

Banks County Middle School



Safe and Smart

STUDENT HANDBOOK

**712 Thompson Street
Homer, Georgia 30547
Office: (706) 677 2277
Fax: (706) 677 5227**

**School's Website:
bcms.banks.k12.ga.us**

Banks County Middle School is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, The Georgia Accrediting Commission, and the Georgia Department of Education.



Please Note:

The Banks County Middle School Student Handbook was published on July 1, 2024. Any district or school changes in information contained within this document supersede the information contained herein. Students will be notified of any changes during the first week of school through class meetings.



OUR MISSION AND BELIEFS

THE BANKS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM'S VISION

“Educating and Empowering for Success”

OUR MISSION

- To provide a foundation for learning
- To encourage responsible citizenship
- To maximize individual potential

WE BELIEVE IN

- Having a safe and smart school
- Being Boldly Committed to Student Success
- A relentless focus on improving student achievement
- Using Data to drive instruction and school improvement
- Using State Standards for instruction and assessment
- Having a school-wide focus on literacy
- Team

NOTIFICATIONS FOR PARENTS

THE SCHOOL DAY

Our day at BCMS begins at **7:50 a.m.** with the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silent reflection, and announcements. Students arriving after **7:50 a.m.** are considered tardy. The school day is divided into six periods- Language Arts, Science, Math, Social Studies, and Connections.

STUDENT ARRIVAL TIME

Students should not arrive at school before 7:15 a.m. Before that time, there is no one who is available to supervise them. Students who arrive late on a bus are not considered tardy and will be given an opportunity to eat in the cafeteria.

AFTER-SCHOOL SUPERVISION

Students may not stay after school unsupervised. For safety reasons, students may not walk to the recreation department or other off-campus location. Students going to locations off campus other than home, must have a parent note on file in the office giving permission to ride a shuttle bus to another location (i.e. : library, daycare center etc.) Students found on campus unsupervised will face disciplinary consequences. Students are not permitted to stay after-school to wait for a sibling/friend who has athletic practice or some other extra-curricular activity.

SCHOOL VISITORS

For the protection of the students and security in the school, state law mandates that any person entering the building during the school day come through the main entrance and go directly to the office before visiting any other part of the school. A visitor's pass must be obtained from the office before going to any classroom or other part of the building. Visitors should come back by the office to sign out before leaving.

PARENT VISITORS

Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their child. Parents should check-in as a visitor at the main office and indicate the purpose of their visit. An area may be designated in the cafeteria or other location in the office for a parent and their child to eat. Parents are welcome to observe in classrooms. Any parent who wishes to visit or observe in the classroom should request to speak to the Principal to schedule this.

STUDENT INSURANCE

Student insurance is available for all students if their families choose to purchase it. The school system provides this as a service for our students, receives no proceeds for the service, and is not responsible for claims. For convenience, claim forms may be obtained in the school office. Parents should submit all claims directly to the insurance carrier.

STUDENT SALES

Students are prohibited from selling items at school according to law as set forth by the State Board of Education. This rule includes students bringing toys and/or collectibles to swap or trade with other students.

MEDICATIONS

Banks County teachers or school designees may administer drugs prescribed by a doctor only if all of the following requirements are met:

1. All routine and intermittent medications shall be in the original labeled container from the pharmacy. Written instructions from a doctor as to how to administer, amount, time, etc., must be shown on the medication container label.
2. No medication, including over the counter medication, shall be given without written parental permission. According to DHR nurse protocols, the school nursing staff may administer medications as indicated on the School Nurse Consent Form.
3. The administration of any medication will be documented on the medication log maintained in the school office. This log will indicate date, time, name of medication and signature of person administering the medication.
4. No prescription medication shall be given without a physician's order.

The Banks County Board of Education recognizes the necessity of providing individualized medical procedures ordered by a licensed physician to promote physical comfort for optimum learning. In order to provide the aforementioned medical procedures the following is required:

1. The parent shall provide a copy of the physician's order for the requested procedure.
2. Medical procedures shall be done only with written parental permission.
3. Only qualified individuals who have undergone initial and follow-up training for these procedures shall perform.
4. Training shall be individualized depending upon student need. Personnel shall receive training provided by a qualified healthcare professional.
5. Personnel shall be evaluated annually to assure proper techniques of procedure.
6. All medical procedures shall be documented on the appropriate form at the time of completion and shall be filed in a pre-designated confidential area as determined by the principal.

HEAD LICE POLICY

Because schools bring a large number of children into close daily contact, they serve as a focal point for the transmission of all types of communicable diseases, including head lice. In the interest of the health and welfare of students enrolled in the Banks County School System, no student will be permitted to attend classes with the general population if they are infested with head lice or the eggs of head lice (nits). Therefore, the Banks County Board of Education has adopted a nit free policy. Control depends on case treatment and prevention of spread. In view of this information, the Banks County Board of Education sets forth the following procedures for dealing with infestations.

1. To avoid embarrassment and to contain the infestation, entire classrooms will be checked for head lice upon the report of possible infestation by a teacher. The principal, his/her designee, school nurse or another qualified professional will examine the student in question and all classmates.
2. When it is verified that a student is found to be infected with head lice and/or nits, the parents or guardians will be contacted regarding the infestation. Upon verification of head lice, a student shall be immediately prohibited from participating in all school activities, to include classroom attendance and transportation on the school bus.

Therefore, the parent will be asked to pick up the student and begin treatment immediately.

3. If the infested student has a sibling in the school system, the sibling and his/her classmates should be checked for head lice.

4. The parents and/or guardian will be given a letter containing recommendations for treatment (See attached letter).

5. Upon returning to school, the parent must accompany the child back to school and wait to see if the child is nit free and can remain at school.

6. Every child readmitted to school shall be examined upon readmission and again in eight to ten days (8-10) days after readmission. The re-examination in eight to ten (8-10) days will determine if re-infestation has occurred. If the student is not nit-free, he/she will be sent home again with readmission only with a note from a private physician or the Banks County Health Department.

7. Banks County School System adheres to the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law and a student should not miss more than one or two (1 or 2) days because of the treatment of head lice. If a child is absent more than three (3) days, the principal should notify the school nurse or the school social worker who can apply pressure to the family to get the child treated and back in school.

FERPA NOTIFICATION

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

These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principals 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 are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write to the principal clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA:

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

BANKS COUNTY FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

The Banks County School System is committed to providing a nutritious meal to each student each day. However, in order to accomplish our objective, we will need your cooperation. For example, if you feel that your children qualify for free or reduced meals, simply take a few minutes and complete a meal application form. Meal applications are available at each school office and lunchroom. It is only necessary to complete one meal application per family. The completion of a single application will cover all of your school aged children attending Banks County Schools. Once the meal application is completed, please return it to any of your children's lunchroom manager or school office as soon as possible! If you need any assistance completing the meal application process, please contact your child's lunchroom manager or Nicole Blalock at your earliest convenience. **If your child received free or reduced meals during the 2022-2023 school year, you must submit a new application before September 11, 2023.** It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that a new application is completed each year and returned to a lunchroom manager as soon as possible! If your family's income changes during the school year and the change in financial status may qualify your child for free and reduced meals, please contact the lunchroom manager in order to obtain a free or reduced meal application. If your child accumulates more than twenty meal charges without payment, your child could receive an alternate meal until all charges are paid or a meal application is approved. If a free or reduced meal application is approved, all charges accumulated prior to the approval must be paid.

2024-2025 School Year Update:

All students will get one free breakfast and one free lunch each school day.

Two balanced meals are served each day. Everyone is encouraged to eat in the school cafeteria. Breakfast is served from 7:30 to 8:10 each morning; Money can be paid on a weekly or monthly basis, or can be paid daily when going through the line. Students may charge no more than three meals. Therefore, it is very important for students to remember to bring money for meals. **Students who qualify may receive free or reduced-priced meals (breakfast and lunch).** Applications for this program are sent home with the student.

MEAL PRICES FOR THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

Student Breakfast all Schools = Free

Staff Breakfast all schools = \$2.50

Visitor Breakfast all Schools = \$2.50

Staff Lunch all Schools = \$4.00

Student Lunch Banks County Primary School = \$2.75

Student Lunch Banks County Elementary School = \$2.75

Student Lunch Banks County Middle School = \$3.00

Student Lunch Banks County High School = \$3.00

Visitor Lunch all schools = \$4.00

Reduced Breakfast all Schools = Free

English

If you have difficulty communicating with us or understanding this information because you do not speak English or have a disability, please let us know. Contact (706-677-2224). Free language assistance or other aids and services are available upon request.

Spanish

Español:

Si tiene dificultades para comunicarse con nosotros, o para entender esta información porque no habla inglés o tiene alguna discapacidad, por favor infórmenos. Comuníquese con (706-677-2224). Tenemos disponibilidad de servicios gratuitos de ayuda en otros idiomas y otro tipo de asistencia y servicios cuando lo solicite.

Vietnamese

Việt:

VI: Vui lòng cho chúng tôi biết nếu quý vị gặp khó khăn khi giao tiếp với chúng tôi hoặc khó hiểu thông tin này vì quý vị không nói tiếng Anh hoặc bị khuyết tật. Liên lạc theo (706-677-2224). Luôn có hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí hoặc trợ giúp và dịch vụ khác theo yêu cầu.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
 - (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
 - (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.
- This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

BANKS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM ATTENDANCE TERMS AND INFORMATION

Absence: A student is considered absent any time he or she is missing from any assigned class or school activity, with or without parent permission.

Parents who are new residents of the school system must enroll their children within 15 days of moving into the system. A referral will be made to the Attendance Support Team for new students that have not been enrolled in school within 15 days.

Excused Absence:

An excused absence is an absence that is the result of one of the following reasons:

1. The student has a personal illness and attendance at school will endanger his/her health or the health of others.
2. The student's immediate family has a serious illness or death, which would reasonably necessitate an absence from school.
3. The student is under a court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the Armed Forces mandating an absence from school.
4. A special or recognized religious holiday observed by the faith of the student occurs on a school day.
5. Conditions render attendance impossible or hazardous to the student's health or safety.
6. A period not to exceed one day is allowed for registering to vote or voting in a public election.
7. The student has a special medical or dental appointment that cannot be made after school hours.
8. The student attends a funeral, which is approved at the discretion of the school administration.
9. A student whose parent/guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent/guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five (5) school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his/her parent/guardian prior to such parent/guardian's deployment or during such parent/guardian's leave.

