

Ben Hill County Schools

2021-2022

Student Handbook

with

**Code of Conduct
Primary, Elementary,
Middle, and High School**



Grow your mind
Grow your life.

Success Begins at Ben Hill County Schools

INSIDE

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BEN HILL COUNTY SCHOOL WEBSITE

www.ben-hill.k12.ga.us

BEN HILL COUNTY SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Ben Hill Preschool

Jaquetta Brown, Principal
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229-409-5598

Ben Hill Primary

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229-409-5592

Ben Hill County Elementary

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BEN HILL COUNTY SCHOOLS

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS



FRONT (L-R): Theresa Davis (District 4), Shirley Brooks (District 1), Juan Medellin (District 7),
Martha Yeager (District 3), Chairman Gary Smith (District 2)

BACK (L-R): Kenneth Palmer (District 6), Jeremy Cox (District 5), and Dr. Shawn Haralson,
Superintendent



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Ben Hill County Schools Student Handbook

PHILOSOPHY OF BEN HILL COUNTY SCHOOLS

Education is a vital part of the American Democratic commitment. The mastery of basic skills, the development of the ability to reason, and character development must be fundamental components of the educational process in America's schools.

Just as essential as these components is the advancement of the value of living in a free-enterprise system. The goal of education in America is to produce individuals who are knowledgeable and can make decisions for themselves as free members of a democratic society.

MISSION STATEMENT

Empowering all students for success...

VISION STATEMENT

One community committed to student success every day...

BELIEF STATEMENTS

In Ben Hill County Schools, we believe... Growth for all students is possible and expected...
Success is achieved when all students reach their potential... Students deserve the best of all our efforts and resources..
Respectful relationships among all stakeholders create a positive learning experience...
Learning requires a commitment from all educators, students, parents, and other stakeholders...
"Community" encompasses all of Ben Hill County: its schools, citizens, and resources....
ALL MEANS ALL!

GENERAL INFORMATION

MANDATORY NOTIFICATION TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS OF RIGHTS UNDER FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

A. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

Each year the Ben Hill County Board of Education is required to give notice of the various rights accorded to parents and students over eighteen years of age ("eligible students") pursuant to the federal statute, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Parents and eligible students have a right to be notified of certain rights with respect to the student's education records. In accordance with FERPA, you are notified of the following:

1. Right to Inspect

You, as a parent or eligible student, have the right to review and inspect substantially all of the student's education records maintained by or at a school, which your child attends in the Ben Hill County School System within forty-five (45) days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal or other appropriate school official a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. School officials will arrange for access and notify the parents or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. Right to Consent Disclosures

You have the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable data contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The intent of the Ben Hill County School System is to limit the disclosure of personally identifiable educational information contained in your educational records to those instances when prior written consent has been given to the disclosure, as an item of directory information of which you have not refused to permit disclosure, and/or under the provisions of FERPA which allows disclosure without prior written consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contacted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or school compliance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill

his or her professional responsibility. Understand that, upon request, the school discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

3. Right to Request Amendments

To have corrected any parts of an educational record that is believed to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of your rights is a right. A parent or eligible student who wishes to amend or correct a record that he or she believes to be inaccurate should:

- (1) Write the school principal or appropriate school official,
- (2) Clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and
- (3) Specify why it is inaccurate. 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 a request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

4. Right to Complain

You have the right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

5. Right to Obtain Policy

You have the right to obtain a copy of the written institutional policy adopted by this institution in compliance with FERPA. A copy may be obtained in person or by mail from the Ben Hill County Board of Education, 509 West Palm Street Fitzgerald, GA 31750.

B. Notice of Designation of Directory Information Under FERPA

1. The Ben Hill County Board of Education has designated certain information contained in the educational records of the students of the Ben Hill County School System as directory information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
2. The following information regarding students is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) address, (3) Telephone number, (4) electronic mail address, (5) date and place of birth, (6) school, (7) program of study, (8) Participation in officially recognized activities and sports, (9) weight and height of members of athletic teams, (10) dates of attendance, (11) institutions attended by the student, (12) audio statements and/or performances, and (13) photographs, video images, and other pictures of the student for school and school system publications.
3. The Ben Hill County School System may disclose directory information for any purpose at its discretion, without the consent of a parent of a student or an eligible student. Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. In this case, the information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory informational categories - names, addresses, and telephone listings - unless parents have advised the LEA they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.
4. Any parent or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed, including directory information that may be disclosed to military recruiters, institutions of higher education, and school system publications, must file written notification to that effect with the principal of the school which the student attends within 30 days of enrolling in each school year. Forms for this purpose are available in the principal's office.
5. In the event a refusal is not filed, the Ben Hill County School System and the school, which the child attends, assume that neither the parent of a student nor eligible student objects to the release of the designated directory information.

C. Mandatory Notification of Rights Under the Federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents and students who are 18 or emancipated minors ("eligible students") certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the following rights:

1. To consent before students are required to submit a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas

(“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)

- a. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 - b. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 - c. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 - d. Illegal, anti-social, self-incrimination, or demeaning behavior;
 - e. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 - f. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 - g. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 - h. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. To receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
 - a. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 - b. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 - c. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
 3. To inspect, upon request and before administration or use -
 - a. Protected information surveys of students;
 - b. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 - c. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

The Ben Hill County School District will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The Ben Hill County School District will directly notify parents and eligible students of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Ben Hill County School District will also directly notify parents and eligible students, such as through U.S. Mail or email, at least annually at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in the following activities:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.
- Parents/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the following:
- Family Policy Compliance Office; U.S. Department of Education; 400 Maryland Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

The handbook will be updated throughout the year. Changes and additions will be made to the handbook online. The online handbook will be the official handbook.

HARASSMENT AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICIES PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

The policy of the Ben Hill County Board of Education is to maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment because of an individual’s race, color, sex, or disability. The Board of Education prohibits all such forms of harassment. Therefore, it shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, or other school system employee, through conduct or any form of communication of a sexual nature, or regarding race, color, or disability, as defined below, to harass school system students.

A violation exists if a school system policy for any teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of this district to tolerate sexual harassment, racial harassment, or disability harassment, as defined by this policy, by a student, teacher, administrator, other school personnel, or by any third parties who are participating, observing, or otherwise engaging in activities, including sporting events and any other extra-curricular activities, under the auspices of the school system.

The Ben Hill County School System will act to promptly investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or

written, of harassment because of race, color, sex, or disability; to promptly take appropriate action to protect individuals from further harassment; and if it determines that unlawful harassment occurred, to promptly and appropriately discipline any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy, and/or to take other appropriate action reasonably calculated to end the harassment.

REPORTING PROCEDURES, INVESTIGATIONS, AND CONSEQUENCES

Any student who believes that he/she has been the victim of sexual harassment, racial harassment, or disability harassment by a student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of the school system, or by any other person who is participating in, observing, or otherwise engaging in activities, including sporting events and other group activities, under the auspices of the school system should report the alleged acts to a principal, guidance counselor, or other individual designated to receive such complaints who will immediately report to the Superintendent. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment, racial harassment, or disability harassment will not reflect upon the individual’s status nor will it affect future grades, course assignments, or other educational decisions. Any teacher, administrator, or other school official who has or receives notice that a student has or may have been the victim of sexual harassment, racial harassment, or disability harassment by a student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of the school system, or by any other person who is participating in, observing, or otherwise engaged in activities, including sporting events and other extra-curricular activities, under the offices of the school system, is required to immediately report the alleged acts to the principal of the school which the student attends and/or the following appropriate school district official:

- A. Allegations of sexual harassment or race harassment should be made to the principal of the school which the alleged student victim attends and to the Superintendent as Equal Opportunity Coordinator and Title IX Coordinator designated in the student handbook;
- B. Allegations of disability harassment should be reported to the principal of the school which the alleged student victim attends and to the Director of Special Education who is the Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator named in the student handbook.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and the accused will be respected consistent with the Board’s legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate the allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

All allegations of sexual harassment, racial harassment, or disability harassment shall be fully investigated and immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated by the Superintendent. A substantiated charge against an employee shall subject such person to disciplinary action, including the possibility of discharge. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject the student to disciplinary action including, but not limited to suspension or expulsion. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances.

The investigation shall be conducted as are other non- discrimination investigations conducted in accordance with Board Policy Descriptor Code JAA/GAAA.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of sexual harassment, racial harassment or disability harassment will not affect the complainant’s or reporter’s future employment, grades, learning, or working environment or work assignments.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Ben Hill County Board of Education does not dis-criminate on the basis of age, disability, race, ethnic origin, color, or sex/gender in its educational programs and activities, athletic programs, or employment practices as required by the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II); Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 (Title VI), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), and the Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A. 20-2-315.

Questions, concerns or complaints relating to the nondiscrimination policies and practices of the Ben Hill County School System should be addressed to the following officials: Stevie Harden, All Title Programs

EFFECT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

The policies, rules and regulations shown in the Student Handbook for Ben Hill County Schools are regulatory in nature and are not to be construed to give rise to any substantive or vested rights. The Board of Education, the superintendent, and the principal reserve the right to amend, suspend, repeal, modify, or revoke the policies, rules and regulations at any time as to any students or related persons without incurring any obligation with respect to the old or existing policy, rule, regulation, or administrative procedure. The ultimate administrative responsibility for the school is vested in the principal who must treat each situation, whether disciplinary or administrative, from the perspective of what is in the best interest of the student concerned, the other students in the

school, and the ongoing educational mission of the school and of the Ben Hill County School System.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, along with the staff, is responsible for its orderly operation. In the case of discipline violations not covered by prescribed disposition in this handbook, the principal may enact corrective measures that are in the best interest of the school and the student(s) involved.

Any student or potential student whose presence would pose a danger to the people or the property at a school may be refused admittance or removed from class pending tribunal action by the superintendent, the superintendent's designee, or a school administrator.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT (BOARD POLICY JCDA)

It is the desire of Ben Hill County Schools that all students should have every possible opportunity to take advantage of instructional programs that will allow them access to the best possible education. Any distractions from a favorable teaching and learning environment lessens this opportunity. Students are expected to adhere to standards of behavior that will facilitate a positive learning environment for themselves and other students and to respect each other, school district employees, and school property. They are also expected to comply with student behavior policies adopted by the board of education and to obey student behavior rules established by individual schools.

Parent involvement is the most desirable avenue for correcting behavioral problems and will be used when possible. Parent conferences may be used in conjunction with other forms of discipline. Parents shall be involved in periodic revisions of the Code of Student Conduct. Further, the General Assembly of Georgia requires this code of conduct include language encouraging parents and guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties for underage sexual conduct and other crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult. Parents/guardians should familiarize themselves with the provisions of the policy and discuss them with their children.

This Code of Student Conduct shall be available to each student and parent in the district, including newly-enrolled students. Parents should sign an acknowledgement of the receipt of the code.

This code shall be available online, and any updates will be posted online as soon as approved. A printed copy will be provided at the beginning of each school year and thereafter upon request. Any online changes supersede printed copies.

Federal and state laws and regulations that are in conflict with this code or its application shall take precedence.

