conduct will be applicable in the HOPE School Program.

RULES AND REGULATIONS:

1. To be accepted into the Hope School Program, students must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Minimum 10 credits from base school. The principal over the Hope School Program has the discretion to lower the number of credits needed for enrollment.
 - b. Must have a job and present proof of employment upon enrollment
 - c. Must have a vehicle and present proof of auto insurance
 - d. Must have a reasonable attendance and discipline record
2. Maximum of 12 credits can be earned during the calendar year. More than 12 credits will be applied to the following calendar school year until the student is *On Track to Graduate* (OTG) with his/her cohort.
3. If failure, drop-out, or other action occurs, the student will not be allowed to re-enter any school in the Houston County School System. A recommendation will be made, for the student, to enter the Adult Basic Education Program [to earn a GED].
4. Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and/or Honor Court eligibility is not attainable through the Hope School Program.
5. A student classified as OTG; as well as, AHSAA eligible may participate in sports at his/her local school.

HOUSTON COUNTY VIRTUAL ACADEMY

Houston County Virtual Academy provides another option for students to learn and complete their required courses. HCVA students will:

- Complete courses “remotely”. Elementary students will have a check-in schedule where they will meet virtually face-to-face with their teacher for instruction and to complete assignments. Middle and High school students will complete their courses through Edgenuity, an online learning platform. It is essential for virtual students to have assistance from parents/guardians.
- Follow a regular weekly schedule where they will be given assignments. The students will be expected to complete all assignments on time.
- Have regular check-in times with their teachers (grades 1st-5th) or Log into Edgenuity daily (grades 6th-12th).
- Have teachers monitor/facilitate student participation in activities, grade assignments and assessments, and provide timely feedback.
- Be allowed to participate in Dual Enrollment courses, Career Academy courses, Band, Athletic P.E., Extracurricular Activities, and Graduation Ceremonies at their zoned school.
- Take Driver’s Education course during the summer session with a certified Driver’s Ed. teacher (not a required course).
- Be **required** to attend the Houston County Career Academy for scheduled exams and state-mandated assessments. **Failure to show for testing will result in removal of enrollment at HCVA.**

Senior Students may participate in his/her zoned school’s Graduation Ceremony. HCVA Senior Students will be ranked for Graduation Ceremonies within their zoned school’s ranking [of Seniors].

GIFTED EDUCATION

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

Gifted students may be found within any race, ethnicity, gender, economic class, or nationality. In addition, some students with disabilities may be gifted. The Houston County School System shall prohibit discrimination against any student on the above basis with respect to his/her participation in the gifted program.

The program for gifted students provides learning activities including acceleration, enrichment topics, and critical thinking skills.

All students will be screened at the SECOND GRADE AND FOURTH GRADE LEVEL using multiple criteria for gifted potential. Those students displaying potential will be referred to the Gifted Referral Screening Team for further assessment.

In addition, parents or guardians, administrators, school counselors, and teachers in all grade levels may refer a child for screening or gifted assessment.

For each student referred, information is gathered in three (3) areas. These areas include aptitude, characteristics, and performance. The scores from the assessments/items used are entered on a matrix where points are assigned according to established criteria. The total number of points earned determines if the student qualifies for gifted services.

If you should need additional information or wish to make a referral, contact the Gifted Education teacher at your child's school or Gifted Education Supervisor at 334-792-8331 ext. 1134 (Dr. Misty Freeman).

HOMEWORK

Elementary - The purpose of homework is to practice newly taught skills, review previously mastered skills, develop independent study habits, or to extend and enrich the curriculum. Suggested appropriate time limits to devote to homework are (applicable for Monday-Thursday):

Kindergarten – limit to reading and mathematics, approximately 15 minutes.

Grades 1-2 20 minutes

Grade 3 30 minutes

Grade 4 40 minutes

Grade 5 50 minutes

Grade 6 60 minutes

Middle/High School – The purpose is:

1. To encourage development of independent study habits, skills, and responsibilities.
2. To enrich, reinforce, and extend learning by providing additional educational opportunities outside the classroom.
3. To provide for advanced preparation for an upcoming classroom activity, discussion, unit of study or test.
4. To provide an opportunity for parents to be familiar with and involved in the school's educational program and their own child's progress.

Guidelines:

The amount and kind of homework will vary with each grade and subject being studied. For grades 7-12, students need to be responsible for their own learning and should put forth considerable effort in and out of class. Study times as well as time needed to complete assignments should be taken into consideration when assignments are made. Advanced classes require more rigorous homework assignments.

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

The Houston County School System will abide by all rules and regulations of the Alabama High School Athletic Association, State Department of Education, and the Polices of the Houston County Board of Education.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBILITY UNDER ACT 93-672 CODE OF ALABAMA SECTION 16-28-12

The Houston County School System, in compliance with the above-referenced law of the State of Alabama, hereby notifies parents of their responsibility under this law and the penalties for failure to comply.

Each parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of any child required to attend school or receive instruction “who fails to send the child to school, or fails to compel the child to properly conduct himself or herself as specified in the Houston County School’s Code of Conduct, which may result in the suspension of the pupil shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, shall be fined not more than one hundred (\$100) dollars and may also be sentenced to hard labor for the county for not more than 90 days.” The absence of the pupil without approval of the principal for reasons specified in the Code of Conduct shall be evidence of violation of this law. The administrators of Houston County Schools are required to report all such violations to the District Attorney using established procedures.

The Board of Education has charged each school principal with notification and education responsibilities of the Act. **Contact your school principal if you have questions.**

All parents, under this Act, “have a responsibility to monitor and supervise the school work and educational activity of the child.”

NOTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBILITY UNDER ACT 93-368

Whenever a student 17 years of age or older withdraws from school, the attendance officer or chief attendance administrator shall notify the Department of Public Safety of the withdrawal. Withdrawal shall be defined as more than 10 consecutive or 15 days total unexcused absences during a single semester, or complete withdrawal from a school.

Within five days of receipt of a notice of withdrawal, the Department of Public Safety shall send notice of the licensee that his/her driver’s license or learner’s license will be suspended. The Department of Public Safety shall deny a driver’s license or a learner’s license, unless the applicant (1) presents a diploma or other certificate of graduation (2) is enrolled and making satisfactory progress in a course leading to a

general educational development certificate (GED)
(3) is enrolled in a secondary school of this state or any other state (4)
is participating in a job training program approved by the State
Superintendent of Education (5) is a parent with the care or custody of
a minor or unborn child (6) has a physician certify that the parents of
the person depend on him/her as their sole source of transportation
(7) is exempted from this requirement due to circumstances beyond
his/her control.

IT'S THE LAW

- * **Erin's Law (HB197):** This law is in reference to mental, physical, and sexual abuse.
- * **Jason Flatt Act (Act 2016-310):** This law is in reference to with suicide prevention.
- * **Jamari Terrell Williams Act (Act 2018-472):** This law is in reference to bullying and cyber bullying.
- * **Annalyn's Law (AL SB26):** This law is in reference to low-risk juvenile sex offenders.

For more information about these laws, please visit the website www.aldse.edu or contact your local school counselor.

Parental Notification of Civil Liabilities and Criminal Penalties

The following laws relate to civil liabilities and criminal penalties for violence or other misbehavior by students on school property or against school employees:

Attendance and Conduct (Act 94-782)

Each parent/guardian or other person having control or custody of a child required to attend school who fails to require the child to enroll, to regularly attend school, or to compel the child to properly conduct himself/herself as a pupil in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education shall be guilty of a misdemeanor (may be fined up to \$100 and may be sentenced to hard labor for up to 90 days).

Teacher Assault (Act 94-794)

A person commits the crime of assault in the second degree (Class C felony) if the person assaults with intent to cause serious physical injury to a teacher or to an employee of a public education institution during or as a result of the performance of his or her duty.

Drug Dealing (Act 94-783)

A person who unlawfully sells, furnishes, or gives a controlled substance to a minor may be liable for injury or damage or both suffered by a third person caused by or resulting from the use of the controlled substance by the minor if the sale, furnishing, or giving of the controlled substance is the proximate cause of the injury or damage.

Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons, Physical Harm, or Threatened Physical Harm (Act 94-784)

The school principal shall notify appropriate law enforcement officials when a person violates local board of education policies concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, physical harm to a person, or threatened physical harm to a person. If any criminal charge is warranted, the principal is authorized to sign the appropriate warrant. If that person is a student, the local school system shall immediately suspend that person from attending regular classes and schedule a hearing within 5 school days.

If a person is found to have violated a local board of education policy concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, physical harm to a person or threatened physical harm to a person, the person may not be readmitted to the public schools until criminal charges, if any, have been disposed of by appropriate authorities and the person has satisfied all other requirements imposed by the local board of education as a condition for readmission.

Weapons in Schools (Act 94-817)

No person shall knowingly with intent to do bodily harm carry or possess a deadly weapon on the premises of a public school. Possession of a deadly weapon with the intent to do bodily harm on the premises of a public school or school bus is a Class C felony. (Note: the term “deadly weapon” means a firearm or anything manifestly designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting death or serious physical injury, and such term includes, but is not limited to, a bazooka, hand grenade, missile, or explosive or incendiary device; a pistol, rifle, or shot gun; or a switch-blade knife, gravity knife, stiletto, sword, or dagger; or any club, baton, Billy-club, blackjack stick, bludgeon objects, or metal knuckles.)

Vandalism (Act 94-819)

The parents, guardian, or other person having control of any minor under the age of 18 with whom the minor is living and who have custody of the minor shall be liable for the actual damages sustained to school property, plus the court costs, caused by intentional, willful, or malicious act of the minor.

Pistol Possession/ Driver’s License (Act 94-820)

Any person over the age of 14 who is convicted of the crime of possession of a pistol on the premises of a public school, or a public school bus, shall be denied issuance of a driver’s permit or license to operate a motor vehicle for 180 days from the date the person is eligible and applies for a permit of license. If a person over age 14 possesses a driver’s license on the date of conviction, the driver’s license will be suspended for 180 days.

Drop-Out/Driver's License (Act 94-820 which amended Act 93-368 as codified in 16-28-40, Ala. Code, 1975)

The Department of Public Safety shall deny a driver's license or learner's permit to any person under 19 who is not enrolled or has not received a diploma or certificate of graduation. Exemptions are students who: are enrolled in a GED program, are enrolled in a secondary school, are participating in an approved job training program, are gainfully employed, are a parent of a minor or unborn child, or are the sole source of transportation of the parent.

Alabama Taylor's Law

Alabama lawmakers passed Taylor's Law which was implemented in the 2010-2011 school year that links the student behavior in school to obtaining a driver's license. The law uses a point system to grade a student's behavior. Points begin to accumulate in the school year when the student turns 13 and each accumulated point makes the student wait one week to apply for a permit or driver's license. If a student doesn't accumulate any points for two consecutive years, all the points are removed.

Gun Free Schools (Act 1994)

The Houston County Board of Education is in full compliance with the Guns Free Schools Act of 1994. Students found guilty of bringing a weapon to school will be expelled for a period of not less than one year.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT,
TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972
AND SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1975**

The grievant, if a student, should present this grievance written or orally to a school administrator.