The Banks County School System will accept the following as written documentation of an absence: a parent note explaining a child's absence, a doctor's excuse, a hospital intake form of an immediate family member, an obituary of an immediate family member, a copy of a court order or subpoena, government documentation the student served as a page or had a pre-induction physical examination for the armed forces. However, Banks County Schools can only accept five (5) parent notes per school year as documentation for an excused absence. After five (5) parent notes, the parent/guardian will be notified that if the student has any additional absences, medical and/or legal documentation is needed to excuse an absence. Once the student returns to school, written documentation of absences should be turned in within five (5) school days. If the written documentation is not received within five (5) school days, the absence is recorded as an unexcused absence.

When an absence is excused, students may make up any school work missed. Asking for make-up work is the responsibility of the student/parent/guardian.

School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Unexcused Absence: Absence without a valid written excuse is considered unexcused.

For any student that accumulated 30 days of unexcused absences, the Banks County School Social Worker must file a report to the Department of Juvenile Justice and Magistrate Court of Banks County.

Truant: Any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences is considered truant.

Tardy: A student is tardy when he or she is not present in the assigned class or school activity at the designated time.

1. **Excused Tardy:**

A tardy is excused when a student arrives late to school with a valid excuse (see below under “Tardies and Early Dismissals”). Other tardies may be excused at the Principal’s discretion.

2. **Unexcused Tardy:**

A tardy is unexcused when a student arrives late to school without a valid excuse. (Examples include over-sleeping, traffic congestion, errand for parents)

3. **Early Dismissals:**

When a student is checked out early before the end of the school day.

Detention:

Work/study session outside of regular school hours.

In-school Suspension:

Removal of a student from the regular class and assigned to an alternative location isolated from peers.

Out-of-school Suspension:

During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school sponsored classes and/or activities.

School days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Expulsion:

Suspended past the current semester.

Exception:

Students shall be counted present when they are serving as pages for the Georgia General Assembly.

Procedures for Excessive Unexcused Absences:
Middle School (6th, 7th, and 8th Grades)

Punctual and regular attendance is important and expected. Regular attendance in school is the joint responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardians. While the following procedures indicate the required contacts on behalf of the school, the Principal or his/her designee may, at his/her discretion, contact parents/guardians by phone, mail, or in person, at any time school attendance is a concern.

For Chronic Unexcused Absences:

- a. The school designee will check attendance daily and telephone the absent student in order to ascertain the reason for the absence. The school designee will document telephone call and information learned on the telephone log. The school designee will remind the parent/guardian of the attendance policy and the importance of attending school.
- b. When a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, the school designee will notify the principal and the principal or designee will send a letter to the parent/guardian requesting to meet to review the following: the student's attendance and the Notification of Compulsory Attendance Form. The parent/guardian will be asked to sign receipt of the documents and return the form to school. After two attempts to contact with the parent(s)/guardian(s), the school will send the attendance letter and the Notification of Compulsory Attendance Form via first class mail. The school will maintain a copy of the letter as documentation. During this meeting, school personnel will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student that truancy cases are referred to the Banks County Risk Reduction Team should unexcused absences continue. The parent/guardian/student will be asked to sign the Notification of Compulsory Attendance Form (for students over the age of ten by September 1) and to develop an attendance contract as a means to improve attendance.
- c. The principal/designee will notify the School Social Worker if:
 - o an Attendance Contract is violated or
 - o After two unsuccessful attempts to coordinate a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to review the student's attendance

At this time, the student will be referred to the Risk Reduction Team (Members of the Risk Reduction Team may include Department of Family and Children Services, Department of Juvenile Justice, Mental Health agencies working in Banks County, Court Personnel, Family Connections, Sheriff's Office, and School Personnel (Principal/Designee, Teacher, Counselor, School Social Worker, and School Nurse, etc.).

- d. After the Risk Reduction Team reviews the case, the parent/guardian/student (over the age of ten by September 1) will be asked to meet to develop a corrective plan of action regarding unexcused absences. Should the parent/guardian/student fail to

attend the meeting or if a plan is not agreed upon, the case will be referred to the appropriate court system for final determination.

e. If unexcused absences continue after a parent/guardian/student has developed the corrective plan of action with the Risk Reduction Team, the student and his/her family may be referred to Magistrate and/or Juvenile Court for legal action.

f. The School Social Worker will send the parent/guardian notification of pending truancy charges filed in Juvenile/Magistrate Court.

g. At the beginning of the school year, the Risk Reduction Team will meet with the parent/students that was under a Risk Reduction Contract in the prior school year to develop a plan for improved school attendance and place the student under a school attendance contract. When the student obtains 5 unexcused absences the school will refer the student back to the Risk Reduction Committee for review. The parent will sign a Risk Reduction case plan. If the student accumulates over 10 unexcused absences, the school may file a legal action request.

School Procedures for Tardies and Early Release

Excessive tardiness and/or checkouts disrupts the educational process. When there is a cause necessitating an individual student to be excused from school for a portion of the school day, the student shall be released from school only to his or her parent(s), legal guardian, or to a person properly identified to school authorities with written permission on file at the school by the parent or guardian of the person so designated. The student also may be released upon receipt of a letter from the parent, guardian, or designated person or by telephone when there is an emergency and the principal or his or her designee authorizes the release. When tardiness and/or check outs become excessive and impact individual students and/or the entire classroom, disciplinary action may occur. Students are required to arrive at school early enough to be in their assigned classroom before the time set by the school administrators. Students not in their classrooms at that time will be counted tardy. We ask that all Parents/Guardians sign their child in at the front office if their child is arriving at school after 8:00 am. Leaving school before the end of the instructional day may only be for lawful reasons. Students leaving before the end of the day may be counted absent from the class or classes missed if they are not present for the entire class. Each school will establish a building level procedure for addressing excessive tardiness and/or check outs with their specific student population. Disciplinary actions for addressing excessive tardiness and/or check outs include, but are not limited to, the following:

For Grades K-8th :

Phone call to parent(s)/guardians

Letter to parent(s)/guardian(s)

Parent Conference

Referral to School Social Worker

Risk to the Reduction Referral

Disciplinary action may be taken for excessive tardiness

Court Referral

For Chronic Unexcused Tardies and/or Early Dismissals:

a. When a student accumulates ten (10) unexcused tardies or early dismissals, the school designee will notify the principal. The principal or designee will send a letter requesting a meeting to review the student's attendance. At this meeting, school personnel (school designee, Counselor, School Social Worker, Teacher, and/or the Principal) will review the Compulsory Attendance Form and develop an attendance contract with the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student. The parent/guardian and students (over the age of ten by September 1 st) will be asked to sign these forms. After two attempts to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s), the school will send the attendance letter and the Notification of Compulsory Attendance Form via first class mail. The school will maintain a copy of the letter as documentation.

During this meeting, school personnel will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student (over the age of ten by September 1) that truancy cases are referred to the Banks County Risk Reduction Team should the student continue to be tardy/leave school early.

b. The principal/designee will notify the School Social Worker when:

o a student accumulates twenty (20) unexcused tardies/early releases or

o after two unsuccessful attempts to coordinate a meeting with the

parent(s)/guardian(s) or

o when the Attendance Contract is violated

At this time, the student will be referred to the Risk Reduction Team (Members of the Risk Reduction Team may include Department of Family and Children Services, Department of Juvenile Justice, Mental Health agencies working in Banks County, Court Personnel, Family Connections, Sheriff's Office, and School Personnel (Principal/Designee, Teacher, Counselor, School Social Worker and School Nurse, etc.).

c. After the Risk Reduction Team reviews the case, the parent/guardian/student (over the age of ten by September 1) will be asked to meet to develop a corrective plan of action regarding unexcused absences. Should the parent/guardian/student fail to attend the meeting or if a plan is not agreed upon, the case will be referred to the appropriate court system for final determination.

d. If tardies/early releases continue after a student has been referred to Risk Reduction, the student and his/her family may be referred to Magistrate and/or Juvenile Court for legal action.

e. The School Social Worker will send the parent/guardian notification of pending truancy charges filed in Juvenile/Magistrate Court.

Court Referrals

Legal complaints may be filed against the parent/guardian and/or student for violating the Georgia Compulsory Education Law. If the parent/guardian cooperates, develops and complies with an attendance contract and its recommendations then no legal action will be filed against the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian does not cooperate and comply with the attendance contract and the student has continued unexcused absences, then the case will be referred to the Risk Reduction Team.

If the student continues to miss school once the Risk Reduction Plan is developed the case will be referred to the Magistrate Court System and the Juvenile Court System for legal action. If the parent/guardian is found guilty of violating the Compulsory School Attendance Law, the courts may invoke the following consequences for each separate offense:

\$25-\$100 fine per unexcused absence

Imprisonment not to exceed 30 days

Community Service

Probation

Any combination of the above

Juvenile Court

After all reasonable efforts to resolve and address absenteeism/tardiness have been exhausted by the Banks County Board of Education, the case will then be forwarded to the Juvenile Court with truancy charges against the student/parent(s)/guardian(s); and/or a petition for dependency against the parent(s)/guardian(s) may be filed for educational neglect.

1. Truancy Charges: A juvenile complaint form shall be completed by the School Social Worker or designee and forwarded to the Department of Juvenile Justice. The complaint form shall be completed with all of the student's current demographic information. Attached to the complaint will be the most current report of attendance and discipline

records, as well as documentation of all efforts that have been made by the Board of Education to resolve the issue(s) with the student, parent(s) or guardian.

Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ): The Department of Juvenile Justice will process complaints as directed by the Juvenile Court. Upon disposition of the Court, the Department of Juvenile Justice will make necessary referrals ordered by the Court and will supervise any conditions outlined by the Court in compliance with DJJ policy.

Upon receipt of the juvenile complaint form, the Department of Juvenile Justice shall then file the petition with the clerk of court and schedule the case for an arraignment hearing. The Board of Education shall receive notice of the upcoming cases scheduled in the form of a court calendar. Said student, parent or guardian shall be served notification of the arraignment by proper service through the clerk of court.

2. Educational Neglect: If a complaint and petition for dependency is filed against the parent(s)/guardian(s) in Juvenile Court and the child is found dependent for educational neglect, the court may enter a protective order in the case. Any non-compliance will be immediately reported by the Banks County Board of Education to the Department of Juvenile Justice or the Juvenile Court. Failure to abide by that order may result in contempt of court charges and up to \$1000 fine and up to twenty days in jail with no bond. The School Social Worker or designee will attend court hearings and serve as liaison between the school system and the court system.