The rules listed in this policy apply to all Ben Hill County Schools. The dispositions listed are recommended maximums. This is not all-inclusive, and a student committing an act of misconduct not covered by this policy will be subject to the discretionary authority of the principal. More severe punishment may be necessary. Notwithstanding the recommended maximum dispositions, a principal, acting through and with the concurrence of the superintendent or superintendent's designee, may refer a student to a disciplinary tribunal or to the Board of Education for disciplinary action arising out of the violation of any of these rules upon such referral, and after proper notice and hearing, appropriate action may be taken.

The Ben Hill County Board of Education allows the use of corporal punishment. It may be used in lieu of suspension at the discretion of the administrator. See Board Policy JDA.

The policy represents a progressive discipline process. Factors taken into account in determining dispositions include, but are not limited to:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| • Student's History | • Age | • Willingness to cooperate |
| • Degree of premeditation, impulse, or self-defense | • Disability | • Seriousness of the offense |
| | • Evidence | |

Because of these factors, punishment imposed may vary from student to student for the same offense.

Students accused of violating this code should be advised of the violation and given a reasonable opportunity to present their position. Any student in excess of 10 cumulative days of suspension per semester for disciplinary reasons may be recommended to the Board of Education for expulsion.

School administrators have the authority to suspend or recommend students for expulsion for violation of reasonable rules or regulations. A student, while under suspension or expulsion, is not allowed to loiter on any Ben Hill County Board of Education property or take part in any school activity.

The system may assign to the alternative program, expel, or refuse admission to any student who engages or has engaged in behavior – either on or off campus – which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process.

If a student enrolls from another school system's alternative education program before the expiration of the placement, the placement will continue at the Ben Hill Alternative Program.

Students with disabilities suspended or expelled from regular transportation are not automatically assigned to a special education bus. Placement on special transportation, when extenuating circumstances are present, will be decided on an individual basis by the IEP committee.

As per O.C.G.A. 20-2-768, Ben Hill County Schools is authorized to refuse to readmit or enroll any student who has been suspended or expelled for being convicted of, being adjudicated to have committed, being indicted for, or having information filed for the commission of any felony or any delinquent act which would be a felony if committed by an adult. If refused readmission or enrollment, the student or the student's parent or legal guardian has the right to request a hearing pursuant to the procedures provided for in Code Section 20-2-754.

CHRONICALLY DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

A teacher shall have the authority, consistent with local board policy, to manage his or her classroom, discipline students, and refer a student to the principal or the principal's designee to maintain discipline in the classroom. The principal or the principal's designee shall respond when a teacher refers a student by employing appropriate discipline management techniques that are consistent with local board policy.

A teacher shall have the authority to remove from his or her class a student who repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn, where the student's behavior is in violation of the student code of conduct, provided that the teacher has previously filed a report pursuant to Code Section 20-2-737 or determines that such behavior of the student poses an immediate threat to the safety of the student's classmates or the teacher. Each school principal shall fully support the authority of every teacher in his or her school to remove a student from the classroom under this code section. Each school principal shall implement the policies and procedures of the superintendent and local board of education relating to the authority of every teacher to remove a student from the classroom and shall disseminate such policies and procedures to faculty, staff, and parents or guardians of students.

Ben Hill County Schools' procedures for dealing with chronically disruptive students are included in the district's behavior support process, the Student Support Team (SST/ RTI). Behavior plans may be included in the SST process. The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures pursuant to OCGA 20-2-738, enabling a teacher to remove from class a student who repeatedly or substantially disrupts the class.

For more information, visit the following webpage: <http://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2010/title-20/chapter-2/article-16/part-2/subpart-1a/20-2-738>.

DEFINITIONS

Bus Suspension – The student is suspended from all school buses for a specified period of time by the local school administrator. The student is expected to attend school, but the parents are responsible for providing transportation to school.

Detention – Student attends a work/study session outside of regular school hours. Student arranges for transportation.

Expulsion – Expelled from all public school property and activities or events for a period of time. Only tribunal waiver, tribunal or action of the Board of Education takes this action. The student may be expelled for an accumulation of offenses, as well as a major offense. During the term of expulsion, the student is not allowed on the school campus or at any school activity or school sponsored event for Ben Hill County Schools or any other Georgia public school.

Students might be:

1. Expelled for less than a calendar year, but not permanently expelled.
2. Permanently expelled.

In-School Suspension – The student is removed from the regular classroom setting for a specified period of time and assigned to a designated classroom on campus to complete the school day. Class work assignments are sent to the student by the teachers. School transportation is provided.

Off Campus Suspension – The student is removed from the regular classroom setting for a specified period of time and assigned an off campus location to complete the school day. Class work assignments are sent to the student by the teachers. School transportation is not provided.

Long-Term Suspension – The student is suspended out-of-school for more than ten (10) days. The student may be suspended for an accumulation of offenses, as well as a major offense. Absences are discussed in policy JBD. During the term of suspension, the student is not allowed on the school campus or at any school activity or school-sponsored event for Ben Hill County Schools or any other Georgia public school.

Non-Prescription Drug(s) – Over-the counter drug(s) not authorized by a registered physician and not prescribed for the

student. Student use is prohibited except in accordance with local school policy.

Prescription Drug(s) – Use of drug(s) (medication) authorized by a registered physician and prescribed for the student. Parent should inform the school on the use of medically prescribed drugs. Procedures for use of prescription medication at school are found in Board policy.

Short-Term Suspension – The student is suspended out of school up to ten (10) days by the local school administrator. The student may be suspended for an accumulation of offenses, as well as a major offense. Absences are discussed in policy JBD. During the term of suspension, the student is not allowed on the school campus or at any school activity or school-sponsored event for Ben Hill County Schools or any other Georgia public school.

BEHAVIOR DISPOSITIONS/RESOLUTIONS

02 – Detention 2 or more days – State Reported	154 – Detention 1 day
10 – Corporal Punishment – State Reported	155 – Detention Saturday
20 – In-School-Suspension – State Reported	156 – Isolation or Time-Out
30 – Out-of-School Suspension – State Reported	157 – Parent Notified
40 – Expulsion – State Reported	158 – Parking Permit
50 – Suspended From Bus – State Reported	Revoked/Fine
61 – Assigned To Alternative Program for Disruptive Students – State Reported	159 – Refer to School Counselor
70 – Court or Juvenile System Referral – State Reported	160 – Refer to Social Services
151 – Clean-Up Duty	161 – Restitution
152 – Conference – Parent	162 – Parent Conference Required Before Returning to Class
153 – Conference – Student/Warning	199 – Other Discipline Actions

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

In School Suspension - (Housed at Home School)

- Used for Minor/Major Discipline Issues 1 to 3 Days
- Used for Detention Time Out – Class Period or Special Events
- Used for Temporary Holding until Parent Arrives
- Student can serve no more than 10 days a semester
- Ride the bus to and from school
- Must complete all classroom assignments
- May be given additional days for inappropriate behavior or lack of completing assignments
- Student may be referred to Off Campus School for continued behavior issues, while serving ISS the student can participate in extracurricular practice or activities; this is at the discretion of the coach or activity sponsor.
- The student can attend all extracurricular activities that are hosted by BHMS/FHSCCA.

Off Campus School – (Housed at HTA)

- Used at the discretion of the principal
- Used for some major discipline issues
- Parents must provide transportation to and from the Options Program
- All classroom assignments must be completed, before the student can return to main campus
- All assignments must be turned in to the Instructor on the last day assigned at OCS
- Failure to comply with OCS rules and regulations can result in home suspension
- Student can serve no more than 10 days a semester at the OCS
- Student assigned to OCS cannot participate in extracurricular activities that are hosted by BHMS/ FHSCCA.
- OCS hours will be 8:30 to 3:30
- Student assigned to OCS cannot attend any extracurricular activities that are hosted by BHMS/FHSCCA.

Home Suspension – (Suspended Home)

- Used for Major Chronic Behavior Issues
- Student has three (3) school days to make up assignments for full grade, after five (5) days student will receive no more than a grade of 70 – zero given after the sixth school day for all missed assignments.
- Student can serve no more than 10 days of home suspension for each semester
- Student will be referred after 10 consecutive days of home suspension and referred to the Options Program

Options Program – Alternative School

- Tribunal hearing/decision or parents must sign a waiver to be enrolled.
- Student will serve 1 semester or full school year.
- Student charged with off campus felony will be assigned Options until his/her case is resolved.
- Student that fails to follow rules of Options Program will be tribunal again for expulsion.
- Failure to meet attendance and mastery of assignments may result in additional time at the Options Program
- An exit meeting must occur between a school administrator, a parent, the student, and an Options Program teacher, before the student is cleared to return to his/ her home school.

RULES

The rules listed in this policy apply to all Ben Hill County School students. The dispositions listed are recommendations. This list is not all-inclusive, and a student committing an act of misconduct not covered by this policy will be subject to the discretionary authority of the administration. More severe punishment may be administered.

Rule 01: ALCOHOL – State reported

Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or use of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol. This includes possession, sale, use, transmission, manufacture, purchase, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, or possessing related paraphernalia during a school activity, function, or event on or off school grounds or while under school supervision.

1. Alcohol Level 1 - Unintentional possession
2. Alcohol Level 2 - Under influence without possession
3. Alcohol Level 3 - Sale, purchase, transportation, possession, consumption of alcohol

Up to 10 day's suspension with possible referral to law enforcement; possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 02: ARSON – State Reported

Unlawful and intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary device. Possession of fireworks or incendiary devices will be reported as "Possession of Unapproved Items." Use of such items is arson.

1. Arson Level 2 - Arson without property damage including trash can fires without damage to property
2. Arson Level 3 - Intentional damage as a result of arson-related activity or the use of an incendiary device

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement; possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education. Restitution will be made.

RULE 03: BATTERY – State Reported

Actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his or her will or intentionally causing bodily harm to an individual. Includes an attack with a weapon or one that causes serious bodily harm to the victim. This code should be used only when the attack is very serious, serious enough to warrant calling the police or bringing in security, where the intent is to do bodily harm to someone.

1. Battery Level 1 - Battery with no injuries
2. Battery Level 2 - Battery with mild or moderate injuries
3. Battery Level 3 - Battery with severe injuries; three or more offenses in same school year

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Physical Violence Against an Employee

(OCGA 20-2-751.6 (a))

1. Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature.
2. Intentionally making physical contact, which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts were in defense of himself or herself as provided for in OCGA 16-3-21 (b).

Mandatory disposition of ten (10) days suspension pending tribunal hearing; referral to law enforcement.

Rule 04: BREAKING AND ENTERING/BURGLARY – State Reported

Unlawful entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a crime. This applies to school buildings or activities related to a school function.

1. B&E/Burglary Level 3 - Any incident involving breaking and entering/burglary

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 05-L: TECHNOLOGY MISUSE - Ben Hill Reported

Ben Hill County School System continues to invest in the academic growth and success of all students in grades PK-12th through the use of technology. Every student in the Ben Hill County School System will have use of a personal issued student laptop. Grades PK-5th student laptops are kept at school and are reissued every day for academic usage. Students in grades 6th – 12th are issued their student laptops at the start of the school year and are required to return them at the end of the school year. It is mandatory for students in grades 6th – 12th to have a school issued laptop, as the school system does not offer textbooks. As textbooks become outdated and does not educate our students beyond the pages in the textbooks. Textbooks will be no longer ordered at FHSCCA, as the student's laptop device will be FHSCCA's main tool for educating its students. Students in grades 6th– 12th are responsible for securing and monitoring the safe use of the school issued laptop. BHES, BHMS, and FHSCCA offer an optional student laptop insurance policy, which covers many of the incidentals that can happen to the student laptop. The cost of this optional student laptop insurance policy is \$30.00, which is non-refundable, active for a calendar school year, and must be renewed every new school year.