Grievance must be filed within twenty (20) days of the time that the grievant knew or reasonably should have known of the grievance.

Detailed procedures for filing a grievance may be found on file in each principal's office.

HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS' COMPUTER, NETWORK, AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP) FOR STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

Introduction

Houston County Schools will be offering access to the computers, computer networks, and the Internet. To gain access, each user must obtain parental permission as verified by the signatures on the form on the last page. The district implements an electronic communications system comprised of computers, networks, and the Internet that allows opportunities for students, staff, and patrons to communicate, learn, access and publish information. The School System believes that the resources available through this network and the skills that users will develop in using it are of significant value in the learning process and their success in the future. These opportunities also pose many challenges including, but not limited to, access for all users, age level appropriateness of material, security, and cost of maintaining ever more elaborate systems. The school system will endeavor to ensure that these concerns are appropriately addressed, but cannot ensure that problems will not arise. By providing these opportunities, the school system intends only to provide a means for educational activities and does not intend to create a first amendment forum for free expression purposes. The school system dedicates the property comprising these resources, and grants access to them by users, only for the educational activities authorized under this policy and procedures and under the specific limitations contained therein. ***The Houston County Board of Education does not archive emails.***

What is possible?

Through these resources, users can explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other materials of educational value. This global network is made up of many smaller contributing networks, such as ours, connecting thousands of computers throughout the world and millions of individual subscribers. Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies and regional and state networks. Users can exchange personal communication with other users around the world. While the use of computers and the Internet is primarily instructional in nature to reach an educational goal, some users may find ways to access other materials. While there is an abundance of valuable information, the availability of material that may not be considered to be of education value in the context of the school setting also becomes available. Unfortunately, some of these resources contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. Most educators believe the benefits to users from access to computers and the Internet exceed their disadvantages. Parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards their children should follow when using these resources. Therefore, we respect each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

How should it be used?

Computers, devices, computer networks, and the Internet should be used for education and re- search through the provision of unique resources and opportunities for collaboration among students, teachers, and administrators. Use of these resources must be in support of this and consistent with the educational objectives of the school.

What is expected?

Users are responsible for appropriate behavior while using these resources. Additionally, users are responsible for their actions while using the equipment and the resources. Use is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. Vandalism of equipment or programs will result in punishment as defined herein.

What are the privileges and rights of a user?

All users have certain privileges and rights. Infringement of or disrespect to the rights of others may result in the loss of Internet privileges. These rights include:

Privacy – All users have the right to privacy. However, if a user is believed to be in violation of the guidelines, a system administrator may review communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that students are using the system responsibly.

Safety – Any users who receive threatening or unwelcome communications should bring them to the attention of a system administrator or teacher.

Intellectual Freedom – Any statement of personal belief is implicitly understood to be representative of the author’s individual point of view and not that of the school.

Inappropriate materials or language – No profane, pornographic, abusive, or impolite language should be used to communicate nor should materials be accessed which are not in accordance with the rules of school behavior.

Equal Access – All users will be granted free and equal access in these resources. Exploration using these resources is encouraged relative to the purposes of education and research. No single user should monopolize these resources.

What are the guidelines?

- Be prepared to be held accountable for your actions. Exemplary behavior is expected from all users at all times.
- Notify an adult immediately if you encounter materials that violate the School Code of Conduct.
- Do not use a computer or the Internet to hurt, harass, attack or harm other people or their work.

- Do not damage the computer or network. Vandalism or theft of resources (including data and files) will not be tolerated.
- Do not degrade the performance of the network through the posting of electronic chain letters or other useless information.
- Do not use the computers, computer networks, or the Internet for illegal activities, i.e. threats, instructions on how to perform an illegal act, child pornography, drug dealing, purchase of alcohol, gang activities, etc.
- Do not violate copyright laws. Copyrighted software and other instructional materials must not be copied or transferred to another except as provided under the license or copyright notice.
- Do not view, send, or display obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, disrespectful, threatening, or inflammatory language, messages or pictures.
- Do not share your password with another person. Each individual is responsible for the security of his/her password.
- Do not reveal the personal address or phone number of yourself or anyone else.
- Do not access other student's work, folders, or files.
- Do not re-post non-academic personal communications without the original author's prior consent.
- Do not install software or download unauthorized files, games, programs, or other electronic media.

ALABAMA ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND EMPLOYEES

On October 22, 1988, President Reagan signed into law the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). This law requires all local education agencies to identify asbestos -containing materials (ACM) in their school buildings and take appropriate actions to control the release of asbestos fibers into the environment. In order to comply with this law all of our schools have been inspected and management plans have been developed by an accredited engineering firm qualified to identify findings and various approved methods of dealing with ACM.

The management plan and the result of each inspection is on file at the central office and at each principal's office. You may view these reports during office hours. If there are any questions concerning our management plan, you may contact Houston County Schools Maintenance Supervisor at 334-899-8795.

PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW (H.R. 1-37)

QUALIFICATIONS: At the beginning of the school year, a local education agency that receives funds under this part shall notify the parents of each student attending any school receiving said funds that the parents may request, and the agency will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

1. Whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: In addition to the information that parents may request under subparagraph (A), a school that receives funds under this part shall provide to each parent:

1. Information on the level of achievement of a parent's child in each of the State academic assessments as required under this part: and
2. Timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED):
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom responders have close

- family relationships;
 - 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 - 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 - 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
 - Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from student for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the education curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under state law.