Student Withdrawals

Banks County Schools will withdraw a student who:

Has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences;

Is not subject to compulsory school attendance; and

Is not receiving instructional services from the local school system through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Each principal or designee shall use his/her best efforts to notify the parent/guardian if the school system plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

Schools shall withdraw students retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

Community Support

Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)

The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) will have a representative on the Attendance Support Team and will inform the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student(s) of the consequences if they receive a truancy complaint. DJJ will accept truancy complaints from the school system and will process the complaints through the juvenile justice system.

Banks County Department of Family and Children Services. (DFACS)

In support of this protocol, The Banks County Department of Family and Children’s Services shall:

Consider information related to school attendance, behavior, and performance in reports and investigations of other suspected abuse and/ or neglect.

Address school attendance in ongoing case plans.

Ensure school enrollment and regular attendance for students in emergency shelter care, or foster care.

Attend court proceedings, when necessary, for ongoing DFCS cases involving truancy and/or complaints against parents related to mandatory school attendance.

Banks County Health Department

The Banks County Health Department is an integral partner in community health as related to school readiness, attendance, and school success. The Banks County Health Department will:

1. Continue to promote and support the school nursing program.
2. Provide scoliosis screening for students.
3. Provide immunization evaluations, immunization, and immunization records as required for school enrollment.
4. Provide any other service which falls under the auspices of the Health Department which will promote personal and community health.

Banks County Sheriff’s Office

Each school in Banks County has access to, either on-site or within a minimal driving distance, an employee of the Banks County Sheriff’s Office. These individuals are certified peace officers designated as “School Resource Officers.” In support of improved school attendance, the School Resource Officer (SRO) shall:

1. Attend the Risk Reduction Team meeting, as possible.
2. Forward complaints against parents and juveniles directly to the Sheriff's Office regarding compliance with the mandatory attendance law.
3. Honor any applicable school-related transportation orders issued by a court.

Banks County Family Connection

Banks County Family Connections will be able to assist with the Attendance Protocol Committee by accepting referrals of students that may need help.

Family Connection will be able to assist in finding resources that the student and his/her family may need.

Banks County Magistrate Court

Banks County Magistrate Court will hear truancy cases that has been referred for court resolution.

STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

HEALTH AND EMERGENCY FORMS: All students are required to complete a health and emergency form. The information on the form is used to locate parents in the event of an emergency, to allow trained emergency staff to provide service to students, and to update students' permanent records. Forms are kept on file in the main office. Please be sure that the forms are kept updated when there are changes in address, phone numbers, etc.

CLINIC: Students who become ill during the day should go to the nurse's office. The nurse will contact parents if necessary.

COUNSELING OFFICE: The counselor is available every day to help support students.

SCHOOL VISITORS: For the protection of the students and security of the school, state law mandates that any person entering the building during the school day come through the main entrance and go directly to the office before visiting any other part of the school. A visitor's pass must be obtained from the office before going to any classroom or other part of the building, and visitors should come back by the office to sign out before they leave. Student visitors are not allowed during the normal school day.

Electronic Devices: including, Cell Phones, CD Players, IPODS, Etc: Students are encouraged to leave all personal electronic items and valuables at home. There is always the risk that these items could be lost, stolen or broken at school. **Banks County Middle**

School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken electronic items and may not investigate such claims.

ENERGY DRINKS (Monster, Rock Star, Red Bull, etc.) - Due to concerns for the health and safety of our students, energy drinks of any kind are not permitted at BCMS. This includes during breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria.

MONEY AND OTHER VALUABLES: Except for what is necessary for school, students should leave money and other valuables at home. Large sums of money are prohibited. Students should never leave purses and other valuables in the locker room, classroom or any other area other than a locked locker. Banks County Middle School is not responsible for lost or stolen items that are brought to school.

ACADEMICS

GRADE REPORTS AND PROGRESS REPORTS:

Grade reports are issued every nine weeks and a progress report is issued every four and a half weeks. Students carry progress reports home. It is the responsibility of the student to share his/her progress report with parents. The final report card will be sent home with students at the end of the school year.

Infinite Campus (Online access for parents to student grades)

Infinite Campus is a web site available to parents so that they can view their student's grades online. Teachers update their grades on at least a weekly basis. To access Infinite Campus, a parent needs a login name and password. This information will be sent home with your student at the beginning of the school year.

GRADING SCALE

90 - 100	=	A
80 - 89	=	B
70 - 79	=	C
69 – Below	=	F
Incomplete	=	I

(An "I" Converts to an F if work is not completed)

EXPECTATIONS:

At Banks County Middle School, we believe our students have great potential. It is our goal to lead the state in achievement and learning. The students in Banks County are as smart and capable as any around. We believe all students can succeed. Parents are encouraged to set high academic expectations for their students.

MAKE-UP WORK:

Make-up work is allowed for both excused and unexcused absences. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for any make-up work with their teachers. This work must be completed in a timely manner. Failure to submit assignments may result in the student receiving no credit for all work not made up.

HONOR ROLL:

Students who make all “A’s” on their 9 weeks report card will be recognized by being named to the Principal’s Honor Roll.

Transfer Students from Home School or a Non-Accredited School:

Banks County Middle School may administer a placement test to determine the appropriate grade level for any student who has been home schooled or who has attended a non-accredited school or place of learning. The school’s administration will make a final determination of a student’s grade level placement.

HARASSMENT-DISCRIMINATION: It is the Policy of the Banks County School System that bullying and racial, sexual, or other forms of harassment or discrimination are strictly forbidden. Any student or employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district based upon his or her race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or gender should promptly report the incident to the principal of their school or the appropriate coordinator, who will implement the board’s discriminatory complaint or harassment procedures. District director (Title II, IX, and XI) Mrs. Nancy Bentley or Mr. Mike Cleveland may be reached at Banks County Board of Education, P.O. Box 248, Homer, GA 30547. Phone: (706) 677-2224

ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

AFTER-SCHOOL STUDENT ACTIVITIES: During any after-school activity, students are under the same rules that govern his/her school day. Students must arrange for pickup before the activity begins. They may not use phones to call for pickup after the activity is over. Students who are not picked up within a reasonable time after the end of an activity may be barred from participating in after-school activities in the future. Students who are not picked up within 30 minutes after the activity is over may be at the Banks County Sheriff’s office. Students may not be on campus after hours unless they are attending or involved in an after-school activity.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY: Students who participate in athletics are required to meet eligibility requirements and follow any rules specified. Student athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and sporting manner toward all persons associated with the athletic program (i.e. conduct becoming an athlete – such as fairness, courteous manner and graceful acceptance of results). A student is eligible to participate in athletics if he/she:

- Attended school last semester.
- Is living within the BCMS school district boundary.
- Passed 5 classes during the previous semester. A student becomes eligible or ineligible the first day of a new term.
- Has completed a physical exam during the past 12 months.
- Was not ineligible at the previous school for academic or behavior reasons. Students must be in class 1/2 day to be eligible to participate in an athletic activity that day. Exceptions to this policy may include pre-arranged absences authorized by the principal.

***Parents must provide proof of insurance for any student participating in athletics or extra-curricular activities.**

Banks County Middle School or individual coaches may have additional academic or behavioral requirements for eligibility.

The following acts by a student athlete shall constitute sufficient cause of athletic discipline, suspension, or removal from team:

- Commission of a felony;
- Possession or use of any dangerous weapon or object;
- Assault of another student or staff member;
- Intimidation of another student or staff member;
- Use of, or possession of, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or narcotics, or tobacco not prescribed by a physician;
- Poor academic performance;
- Improper possession of athletic equipment belonging to the BCSS, or any other competing school district;
- Cheating or immoral conduct
- Destruction or defacing of property;
- Disruptive conduct/disobedience of reasonable instructions of school authorities or unsportsmanlike conduct
- Unauthorized absence from school, practice, or event;
- Gambling, theft, use of profanity or vulgarity
- Failure to follow reasonable training rules authorized under the BCMS Athletic Policy or the coach.
- Other misbehaviors handled at the discretion of the administration and coaching staff.

CLUB INFORMATION

Fellowship of Christian Athletes- The mission/purpose is to give all students an opportunity to enjoy Christian fellowship. FCA meets once a week before regular school hours. They perform various community service projects.

FFA- The mission/purpose is to give students an opportunity to participate and compete in agricultural and forestry related activities. FFA meets periodically after school throughout the year to discuss club business and to elect officers. FFA members attend competitions and have an annual banquet at the end of the year.

Banks County 4-H – The purpose of the club is to assist youth in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will help them become self-directing, productive, and contributing citizens. Meetings are held each month in the classroom at the middle school level for students in 6th through 8th grade. A full listing of state events can be found at: <http://www.georgia4h.org>

Interact Club- The Interact Club is closely tied to the Rotary Club. The Interact Club is a civic-minded club that is service oriented.

If you **do not** wish for your child to participate in any of these clubs, please send an email or letter to the Principal. In the letter, please list the club in which you do not want your child to participate.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER: Inform the office as soon as possible if you change your address or telephone. This information needs to be updated on the Health and Emergency form.

PARENT CONFERENCES: Teachers at Banks County Middle School are always ready to meet with parents to insure the success of students. Parent conferences are best arranged through an individual teacher or through the administration or counseling office for conferences with multiple teachers. Please allow time for arranging conferences.

GIFTS AND FLOWERS: Gifts and/or flowers may be delivered to the office for students, however, in order to avoid classroom interruptions, items will be given to the student at the end of the school day. Glass containers and balloons are not allowed on our buses.

STUDENT SALES: Students are prohibited from selling items at school according to law as set forth by the State Board.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE: Occasionally a student will be photographed or videoed by teachers or, sometimes, newspapers reporters, in connection with school activities. If parents object they should notify the school office immediately.

CELL PHONES: Cell phones may not be turned on or visible during school hours. Cell phones that are seen or are turned on may be confiscated and the student may face disciplinary consequences. Cell phones have led to many disruptions and distractions throughout the school day so our updated Cell Phone Policy for BCMS is as follows:

Students using electronic devices during the school day without permission will be subject to the following procedures.

- 1. First offense: Step issued, device confiscated. Students may pick up the device at the end of class or other designated time not to exceed the end of the school day.**
- 2. Second offense: Step issued, device confiscated and parent contacted. Students may pick up the device at the end of the school day from administration.**
- 3. Third offense: Step issued, device confiscated and parent contacted. Parents/Guardian must pick up devices and conference will be held with admin, parents/guardians, and student.**
- 4. Fourth offense: Same as third offense but ISS will be given due to student defiance.**
- 5. Additional offenses will result in progressive disciplinary action as needed.**

MESSAGES: Please arrange for afternoon pickup, meeting for appointments, etc. before your student leaves for school each morning. Call the main office to leave a message only in the event of an emergency.