Inappropriate use of system technology devices without the intention of or the result of deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging the computer network, program(s), accessing inappropriate materials, or data.

1. First/Subsequent Offenses - Consequences will be age appropriate.

Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolution codes 151 - 199.

Rule 05: COMPUTER TRESPASS – State Reported

Unauthorized use of a computer or computer network with the intention of deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging, or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program(s), or data.

1. Computer Trespass Level 2 - Computer misuse.
2. Computer Trespass Level 3 - Unlawful use of computer or altering records.

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 06-L: CLASSROOM/ON-CAMPUS DISTURBANCE – Ben Hill Reported

Any student action that disturbs the normal flow of teacher/school directed activities.

1. Classroom/On-campus Disturbance Level 0 – Ben Hill Reported - Minor

First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 06: DISORDERLY CONDUCT – State Reported

Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others. Includes disruptive behaviors on school buses.

1. Disorderly Conduct Level 1 - Creating or contributing to a moderate disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment but does not pose a threat to the health or safety of others.
2. Disorderly Conduct Level 2 - Creating or contributing to a severe disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment but does not pose a threat to the health or safety of others; may represent a repeat action.
3. Disorderly Conduct Level 3 - Creating or contributing to a severe disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment or poses a threat to the health or safety of others. Level 3 may be used for students that violate this policy three or more times during the same school year.

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement; possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 07: DRUGS, EXCEPT ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO – State Reported

Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics. Includes being under the influence of drugs or substances represented as drugs. Code includes over-the-counter medications if abused by the student. Also includes intentionally smelling or inhaling fumes from any substance (for example: glue, solvents) for the purpose of becoming intoxicated. Code does not include tobacco or alcohol.

1. Drugs Level 1 - Unintentional possession
2. Drugs Level 2 - Any medication prescribed to student or purchased over-the-counter and not brought to the office upon arrival to school
3. Drugs Level 3 - Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; Possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 08: FIGHTING – State Reported

Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender and confrontations, tussles, or other minor confrontations.

1. Fighting Level 1 - Fighting with no injuries
2. Fighting Level 2 - Fighting with minor or moderate injuries
3. Fighting Level 3 - Fighting with severe injuries; three or more fights in same school year

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education. More severe measures, including restitution for damages, immediate referral for expulsion, and/or notification of law enforcement officials, may be taken.

Rule 09: HOMICIDE – State Reported

Murder and non-negligent manslaughter, killing of one human being by another, killing a person through negligence.

1. Homicide Level 3 - Any incident involving homicide referral to law enforcement officials and referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 10: KIDNAPPING – State Reported

Unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will, or of a minor without the consent of his/her custodial parents or legal guardian.

1. Kidnapping Level 3 - Any incident involving kidnapping

Referral to law enforcement officials and referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 11L: THEFT – PETTY – Ben Hill

Taking, carrying, leading, or riding away with property of another person of a value of less than \$25 without threat of violence and no law enforcement notification.

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 199.

Rule 11: THEFT/LARCENY – State Reported

The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property of another person without threat, violence, or bodily harm. This includes pocket picking, purse or backpack- snatching if left unattended, theft from a building, theft from a motor vehicle, theft from a coin-operated machine, and all other types of larcenies. The Larceny / Theft code should be used only when theft is

serious enough to warrant calling the police or bringing in security.

1. Larceny/Theft Level 1 - Unlawful taking of property with a value between \$25 and \$100
2. Larceny/Theft Level 2 - Unlawful taking of property with a value between \$100 and \$250
3. Larceny/Theft Level 3 - Unlawful taking of property with a value exceeding \$250; three or more offenses in the same school year

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 12: MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT – State Reported

Theft, or attempted theft, of a motor vehicle. Code includes theft of car, truck, motorcycle, dune buggy, RV, or anything that is self-propelled.

Referral to law enforcement officials and referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Board of Education

Rule 13: ROBBERY – State Reported

Taking, or attempting to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization, under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

1. Robbery Level 2 - Robbery without a weapon
2. Robbery Level 3 - Robbery with a weapon

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 14: SEXUAL BATTERY – State Reported

Unlawful sexual behavior or contact with force or threat of force or where the victim is incapable of giving consent. Age of the student should be taken into account.

This code will be used only when the incident is severe enough to warrant calling in law enforcement.

1. Sexual Battery Level 3 - Any incident involving Sexual Battery

Short or long-term suspension and referral to law enforcement officials; possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 15: SEXUAL HARASSMENT – State Reported

Deliberate, repeated, and unsolicited physical actions, gestures, or verbal or written comments of a sexual nature, when such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. Includes any unwelcome sexually oriented communication or behavior that makes an individual feel afraid, offended, or uncomfortable.

1. Sexual Harassment Level 1 - Unwelcome comments not directed towards individual
2. Sexual Harassment Level 2 - Unwelcome comments directed towards individuals
3. Sexual Harassment Level 3 - Violation of sexual harassment policy; three or more offenses in the same school year

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education. Other disciplinary options may be used in extreme cases.

Rule 16: SEX OFFENSES – State Reported

Unlawful sexual behavior or contact without force or threat of force where the victim is capable of giving consent. Code includes indecent exposure and obscenity. Includes viewing or downloading pornographic content onto communication devices on school-owned or personal devices.

1. Sex Offenses Level 1 - Inappropriate sexually -based physical contact
2. Sex Offenses Level 2 - Inappropriate sexually -based behavior
3. Sex Offenses Level 3 - Consensual sexual activities; three or more offenses in the same school year

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 17: THREAT/INTIMIDATION – State Reported

Any threat through written or verbal language or act, which creates a fear of harm and/or conveys a serious expression of intent to harm or violence without displaying a weapon and without subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.

1. Threat/Intimidation Level 2 - Physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack
2. Threat/Intimidation Level 3 - School-wide physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

More severe measures, including restitution for damages, immediate referral for expulsion, and/or notification of law enforcement officials, may be taken.

Rule 18: TOBACCO – State Reported

Possession, use, distribution, or sale of tobacco, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco like products or paraphernalia on school grounds, at school sponsored events, and on transportation to or from school. Students who are under school supervision (club meetings, field trips, club trips/activities, sports activities, etc.) shall not use or possess tobacco in any form.

1. Tobacco Level 1 - Unintentional possession of tobacco products
2. Tobacco Level 2 - Intentional use or possession of tobacco products
3. Tobacco Level 3 - Distribution or sale of tobacco products; three or more offenses in the same school year

Tobacco

1st Offense – 3 days of OCS (Off Campus School Suspension)

2nd Offense – 5 days of OCS (Off Campus School Suspension)

3rd Offense – 3 days of OSS (Out of School Suspension)

Subsequent Offenses - long term suspension and referral to law enforcement officials; possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Juuls & Vape Instruments

Juuls and Vape Instruments are prohibited on the campus or inside the school buildings of the Ben Hill County School System as these instruments are used for various recreational activities to include, but not be limited to smoking tobacco oil as well as illegal drugs such as THC, CBC, and Marijuana.

1st Offense – 5 days of OCS (Off Campus School Suspension)

2nd Offense – 3 days of OSS (Out of School Suspension)

3rd Offense – 5 days of OSS (Out of School Suspension)

Illegal Drugs

1st Offense – 10 days of OSS (Out of School Suspension), referred to Tribunal Hearing.

Tobacco/Drug/Weapon Free Campuses

Tobacco, drugs, and weapons are prohibited at all Ben Hill County Schools' facilities.



Rule 19: TRESPASSING – State Reported

Entering or remaining on a public school campus or School Board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry. This includes students undersuspension or expulsion.

1. Trespassing Level 2 - Unauthorized presence on school property
2. Trespassing Level 3 - Refusing to leave school property; three or more offenses in the same school year

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 20: VANDALISM – State Reported

The willful and/or malicious destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property, real or personal, without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it.

1. Vandalism Level 2 - Minor damage or defacement of property
2. Vandalism Level 3 - Malicious destruction or damage to property; three or more offenses in the same school year

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Appropriate restitution will be made for all damages and costs related to repairs.

More severe measures, including immediate referral for expulsion, and/or notification of law enforcement officials, may be taken.

Rule 22: WEAPONS/KNIFE – State Reported

The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife, including a pocket or pen knife, to inflict harm on another person, or to intimidate any person.

1. Weapons/knife Level 1 - Unintentional possession of a knife or knife-like item with no intent to harm or intimidate
2. Weapons/knife Level 2 - Intentional possession of a knife or knife-like item with no intent to harm or intimidate
3. Weapons/knife Level 3 - Intentional possession or use of a knife or knife-like item with intent to harm or intimidate

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 23: WEAPONS/OTHER – State Reported

The possession, use, or intention to use any instrument or object that is used or intended to be used in a manner that may inflict bodily harm (does not include knives or firearms).

Includes but is not limited to razor blades, straightedge razors, brass knuckles, blackjacks, bats, clubs, nun chucks, throwing stars, stun guns, tasers, etc.

1. Weapons/Other Level 2 - Unintentional possession of a weapon, other than a knife or firearm, or simile of a weapon that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm
2. Weapons/Other Level 3 - Intentional possession and use of any weapon, other than a knife or firearm, in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm

Up to ten (10) days suspension with possible referral to law enforcement possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 25: WEAPONS/HANDGUNS – State Reported

Possession of a firearm that has a short stock and is designed to be held and fired by the use of a single hand; and any combination of parts from which a firearm described above can be assembled. This definition does not apply to items such as toy guns, cap guns, bb guns, and pellet guns.

1. Weapons/Handgun Level 3 - Intentional or unintentional possession of a handgun.

All Offenses - Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school shall be referred to law enforcement and recommended to tribunal for expulsion from school for not less than one year, subject to modification on a case-by-case basis by the Board of Education. If the student is allowed to return after expulsion, his/her placement will beat the alternative program.

Rule 26: WEAPONS/RIFLES/SHOTGUN– State Reported

The term “rifle” means a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire only a single projectile through a rifled bore for each single pull of the trigger. The term “shotgun” means a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire through a smooth bore either a number of ball shot or a single projectile for each single pull of the trigger.

1. Weapons/Rifle/Shotgun Level 3 - Intentional or unintentional possession of a rifle/shotgun

All Offenses - Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school shall be referred to law enforcement and recommended to tribunal for expulsion from school for not less than one year, subject to modification on a case-by-case basis by the Board of Education. If the student is allowed to return after expulsion, his/her placement will be the alternative program.

Rule 27: SERIOUS BODILY INJURY – State Reported

Bodily injury, which involves a substantial risk of death, protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

Any behavior that dismembers, disfigures, causes permanent loss of a limb or function of an organ and causes substantial risk of death.

Serious Bodily Injury Level 3 - Any incident involving infliction of “bodily harm” that dismembers, disfigures, causes permanent loss of a limb or function of an organ and causes substantial risk of death.