Houston County Schools has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Houston County Schools will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Houston County Schools will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection disclosure, or use of personal information for

marketing, sales or other distribution.

- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by the Department of Education.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the agency listed on page 24.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

- 1.The right to inspect and review the student’s education record within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- 2.The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the decision is not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school personnel will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- 3.The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate education interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

4. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. [Optional] Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
5. [FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records.]
6. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Houston County Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are listed below:
7. Houston County Schools routinely discloses names, addresses, and telephone numbers to military recruiters upon request. If you choose to opt out of this process, please notify your student's counselor, in writing, no later than the 1st day of September of the school year opting out. This procedure is for the convenience of military recruiters and bears no recourse/consequence for any student opting out of the notification process.

Family Policy Compliance Office
US Departmental Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

JURISDICTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Students enrolled in the Houston County School System are subject to the policies of the Houston County Board of Education and to the rules and regulations of the schools. This authority applies to all school-sponsored activities including, but not necessarily limited, to the following:

- Transportation on School Buses
- Field Trips
- Athletic Functions
- Clubs and/or Organizations
- School-Sponsored Social Events
- School Groups that represent the School System in Educational Events

FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND PROCEDURES

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAM (If Available)

In-school suspension is a structured disciplinary action in which a student is removed from the regular classroom activities but is not dismissed from the school setting. The principal or his/her designee has the authority to assign students to in-school suspension for a reasonable and specified period of time.

MORNING DETENTION / AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION / SATURDAY SCHOOL

The principal or his/her designee has the authority to assign students to a designated area either before school or the end of a school day. Saturday School is an option, as well. The parent is responsible for providing transportation. A parent/guardian will be notified before a student is assigned to detention. Detention time shall be for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes per day.

Should a student fail to report to Saturday School after the 1st re-assignment, the student will be referred to Alternative School for one (1) day.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The Houston County Board of Education has no rule against reasonable and proper spanking/paddling of students for disciplinary reasons. Before corporal punishment is administered as a disciplinary method, the student will be given the reason for the punishment and an opportunity to explain his/her action. Corporal punishment must be administered by the administrator or by the teacher in the presence of a certified professional employee. The administrator and/or teacher will prepare a written report for each incident to be sent home on the day the corporal punishment is administered. Parent/guardian must notify school in writing annually if he/she prohibits the school from paddling his/her student(s). ***The hand written note must be delivered, in person, by the parent-by first day of each school year.***

SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as the temporary removal of a student from a school for violation of school rules or regulations. The authority to suspend a student from school rests entirely with the principal of each school. Only in the absence of the principal may the assistant principal assume this responsibility. All suspensions should be for a specified number of days (not to exceed 10 days). The suspension will be in accordance with prescribed board policy. Any deviation from said pattern shall require the authorization from the superintendent of schools or his/her designee.

PRINCIPAL’S PROBATION

Students that are persistent in not following rules of proper conduct may be assigned a period of time to improve their conduct/behavior or be subject to additional sanctions. These sanctions will include a ban from all activities on the campuses of Houston County Schools for a period of time to be determined by the school principal and approved by the superintendent.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Any employee of the Board of Education (including bus drivers) has the authority to use reasonable force to restrain a student from abusing or attempting to abuse self, other students, teachers, administrators, parents, or other staff members. Schools and programs that use physical restraint as allowed by law must develop and implement written policies to govern the use of physical restraint. The Houston County Board of Education has adopted a Time Out and Restraint Policy (5.30.2) to meet requirements of federal and state laws and regulations. A copy of Policy 5.30.2 is maintained in the board office and is available for review upon request.

SCHOOL BUS SUSPENSION

The principal/designee has the authority to deny a student the privilege of riding a school bus. This denial, based on the misconduct of the student, will be for a reasonable and specified period of time. The parent/guardian will be notified prior to the suspension from the bus.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from a school for violation of school rules or regulations. A student may be expelled from school if an offense is serious enough to warrant such action. The authority to expel a student rests with the Houston County Board of Education. The local school principal may suspend the student pending the decision of the board to expel said student. The expulsion hearing must be held within ten (10) days from the date of suspension.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

Exceptional students are those students as defined in IDEA 04 and Alabama Act 106 (excluding gifted and speech only). All rules and regulations governing student conduct as related to exceptional students shall comply with the Alabama Administrative Code of the State Department of Education, IDEA 04, Alabama Act 106 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE/SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

In conformance with the State Board of Education Resolution 1-2-g and Alabama State Board of Education Regulation 1-2-g and Alabama State Board of Education Administrative Regulation 290-010-020-01, law enforcement agencies shall be allowed to make periodic, unannounced visits to any local public school for the purpose of detecting the presence of drugs. Such visits may include the use of drug-sniffing dogs in schools and classrooms as appropriate.

Lockers, desks, parking lots, and any other fixtures or facilities provided for the students are the property of the school district. Also, students and any personal items brought on school campus/events/field trips are subject to searches by school officials with reasonable suspicion. School officials may conduct searches or use other detection devices within the facilities or on the school campuses at any time that it is felt that alcohol and other drugs, weapons, or any object considered to be harmful to the safe environment of the school may be present.

NOTIFICATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES

Officials shall be notified in accordance with the procedures herein.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Alternative School is a viable approach designed to keep students in school. It offers an alternative to out-of-school suspensions, serves as a deterrent to truancy, and helps students who are potential dropouts. **Assignments to Alternative School in elementary grades K - 2nd can only be made with the approval of the superintendent or his/her designee.**

OBJECTIVES:

- Reduce the number of out-of-school suspensions
- Reduce disruptive and delinquent behavior in the classroom and on school campus
- Keep students in school

PLACEMENT / DISMISSAL

Each student is placed in the program upon referral by school administrators as outlined herein.