HALL PASSES: Students who are in the hallways for any reason during class time or lunchtime need a pass provided by a teacher or administrator and in student agendas.

WATER SAFETY: Drowning is the leading cause of death for children one to four years old, and the second leading cause of death for children ages 5-14. Two children die every day from drowning. Participating in formal swim lessons can reduce the risk by 88%. Please contact Banks County Parks and Recreation Department for information regarding water safety classes.

DAILY EXPECTATIONS

At Banks County Middle School, we expect all students to focus daily on being Guilty of Greatness. Being Guilty of Greatness will ensure success for all students. We encourage parents to reinforce this focus at home.

I will be Guilty, Guilty of Greatness:

1) I will have Great Attendance – Student attendance is a key to student success. Students are encouraged to have great attendance during the school year.

2) I will have Great Character - Students should always do what is right. This includes following all school rules, respecting their teachers and classmates, and valuing each other.

3) I will produce Great School Work- Students should take care of business in the classroom. This means being actively engaged at all times, completing all assignments, and studying. Students should take pride in their work and give their maximum effort to reach their potential every day.

DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES: Faculty, staff, and administrators use a variety of disciplinary responses to student misconduct. Minor infractions will be handled by the classroom teacher. In the event that the student is referred to an administrator, possible disciplinary actions may include: conference, behavior management contract, parent conference, after-school detention, in-school suspension (from 1 to 10 days), activity suspension, out-of-school suspension (from 1 to 10 days), recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools for long-term suspension/expulsion or placement in the Alternative School, referral to local law enforcement authorities, referral to a disciplinary tribunal hearing, or other appropriate consequences, i.e. school community service (litter pick-up, cafeteria work, cleaning, etc)

CHRONIC DISCIPLINARY PROBLEM STUDENTS:

Any student who exhibits chronic disciplinary problems or who exhibits misbehavior of a serious nature may be placed on a chronic discipline plan. A meeting may be held between the student, parent(s), and administration to create a plan to correct the behavior problems. The plan will detail expectations and list consequences of further misbehaviors. The administration will determine the length of time that a plan is in effect. Students who transfer to BCMS with discipline problems may also be placed on a discipline plan or contract. Violations of the discipline plan may result in suspension to placement in alternative school.

SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIOR: The bus driver is in complete charge of the school bus. Any student who behaves inappropriately will be subject to disciplinary action. This action ranges from warning to permanent expulsion from the school bus.

FALSE ALARMS: Pursuant to the 1991 Uniform Fire Code Section 13.203, false alarms shall not be given, signaled or transmitted or caused or permitted to be given, signaled or transmitted in any manner. Under the law, false alarms are misdemeanors subject to a maximum fine of \$250. Such action or involvement by a student will result in disciplinary action and notification of law enforcement officials. Bomb threats are considered felonies.

WEAPONS: O.C.G.A. § 16-11-127.1 states that it is unlawful for any person to carry, possess, or have under control any weapon at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school. State law also calls for the mandatory expulsion for 1 year of students who carry, possess, or control any weapon at school. Banks County Board of Education policy is that **ALL knives are prohibited, regardless of size.**

SPECIAL INFO: The Georgia General Assembly requires schools to encourage parents and/or guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

DRESS CODE: BCMS students should be neat and clean in appearance at all times. Clothing should be clean, serviceable, and suitable as school attire. Students should dress simply and modestly. Students who violate the dress code will be required to call a parent for a change of clothes. In the event that the parent cannot be reached to pick up the student, the student may be given the choice of either changing into clothing that is available at the school or spending the day in ISS. Penalties of violations of dress code may include In or out-of-school suspension.

Dress Code Requirements

***The administration of Banks County Middle School has high expectations for student dress. We hold that school is a special place, and students should dress with this in mind.**

- See-through or mesh clothing or garments that have been purposely torn are not permitted.
- Students are not permitted to wear pants/jeans or other clothing that contains holes above the knees. Holes that are patched and do not expose skin are allowed.
- Pajamas are not appropriate attire for school and should not be worn.
- Shirts/pants that reveal a bare midriff, low cut shirts, and tank tops are not permitted.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses shall be of a length that is no more than three inches above the knee when standing upright, regardless of what is worn underneath.
- Clothing that displays emblems of alcohol, drugs, sex, tobacco, or inappropriate language are not permitted.
- Clothing that displays suggestive writing or pictures is not permitted. Clothing considered disruptive, suggestive or indecent are not permitted.

- Students are not permitted to inappropriately write, paint or mark on their hands, arms, face, body or clothing.
- Piercing of any visible body part (other than the ears), including the tongue, lip, and eyebrows, is not permitted. The use of plastic spacers is also prohibited.
- Sunglasses and/or non-prescription glasses may not be worn inside the building.
- No object or ornament that is capable of being used as a weapon may be worn. This includes, but is not limited to, heavy chains, wallet chains, chain belts, or jewelry with spikes or studs.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Hats, caps, and/or hoodies are not allowed. Hoodies should not be worn over students' heads because this could obscure part of a person's face and identity- making it harder to spot an intruder or to identify a student if needed.

*** The administration has the authority to determine appropriate dress.**

***In the event that the administration determines that a student's dress is disruptive to the learning environment, is unsafe, or is determined to be immodest, the student will be required to change and disciplinary action may be taken.**

*** All personal items, including book bags, gym bags, purses, etc. are always subject to search.**

Banks County Middle School **Four-Step Discipline Plan**

Banks County Middle School uses a four-step plan within each classroom. This plan allows the teacher to handle minor discipline problems such as excessive talking, sleeping, refusing to do work, failure to bring class materials, chewing gum, etc. Documentation on this plan starts over every 9 weeks. Steps are as follows:

Step 1: Student Warned - Teacher Conference with Student

Step 2: Teacher Conference with Student - Silent Lunch - Parent Contacted

Step 3: Teacher Conference with Student - Silent Lunch - Loss of Incentive Time - Parent Contacted

Step 4: Admin Conference with Student - Admin Contact Parent - ISS

If additional steps are needed during the same 9 week period:

Reflection assignments may be given as well as additional consequences such as ISS, OSS or Behavior Contracts, etc.

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES: The outcome of disciplinary infractions depends on the student's attitude, context of the incident, and disciplinary history. Examples of possible consequences are listed below.

- Minor Misbehaviors, i.e. chewing gum, eating or drinking, sleeping, lack of participation; other minor disruptive behavior: The teacher documents the inappropriate behavior on the four-step plan and implements corrective actions.
- Completion of a four-step plan in a classroom during a Nine-week-grading period: ISS for one or more days to a disciplinary tribunal.
- Social networking that creates a disruption at school or in the classroom: ISS to Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Disrespectful action toward a BCMS employee or other adult: In-School Suspension to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Profanity: Documented on Step Plan to a disciplinary tribunal.

- Improper Possession of an electronic device, cell phone, playing cards, or dice could result in having the item collected, tagged, and stored. BCMS is not responsible if the item is lost or stolen after confiscation. Parents may pick up the item at the end of the school year. Items not picked up by the last day of the student school year will be discarded. Refusing to comply could result in: ISS to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Inappropriate dress: First offense -- Change/adjust attire or leave school premises. Second offense and those thereafter – Change/adjust attire or leave school premises plus one or more days of ISS to Out of School Suspension.
- Cheating/Plagiarism: Students who use plagiarized papers, projects, or tests or are involved in any other form of cheating will not be given credit for the assignment. The teacher will inform the parents. Subsequent offenses will result in disciplinary actions by an administrator.
- Insubordination, i.e. refusing to identify self when directed to do so by an adult; refusing to leave classroom when directed to leave by a teacher; refusing to surrender prohibited items when asked by a teacher or administrator; using abusive language toward school personnel or other students: In-School Suspension to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Skipping/Cutting Class: Detention to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Tobacco possession of or use on school property: ISS to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Electronic cigarette, Vape, Juul, or any type of inhalant device: ISS to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Possession, distribution, representation of or use of alcohol, illegal drugs or unauthorized prescription medication: ISS to disciplinary tribunal hearing.
- Gambling/card playing/rolling dice/etc.: In-School Suspension to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Student demonstrations: In-School Suspension to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.
- Fighting: ISS to referral to disciplinary tribunal.
- Forgery: ISS to referral to disciplinary tribunal.
- Vandalism: ISS to disciplinary tribunal. Restitution will be required for all damage to school property.
- Using a school computer or other device to look at inappropriate/obscene material
- Other: Handled at discretion of the administration.

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Chronic misbehavior and repeated offenses may result in a tribunal hearing with a recommendation for expulsion and/or placement in Alternative School.**
- **The Principal is responsible for protecting the learning environment of the school. The Principal or his designee may discipline any student who becomes disruptive to the learning environment.**
- **Consequences for other misbehaviors not listed here will be handled at the discretion of an administrator.**
- **PLEASE NOTE: The Administration reserves the right to consider unusual circumstances as they arise and may determine appropriate consequences for such events.**

The Banks County School System's Student Behavior Code of Conduct is included in this handbook. Refer to this document below for more information.

Banks County Schools Student Behavior Code of Conduct

It is the purpose of the Banks County School System to operate each school in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with that purpose, the Board of Education has adopted a policy which requires all schools to adopt codes of conduct which requires students to conduct themselves at all times in order to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the district.

The school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is effective during the following times and in the following places:

- At school or on school property at any time;
- Off school grounds at any school activity, function or event and while traveling to and from such events;
- On vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system and at all school bus stops;

Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which is felonious or which may pose a threat to the school's learning environment or the safety of students and employees.

The Banks County Board of Education in compliance with the law (20-2-751.2) is authorized to refuse to enroll a student under a discipline order from public/private schools in Georgia and public schools outside of Georgia in which the student was previously enrolled. The Banks County Board of Education may enroll the student and subject the student to provisions of the disciplinary order (suspension, expulsion) from the previous school or school system.

Administrators must inform school personnel to whom a student is assigned if the student has been convicted or adjudicated to have committed a felony act.

The Banks County School Superintendent shall fully support the authority of principals and teachers to remove a disruptive student from the classroom, including establishing and disseminating procedures.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community.

The Banks County School System will distribute electronically a student code of conduct and parents will be provided with a form on which the student's parent or guardian may acknowledge their receipt of the code and the local school shall request that the form be signed and returned to the school.