Referral to law enforcement officials and referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 28: WEAPONS/OTHER FIREARMS – State Reported

Firearms other than handguns, rifles, or shotguns as defined above. Includes any weapon (including starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive; the frame or receiver of any weapon described above; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device, which includes any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas (i.e. bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge more than 4 ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than ¼ ounce, mine, or similar device); any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than ½ inch in diameter; any combination or parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. (NOTE: This does not include toy guns, cap guns, bb guns, pellet guns, or Class-C common fireworks).

1. Weapons/Other Firearms Level 3 - Any incident involving other firearms

Referral to law enforcement officials and referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 29: BULLYING – State Reported

Pattern of behavior, which may include written, verbal, physical acts, or through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology occurring on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, threatening the educational environment, or causing substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm.

Includes but is not limited to a pattern of unwanted teasing, threats, name-calling, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, hazing, physical attacks, extortion, social exclusion, coercion, spreading of rumors or falsehoods, gossip, stalking, or using any type of electronic means to harass or intimidate.

1. Bullying Level 1 - First incident of bullying

2. Bullying Level 2 - Second incident of bullying

3. Bullying Level 3 - Repeated acts occurring on school property or school equipment that is a willful attempt or threat to inflict injury, or apparent means to do so, any display of force that puts victim at fear of harm, any written, verbal or physical act that threatens, harasses, or intimidates; causes another person physical harm; interferes with a student's education; so severe and pervasive intimidates or threatens educational environment.

For Grades PreK-5:

Punishment at the discretion of the administrator. The student's age/level of maturity or development should be considered in relation to the offense.

For Grades 6-12:

1. 1st Offense - parent conference, referral to school counselor and three (3) days suspension or other appropriate punishment at the discretion of the administrator
2. 2nd Offense - five (5) days suspension
3. 3rd Offense - assignment to alternative program. More severe punishment may be necessary in some cases.

Rule 30-L: ATTENDANCE – Ben Hill Reported

Attendance issues of a minor nature including unexcused tardiness to school or class, being in areas designated in the student handbook and/or by school officials as being off limits, failure to be in an assigned place of instruction at the assigned time without a valid excuse, and/or urging others to violate this rule.

Attendance Related Level 0 – Ben Hill Reported

First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 30: ATTENDANCE RELATED – State Reported

Repeated or excessive unexcused absences or tardies; including failure to report to class, skipping class, leaving school without authorization, out of assigned area, or failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions.

1. Attendance Related Level 1 - Any incident involving attendance
2. Offense Level 1 – Action must be State Reported Disposition – Includes Detention 2 Days, Corporal Punishment, ISS, OSS, Expulsion, Bus Suspension, Referral to Alt School, or Referral to Court.

Rule 31-L: DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS – Ben Hill Reported

Minor violations of the Student Dress Code as outlined in the student handbook.

1. Dress Code Violation Level 0 – Ben Hill Reported -Minor

First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 31: DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS – State Reported

Violation of school dress code that includes standards for appropriate school attire.

1. Dress Code Violation Level 1 - Non-offensive or non-suggestive clothing, jewelry, book bags or other articles of personal appearance.
2. Dress Code Violation Level 2 - Offensive or suggestive clothing, jewelry, book bags or other articles of personal appearance.
3. Dress Code Violation Level 3 - Offensive or suggestive clothing, jewelry, book bags or other articles of personal appearance. Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school dress code policy three or more times during the same school year.

All Offenses –Action must be State Reported Disposition

–Includes Detention 2 Days, OCS, ISS, OSS, Expulsion, BusSuspension, Referral to Alternative Program, or Referral to Court

Rule 32-L: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY - CHEATING –Ben Hill Reported

Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on school assignments that affords one an unfair advantage of a minor nature.

Academic Dishonesty Level 0 – Ben Hill Reported

First Offense: - Redo the assignment (highest grade that can be made for redo is 70%); further action at administrator discretion

1. Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 32: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY – State Reported

Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assignments or exams.

1. Academic Dishonesty Level 1 - Intentional receiving or providing of unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assessments, and assignments
2. Academic Dishonesty Level 2 - Intentional plagiarism or cheating on classroom assignments or projects
3. Academic Dishonesty Level 3 - Intentional plagiarism or cheating on major exams or statewide assessments or project or the falsification of school records - includes forgery. Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on academic dishonesty three or more times during the same school year.

First/Subsequent Offenses: - Up to ten (10) days suspension, redo assignment with maximum lower grade, alternative assignment, and possible grade of 0.

Rule 33-L: STUDENT INCIVILITY – Ben Hill Reported

Failure to comply with reasonable directions of a Ben Hill County Schools employee when on the school grounds or during a school activity off school grounds. This can include cursing, talking back, “sassing,” intentionally arguing in a demanding or disruptive manner, or otherwise showing disrespect for any persons present at school or school related functions. Violations include harassing, intimidating with words or actions, and verbally abusing others. This includes verbal non-violent confrontation, willful disobedience, and disrespectful behavior.

Student Incivility Level 0 – Ben Hill Reported

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 33: STUDENT INCIVILITY – State Reported

Insubordination or disrespect to staff members or other students; includes but is not limited to refusal to follow school staff

member instructions, use of vulgar or inappropriate language, and misrepresentation of the truth.

1. Student Incivility Level 1 - General disrespect or failure to follow instructions
2. Student Incivility Level 2 - Blatant insubordination; profanity directed toward school staff or peers; intentional misrepresentation of the truth
3. Student Incivility Level 3 - Blatant and repeated insubordination or intentional misrepresentation of the truth; three or more offenses in the same school year

All Offenses Level 1-3 – Action must be State Reported Disposition – Includes Detention two (2) Days, Corporal Punishment, ISS, OSS, Expulsion, Bus Suspension, Referral to Alternative School, and Referral to Court.

Rule 34-L: –DISTRACTING PARAPHERNALIA – Ben Hill Reported

Distracting paraphernalia not specifically required by a teacher for educational uses. These will be confiscated and may not be returned.

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 34: POSSESSION OF UNAPPROVED ITEMS –State Reported

The use or possession of any unauthorized item disruptive to the school environment.

1. Possession of Unapproved Items Level 1 – Possession of unauthorized items. Includes but is not limited to possession of toy, mobile devices, gadgets, personal items, gum, candy, etc.; includes possession of pepper spray.
2. Does not include the possession of fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous
3. Possession of Unapproved Items Level 2 - Use of unauthorized items (i.e. toys, mobile devices, or gadgets). Does not include the possession of fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be constructed as dangerous. Includes but is not limited to use of toys, mobile devices, gadgets, personal items, etc.; includes the use of pepper spray without injury.
4. Possession of Unapproved Items Level 3 - The use or possession of unauthorized items including but not limited to toy guns or other items that can be construed as dangerous or harmful to the learning environment; Includes the possession of matches, lighters, incendiary devices or fireworks. The use of matches, lighters, incendiary devices or fireworks should be coded as Arson; Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to unapproved items. Includes but is not limited to possession of matches, lighters, fireworks, bullets, stink bombs, CO2 cartridges; includes the use of pepper spray with injury.

All Offenses Level 1-3 – Action must be State Reported Disposition – Includes Detention two (2) Days, Corporal Punishment, ISS, OSS, Expulsion, Bus Suspension, Referral to Alt School, or Referral to Court

Rule 35: GANG RELATED – State Reported

Any group of three or more students with a common name or common identifying signs, symbols, tattoos, graffiti, or attire which engage in criminal gang activity. The solicitation of others for gang membership, the defacing of school or personal property with gang related symbols or slogans, threatening or intimidating on behalf of a gang, or the requirement of payment for protection or insurance through a gang. Includes wearing or possessing gang related apparel or communicating verbally/ nonverbally to convey membership or affiliation with a gang.

1. Gang Related Level 2 - Wearing or possession of gang-related apparel; communicating either verbally or nonverbally to convey membership or affiliation with a gang. Possession or wearing of gang-related clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, or using colors to convey gang membership or affiliation; gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc. to convey gang membership or affiliation; committing any other illegal act or other violation of school policies in connection with gang-related activity.
2. Gang Related Level 3 - Soliciting students for gang membership, tagging or defacing school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey or promote membership of affiliation in any gang; requiring payment for protection, insurance, otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity; inciting other students to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity. Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to gang activity.

Level 2: Three (3) to five (5) days suspension. If activity involves physical harm, punishment may be administered to the fullest degree.

Level 3: Up to ten (10) days suspension; referral to law enforcement; possible referral for alternative placement; possible referral to Board of Education with recommendation for expulsion from Ben Hill County Schools pursuant to the policies of the Ben Hill County Board of Education.

Rule 36: REPEATED OFFENSES – State Reported

Collection of offenses that occur on multiple school days that may lead to a state reportable disciplinary action.

1. Repeated Offenses Level 1 - Collection of minor incidents
2. Repeated Offenses Level 2 - Collection of moderate incidents
3. Repeated Offenses Level 3 - Collection of severe incidents

Disposition at administrator discretion up to and including alternative placement.

Rule 101: BUS MISCONDUCT

Bus misconduct of a minor nature. See next section for dispositions for more serious bus misconduct infractions.

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 102: INAPPROPRIATE DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Inappropriate public display of affection (examples - hugging, kissing, sitting in laps).

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 104: FORGERY – Ben Hill

Presenting false or altered documents. Examples include, but are not limited to, notes from teachers, parents, or doctors, office notes, report cards, deficiency notes, hall passes, absentee excuse forms, progress reports, or other school forms.

Taking or possessing hall passes, absentee excuse forms, or other school forms without permission is considered forgery.

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

More severe measures, including restitution for damages, immediate referral for expulsion, and/or notification of law enforcement officials, may be taken.

Rule 105: GAMBLING – Ben Hill

Playing any game of skill or chance for money or anything of value on school property or at a school function.

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

More severe measures, including restitution for damages, immediate referral for expulsion, and/or notification of law enforcement officials, may be taken.

Rule 106: GIVING FALSE INFORMATION – Ben Hill

Refuse to identify himself/herself or give false identity or information upon request of any teacher, principal, superintendent, school bus driver, or other authorized school personnel. If an ID card is issued, it must be shown to school officials when requested.

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

More severe measures, including restitution for damages, immediate referral for expulsion, and/or notification of law enforcement officials, may be taken.

Rule 107: FOOD AND LITTERING – Ben Hill

Good behavior and cleanliness, including returning trays and utensils to service area and placing trash in containers provided, is expected in the dining area. Students shall eat in designated areas. The use of food items or chewing gum in the halls or classroom is not allowed unless approved by the administration or under the direct supervision of a teacher in food preparation. Littering will not be tolerated.

1. First/Subsequent Offenses: – Consequences will be age appropriate. Possible action consists of behavior dispositions and resolutions codes 151 – 199.

Rule 109: PARKING AND TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS – Ben Hill

All vehicles on campus must have a valid decal that is visibly hung from the rear view mirror. A new decal must be purchased each school year that you are a student at FHS and drive on campus. Students below grade nine are prohibited from driving on campus. Students must have a valid driver's license to obtain a permit and drive on campus. Students will be fined and parking permits may be revoked for the following violations:

- Driving too fast for conditions, reckless driving, and improper parking.
- Parking in teachers' or honors' parking spaces.
- Parking without a decal.
- Behaving in any manner that could cause accident or injury.
- Loaning, sharing, or giving permits to other students.