A student may be referred to the Alternative School for a period of (3) three to (10) ten days or more, if needed. **A disciplinary referral form must accompany the student to the center.**

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL GUIDELINES

Note: K-2 students must be recommended to the superintendent or his/her designee-for placement-at the Houston County Alternative School or OSS (Out of School Suspension). If a K-2 student is assigned OSS, he/she will complete all assignments via an online platform.

1. Attendance in the program is mandatory for students who are referred from their regular school.
2. Students sent to the Alternative School are responsible for bringing their assignments, books, and other material needed. The Alternative School teacher will check for these upon the student's enrollment. Work assigned must be completed before the student is dismissed. If the work is not completed to the assigned teacher's satisfaction the student may be sent back to the Alternative School teacher by the principal until the work is finished. In such case the student must stay for a minimum of one day.
3. All students referred to the Alternative School for the second time will not be dismissed from the program, even though time assigned is completed, until a conversation with the legal guardian is held with the Alternative School Principal. The student will then be released to the guardian to take him/her to the assigned school for re-admission and a conference with the principal/designee. These conferences may be held on or after the last day of assignment to the Alternative School. Any exception to this procedure must have the approval of the superintendent or his designee. All parents/guardians will be notified of this requirement upon admittance of the student to the Alternative School for the second time. This is the responsibility of the Alternative School principal.
4. Once enrolled in Alternative School, students will remain until their assigned time is completed plus any days added by the Alternative School personnel. There will be no early dismissals.
5. Extracurricular Activities - A student sent to Alternative School is not allowed to attend or participate in any extracurricular activities or practice for such on any day that he/she is in the program.
6. Transportation – The student or his/her parents/guardian must provide his/her own transportation.
7. Meals – Meals are provided by the guidelines of the CNP.
8. Exam Exemptions – Students sent to the Alternative School lose their perfect attendance exemption privileges.

9. Students who fail to follow the rules of the Alternative School personnel will be subject to having his/her time extended, suspension or expulsion.
10. Students assigned to the Alternative School at the time of semester examinations may return to their home-based school for their examinations with prior approval of the Superintendent.
11. Any test to be administered to students attending Alternative School should be sent to the Alternative School. Tests will be returned to the home school [of the student].
12. Copies of Alternative School referral will be sent to Juvenile Services.
13. Cell phones are not allowed in Alternative School.

GUIDELINES FOR LONG-TERM ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

The long-term Alternative School program is a structured disciplinary action in which a student is removed from regular classroom activities for a specified time of more than ten days. Placement in this program will occur only after the policies set forth herein for short-term programs have been exhausted. Each individual should be evaluated and a program planned for that student based on the special circumstances of the situation. The goal is always to help the student.

The superintendent/designee will be notified in all long-term placements to the Houston County Alternative School (HCAS).

- Long-term Alternative School assignments shall be recommended by the school administration and determined by the school's disciplinary committee (11 - 45 days)
- Students must demonstrate appropriate behavior in order to earn the privilege of dismissal at the end of the assigned time.
- A student's 504 Plan, IEP, and/or ILP is provided to the Houston County Alternative School when applicable.

Assignments to long-term Alternative School can be based on; but not limited to, the following reasons based upon the recommendation of the principal or his/her designee.

1. **Disciplinary Reasons** – Placement must be recommended by the principal and voted on by the school disciplinary committee.
2. **Health and Safety Reasons** – Placement must be based on student's parents and/or guardians written request; as well as, the school administration/counselor's recommendations, and concurrence of the superintendent or his designee.

3. **Parental Request, Attendance Reasons, or Court Related Reasons** – Placement will be based on a written request from the parent/guardian, the school administration, and the concurrence of the superintendent or his designee.

**There is no appeal process for suspensions and/or referrals to alternative school for 10 days or less.

CLASSIFICATION OF VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Code are divided into three classes: Class I Minor; Class II Intermediate; and Class III Major. Each classification is followed by a disciplinary procedure to be followed by the principal or his/her designee. In the following classes of violations and disciplinary procedures it is understood that the student will be provided with due process before any disciplinary action is taken:

CLASS I – MINOR OFFENSES

- A. Minor distraction of other students
- B. Quarreling of students
- C. Use of profane or obscene language
- D. Non-conformity to Dress Code
- E. Minor misbehavior on a school bus
- F. Inappropriate public display of affection between students
- G. Chewing gum
- H. Eating or drinking in unauthorized areas
- I. Locker misuse or abuse
- J. Sharing lockers is not permitted. Violation of this rule, in addition to Class I disciplinary action, will result in the loss of locker privileges. No refund of any unused portion of fees.
- K. Littering of school property
- L. Sitting in a parked vehicle after arriving at school and/or during the school day.
- M. Minor physical conflicts
- N. Participation on campus in organizations not recognized by the school
- O. Reporting to class without materials and supplies
- P. Use of a digital device during class or in the hallways without administrative approval **1st Offense (2nd Offense Class II)**
- Q. Any cheating or plagiarism
- R. Any other violation which the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR CLASS I OFFENSES (Minor)

First Offense: Conference with student, parental contact when warranted. Circumstances may warrant disciplinary action as outlined under subsequent offenses.

Subsequent Offenses (may include but are not limited to the following):

- Parent-Teacher Conference
- In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Before School Detention (BSD)
- After School Detention (ASD)
- Saturday School
- Corporal Punishment
- Bus Suspension (Applicable to Bus Incidents)

- Subsequent Bus Referrals will result in 3-10 days Bus Suspension

After three (3) Class I Offenses are earned by a student, the next Class I may be considered a Class II Offense.