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in the Code, the principal may undertake corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures.

Each principal shall support the authority of each teacher to remove a student from the classroom who interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students in the classroom and who disrupts the opportunity for other students to learn.

System policies and procedures related to teacher removal of students from class shall be implemented and disseminated to faculty, staff, parent/guardians, and students.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a **progressive discipline process**. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior or a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

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

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges/Silent Lunch
- Isolation or Time Out
- Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Temporary Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- Short-term Suspension
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The school will refer any act of misconduct to law

enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Banks County Board of Education policies.

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved also by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy.

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

A disciplinary hearing will be held in instances of alleged violation of the student code of conduct where the principal recommends a suspension or expulsion of longer than ten days or an alleged assault or battery by a student upon a teacher or other school official or employee, if such teacher or other school official or employee so requests.

The hearing must be held no later than ten school days after the beginning of the student's suspension unless the school system and the parent or guardian mutually agree to an extension. All parties are afforded an opportunity to present and respond to evidence and to examine and cross-examine witnesses on all issues unresolved. Any teacher who is called as a witness by the school system shall be given notice no later than three days prior to the hearing and a verbatim electronic or written record of the hearing shall be made and shall be available to all parties.

Decisions must be in writing and shall be given to all parties within ten days of the close of the record. Any decision by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal may be appealed to the local board of education by filing a written notice of appeal within 20 days from the date the decision is rendered. Any disciplinary action imposed by the disciplinary officer, panel or tribunal may be suspended by the school superintendent pending the outcome of the appeal.

The penalties for physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee shall be assessed against a student by a disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal. Any student alleged to have committed an act of physical violence shall be suspended pending the hearing by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal. The decision of the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal may be appealed to the local school board pursuant to Code Section 21-2-754. The decision of the disciplinary officer, panel or tribunal shall include a recommendation as to whether a student may return to public school and, if return is recommended, a time for the student's return must be included in the recommendation.

A student found by a disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence as defined against a teacher, school bus driver, school official or school employee shall be expelled from the public school system. The expulsion shall be for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school as noted in the law. The local board of education at its discretion may permit the student to attend an alternative education program for the period of the student's expulsion. If the student who commits an act of physical violence is in kindergarten through grade eight, then the local school board at its discretion and on the recommendation of the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal may permit such a student to re enroll in the regular public school program for grades nine through twelve. If no alternative educational program is available for students in grades kindergarten through six, the local board of education at its discretion may permit a student in kindergarten through grade six who has committed an act of physical violence to re enroll in the public school system.

A student who is found by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, school official or school employee shall be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior.

A student who is found by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, school official or school employee may be disciplined by expulsion, long-term suspension, or short term suspension.

This code shall not infringe on the rights provided to students with Individualized Educational Programs pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Student vehicles brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, desks and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without further notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of administrators.

BEHAVIOR WHICH WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The degree of discipline imposed will be in accordance with the progressive discipline process unless otherwise stated.

-Possession, sale, use in any amount, distribution, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturates, marijuana, drug paraphernalia or alcoholic beverage or other intoxicant.

-Possession, distribution, attempted sale or sale of substances represented as drugs or alcohol.

-Sale, attempted sale, distribution, or being under the influence of a prescription or over the counter drug.

Behavior: Possession or use of Tobacco/ Lighters (in any form including imitations or paraphernalia) on school property or at any school sponsored event.

Please note: Students will also be considered in violation of the tobacco policy when they are in a restroom stall with a prohibited item (or in a restroom stall with another student possessing a prohibited item). Prohibited items include any and all tobacco related products and paraphernalia. **Consequences: ISS/OSS up to expulsion or referral to disciplinary tribunal. Could also result in the loss of school privileges as deemed appropriate by administration. Parent contact required. May result in successful completion of a tobacco/drug education class. Law Enforcement may be contacted.**

Behavior: Possession or use of E-Cigarettes, Vapes, Dab Pens, Juuls, or any other vaporizing delivery system (in any form including imitations or paraphernalia) on school property or at any school sponsored event.

Please note: Students will also be presumed to be vaping when they are in a restroom stall with a delivery/vaporizing device (or with another student in a restroom stall possessing a delivery/vaporizing device).

Consequences: ISS/OSS up to expulsion or referral to disciplinary tribunal. Could also result in the loss of school privileges as deemed appropriate by administration. Parent meeting required. May result in successful completion of a tobacco/drug education class. Law Enforcement may be contacted.

1st offense will require a mandatory face to face parent conference. Students will be assigned 2 days of OSS, and 3 days of ISS.

2nd offense will require a mandatory face to face parent conference. Students will be assigned 5 days of OSS and loss of school privileges as deemed appropriate by school administration.

3rd offense will result in referral to a disciplinary tribunal or tribunal waiver. Expulsion from school with an option to enroll in our alternative education program for 1 full semester. Student must successfully complete 1 full semester in Alternative School in order to be eligible to return to regular classes. May also require successful completion of a tobacco/drug education class.

-Possession or use of a weapon or dangerous instrument: A student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon. Students who possess firearms on campus will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year suspension and will be referred to law enforcement officials.

-Assault, including threats of bodily harm and/or sexual assault, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon a teacher or other school personnel: possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

Inciting, advising or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts.

Battery, including sexual battery, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

Bullying: Georgia law mandates that upon a finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Bus Misbehavior

The following specific provisions shall govern student conduct and safety on all school buses:

1. All provisions of the Student Code of Conduct apply to behavior on the school bus, including but not limited to, acts of physical violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined by subsection (a) of the Code Section 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior;
2. Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; pagers; audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and
3. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Disrespectful conduct toward teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students or persons attending school-related functions.

Any behavior based on a student's race, national origin, sex, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient is prohibited, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature.

- Possession or use of tobacco, lighters, matches, or paraphernalia in any form
- Damaging or defacing personal property or school property (vandalism)
- Theft
- Extortion or attempted extortion
- Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive
- Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat
- Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives; disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff.
- Classroom and school disturbances

- **Violation of school dress code**
- **Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words or indecent exposure**
- **Use of pocket pager, cell phone or electronic communication device during school hours, except for health or other unusual reasons approved by the board of education.**
- **Inappropriate public displays of affection**
- **Gambling or possession of gambling devices**
- **Moving and non-moving driving violations**
- **Giving false information to school officials**
- **Cheating on school assignments**
- **Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, leaving campus without permission**

Failure to comply with compulsory attendance law: Guidelines and consequences are outlined in the student attendance policy.

Loitering: A student is not allowed to enter the premises of a school other than his/her school, unless prior permission is received from an administrator of the school to be visited. A student may not enter any school building on weekends or after school hours without authorization.

Criminal law violations: A student who has committed a violation of the criminal laws, whether on or off campus, which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony, and whose presence on the school campus may endanger the safety of other students or cause substantial disruption to the school operation, may be subject to disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, short-term suspension and referral to a disciplinary tribunal.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Assault: Any threat or attempt to physically harm another person or any act which reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: threatening language or swinging at someone in an attempt to strike).

Battery: Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person. (Example: fighting)

Behavior Support Process: a student support process for identifying and addressing the behavioral needs through providing integrated resources that promote behavioral change.

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student: a student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur.

Corporal Punishment: Physical punishment of a student by a school official in the presence of another school official.

Detention: A requirement that the student report to a specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official to make up work missed. Detention may require the student's attendance before school or after school. Students are given one day's warning so that arrangements for transportation can be made by the parents or guardians.

Disciplinary Order: any public or private school or school system order that imposes short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion upon a student in such school or system.

Disciplinary Tribunal: School officials appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact finder and judge with respect to student disciplinary matters.

Dress Code: The current dress code is explained in the student handbook.

Drug: The term drug does not include prescriptions issued to the individual, aspirin or similar medications and/or cold medications that are taken according to product use recommendations and board policy. Caffeine pills are considered drugs.

Expulsion: Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school quarter or semester. Such action may be taken only by a disciplinary tribunal.

Extortion: Obtaining money or goods from another student by violence, threats, or misuse of authority.

Fireworks: The term "fireworks" means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compounds and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substances.

Gambling: Engaging in a game or contest in which the outcome is dependent upon chance even though accompanied by some skill, and in which a participation stands to win or lose something of value.

Loitering: going on any school campus without authorization – trespassing.

Physical Violence: Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person or another; or intentionally making physical contact or physical harms were in defense of himself or herself, as provided in Code Section 16-3-21.

In-School Suspension: Removal of a student from class (es) or regular school program and assignment of that student to an alternative program isolated from peers.

Suspension: Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed 10 days (short-term) or for a period greater than 10 days (long-term, which may be imposed only by a disciplinary tribunal). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.

Theft: The offense of taking or misappropriation of any property, of another with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

Waiver: A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.

Weapons: The term weapon is defined as any object which is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well being. The following things may be defined as dangerous weapons: any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, any stun gun or taser, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife, straight-edge razor or razor blade, spring sticks, metal knucks, chains, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a way

as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nunchaku, or fighting chain, throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES

The Banks County Board of Education provides a variety of resources which are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include Response to Interventions, school counselors, chronic disciplinary problem student plans.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contacts is extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents and as well as on-going opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments. Parents and students should contact the principal of the school if specific questions arise related to the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code, which may result in a school staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior.

Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify by telephone call and by mail the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call and by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

Banks County School System Bullying Policy

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

Bullying is defined as follows: An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

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

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

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. Such consequences shall include, at a minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling, as appropriate under the circumstances. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school. Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a

victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which may be done electronically. Students and parents will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at each school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.

Banks County School Bus Information

Students are eligible for transportation by school bus provided they live in Banks County. Bus routes are established based upon the following guidelines:

- The student must live on a state or county-maintained road with adequate space for the bus to turn around.
- The road must be wide enough for the bus and another vehicle to pass.

The transportation of students is an important function in our school system. Every precaution must be taken to see that students are transported safely. The same behavior is expected on the school bus as is expected in the classroom. Therefore, it is important that students abide by the bus discipline policies as outlined below.

Conduct on the Bus:

- A. Students shall obey the bus driver.
- B. Students shall not disturb the bus driver while he/she is driving.
- C. Assigned seating will be at the discretion of the bus driver.
- D. Students must remain in their seats and not change seats unless directed by the bus driver- and then only if the bus is stopped.
- E. Students shall keep voices low and avoid shouting or whistling.
- F. Students shall not “rough-house,” push, fight, throw objects, or use profane or abusive language.
- G. Students shall not eat or drink on the bus.
- H. Students shall not bring glass containers of any kind on the bus.
- I. The use of tobacco is forbidden.
- J. Gum is forbidden on the bus.
- K. Students will be permitted to carry only books and other items related to school work which can be held in the student’s lap and do not take up seat space. Large musical instruments, large sports equipment, and live animals will not be transported.