- Loitering or sitting in vehicles while parked on campus.
1st Offense: \$25 fine and/or possible permanent loss of parking privileges
2nd Offense: \$30 fine and/or possible permanent loss of parking privileges
3rd Offense: \$35 fine and/or possible permanent loss of parking privileges

Vehicles may be towed away at owner's expense and Law Enforcement may be notified as deemed necessary.

FOR FHSCCA STUDENTS, PARKING DECALS CAN BE PURCHASED IN STUDENT OPERATIONS ON THE CAMPUS OF FHSCCA. PARKING DECALS ARE \$40 DOLLARS. REPLACEMENT PARKING DECALS ARE \$20.00 AND DECALS PURCHASED AFTER FIRST SEMESTER WILL BE **\$20.00 AS WELL.**

STATE LAW ON ATTENDANCE

The Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A.) 20-2-690.1 Mandatory attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall be required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all requirements of a high school diploma.

Every parent, guardian, or other person residing within this state having control or charge of any child or children during the ages of mandatory attendance as required in subsection (a) of this code section shall enroll and send such child or children to a public school, a private school, or a home study program that meets the requirements for a public school, a private school, or a home study program; and such child shall be responsible for enrolling in and attending a public school, a private school, or a home study program that meets the requirements for a public school, a private school, or a home study program under such penalty for noncompliance with this subsection as is provided in Chapter 11 of Title 15, unless the child's failure to enroll and attend is caused by the child's parent, guardian, or other person, in which case the parent, guardian, or other person alone shall be responsible; provided, however, that tests and physical exams for military service and the National Guard and such other approved absences shall be excused absences. The requirements of this subsection shall apply to a child during the ages of mandatory attendance as required in subsection (a) of this Code section who has been assigned by a local board of education or its delegate to attend an alternative public school program established by that local board of education, including an alternative public school program provided for in Code Section 20-2-154.1, regardless of whether such child has been suspended or expelled from another public school program by that local board of education or its delegate, and to the parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of such child. Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to require a local board of education or its delegate to assign a child to attend an alternative public school program rather than suspending or expelling the child. (b) Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of a child or children and who shall violate this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school in violation of this part after the child's school system notifies the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of five unexcused days of absence for a child shall constitute a separate offense. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of five unexcused days of absence without response, the school system shall send a notice to such parent, guardian, or other person by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Public schools shall provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each child enrolled in public school a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance under this Code section for children and their parents, guardians, or other persons having control or charge of children. The parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child or children shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties; children who are age ten years or older by September 1 shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties.

After two reasonable attempts by the school to secure such signature or signatures, the school shall be considered to be in compliance with this subsection if it sends a copy of the statement, via certified mail, return receipt requested, to such parent, guardian, other person who has control or charge of a child, or children. Public schools shall retain signed copies of statements through the end of the school year.

Local school superintendents in the case of private schools or home study programs and visiting teachers and attendance officers in the case of public schools shall have authority and it shall be their duty to file proceedings in court to enforce this subpart.

State School Board Policy on Absences and Excuses (CodeJBD)

Local boards of education shall adopt policies excusing students from school under the following circumstances:

- Personal Illness

- Serious illness or death in a student's immediate family
(An immediate family member is defined as a parent; sibling; child by blood, adoption, or marriage; spouse; grandparent or grandchild.)
- Court Order
- Religious Holidays
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety
- One day to register or vote in a public election.
- Parent being deployed or returning from military duty (up to five days).

The Ben Hill County Board of Education will allow absences resulting from students visiting prospective colleges to be counted as excused absences if the student receives approval from school administrators prior to the visitation.

Students shall be counted present when serving as pages of the General Assembly.

NOTE: School boards are allowed to require appropriate documentation in order to determine if an absence is an excused absence.

Ben Hill County Board of Education believes that regular school attendance is essential to gaining a quality education. Each school shall intervene early when students begin to accumulate absences. These interventions shall include telephone calls, letters, home visits and conferences informing of absences and resource referrals to parents offering assistance in resolving attendance problems. If attendance problems continue, it will warrant referral to the Ben Hill County social workers for truancy and possible follow-up with a referral to the review board of the District Attorney's office if the problem is not corrected. It is suggested that parents contact the school counselor if a student is ill and will be out several consecutive days.

STUDENTS FOUND TRUANT

In the event of being reported or found truant pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-698, 20-2-699, and/or 20-2-700, the student, along with their parent/guardian, will be immediately referred for a CHNS hearing, even if they have not yet reached seven absences.

ABSENCES, EXCUSES AND EARLY DISMISSALS

Students are expected to be in attendance in Ben Hill County Schools in accordance with compulsory attendance laws and for the number of full-length days prescribed by law. A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, unless with written permission of the teacher, principal, or their duly authorized school official.

No student shall encourage, urge or counsel other students to violate this policy. Absences will be considered either "excused" or "unexcused."

Pre-approved Absences

Absences for EARLY DISMISSAL and OUT-OF-TOWN trips, which are approved by the administration before the absence occurs, will result in the student being allowed to make up work and not receive a zero on work missed. In case of an emergency, parents must make arrangements within a reasonable period of time.

Excuses

Excuses for absences shall be furnished in writing, **must be** signed by the student's parent or guardian and shall specifically state the dates and reasons for the absence. Excuses written by parents will be accepted for up to (5) five absences. Any absence thereafter will require an excuse from a medical professional or other medical documentation (as required by the principal or designee).

Early Dismissal

For the academic advantage of a student being in school, a student should not be taken out of school during the school day including the latter part of the day. When necessary, a student is permitted to leave during the school day if a parent, guardian or other approved person comes to school to get him/her. The person picking up the student must sign him/her out at the school office. Arrangements for early dismissal should be made by a written note or in person. When dismissed early from school, students are counted absent for classes missed and are subject to all absentee policies. Early dismissals require a note signed by parent/guardian including a phone number for verification, or a parent must be present to sign the student out.

The principal or a designee to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused will evaluate all excuses. Students shall be permitted to make up work when absences are excused or pre-approved. **Absences due to out of school suspension shall not be counted as unexcused**". Work missed due to **unexcused** absences may be made up at the discretion of the principal or his designee under extenuating circumstances. All make-up work must be completed within five (5) school days of the student's return to school, unless the school principal or his or her designee allows the student additional time to complete such make-up work.

Previously assigned work should be completed on the day the student returns to school unless an administrator has determined this would make it an unreasonable expectation of the student.

In order for any absence to be excused, the student must present the written excuse within five (5) schooldays after returning to school.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

For purposes of determining perfect attendance, students shall have no unexcused tardies to school, no unexcused early dismissals from school, and be present on campus all day each school day.

GEORGIA'S TEENAGE AND ADULT DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY ACT (TAADRA)

During the 2015 Georgia General Assembly, significant changes were made to the Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act (TAADRA). Effective July 1, 2015, schools will no longer be required by state law to submit noncompliance data for students with excessive unexcused absences and certain discipline infractions. Schools will simply have to certify that a student is enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school to be eligible for a driver's license or learner's permit. Students will no longer have their driver's license or learner's permit suspended for excessive unexcused absences or discipline infractions. Schools will now issue a Certificate of Enrollment form to certify that a student is eligible for a driver's license or learner's permit. The Certificate of Enrollment Form replaces the Certificate of Attendance and the Certificate of Eligibility of Driving Privileges form.

ACCIDENT/ILLNESS

Any accident on the school campus, which is serious enough to require first aid, should be reported to the principal's office immediately. Parents will be notified in case of serious accidents or illnesses at school.

ADMISSION/WITHDRAWAL/TRANSFERS

Admission

Registration must be done at the attendance area school. Students are assigned to a school by their custodial parent/ legal guardian's residence address.

The legal custodial parent should accompany a student to register the student in school. Parents/guardians registering students must be the parent on the birth certificate, must have custody documents from the court or notarized affidavit. The person bringing the student to be registered for school is the person who can withdraw that student at a later time unless legally acceptable arrangements are made for someone else to do so. Parents/guardian must bring the following items with them when registering a student: parent/guardian-valid picture ID (license, work ID, military); child's birth certificate; child's social security card; withdrawal form/report card; child's immunization records (Georgia Form 3231). Note: We will request records from previous school; however, we must have all documentation to complete registration.

Residency must also be established to enroll the student. TWO PROOFS OF RESIDENCE SUCH AS ANY TWO OF THE FOLLOWING must be presented upon registration:

- Copy of receipt for monthly rental/mortgage payment.
- Copy of rental agreement/mortgage payment.
- Copy of water, telephone, or cable bill.
- Copy of property tax bill.
- Copy of homeowner's insurance policy/receipt.
- Income tax form with your address.

If family (and child) lives with a person who rents or owns the home, an affidavit or notarized statement from renter or owner to the effect that the family (and child) lives with them, is required. School personnel may verify this information.

If legal custody of a child is split between two parents, in addition to the documents listed above, the school needs a certified copy of the most recent court order identifying each parent's respective award of physical custody. Parents are responsible to immediately inform the school of any changes to the court order.

Change of Address

If a student is already enrolled in a Ben Hill County School and changes residence within the county at any time during the year, the parent/guardian **must** also fill out an Address Verification Form. Schools must have this form before changing any

addresses on students.

ADMISSION OF SUSPENDED/EXPELLED STUDENTS

A placement committee will determine whether students returning from a Regional Youth Detention Center will be placed at their home schools or in the Alternative Program.

The position of the Ben Hill County Board of Education that the admission into the school system of a resident student who has been suspended from another school system for disciplinary reasons may have an immediate and direct adverse impact upon the discipline or general welfare of the school.

In accordance with Georgia law, the Board reserves the right and may decide not to admit a resident student to the school system who has been suspended or expelled from another school system during the period of suspension or expulsion.

This includes students enrolling from Youth Detention Centers (YDC).

Withdrawal from School

Any student leaving school permanently should be withdrawn by the person who registered the student in school or make legally acceptable arrangements for someone else to withdraw the student. Students between the ages of 16 and 18 must have written permission from a parent/guardian to withdraw.

Parents and students must attend a conference with the principal/designee prior to withdrawal.

INTRADISTRICT TRANSFER RIGHTS

Because there is only one school per grade span in Ben Hill County, parents are being notified that there is not an intradistrict transfer option available to their child.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS

Students/parents who are concerned about a specific classroom situation should first confer with the teacher. If the issue is not resolved, the student/parent should make arrangements to see an administrator of the school. If the problem is not solved at this time, contacting the appropriate Central Office personnel such as an Assistant Superintendent would be the next appropriate step.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

All after school activities sponsored by the school are under the jurisdiction of the school, and the same rules and regulations cover them as during school hours. To participate in Non-GHSA activities, students must be in attendance for at least ½ the school day of the event unless otherwise cleared by the administration. The GHSA regulates attendance for participation requirements for activities sanctioned by the GHSA. All other activities are under the jurisdiction of the sponsoring organization.

ATHLETIC MEDICALS

Athletes who have been restricted from play or practice secondary to a medical condition or injury must have a release from the doctor to return to play/practice.

BICYCLES

Students riding bicycles to school are expected to lock the bicycles at a determined location set by the principal or designee as soon as they arrive at school.