CLASS II – Intermediate Offenses

- A. Skipping class or leaving class without permission
- B. Gambling – Any participation in games of chance for money and/or other things of value
- C. Instigating Conflict – The deliberate attempt to incite, provoke physical conflict, or verbal altercation between individuals
- D. Vandalism – Intentional and deliberate action resulting in injury or damages to public property or personal property of another
- E. Stealing, Larceny, Petty Theft – The intentional unlawful taking or carrying away of property valued at less than \$100 belonging to or in possession or custody of another
- F. Possession of stolen property with the knowledge that it is stolen
- G. Threats, Intimidation, Extortion, Harassment – Verbally or by written or printed communication, maliciously threatening any injury to the person, property or reputation of another, or the intent to extort money or take advantage of any person, to do any act or refrain from doing any act against his/her will
- H. Trespassing – Willfully, entering or remaining on any school property without being authorized, licensed, or invited; or having been authorized, licensed, or invited after being warned by an authorized person to depart and refusing to do so
- I. Unjustified activation of a fire alarm system or fire extinguisher
- J. Written or verbal proposition to engage in sexual acts including social media
- K. Use of obscene gestures, racial slurs, illustrations, or language directed toward another person
- L. Intentionally providing false information to school personnel
- M. Illegal Organizations – Any attempt to use the school day for activities that are not school related or school-sponsored (non-gang related)
- N. Mere possession of a knife, razor blade, box cutter or edged instrument, etc. (consult School Resource Officer SRO on blade length)
- O. Truancy
- P. Touching/hitting/slapping/spitting (but not limited to the aforementioned) on another person against his/her will in a threatening or suggestive manner
- Q. Use of a digital device during class or in the hallways without administrative approval (2nd Offense)
- R. Major Distractions – Any behavior that prevents any activity from continuing in an orderly manner.

- S. Any action by a student that constitutes an inappropriate use of a computer and/or network resource
- T. Speeding or reckless driving
- U. Misuse of lunch codes
- V. Refusal to give name or intentionally giving false information to authorized person
- W. Disrespect/Disobedience towards a school board employee or substitute.
- X. *Any use of a digital device to take pictures, video and/or record is prohibited
- Y. *Possession of lighters, matches, fireworks/firecrackers etc.; and/or, igniting fireworks or firecrackers
- Z. *Possession and/or use of any tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaping products (i.e. nicotine products and/or paraphernalia) **1st Offense – 10 days Alt. School (2nd Offense Class III)**
- AA. *Using obscene language or profanity towards a school board employee
- BB. *Covering cameras on school bus or on campus that results in a safety issue
- CC. *Leaving campus without permission
- DD. *Defiance of school board employee's authority
- EE. **NOTE: Overt and continuing to be determined by an administrator**
- FF. *Fighting
 - a. Grades 3rd-12th – Any physical conflict between two or more individuals. If the aggressor can be identified/determined, he/she could receive no fewer than two and no more than ten additional days to Alternative School **1st Offense – 5 days Alt. School, 2nd Offense – 10 days Alt. School, 3rd Offense a Class III** and may result in referral for anger management (principal's discretion).
 - b. Grades K-2nd – Discipline to be determined by the school administration.
 - c. Discipline may include ISS, break detention, after-school detention, or Alternative School. If the aggressor can be identified/determined, he/she could receive additional punishment as deemed appropriate by the school administration. **2nd offense** may result in referral for anger management (principal's discretion).
- GG. Any other offense which the principal may deem necessary to fall within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances

***Automatic referral to Alternative School for a period of three to ten days. (Grades 3rd –12th)**

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR CLASS II OFFENSES (Intermediate)

First – Student conference and parental contact, disciplinary action such as corporal punishment, ASD, ISS, bus suspension, etc. Circumstances may warrant assignment to Alternative School for a period of three to ten days.

Subsequent Offenses –

1. Parental conference
2. Referral to Alternative School for 3 days; 2nd referral – 5 days; 3rd referral – 10 days; 4th referral will constitute assignment to long-term alternative school (11-45 days - Disciplinary Committee’s discretion) and could result in referral to the Superintendent of the Board of Education for expulsion (Disciplinary Committee’s discretion).

Note: For fighting, the student may also be required to attend an anger management class at the discretion of the principal, assistant principal, or designee.

CLASS III – MAJOR OFFENSES

- A. Drugs – Use, unauthorized possession, transfer or sale of drugs, drug paraphernalia, counterfeit substances or alcoholic beverages
- B. Weapons – Any possession of any object or device that can be defined as a weapon
 - a. Willfully bring a weapon with intent to threaten or do harm:
 - 1)Superintendent recommends expulsion
 - 2)Board of Education votes on expulsion
 - b. In possession of a weapon without the intent to threaten or do harm:
 - 1)Assigned to Alternative School no less than 45 days
 - 2)Superintendent may recommend expulsion
 - 3)Board of Education may act on expulsion recommendation
- C. Battery Upon a School Board Employee – The actual unlawful and intentional touching or striking of a School Board Employee against his/her will, or the intentional causing of bodily harm to a School Board Employee
NOTE: Superintendent may recommend expulsion
- D. Verbal Assault Upon a School Board Employee – Verbal assault in the form of speech
NOTE: On-going and overt – to be determined by administration
- E. 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