School bus transportation is a privilege afforded students by the Banks County Board of Education. Student transportation is not a right. The purpose of the guidelines is to help create a safe environment while transporting students.

The following include the possible consequences administered by school administrators:

- First offense: The principal shall take the proper disciplinary action based on the nature or severity of the offense which may include a warning to suspension from riding the bus.
- Second offense: The principal shall suspend the students from riding the bus for at least 3 school days.
- Third offense: The principal shall suspend the student from the bus for at least 5 school days.

- Fourth offense: The principal shall suspend the student from the bus for at least 10 school days.
- Fifth offense or more: The principal shall suspend the student from the bus for at least 30 school days.

Days of suspension not served will carry over to the next school year.

USE OF COMPUTER RESOURCES

The Banks County Board of Education believes in preparing students for success in life and work in this technological information age. This entails providing access to a wide variety of media resources, including electronic media and the Internet. All personnel and students must conform to all guidelines for acceptable use of electronic equipment, devices, and other resources. *Definition: Acceptable use is defined as the use of computers, access to the Internet, e-mail, and other electronic transmission devices by teachers, students, and staff, to support education and research consistent with the educational objectives of the Banks County School System. Use for commercial activities or personal use or gain is prohibited.*

Both students and employees are expected to follow legal, ethical, system and school rules regarding use of the Internet and other electronic media. Students who fail to abide by such rules may be subject to disciplinary action, including revocation of use of privileges, suspension, criminal charges, and/or other appropriate actions. Employees violating the rules may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and/or criminal charges.

The use of computing resources of the Banks County School System is a privilege, which is conditional on the individual's compliance with State and Federal Law and the Board of Education regulations. Faculty, students, and staff must realize and acknowledge that the Banks County Schools' computing resources are provided strictly for the support of academic, administrative, and instructional support activities. Any other use is a violation of this policy. Additionally, only approved software and other electronic media will be used for instruction. Software and media from any other source is prohibited. Finally, use of the Internet must have a defined educational purpose that supports the instructional program. Personal email will not be permitted. The use of electronic mail by students will be permitted only if it is based on planned and supervised instructional objectives developed by the teacher. There is a wide range of material available on the Internet. Some of the material may not be consistent with the values of the families of the students. The Board of Education restricts access to material that is not appropriate in the school environment and has installed blocking software to limit inappropriate material. The Board of Education cannot totally assure that the student will not gain access to these materials. Hence, the parents will be notified of the availability of access to the Internet and the policies governing its use. Parents who do not want their child to have access to Internet instructional activities must complete, sign, and return to school a form developed by the school and made available to parents stating that their child shall be denied access to the Internet. If the form is not completed and returned, the child shall have access to the Internet. The child will not be penalized in any manner for this request not to have access to the Internet and an alternative educational resource will be provided. This policy shall be distributed by the principal to all personnel and reviewed during a scheduled faculty meeting. Students and parents shall annually be made aware of this policy and forms distributed regarding access to the Internet.

Computers and Network Resources **Student Acceptable Use Guidelines**

Please read the following carefully. Violations of the Acceptable Use Guidelines may cause a student's access privileges to be revoked, disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

Any student who utilizes the computer lab(s) or any computer equipment at the school must be aware of certain policies for use of the equipment and/or facilities. Procedures are in place for the protection of students and equipment. Students will be held accountable for any violation of the following policies (as would be the case for any classroom disciplinary matter). A student and his/her parents will be responsible for damages and will be liable for costs incurred for service or repair.

Students are only allowed to utilize the computers and network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their teacher. Students are not permitted to go into the operating system to look around, run programs, or attempt to do anything they are not specifically authorized to do.

Students bringing flash/jump drives, cd's or dvd's from outside the school must have them scanned for viruses by an authorized staff member prior to their use on a computer or the network.

Safety Issues:

1. Any on-line communication should always be at the direction and with the supervision of a teacher.
2. Never provide last name, address, telephone number, or school name online.
3. Never respond to, and always report to the teacher or parent, any messages that make you feel uncomfortable or that are from an unknown origin.
4. Never send a photo of yourself or anyone else.
5. Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you met on-line.
6. Never open attachments or files from unknown senders.

Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Accessing, sending, creating or posting materials or communications that are:
 1. Damaging to another person's reputation,
 2. Abusive,
 3. Obscene,
 4. Sexually oriented,
 5. Threatening or demeaning to another person's gender or race,
 6. Contrary to the school's policy on harassment,
 7. Harassing, or
 8. Illegal
- B. Using the network for financial gain or advertising.
- C. Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without their consent.
- D. Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages.
- E. Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other system users.
- F. Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bankcard or checking account information.
- G. Using the school's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software or violation of copyright laws.

- H. Loading or using games, public domain, shareware or any other unauthorized program on any school's computer or computer system.
- I. Purposely infecting any school computer or network with a virus or program designed to damage, alter, destroy or provide access to unauthorized data or information.
- J. Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person.
- K. Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account.
- L. Using the school's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended.
- M. Using the school's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with a teacher's directions and generally accepted network etiquette.
- N. Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, the operating system, or any of the software.
- O. Attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any network or computer component.
- P. Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by their teacher.
- Q. Providing another student with user account information or passwords.
- R. Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which are not school system property to or in the district's technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel.

Banks County School System
Parent Involvement Plan
2016-2017
Revised July 15, 2014

The Banks Board of Education affirms and assures the right of parents and legal guardians of children being served in activities funded by Title I the opportunities to participate in the planning, design and implementation of the Title I program and its activities.

A. The Board shall involve parents in the joint development of a written parent involvement policy that shall be incorporated into the school system's plan under section 6312 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The school system shall involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 6316 through input received from school level improvement committees, school council meetings with parent membership and through input received from other parent meetings or written surveys. The school system shall also establish expectations for parent involvement through written information distributed to parents through system, school, and classroom newsletters, parent contracts, the local media, as well as through school or system websites.

B. The Board shall provide coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance

through the distribution of written information and resources and through meetings in or out of the school involving appropriate personnel.

C. The Board shall build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement through a variety of activities to include but not limited to:

- Providing information to parents in written form or through meetings on topics such as the State's academic content standards, State and local student academic achievement standards/assessments, and the requirements of parent involvement under the law.
- Providing materials and training to help parents work with their children and monitor their progress to improve their children's achievement.
- Training educational staff on how to build ties between parents and the school.
- Coordinating and integrating parent involvement strategies with Head Start, Pre-K programs and other programs, to the extent feasible and appropriate by communicating directly and indirectly with these agencies through verbal or written information when needed.
- Sending information to parents in a format and, to the extent feasible, in a language that parents can understand.
- Providing reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request or as the school or system deems appropriate or necessary.

D. The Board shall conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent involvement policy to determine whether there has been increased participation and whether there are barriers to greater participation, particularly by parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background. This data will be obtained from parent, committee or school council meetings or through parent surveys.

E. The Board, in conjunction with individual school activities, shall, to the extent possible, implement the activities to meet the federal requirements under Title I, Part A, Sec. 6318. It shall encourage and support activities that allow the schools to effectively involve parents, which places a positive impact on student success.

F. The Board shall ensure that each Title I school abides by a Title I Parent Involvement Plan and will include the following:

All parents and teachers will be invited to an Annual Public Meeting held each year. The annual public meeting will provide an opportunity to parents and teachers to have input into the design and implementation of the Title I Project and provide parents an opportunity to establish mechanisms for maintaining on-going communications among parents, teachers, and agency officials. Additional activities held periodically during the school year may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Notify parents of the results of the annual college and career performance index (CCRPI) for parental input opportunities on the school improvement plan.
2. Notify parents that a school has been identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The notification must include the following elements:

- a. An explanation of what identification means, and how the school compares to other schools;
 - b. The reason for the identification;
 - c. What the school is doing to address the problems of low achievement;
 - d. What the Banks County Board of Education and Georgia State Department of Education is doing to help the school address the problem of low achievement;
 - e. How parents can become involved in addressing the school's academic problems; and
 - f. The parents' options regarding their right to seek a transfer of their children or to seek supplemental educational services.
3. Reporting the child's progress to the parents.
 4. Providing information concerning the Title I Program.
 5. Parent-Teacher conferences at PTO meetings and open house held at schools.
 6. Parent questionnaire for providing input in future program development.
 7. Dissemination of evaluation results and school report cards.
 8. A school-parent compact.
 9. Notice must be "in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand".
 10. Provide parents information on the professional qualification of their child's teacher at the beginning of each school year.
 11. Receive timely notice if their child is taught by a teacher who is not highly qualified for four or more consecutive weeks.
 12. Collect all non-satisfactory parents' comments regarding school plans.

Parents and teachers shall annually assess the effectiveness of the parent involvement program and determine what action needs to be taken, if any, to build the capacity of parents to help their children achieve high standards. A response to the recommendations by parents will be made within a 30-day time period through each school's newsletter.

The School shall:

- Provide assistance to parents of participating Title I children in understanding such topics as the state's academic content and achievement standards, the assessments being used, the requirements of Title I, Part A, and how to monitor their children's progress and work with educators to improve their achievement.
- Provide materials such as literacy training and training on how to use technology, to help parents to work with their children to improve achievement.
- Educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and the school.
- "To the extent feasible and appropriate," coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs with other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
- Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

- Provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.

The School may:

- Train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.
- Arrange school meetings at a variety of times for parents to increase the chance of their attendance.
- Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.
- Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.

Parent Involvement Plan Details

The Title I and other program coordinators will offer assistance in planning and implementing effective parent involvement programs. Title I will collaborate with other programs such as Early Intervention Program (EIP), counselors, Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO's), and Safe and Drug Free Schools to integrate parent involvement strategies and programs.

The parent involvement policy will be reviewed annually by parents and teachers. Banks County Schools will analyze the effectiveness of the policy in increasing participation of parents through numbers of conferences and attendance at parent functions, and increased student achievement.

If barriers to participate are identified, strategies will be enlisted to break down the barriers. As a result of teacher and parent suggestions, new strategies or policies will be revised as needed to provide greater participation of parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy or any racial or ethnic minority.

Parents will be involved in the planning, review and improvement of the Title I Program, join planning and design of programs in such ways as: Surveys, Conferences, Annual Meeting, Parent Compacts, School Councils, Emails, Website.