BOOK BAGS

(See school supplemental handbook.)

CELL PHONE USE

Cell phones and cell phone accessories are permitted at school, but cannot be exposed inside of the school building during instructional hours. This includes being visible from a book bag, a purse, or hanging out of a pocket. School administration may establish a reward day for cell phones to be used in the school building. Cell phones will be confiscated if used or exposed during instructional hours.

- 1st Offense - Parent Pickup
- 2nd Offense - 10 days or \$10.00
- 3rd Offense - 20 days or \$20.00
- 4th Offense - 30 days or \$30.00

Failure to surrender the unauthorized used cell phone over to the school administration will result in 3 days of home suspension.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Each school's supplemental handbook will provide a listing of extracurricular offerings and the opportunity for parents to decline permission for students to participate in a specific club or organization.

FUND RAISING

The Board of Education specifically prohibits students in grades P - 5 being involved in door-to-door fund raising activities.

SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

The Ben Hill County School System operates school buses during the week for all students who desire to participate in the transportation program. However, this service, which is determined by the conduct of the student rider, may be discontinued. A student is expected to behave by following school rules. For safety purposes, a student who misbehaves and threatens safety of students and/or staff will be reported to the principal or designee.

The principal will determine if the misbehaving student keeps or loses bus privileges. The principal's decision is final.

Please speak with your child about his/her behavior on the bus. Help us help you get your child to school safely. Ben Hill County School buses have video equipment on each bus. Videos are used to help deter bad behavior and to identify those who threaten school buses/children/drivers, etc.

Video Cameras on Buses

The Ben Hill County School System has installed a video camera on all regular route buses. All students who travel on system buses are recorded as they board and disembark from the buses and ride to and from school and other locations. All SD cards from this recording equipment are the property of the Ben Hill County BOE. The camera is there for safety purposes and to assist the driver and principal with discipline problems on the bus. The camera records for about twelve hours then stops and begins recording again. This might mean that something will not be recorded during this time. In addition, sometimes the equipment does not work properly even though every effort is made to maintain it in working order. The SD card may be pulled from the recorder by the principal, transportation director, or a person authorized by one of the above persons. The SD card will be labeled with the bus number, date, and the name of the person pulling the SD card. The SD card will be given to the principal, assistant principal, or transportation director for viewing.

Parents are not allowed to view videos due to the privacy rights of other students.

The SD card may be pulled if an alleged disciplinary incident occurs involving, but not limited to, the following: a fight on the bus; illegal drugs/weapons on the bus; verbal abuse/ disrespect/ sexual harassment of the driver or another student; any act of physical violence upon another person; sex acts or sexual touching of any type; principal/ driver believes there to be a problem that the driver has not seen or heard; and/or altercation that results in law enforcement being called to the bus for assistance.

All SD cards should be kept at the transportation department and in student record for storage. They will be held until the school year ends and then be destroyed. The SD card may be used as evidence in disciplinary hearing if requested by principal or tribunal panel.

Bus Drop-off Procedures

Your child will be dropped off at the address provided by the school office. A parent/guardian is responsible for writing a note with their signature requesting a different location for their child to be dropped off. The location indicated in the note must be a Ben Hill County School System scheduled bus stop.

Bus Behavior

All students who utilize the county's bus transportation system must observe appropriate school behavior. The school bus and the bus stop are extensions of the classroom.

The same rules that apply on a school campus apply on a school bus and at the bus stop. Bus transportation is provided as a privilege to all students who attend Ben Hill County's public schools. A student may lose his/her privilege to ride the school bus by failing to obey the system's rules. Students should respect their bus driver and cooperate with his/her instructions or requests. Students should remain in their assigned seats when the bus is moving and keep their hands and feet out of the aisles and off other riders and their property.

BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

The principal or other designee at the local school administers disciplinary action for bus misbehavior. School buses and bus stops are considered extensions of the school campus. All rules that govern student conduct while on school campus/property apply while students are on the school bus or at the bus stop. School principals have the authority to impose an immediate suspension for serious offenses. The principal may also add any other disciplinary action deemed necessary. School bus drivers do not discipline children, although they have the prerogative to assign seats or move a child from one seat to another to solve a discipline problem.

Primary & Elementary Procedures for Bus Discipline areas Follows:

Offense 1: The driver will talk with a student or may reassign him/her to a new seat on the bus. If this does not correct the misbehavior, the driver will contact the school administrator. The driver will document these actions.

Offense 2: The principal will counsel with the student and warn the student. Student will be placed on probation. Driver will provide documentation of action taken during first offense. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be contacted.

Offense 3: Student will be suspended from riding the bus for one (1) day.

Offense 4: Student will be suspended from riding the bus for three (3) days.

Offense 5: Student will be suspended from riding the bus for five (5) days.

Offense 6: Student will be suspended from riding the bus for 10 days.

Subsequent offenses will warrant 10 or more day's removal from bus. The principal may also add any other disciplinary action deemed necessary.

Middle/High School Procedures for Bus Discipline Are As Follows:

Offense 1: The principal will counsel with the student and warn the student. Student will be placed on probation. Driver will provide documentation of action taken during first offense. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be contacted.

Offense 2: Student will be suspended from riding the bus for one (1) day.

Offense 3: Student will be suspended from riding the bus for three (3) days.

Offense 4: Student will be suspended from riding the bus for five (5) days.

Offense 5: Student will be suspended from riding the bus for 10 days.

Subsequent offenses will warrant 10 or more day's removal from bus. The principal may also add any other disciplinary action deemed necessary.

In addition to any other rules governing the behavior of students on school buses, every student who rides a school bus should understand that the following behaviors are specifically prohibited:

- A. Any "act of physical violence" defined under Georgia law as follows:
 - 1. Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another (which is referred to in this Handbook as "Type One Physical Violence"); or
 - 2. Intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or physical harms were in defense of himself or herself, as provided in Georgia Criminal law at O.C.G.A. Section 16-3-21 (which is referred to in this Handbook as "Type Two Physical Violence").
- B. Bullying as defined elsewhere in the Handbook;
- C. Physical assault or battery of other persons on a school bus;
- D. Verbal assault of other persons on a school bus;
- E. Disrespectful conduct toward the bus driver or other persons on the school bus;
- F. Other unruly behavior on a school bus;
- G. 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 system or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Personal belongings should be left at home. The school bus driver is not responsible for personal belongings of a student including belongings left on the bus.

- H. 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.

If a student engages in physical acts of violence, either Type 1 or Type 2, the student will be subject to the disciplinary consequences explained under the other relevant sections in this Handbook.

If a student is found to have engaged in bullying or in physical assault or battery of another person on a school bus, the parent or guardian of the student shall be required to participate in a meeting with appropriate school officials to form a school bus behavior contract for the student. The contract may include, but is not limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus.

STUDENT DRESS EXPECTATION

Students are expected to comply with the Ben Hill County School's Dress Code while in attendance at school. This includes wearing items in the adopted school dress code. This policy addresses requirements for normal school days. The appearance of students should be reasonable and not distracting to others. Students are expected and required to show proper attention to personal hygiene, neatness, and conservative standards of dress and appearance. When questionable the school principal or the principal's designee will make the final determination of whether a student's attire or appearance is in conflict with the system policy. Students will observe the following dress code both at school and on the school bus:

The following mandatory standards for student attire have been developed and are applicable to all middle and high schools.

Compliance

The correction plan below has been established to address incidents of noncompliance to the Dress Code Policy.

Incident #1

Warning, parental contact, and remedy clothing

Incident #2

Parental Contact, Remedy Clothing, ISS

Incident #3

Parental Contact, Remedy Clothing, 3 Days ISS

Any Incident beyond the 3rd: Violation will be addressed in accordance with the Code of Conduct, which provides for various consequences depending on a student's discipline record and the severity of the offense.

No student will be considered non-compliant with the dress code policy under the following conditions:

1. During the first 2 weeks after a student transfers from another system or school within the system—
2. When the principal authorizes dress down days or gives special permission—
3. When instructors/advisors have obtained permission through the principal and require students to dress in uniforms such as band, ROTC, sports teams, etc.

BHP & BHES Dress Code

1. In addition, no hats, caps, sun visors, combs, scarves, rollers or bandannas are to be worn. Sunglasses may not be worn inside. (Exceptions can be made with the principal for prescription glasses.)
2. No see-through garments; sheer see-through, or mesh see-through garments. Proper and acceptable undergarments will be worn at all times. Undergarments should not be visible to others.
3. No skin may be shown between the button line and the belt line. No midriff type clothing is allowed.
4. Clothing such as belts, flaps, etc., must be buttoned or buckled. No chains or chained wallets.
5. Dresses, skirts, shorts, culottes, and similar garments shall be of reasonable length and provide proper coverage.
6. Students are required to wear safe and appropriate shoes at all times. No bedroom shoes, heelies, stilettos, high heels or similar type shoes are allowed at school.
7. Tank shirts and halter-tops are not to be worn. Cleavage must not show - no low cut clothing. Sleeveless shirts may be worn as long as they provide proper coverage.
8. No clothing or jewelry bearing advertisements of alcohol or tobacco products or offensive, obscene, or vulgar language will be allowed. The Ben Hill County Board of Education interprets this to include references of a sexual nature, either symbolic or implied, such as "Big Johnson" tee shirts; references to contraception; and insufficiently attired caricatures of individuals. Any clothing, jewelry, hair, make-up, fingernails, or any other item, which causes a disruption of the school environment, may be banned at the discretion of the principal.
9. Pants are allowed to have holes. Students are allowed to wear shorts, tights, leggings, spandex, or jeggings under their pants to conceal the exposed skin and provide appropriate coverage if necessary.

The principal shall have the authority to interpret dress code and make case-by-case determinations for the appropriateness of dress which is questionable or which is not covered in this policy.

FHSCCA & BHMS Dress Code

Students should wear appropriate school clothing. A student shall not dress, groom, wear or use emblems, insignias, badges, or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonably the attention of other students or otherwise to cause disruption or interfere with the operation of the school. Students, who in the opinion of the staff, are dressed inappropriately will be asked

and expected to change their attire.

General Guidelines

1. Promote a respectful learning environment.
2. Promote a safe learning environment where dress does not interfere with the successful and safe completion of learning activities.
3. Promote an equitable and inclusive learning environment in which the dress code does not negatively impact students and staff.

Permitted Clothing

1. Students must wear clothing including both a shirt with pants, shorts, a skirt or the equivalent and shoes.
2. Clothing must have the fabric in the front, back, and sides with no space between the top and the bottom.
3. Clothing must cover undergarments and private parts.
4. The fabric covering all private parts must not be see-through.
5. Clothing must be suitable for all scheduled classroom activities, including PE, Science Labs, and other school activities.

Clothing Not Permitted

1. No hats, caps, sun visors, combs, scarves, rollers, or bandannas; no sunglasses, no sweatbands, no wristbands
2. No see-through garments
3. No Halter Tops, strapless or spaghetti string tops
4. All Belts must be buckled
5. No Chains or chained wallets
6. No Bedroom shoes, heeled shoes, stilettos, high heels or similar type shoes
7. No clothing or jewelry bearing advertisements of alcohol or tobacco products or offensive, obscene or vulgar language will be allowed.
8. Offensive clothing or coverings
9. Any dress deemed to be Gang Related; nothing depicting guns, knives, weapons
10. No pajama pants or pajamas
11. No Gloves inside the building
12. No clothing that interrupts or disturbs the educational process and setting at FHSCCA or BHMS

Gang Related Clothing:

1. No student should display or wear gang articles, paraphernalia, or clothing.
2. No sagging pants.
3. Pant legs must be the same length

The Principal or his/her designee has the authority to interpret the dress code and make a case-by-case determination for the appropriateness of dress, which is questionable, or which is not covered in the County Handbook.