- F. Stealing, Larceny, Extortion, 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
- G. Burglary of School Property – Entering or remaining in a structure or conveyance with the intent to commit an offense during the hours the premises are closed to the public
- H. Criminal Mischief – Willful and malicious injury or damages at or in excess of \$50.00 to public property, or to real or personal property belonging to another
- I. Possession or unauthorized discharge of any firearm or any device capable of expelling a projectile
- J. Arson – The willful and malicious burning of any part of school board property
- K. Threats of Violence toward School/Educational Environment – Any such communication which has the effect of interrupting the education environment
- L. Explosions – Preparing, possession, or igniting on school board property explosives likely to cause bodily injury or property damage
- M. Sexual Acts – Acts of sexual nature including, but not limited to battery, intercourse, attempted rape, or rape
- N. Aggravated Battery – Intentionally causing great bodily harm, disability, or permanent disfigurement, or use of deadly weapon
- O. Inciting or participating in a 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
- P. Indecent exposure
- Q. Unprovoked assault or attack on another individual
- R. Possession, distribution or manufacture of pornography
- S. Any offenses that are classified under the law as Felony Offenses
- T. Continuous Pattern of Intentional Threats, Intimidation, Extortion, Harassment
- U. Any other offense which the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances
- V. Threatening or continuous use of profanity towards a School Board Employee
- W. The intentional or unintentional use of an electronic device (audio and/or video) to capture nudity and/or sexual acts or demeaning visual or audio graphics.
- X. Gangs
 - a. The presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory or manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol or any other attribute which indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group presenting a clear and present danger.
 - b. Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidations, and/or related activities of such group affiliations which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or

mental harm or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to students

- c. Wearing, carrying or displaying paraphernalia or exhibiting behavior or gestures symbolizing gang/group/club membership or causing or participating in activities which intimidate or affect other students.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR CLASS III OFFENSES (Major)

1. Immediate notification of parents or guardian and central office.
2. Notification of law enforcement officials and initiate filing a petition with Juvenile Court Services.
3. Immediate assignment to Alternative School.
4. Initiation of procedures for long-term Alternative School or expulsion.

Disciplinary Committee/Superintendent can recommend:

- 11 to 45 days Alternative School placement
- Up to one (1) year Alternative School placement.
- Expulsion to the Houston County Board of Education.

BUS DISCIPLINE

A system of student transportation is provided to students attending Houston County Schools. The bus is an extension of the classroom; therefore, students are required to observe all school rules while being transported to and from school. A serious or continued violation of rules may result in revoked transportation privileges. Class III Offenses will include suspension from the bus for the remainder of the year and follow Class III administrative options herein. Certain acts of misconduct will result in additional punitive action. This action will be decided, according to the administrative options for Class II or Class III offenses, as defined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Parents/Guardians must provide transportation to and from school; as well as, Alternative School for students suspended from the bus. *Any electronic device that is a distraction to the safe operation of a school bus will not be allowed; and, will be subject to student disciplinary action.*

Bus Vandalism/ Destruction

The willful destruction of school bus property will result in restitution for parts and labor needed for repair. Students will lose transportation privileges until restitution is paid in full to the Houston County Board of Education.

** Vandalism that is considered a Class III offense will follow Class III actions outlined in the code of conduct. In addition restitution for damage will also be applied and transportation privileges will be revoked until restitution is paid in full.

Class II Bus Referrals follow Disciplinary Actions as stated herein and can include:

- 1st referral - may result in a 3 day suspension
- 2nd referral - may also result in a 10 day suspension
- 3rd referral - may result in a 30 day suspension
- 4th referral – may result in a remainder of the academic year suspension

FIELD TRIPS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITES

Any student receiving the following may be exempt from attending a field trip and/or an extra- curricular activity (in-school games, plays, assemblies, etc.).

- Any student who commits multiple CLASS I offenses.
- Any student who has been to Alternative School two times.
- Any student who receives a CLASS III disciplinary action.

NOTE: This will be determined by the school administration and the school’s disciplinary committee.

PENDING CRIMINAL CHARGES

Any student charged with violating a local, state, and/or federal law which constitutes a felony offense, or that involves any violent crime or use of any type of weapon, shall not be allowed to return to school until the superintendent approves the return. The student may be allowed to attend Alternative School until the issue has been resolved through the court system pending superintendent’s approval. Any work missed shall then be classified as excused and the student given an opportunity to make up work following the policies set forth by the Houston County Board of Education.

IDEA students who violate this policy shall be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary methods outlined in the IDEA and Alabama Administrative Code 290-8-9-09 (1).

TRANSFER STUDENT WITH DISCIPLINE ISSUES

Students with discipline issues enrolling in a Houston County School must complete all discipline assignments before attending regular classes. This includes suspensions, Alternative School placement, etc. Students permanently expelled from another school system shall not be permitted to attend school in Houston County. The Houston County Board of Education reserves the right to uphold any discipline action taken by student’s previous school system.

DRESS CODE

School is a place of business and all school personnel and students should dress accordingly. Students are expected to maintain the highest possible standard of personal hygiene. This includes cleanliness (for example, daily bath and oral hygiene) as well as wearing neat and clean clothes. Students are also expected to choose their clothes in good taste, wearing only those clothes that are appropriate for an education environment.

All school personnel and students are expected to comply with the Dress Code. The school administration, school counselor, or designated central office personnel may review an individual situation to determine whether a modification of a provision is required for the health and safety of a particular student/staff member or other compelling reasons.

The school administration will judge the appropriateness of any article of apparel.

Health and Safety

- A. Proper foot attire must be worn
- B. Students will not wear dark glasses inside the school building unless required to do so for medical reasons pursuant to doctor's written orders.
- C. Jewelry (including piercings) that creates a hazardous condition (studded bracelets, necklaces, oversized earrings etc.) will not be worn to school.