Information and assistance concerning Title I will be addressed through items such as: parent letters, conferences, phone calls, parent visitation, annual Title meeting, Ice Cream Night, Fine Arts Night and open house.

Sharing student performance and assessment through: School Report Card, Student Report Cards, Progress Reports, Test Results Reports/Conferences, Student led Conferences

Reviewing school curriculum through: Explanation of Testing & Results, Study Groups

Promoting two-way communication through:

Orientation Meeting

Conferences

Phone Calls

Questionnaires

Newsletters

Parent Visitation

Parent Compacts

Having parents help their children through:
Parent Flyers, Incentive Reading Programs, Newsletters, Online Assessment System,
ClassWorks, Lexia.

Providing parents with materials and training to help them work with their children and to coordinate literacy training through opportunities such as: Parent Workshop Sessions, Take-Home Materials, Parent Flyers.

The School will develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities. Information on child rearing issues and helping parents get involved in the education of their children will be provided through opportunities such as: Partners-in-Education, Mental Health Facilities, Local Hospitals, Health Departments, Adopt A Classroom.

To the extent possible, we will provide information to Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents in a language their parents understand and provide opportunities for these parents to participate by:

Providing written communication in the language parents can understand

The School will provide assistance to participating parents in such areas as understanding the:

- National Education Goals,
- State's content standards and student performance standards,
- School Improvement process, if applicable,
- Components of a school wide program,
- State and local assessments,
- Requirements of Title I parent involvement,
- Ways parents can monitor their children's progress and work with educators to improve the performance of their children, and
- Ways parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of the children.

The School shall provide materials and training in the areas of:

- Literacy training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement and
- Technology training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement.

PARENT NOTIFICATION RIGHT TO KNOW PROCEDURES

Parents are notified of the parent's "right to know" through easy to read and clearly visible statements in the student agenda. All students enrolled in the school system receive a copy of the agenda. Parents must sign and return the notification form indicating that they have read the statement. Returned forms with parent signature are maintained at the school level. Parents are notified of non-highly qualified teacher status through a letter from the principal noting teacher status and plans for rectifying the status. Banks County School System ensures this notification of the parent's "right to know" and non-highly qualified teacher status by requesting copies of all such notifications that are distributed. These copies are maintained by the office of the Board of Education.

RIGHT TO REVIEW TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

As a parent of a student, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teacher and requires the school system to give you this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the Georgia Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he/she teaches.
- Whether the Georgia Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and if so, the subject of the degrees.
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

Complaint Procedures

Revised July 13, 2014

A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency ("complainant") may file a complaint with the Banks County Board of Education if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a local educational agency ("LEA"), the state educational agency ("SEA"), or an agency or consortium of agencies is violating a Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

1. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
2. Title I, Part B, Subpart 3: Even Start Family Literacy
3. Title I, Part C: Education of Migrant Children
4. Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
5. Title I, Part F: Comprehensive School Reform
6. Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
7. Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology
8. Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement
9. Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1: Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities
10. Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2: Community Service Grants
11. Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers
12. Title V, Part A: Innovative Programs
13. Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 6111: State Assessment Program 2
14. Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 6112: Enhanced Assessment Instruments Competitive Grant Program
15. Title VI, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income Schools
16. Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children

C. Filing a Complaint

A complaint must be made in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

1. A statement that the LEA, SEA, agency or consortium of agencies has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program;
2. The date on which the violation occurred;
3. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation);
4. A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information;
5. Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency;
6. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position; and
7. The address of the complainant.

The complaint must be addressed to:

Dr. Ann Hopkins
Banks County Board of Education
102 Highway 51 South
Post Office Box 248
Homer, Georgia 30547

Once the complaint is received by the Banks County Board of Education, it will be copied and forwarded to the appropriate program director.

D. Investigation of Complaint

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, the Director of Federal Programs or his or her designee will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

1. The date the LEA received the complaint;
2. How the complainant may provide additional information;
3. A statement of the ways in which the LEA may investigate or address the complaint; and
4. Any other pertinent information.

If the complaint involves other entities, the LEA will also send a copy of the Letter of Acknowledgement to the other entity, along with a copy of the complaint. The LEA will contact the other entity to clarify the issues and review the complaint process. If the complaint cannot be resolved through this contact, the LEA will invite the entity to submit a written response to the LEA, and to provide a copy of the response to the complainant.

Appropriate LEA staff will review the information and determine whether:

1. Additional information is needed;
2. An on-site investigation must be conducted;
3. Other measures must be taken to resolve the issues raised in the complaint;

or

4. A Letter of Findings can be issued.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the LEA will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings.

If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included. Either the 30-day or the 60-day timelines outlined above may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant, as well as the other parties involved.

E. Right of Appeal

If an individual, organization or agency is aggrieved by the final decision of the LEA, that individual, organization or agency has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. The review is at the Department's discretion. For complaints filed pursuant to Section 9503 (20 U.S.C. §7883, complaint process for participation of private school children), a complainant may appeal the LEA decision to the Georgia Department of Education no later than thirty (30) days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the LEA decision and include a complete statement of the reasons.

Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact Dr. Ann Hopkins at the following address:

102 Highway 51 South

P .O. Box 248

Homer, GA 30547

706.677.2224

ahopkins@banks.k12.ga.us

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

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.

8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

TITLE I INFORMATION

Banks County Middle School is Title I school operating a school wide program. Title I provides federal funding to schools that have low poverty levels. The funding provides supplemental instruction for students who are economically disadvantaged or at risk for failing to meet state standards. Schools must have a child poverty rate (based on free/reduced meal participation) of at least 40% to operate a school wide Title I program. A school wide Title I program can provide benefits to all students and is not just limited to those students who are considered to be economically disadvantaged.

WATER COOLERS

During the summer of 1990, water coolers in the Banks Co. Schools were tested for lead. No lead was found. Results of the test are on file in the superintendent's office. Anyone interested in reviewing these tests should contact the Banks Co. School Superintendent's office at (706) 677-2224.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN ANNUAL NOTIFICATION

During the spring of 2001, an Asbestos Inspection of the Banks County School System took place through the combined efforts of Pioneer Regional Educational Service

Agency and the Banks County School System. Based on this inspection, a management plan was written and submitted to the Georgia Department of Education. This plan will be available for public inspection at the schools and at the school superintendent's office. Anyone interested in reviewing this plan should contact the Banks County School System at (706) 677-2224. It contains the following items:

1. Location, amounts and types of asbestos contained materials in all schools and support buildings.
2. Response actions to the asbestos contained materials selected by the Banks County School System.
3. Plans for re-inspection, periodic surveillance and operation, and maintenance programs.
4. Public notification procedure.

PROCEDURES FOR CLOSING SCHOOLS

On mornings when road conditions and safety considerations indicate a possible need to close schools, the following procedures will be followed in reaching a decision:

4:30 – 6:00 a.m.

- Banks County Emergency Management Agency, the Banks County Sheriff's Department, and the Georgia State Patrol are contacted by the system Director of Transportation.
- The Director of Transportation along with other employees check road conditions for buses. Banks County Emergency 911 will also be relaying road conditions as reported by law enforcement.
- The Director of Transportation updates and discusses conditions with the superintendent and associate superintendent.

6:00 – 6:15 a.m.

- The superintendent or his designee makes the decision about whether or not school will be in session.

Local and area radio and television stations will be notified by the superintendent or his designee only if schools will be closed for the day.

*Every attempt will be made to publicize the decision by 6:00 a.m., but changing weather patterns may occasionally require a later time. Check radio and TV stations or www.banks.k12.ga.us for closings.

On days when it is obvious that school will not be in session that next day, an announcement will be made by 6:00 p.m. via the above media outlets.

If schools are closed for emergency conditions, all school events, practices, and games are canceled for that day, as well as use of facilities by others.

*Radio and TV stations will not announce which schools are open. No notification means school is open.

PROCEDURES FOR EARLY OR DELAYED DISMISSAL

With safety as our primary focus, it is sometimes necessary to dismiss early or retain students because of bad weather or other emergencies. When such circumstances occur, the following procedures will be followed by the school system:

1. The superintendent, or his designee, makes the decision that school dismissal will be early or delayed due to impending emergency conditions.

2. The transportation director notifies bus drivers to report to the schools. Each bus is equipped with a two-way radio that allows staff to communicate about road conditions or problems.
3. Central office staff will notify schools that school dismissal will be early or delayed.
4. Central office staff will notify radio stations about early or delayed dismissal announcements. The projected dismissal times for all schools will also be announced. **Please listen to local radio stations for information so that school, central office and Emergency 911 telephones remain available for emergency communications.**
5. Students who are picked up must be signed out in the school office before they can leave.
6. Parents should develop a plan that includes how children who are transported via bus will be supervised. It is vitally important that a house key be conveniently available to children so they do not have to remain outside.
7. Parents are encouraged to meet children at main roads.
8. Should roads become too hazardous for buses to travel, students will be retained at school until roads are passable. If conditions prevent students from being transported home, the school will become an emergency shelter for the night.
9. The principal and other designees will remain at school until all students have arrived home or until cleared by the superintendent's office.

STATEMENT of NON-DISCRIMINATION: Banks County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding any of the programs below or any grievances should be made to Dr. Ann Hopkins, ahopkins@banks.k12.ga.us, at the Banks County School System at [\(706\) 677-2224](tel:7066772224), Banks County Board of Education, Post Office Box 248, 102 Highway 51 South, Homer, Georgia 30547.

• Perkins Act—Career, Technical and Agricultural Education • Title I, Part A: Improving Academic Achievement of Disadvantaged Students – Basic Programs • Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children • Title II, Part A: Professional Development for Teachers, Principals, and Others • Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology • Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient (LEP) • Title VI, Part B: Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) • Title X, Part C: McKinney - Vento Homeless Assistance Act • Title IX: Gender Equity in Education • Section 504 • IDEA: Special Education

Water Coolers

Water coolers in the Banks Co. Schools have been tested for lead. No lead was found. Results of the test are on file in the superintendent's office. Anyone interested in reviewing these tests should contact Dr. Ann Hopkins at Banks County School System at (706) 677-2224.

Asbestos Management Plan Annual Notification

An Asbestos Inspection of the Banks County School System took place through the combined efforts of Pioneer Regional Educational Service Agency and the Banks County School System. Based on the inspection, a management plan was written and submitted

to the Georgia Department of Education. This plan will be available for public inspection at the schools and at the school superintendent's office. Anyone interested in reviewing this plan should contact Dr. Ann Hopkins at the Banks County School System at (706) 677-2224. It contains the following items:

1. Location, amounts and types of asbestos contained materials in all schools and support buildings.
2. Response actions to the asbestos contained materials selected by the Banks County School System.
3. Plans for re-inspection, periodic surveillance and operation, and maintenance programs.
4. Publication notification procedure.