COUNSELING SERVICES

School guidance counselors are available at each school.

DISASTER ALERTS

Disaster alerts are held periodically throughout the school year.

Fire Drills: Continual long sounds or verbal instructions

Tornado Alerts: Continual long sounds or verbal instructions.

All Clear Signal: Three sounds or verbal instruction

IMMUNIZATION ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No child shall be admitted to Ben Hill County Schools unless the child has submitted a certificate of immunization. Before starting the school year, all students born on or after January 1, 2002 and entering or transferring into 7th grade will need proof of a whooping cough booster shot and a meningococcal shot. Also, effective July 1, 2021, children 16 years of age and older, who are entering the 11th grade (including new entrants), must have received one booster dose of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) unless their initial dose was administered on or after their 16th birthday.

The Certificate of Immunization is a form provided by the Department of Human Resources. It is issued by a physician licensed under the laws of Georgia or by a local board of health (Health Department). The principal/superintendent may grant a 30-calendar day waiver of the immunization certificate provided physician or the Health Department that the immunizations are in process provides documentation.

A certificate for a child who is in the process of receiving all required vaccines must have a date of expiration that relates to the date the next required immunization is due or the date on which a medical exemption must be reviewed. A new certificate must then be obtained and submitted to the school or facility within 30 days after expiration date. Children whose parents fail to

renew said certificates within the time allotted shall not be permitted to continue in attendance.

Effective with the school year 2007-2008, for entrance into grade six in Georgia Schools, a child must have two (2) doses of Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine on or after the first birthday.

Requirements for the hepatitis B, measles, mumps, and rubella and varicella vaccines may be waived with serologic proof of immunity. Requirements for varicella vaccine may be waived also with history of medical diagnosis of disease or parent or guardian description of disease that has been interpreted as valid by the certifying authority.

A tetanus and pertussis booster is needed at age 14 or entry into high school (grade 9). The principal/superintendent may grant a maximum of 90 calendar day waiver with the documentation provided by the physician or the Health Department:

1) Specifying that an immunization sequence has been started and that this immunization time schedule can be completed within the 90 day waiver period, 2) Provided confirmation is received during the waiver period from the Health Department or physician that immunizations are being received as scheduled, and 3) Provided the student under waiver is a transfer student (moves to Georgia from another state) or a student entering kindergarten or first grade from out of state.

The waiver may not be extended beyond 90 calendar days; and upon expiration of the waiver, the child shall not be permitted to attend school unless the child submits a certificate of immunization.

If parent/legal guardian objects to immunization of the child on the grounds of religious beliefs, the parent/guardian must furnish a notarized affidavit, which certifies that the immunization requirement conflicts with the religious beliefs.

Immunization may be required by the system should a disease be in an epidemic stage in the school/system. During an epidemic or a threatened epidemic of any disease preventable by an immunization required by the Department of Human Resources, children who have not been immunized may be excluded from the school until (1) they are immunized against the disease unless they present valid evidence of prior disease, or (2) the epidemic or threat no longer constitutes a significant health danger.

Out of state students must meet all requirements for Georgia Immunization and the documentation must be provided on the Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form as provided by Rule 290-5-4-.04, or a Certificate of Immunization indicating medical exemption as provided by Rule 290-5-4.05.

Code Section Code 20-2-771 and Chapter 290-5-4 (Rules of DHR and PH)

Please direct your questions to child's school nurse.

PROCEDURES FOR MEDICATION IN SCHOOLS

Ben Hill County Schools acknowledge that some students may require medication during the school day. School system personnel will administer medications in accordance with law and system procedures. Whenever possible, parents/guardians are encouraged to administer their child's medications before and after school hours.

Parent/Guardian Authorization/Consent

Parent/Guardian consent is required for medication (prescription and non-prescription) to be administered to a student.

- A. Regardless of whether prescription or non-prescription, parent/guardian must complete an "Authorization of Medication Administration" form for medication. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of any changes in pertinent data.
- B. Medication will be administered according to prescription pharmacy label unless the prescribing physician has submitted a written change order to the school nurse.
- C. Non-prescription medications will be administered according to labeling directions on the original container or as doctor prescribes.
- D. New "Authorization of Medication Administration" forms must be completed each school year even if the medications remain the same.

Delivery of Medication to School

Prescription medication must be delivered to the school in its original container with the original pharmacy label containing the student's name, date, name of the medication, dosage, and expiration date. (Medications arriving in baggies, envelopes, or other types of packaging will NOT be accepted.)

Non-prescription medication must be delivered to the school in its original container with manufacturer's directions are clearly visible. (Medication arriving in baggies, envelopes, or other types of packaging will NOT be accepted.)

It is recommended that parent/guardian obtain a second container/bottle of medication from the pharmacy (one for home and one labeled for school) as medication will NOT be sent home with students.

Physician's Order Requirement

Because aspirin and aspirin containing products have been linked to Reye's syndrome, aspirin and other salicylates (Pepto-Bismol, Excedrin, Alka-Seltzer, etc.) will NOT be administered to students without a written order from a physician and permission from the parent/guardian.

A physician’s order will be required for non-prescription medication to be administered more than twice a day OR for more than three consecutive days.

School personnel will NOT administer alternative medications such as vitamins, minerals, herbs or dietary supplements unless prescribed by a physician.

Self-Administration of Asthma Medication/Epi-Pen

A student with a diagnosis of asthma or a severe allergic reaction is permitted to possess and self-administer inhaled asthma medication or an Epi-Pen during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, or while on the school bus or other school property after physician and parent/guardian approval. The parent/guardian of the student, the student, and the prescribing physician must complete the “Authorization for Student to Carry a Prescription Inhaler or Epi-Pen” form and return it to the school nurse.

Permission for self-administration of asthma inhalers/Epi-Pens is effective for one school year and must be renewed yearly.

Inhalers must be marked in permanent ink with the student’s name. Epi-Pens must contain the pharmacy label and directions for the student.

Parents are encouraged to provide to the schools duplicate medication and supplies in the event a student is unable to self-administer or fails to bring the medication or equipment to school.

Disposal of Medications

The responsibility of the parent/guardian is to pick up their child’s medication (prescription and non-prescription) by the end of the school year. For safety reasons, medications will NOT be sent home with students. A written reminder will be sent home with students that have medication at school. If medication has not been picked up by the last day of school, the school nurse will dispose of and document the disposal of the medications.

Students with Diabetes

An individualized health plan will be developed for each student in coordination with the treating physician and the needs of the student.

Caution about Drugs

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that the sale, transfer (to include giving away, or making available in any manner), possession, or use of any drugs/medications or created appearance of drug/medication except as outlined above is a violation of the **Student Code of Conduct and such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.**

Specialized Health Procedures

A physicians’ order and parent/guardian consent is required for specialized health procedures (cauterizations, tube feedings, ostomy care, etc.). The parent/guardian is responsible for furnishing all equipment, supplies, medications, formulas, or other items necessary for the administration of the procedure and to provide replacements and maintenance as necessary.

LUNCHROOM INFORMATION

Students are expected to confine all eating to the cafeteria (except for planned activities). Students are expected to display good manners in the cafeteria. Students should use correct table manners, talk only to those at their table, and should leave the table as clean as possible.

School Nutrition Information

The School Nutrition staff at each school invites and encourages your child’s participation in the breakfast and lunch programs. Nutritious meals are planned, prepared, and served daily. All meals meet the USDA dietary guidelines for students in the specified grade levels

Meal Cost

Ben Hill County student meals will remain under the USDA CEP pricing option for the 2021-2022 school year. Under CEP, students enrolled in Ben Hill County Schools will be served one breakfast and/or one lunch per day at no charge. When snacks are offered as part of afterschool group tutoring conducted by the school system the students will receive snacks at no charge.

Parents are encouraged to visit their child’s school at mealtime with prior reservations. Meal costs for visitors are Breakfast - \$1.00 and Lunch - \$4.00.

Ala Carte Purchases

Students are allowed to purchase extra items that are being served as part of the student meal such as extra milk, fruits or vegetables or smart snack items available in addition to the student meal that is provided at no charge. Smart snack items are clearly labeled as not being part of the student meal. Ala Carte Purchase payment is due at the time of purchase. Students may place money into their meal account in advance. Please place payment for ala carte items in a sealed envelope with your child’s name and the payment amount on the outside of the envelope. If paying by check, include student ID#, student’s first name and last name, and the school

name on the check.

Food Allergies

Parents of students with food allergies are required to provide the school nurse prior to the start of every school year, with documentation from their child's physician or nurse supporting a diagnosis of food allergy, and any risk of anaphylaxis. Any food to which the child is allergic should be identified along with a description, if appropriate, any prior history of anaphylaxis; listing any medication prescribed for the child for the treatment of anaphylaxis; detailing emergency treatment procedures in the event of a reaction; listing the signs and symptoms of a reaction; assessing the child's readiness for self-administration of prescription medication; and a list of substitute meals that may be offered to the child by school or early childhood education program food service personnel. The school nurse will copy this information to the school nutrition program so that appropriate changes may be made in the student's meal selections if needed. Lactose intolerance is not considered an allergy. Lactaid milk is available at all schools for students who are lactose intolerant.

Menus

Nutritious meals prepared daily are served at all schools. Therefore, competitive meals purchased from local restaurants are not allowed to be delivered to students for lunch. Students in Pre-K through 5th grade receive a non-select breakfast and lunch meal. Grades 6 through 12 are approved for offer vs. serve for breakfast and lunch and may choose three or four items offered at breakfast and four or more food group components at lunch. Students are required as part of the USDA School Nutrition Program to have one of their selections to be at least ½ cup fruit or vegetable at both breakfast and lunch.

Menus are posted on the school's web page and in the cafeteria of each school. Please contact Martha Dixon Director of School Nutrition, at 229-409-5500 x5529 with any questions you may have concerning school nutrition.

PARENT PORTAL

You can review your child's academic progress and student records – not just during regular school hours but anytime it is convenient for you. Contact your child's school for information about how to set up an account or email parentportal@benhillschools.org.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Personal belongings should be left at home. The school is not responsible for personal belongings (includes cell phones, laptops, smart watches, headphones, etc.).

SCHOOL PROPERTY AND STUDENT DEBTS

Students marking, damaging school equipment or property in any way will be required to clean the article and/or pay for the damage. When issued a textbook, the student becomes responsible for assuring that the book does not become lost or damaged beyond normal usage. Loss or excessive damage to textbooks will result in the student paying for the book or for damages. The law specifically provides that parents and students are responsible for materials lent to the student.

Students shall be notified in writing of any debt charged to them and failure to pay these debts may result in sanctions. Opportunity shall be given for the student or parent to meet with a school official to discuss any debt the student owes.