The school administration will judge the appropriateness of any article of apparel.

Common Courtesy

- A. No head coverings in school buildings or on campus during school hours. Toboggans may be worn during cold weather outside of buildings and on the bus. Approval may be given for medical, religious, or safety reasons.
- B. No Blankets

Dress vs Costume

- A. No halter tops, togas, hospital gowns, pajama outfits, bedroom slippers, etc. will be allowed.
- B. No costumes/face paintings are allowed except when approved as a school-sponsored activity by school administration.

Decency and Modesty

- A. No see-through shirts, blouses, or pants; no clothes that bare the midriff or sides. Sundresses and backless dresses must be worn with jackets. No clothing with decals or slogans of unacceptable groups or language that contains and/or refers to suggestive or immoral behavior or profanity, gang activity, alcohol, drugs, or tobacco advertisements will be allowed.
- B. No lewd or vulgar sayings on clothing will be allowed. Clothing or insignia that could incite ill-feelings and racial problems will not be allowed.
- C. No short-shorts or tight shorts are allowed. Shorts may be worn if they are not shorter than mid-thigh in length and must be worn at the waist and no holes or mesh leggings above mid-thigh. This is applicable to males and females.
- D. Dress lengths that expose underclothing when sitting or standing are prohibited. Dresses/ Shirts worn over pants must be worn securely above the hips and all belts fastened. Pants or shorts below the waist (SAG), suspenders, overalls and pants with snaps unfastened or undergarments visible above the waistband of the pants or shorts will not be allowed. This is applicable to males and females.
- E. Tops, blouses, shirts, and dresses must be at least 2" in width at the shoulders. No students will be allowed to wear spaghetti straps, racer backs, sleeveless muscle shirts, tank tops, etc.
- F. Proper undergarments must be worn with all clothing.
- G. Clothing shall not be so tight or so low cut as to be revealing.
- H. Trench coats or any coat below hip length shall not be worn inside buildings.
- I. When wearing leggings or jeggings, shirts must be completely untucked and covering the hips.

Teachers have the authority to enforce the dress code and send the student to the office. The school administration has the final authority to determine inappropriate dress. Exceptions may be made by the administration to any of the above when physical or other circumstances is warranted or for certain groups during performance or special activities. Nonconformity to the dress code is a Class I Offense. After three (3) Class I Offenses, the next Class I will be classified as a Class II Offense.

NOTE: Grades 6th -12th will adhere to the Dress Code as adopted. The Dress Code for Grades K-5th is at the school principal's discretion.

Houston County Student Harassment/Bullying Report

Harassment/Bullying means a continuous pattern of intentional behavior that takes place on, or off, school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to, 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 set forth below. To constitute harassment, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:

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

The term “violence” as used in this policy means the infliction of physical force by a student with the intent to cause injury to another student or damage to the property of another student. The term “threat of violence” as used in this policy means an expression of intention to inflict injury or damage that is made by a student and directed to another student.

The term “intimidation” as used in this policy means a threat or other action that is intended to cause fear or apprehension in a student, especially for the purpose of coercing or deterring the student from participating in or taking advantage of any school program, benefit, activity or opportunity for which the student is or would be eligible.

The term “student” as used in this policy means a student who is enrolled in the Houston County school system.

Students are expected to treat other students with courtesy, respect, and dignity and comply with the Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected and required:

- (1) to comply with the requirements of law, policy, regulation, and rules prohibiting harassment, violence, or intimidation;
- (2) to refrain from inflicting or threatening to inflict violence, injury, or damage to the person or property of another student; and
- (3) to refrain from placing another student in fear of being subjected to violence, injury, or damage when such actions or threats are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any personal characteristic of the student that is identified in this policy.

Violence, threats of violence, harassment, bullying, and intimidation are prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary consequences and sanctions if the perpetrator of such action is found to have based the prohibited action on one or more of the following personal characteristics of the victim of such conduct: race, sex, religion, national origin, or student's disability.

Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any student who has reported a violation of this policy or sought relief provided by this policy are prohibited, and are themselves a violation of this policy. Any confirmed acts of reprisal or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary sanctions that may include any sanction, penalty, or consequence that is available to school officials under the Code of Student Conduct. A student who deliberately, recklessly, and falsely accuses another student of a violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS HARASSMENT/BULLYING REPORT

DATE:

PERSON FILING REPORT:

Relationship to student- If not the student:

(parent, guardian, friend, etc.)

Contact information: Address: City, State, Zip:

Phone Number:

Description of harassing behavior:

If this is a minor allegation, do you wish for this incident to be presented and resolved informally? (**circle one**) YES or NO

Is there evidence of a threat of suicide by a student? If so, please explain:

**A student who deliberately, recklessly, and falsely accuses another student of a violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the Houston County Student Code of Conduct

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Acknowledgment

I _____ enrolled in _____ School and my parent(s)/guardian hereby acknowledge by our signature that we have received and are responsible for reading, or having read to us, the foregoing Code of Student Conduct.

MEDIA WAIVER: The Houston County School System has permission to use my child's picture in publications and video for the purpose of promoting the Houston County School System and its programs.

(Signed) _____
PARENT/GUARDIAN

(Signed) _____
STUDENT

(Signed) _____
PARENT/GUARDIAN

(Signed) _____
PARENT/GUARDIAN

DATE: _____

NOTE: Please detach this page after reading and signing and have the student return it to the homeroom teacher. This ACKNOWLEDGMENT WILL BECOME A PART OF THE STUDENT'S CUMULATIVE F