Georgia Special Needs Scholarship: The Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (GSNS) Program is a school choice program available for special needs students attending Georgia public schools who are served under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Eligibility requirements for the GSNS program are provided at the Georgia Department of Education website. If a student meets the eligibility criteria for the GSNS Program; a parent/guardian has the right to request a transfer from a student's current public school to: Another public school within their district of residence; or Another public school district outside their district of residence; or One of the three state schools for the blind or deaf; or A private school authorized to participate in the GSNS Program. Funds received through the GSNS Program can only be used to pay for tuition and fees at a private school authorized by the State Board of Education to participate in the program.

Directory Information: The Banks County School District has designated the following information as directory information: A) Student's name, address, and telephone number. B) Student's date and place of birth. C) Student's email address. D) Student's participation in official school activities and sports. E) Weight and Height of members of an athletic team. F) Dates of attendance at schools within the district. G) Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in district schools. H) Photograph and Grade Level.

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. In addition, two federal laws require school districts receiving federal financial assistance to provide military recruiters, upon request, with students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers unless parents have advised the school district that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. You have the right to refuse to allow all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to refuse to allow it to be disclosed to the public upon request without your prior written consent.

If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the principal of the school at which the student is enrolled in writing within 10 days after officially enrolling in school or within 10 days of the date of the release of this notice.

You are also notified that from time to time, students may be photographed, videoed, or interviewed by the news media at school or at some school activity or event. The principal will take reasonable steps to control access to students by the media or other individuals not affiliated with the school or district. However, your submission of a written objection does not constitute a guarantee that your student will not be

photographed, videoed, or interviews, or that such information will not be posted on websites or social media sites not affiliated with the school or district, or in circumstances which are not within the knowledge or control of the principal.

You have a right to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington DC 20202.

The Georgia Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act affords parents and eligible students the right to file a complaint with the school district regarding a possible violation of rights under OCGA 20-2-667 or under other federal or state student data privacy and security laws. Such complaints may be filed with: Banks County Schools, PO BOX 248, Homer, GA 30547

Title IX, Part A – McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, State educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth.

Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment.

The Banks County Homeless Education Liaison acts as a link between family, shelter, school system and community resources to coordinate educational services for homeless students.

If your family lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and is forced to live in any of the following situations:

- Live in a shelter
- share housing with relatives or others because you lost your housing or cannot afford housing
- live in a campground, car, abandoned building, or other inadequate shelter do not have a permanent address and/or permanent housing
- live on the street if you are an unaccompanied youth

Then your children may have the right to:

- Enroll in school without proof of residency, immunization, school records, or other documents.
- Choose between their school of origin or the school zoned for where you are currently living, when feasible.
- Receive transportation to school.
- Receive School Supplies

- Receive Community Based Resources

Title I, Part A - Foster Care Provisions Foster Care Program focuses on school access, improved educational outcomes, and enhanced academic stability for children and youth in foster care. The provisions derived from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) establish guidelines for recognizing and addressing the unique needs of foster care children and youth. The Foster Care Program has the responsibility of working closely with local child welfare agencies and local educational agencies to identify children and youth in foster care and to ensure the successful implementation of ESSA provisions. For more information about the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program and the Foster Care Provisions, please contact:

Holly Koochel
 Banks County Schools Homeless Liaison
 1989 Historic Homer Highway
 Commerce, GA 30529
 706-677-2224
hkoochel@banks.k12.ga.us

ANNUAL NOTICES REQUIRED BY LAW

Numerous federal and state laws require school districts to provide students, parents, and/or the public with notices, many of which must be provided at the beginning of the school year. The following chart describes some of the notices required by federal and state law. This chart does not contain a description of employment-related required notices.

Topic	Requirement	Source
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	<p>The ESSA requires the state education agency, school districts, and individual schools to provide numerous notices or information to parents, the public, and others. When notice must be given and who must receive the notice differs for each notice.</p> <p>Schools must provide annual notice to parents in Title I schools of their right to ask about their student’s teacher qualifications.</p> <p>Schools must notify parents if their children are taught for 4 or more weeks by a teacher not properly certified for the class assigned.</p>	20 U.S.C. § 1112

Topic	Requirement	Source
<p>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)</p>	<p>Pursuant to FERPA, school districts must provide parents/guardians and eligible students annual notice of their rights to inspect and review education records, amend education records, consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information in education records, and file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education. Under FERPA, school districts may disclose directory information to requesting parties, including military recruiters, if they have given public notice to parents/guardians and eligible students of what information has been designated as directory information and when and how they may opt-out of allowing the district to disclose directory information.</p>	<p>20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.7 and 99.37</p>
<p>Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)</p>	<p>The PPRA requires school districts to adopt a number of policies regarding surveys, instructional materials, physical examinations and personal information used for marketing. Parents must be notified of these policies at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable time period after any substantial change is made to the policies.</p> <p>If districts plan to: (1) use students’ personal information for selling or marketing purposes; (2) administer any survey about any of the eight topics listed in the statute (political beliefs, income, sex behavior or attitudes, etc.); or, (3) administer certain non-emergency, invasive physical examinations, districts must notify parents at least annually at the beginning of the school year of the specific or approximate dates when these activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled.</p>	<p>20 U.S.C. § 1232h; 34 C.F.R. Part 98</p>

Topic	Requirement	Source
School Nutrition Programs	<p>If school districts participate in the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, or the Special Milk Program, near the beginning of the school year they must provide both parents and the public information about free and reduced price meals and/or free milk. Districts must also provide parents an application form.</p> <p>School districts must notify parents and others in the community about the content and implementation of the local school wellness policy.</p>	<p>7 C.F.R. § 245.5; 42 U.S.C. § 1758(b); O.C.G.A. § 20-2-66(b)(3)</p>
McKinney Vento Act	<p>The McKinney Vento Act requires homeless student liaisons to provide public notice of the education rights of homeless students disseminated in places where homeless students receive services under the Act, such as in homeless shelters.</p>	<p>42 U.S.C. § 11432(e)(3)(C)(iii)</p>
Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)	<p>AHERA requires school districts to inspect their buildings for asbestos-containing building materials and develop, maintain, and update an asbestos management plan. School districts must annually notify parents, teachers, and employee organizations in writing of the availability of the management plan and of planned or in progress inspections, reinspections, response actions, and post-response actions, including periodic reinspection and surveillance activities.</p>	<p>40 C.F.R. §§ 763.84 40 C.F.R. §§ 793(g)</p>

Topic	Requirement	Source
Nondiscrimination	<p>Title IX, Title VI, Section 504, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and Americans with Disabilities Act require each school district that receives federal funds to notify all students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated compliance coordinator, and to adopt and publish a grievance procedure to resolve student and employee complaints in each area. Each recipient must publish a notice that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex (Title IX), race (Title VI), disability (Section 504 and ADA) in admissions or employment, or age (ADEA), and that inquiries concerning the application of federal law may be referred to the appropriate coordinator or the Office of Civil Rights. The notice of nondiscrimination must be displayed prominently in each announcement, bulletin, catalog, student or personnel handbook, or application used to recruit students or employees.</p>	<p>34 C.F.R. § 106.9 – Title IX (sex)</p> <p>34 C.F.R. §100.6(d) – Title VI (race)</p> <p>34 C.F.R. § 104.8 – Section 504;</p> <p>28 C.F.R. § 35.106 (disability)</p> <p>34 C.F.R. § 110.25 (age)</p>
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	<p>Under the IDEA, school districts must give parents of a child with disabilities a copy of their parental rights one time a year. Also, a copy of their rights must also be given to parents upon initial referral or parental request for an evaluation, upon filing a request for a due process hearing, and upon request of a parent. A school district may post a copy of the procedural safeguards on its website.</p>	<p>20 U.S.C. § 1415(n)</p>

Topic	Requirement	Source
Attendance protocol, possible consequences	The school must annually provide parents with (1) a summary of the possible consequences and penalties for truancy and (2) a statement to sign acknowledging receipt of the summary. After two reasonable attempts to obtain a signed statement, the school must send to the parent the summary and statement via first class mail. Before commencing court action against parents for student truancy, schools must notify them by first class mail. A copy of the notification will be maintained for documentation.	O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1(c)
Code of conduct/clubs	The school must annually provide parents with the code of conduct and a form to acknowledge receipt of the code and/or opt out of student's participation in school sponsored clubs. Parent consent is required for participation in clubs started after the school year begins.	O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-736(a); 20-2-751.5(e); 20-2-705
Bullying Prohibition	Each school must notify students and their parents of the prohibition against bullying and its penalties by posting such information at the school and including it in student and parent handbooks.	O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4(b)(4)
Equity in Sports	The school system must annually notify all its students of the name, office address, and office phone number of the employee(s) designated to coordinate efforts to comply with Georgia's Equity in Sports Act.	O.C.G.A. § 20-2-315(g)
Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Act	The school system must provide written notice of options available under the Act to parents at the initial IEP meeting in which a disability is identified, and annually thereafter by letter, email, or other reasonable means.	O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2113

Topic	Requirement	Source
PSC mandated process for students reporting allegations of inappropriate behavior by school employees	School systems must include the Professional Standards Commission mandated process in student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies.	O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.7
Public school choice within the district	The school system must notify parents by July 1 of each year which schools have available space and to which of these schools parents may request a transfer for their children.	O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2131
School Report Card	The school must provide parents with appropriate student performance and school completion performance portions of the school report card annually. Report cards must be posted on existing school system websites.	O.C.G.A. § 20-14-34(d)
Scoliosis screening	The school must give parents advance written notice of the time of scoliosis screening and honor requests of parents who object to such screening.	O.C.G.A. § 20-2-772(b)

Child Find id is a federally established comprehensive system designed to assure that each child, regardless of a disability, is educated to his/her maximum potential. The purpose of Child Find is to locate, identify, and evaluate children from birth to age 21 in Banks County who may have a developmental delay or other disabilities and are in need of special education and related services. Contact the Special Programs Dept. at 706-677-2224.

The Banks County Schools will take referrals for nominations of students for the Gifted Program during the month of February. These may be made by anyone who has knowledge of a student's academic and intellectual functioning. For questions, contact your child's school or Banks County the Special Programs Dept. at 706-677-2224.