If a student or parent is unable to pay the debt, an official statement to that effect may be filed with the superintendent or designee who will make arrangements for the student to satisfy the debt by performing services for the school district.

TITLE I – PARENT INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Parental engagement in the Ben Hill County Schools is an important component in a student's success in school. The Board encourages parents to become engaged in their child's education to ensure the child's academic success.

The Ben Hill County School District will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1010 of the Every Student Succeeds ACT (ESSA). Those programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

Parental engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities.

The Ben Hill County School District will take the following actions to engage parents in the joint development of its district wide parental engagement plan under section 1010 of the ESSA:

Conduct an annual fall meeting to inform parents of school's Title I participation and to discuss the Title I program (PTA):

- Provide parents with opportunities to be informed of the benefits of their school's participation in Title I and encourage them to become involved in the ongoing planning, review, and improvement of the parental engagement program;
- Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's Title I program and Parent Engagement Policy

through the annual evaluation of the Title I program conducted each year during programs such as “Parent University,” participation on the Title I Advisory Council, use of parent surveys, memberships on committees, school wide planning teams, school councils, and involvement in developing the school’s improvement plan;

- Create a District Parent Advisory Council to provide advice on all matters related to parent engagement in programs supported by Title I funds;
- Develop district protocols for appropriate roles for community based organizations and businesses in parent engagement activities;
- Adopt district model approaches to improving parent engagement at the school level;
- Allocate district resources to parent engagement activities;
- Meet with parenting personnel from Pre-K and the English Language Assistance Programs to collaborate while planning for parent workshops when feasible;
- Conduct other activities such as parent resource centers that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their students;
- Communicate with parents in a format and language that they can understand;
- Invite families and preschool children into the schools to visit, have lunch, and participate in planned activities;
- Provide to parents, as appropriate, information to help them understand the State’s academic content standards, the State’s student academic achievement standards, and the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments;
- Provide parents with timely information about the Title I program through parent meetings, the school website and newsletters throughout the school year.

TITLE I – EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)

Purpose and Use of Title I, ESSA Funds

The purpose of the ESSA Title I, Part A funds is to ensure that all students have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on the State Board adopted content and achievement standards, as specified in the statute and regulations. Districts and schools receiving funds are to ensure that they are meeting the educational needs of low-achieving students in low income schools funded by Title I or in schools receiving the funding and are closing the achievement gap between high and low performing students, especially the achievement gaps between minority and non-minority students and between socioeconomically disadvantaged students and their more advantaged peers.

School-Wide Program

A school-wide program school may now use its Title I, Part A funds coupled with other Federal education funds to upgrade the school’s entire educational program, rather than to target services only on identified children. By affecting the entire program of instruction, the overall education of children in the most impoverished schools can be improved.

Professionally qualified Teachers and Paraprofessionals

All of Ben Hill County’s Title I schools will use their title funds to support instructional strategies which are effective with students who are at risk of not meeting state standards. Programs of high quality are in place and offer strategies to ensure success in the Core Academic Program. Professionally qualified teachers are placed in all our schools to provide instruction on a regular basis to all of our students.

Paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002 must have:

- Completed two years of study at any institution of higher learning;
- Obtained an associate’s degree (or higher);
- Demonstrate through an academic assessment the knowledge and the ability to assist in the instruction of reading, writing, and math.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY

Complaint Procedures Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*

A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency (“complainant”) may file a complaint with the Ben Hill County Board of Education (“Department”) if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a violation of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the *No Child Left Behind Act*. 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 C: Education of Migrant Children
3. Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
4. Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology
5. Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement
6. Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1: Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities
7. Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers
8. Title VI, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income Schools
9. Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children
10. Title X, Part C: McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth

C. Filing a Complaint

A complaint must be made in writing to the Ben Hill County School Director of Federal Programs and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

1. A statement that the Ben Hill County School System 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. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant’s position; and
6. The address of the complainant.

D. Investigation of Complaint

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

1. The date the Department received the complaint;
2. How the complainant may provide additional information;
3. A statement of the ways in which the Department may investigate or address the complaint; and
4. Any other pertinent information.
5. If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the Superintendent 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 time lines for completion will be included. The sixty (60) day time line outlined above may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant.

E. Right of Appeal

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the local level, the complainant has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Superintendent’s decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

The complaint must be addressed to:

Georgia Department of Education, Office of Legal Services, 205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE, 2052 Twin Tower East, Atlanta, GA 30334

It is the policy of the Ben Hill County Board of Education that grievances and complaints relating to school matters are to be

recognized and addressed in an orderly manner. Grievances and complaints shall be addressed from parents, students, staff, private schools and other concerned organizations or individuals in the general public.

Grievances and complaints shall be handled and resolved, whenever possible, as close to their origin as possible. For the purposes of this policy, a grievance is defined as any claim by a member of the public that the action or operation of the school district or the Board of Education is in violation of the law or Board policy. Any claim that does not meet the definition of grievance will be considered a complaint and it will be handled through routine administrative procedures.

The Federal Programs Director is responsible for dissemination of complaint procedure. The complaint procedure and form will be available on district website, employee handbook, and paper copies will be available at each school and the district office.

STATE ASSESSMENTS

Students in grades 3 through 8 will take an end-of-grade assessment in the content areas of language arts and mathematics. Students in grades 5 and 8 will also take an end-of- grade assessment in the content areas of science, social studies. These tests are administered towards the end of the school year, typically in April or early May.

Students at the high school level will take an end-of- course assessment in the following four courses:

- Language Arts: American Literature and Composition
- Mathematics: Algebra I
- Science: Biology
- Social Studies: United States History

The end-of-course measures are administered at the completion of the course, regardless of the grade level. These measures serve as the final exam for the course, and contribute 20% to the student’s final course grade (this 20% rule does not apply to BHES nor BHMS). Each school district selects a local testing window, based on their local school calendar, from within the state-designated testing window. Middle school students who are enrolled in one or more of these courses are required to take the associated end-of-course (EOC) measure. If enrolled in a mathematics and/or science EOC course, these middle school students will not take the corresponding content area end-of-grade (EOG) measure.

Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills

All kindergarten students defined in Rule 160-3-1-.01 except those students exempted by criteria specified in their individualized Education Program shall be assessed using GKIDS and/or other state approved measures during their kindergarten year. Students entering kindergarten prior to March 1 shall be assessed with the total GKIDS. Students entering on or after March 1 shall be assessed with as much GKIDS as the system determines is appropriate. Only certified teachers who are responsible for the entire class and who have been trained in the use of the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) shall administer the assessment. All children shall be administered the GKIDS according to the established guidelines and procedures found in The Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) Assessment Guide.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

If a student needs to make a transportation change, he/ she must present a written request signed by the parent to the office, and the office must approve it before the change is made. This will apply whether the transportation is by car or by school bus.

VIDEO/AUDIO TAPING

The school system reserves the right to videotape or audiotape students in school programs, school events and student evaluations, as well as on the bus. The school system also reserves the right to tape any meetings concerning the student where a parent may be present.

VISITORS

Any person entering the school campus or any school building, who is not a student at the school or an employee of the school system, shall check in at the front office, provide a reason for his or her presence at the school, and present their Federal/State Issued ID Card to receive a pass to move throughout the school building. The administration at the school may deny entry into the school building or deny any person that the administration deems to create a hostile environment or create a school disruption for both the students and the school personnel.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION (All Grades)

Attendance Regulations

Any middle or high school student missing more than half of any period will be counted absent for that period.

School-Sponsored Non-Instructional Activities (Absences)

Georgia School Standards prohibit students from being absent from class because of school related non-instructional activities for more than ten (10) days per class during the school year. A student may be absent because of his/her involvement in school-sponsored, non-instructional activities such as participation in athletics or club functions on the local, state, or national level, beyond the ten (10) days if the student receives specific exemption from the ten (10) day rule from the Board of Education. (The days missed by a student for school-sponsored, non-instructional activities are not computed as part of the absentee policy, which establishes a maximum number of absences from class beyond which a student cannot receive course credit for a class.) A student who wishes to participate in a school-sponsored, non-instructional activity which will require him/her to exceed the ten (10) days per scheduled class period per year maximum must apply for an exemption prior to the absences according to Board Policy IED.

Make-Up Work

Make-up work is defined as work assigned on a day the student is absent and is not to be confused with previously assigned work. (Previously assigned work includes but is not limited to reports, projects, homework, and term papers, which were assigned when the student was present. Previously assigned work should be completed on the day the student returns to school unless an administrator has determined this would make it an unreasonable expectation of the student.)

Teachers have the discretion to require students who we represent prior to the date of the test administration, but absent on the date of the administration, to make up the missed test on the first date the student returns. Credit will only be awarded if the required excuse is submitted within five days and the absence is deemed an excused absence. **(Previously assigned work should be completed on the day the student returns to school unless an administrator has determined this would make it an unreasonable expectation of the student.)**

Materials

Students will be expected to have notebooks, notebookpaper, and pencils at all times for use in class.

Parent/Guardian Right-To-Know

The parents or guardians of any student who attends a school within the Ben Hill County School System may request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teacher, including a description of the professional certificate held by the teacher for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction, whether or not the teacher is teaching under a provisional or probationary certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, and information regarding the educational background of the teacher, including a description of the teacher's undergraduate degree and major and graduate degrees, if any, with graduate fields of study or additional certification areas. Parents may also request information regarding any paraprofessionals working with the student's teacher or teachers and the qualification of such paraprofessionals. Any requests for the qualifications of the teacher or paraprofessional should be submitted in writing to the Principal of the school which the child attends and should be delivered by regular mail or personally to the Principal or any Assistant Principal of the school which the student attends.

BEN HILL COUNTY ACADEMIC PROMOTION, PLACEMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

I. DEFINITIONS.

- A. Accelerated instruction- challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic strengths in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. This accelerated instruction is designed to provide opportunities for students to achieve at levels beyond the grade level norm. This instruction will move faster and go deeper with grade level standards as well as introduce standards from the next grade level when appropriate.
- B. Remediation/Intervention instruction – academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes that are designed to bring students not performing on grade level, as defined by the Office of Education Accountability, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before and after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer/intersession instruction.
- C. Differentiated instruction – instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.
- D. Grade level – standard of performance, as defined by the Office of Education Accountability, on a Georgia Milestone Assessment.
- E. Placement – the assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of

academic achievement.

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

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

H. Retention – the reassignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

I. Pyramid of Intervention

The pyramid is set up in levels or tiers with each providing general guidelines of what students should be receiving in their instructional setting.

Tier 1: ALL students are receiving differentiated instruction and frequent progress monitoring in their current standards-based classroom.

Tier 2: Students struggling in Tier 1 are provided more focused interventions through methods that differ from Tier 1 and that provide more frequent monitoring.

Tier 3: Through the Student Support Team (SST) process, students that continue to be unsuccessful are given more individually targeted instruction in addition to the Tier 1 & 2 strategies.

Tier 4: Students are entered into a specialized learning program to help provide for their instructional needs.

Response to Intervention (RTI)/Student Support Team

– This team is made up of the RTI coordinator, intervention specialists, and grade level teachers and looks at each child identified as needing extra support through the Pyramid of Intervention in order to meet his/her educational goals. This team is responsible for writing the tier 3 Intervention Plan and determining an appropriate progress monitoring tool.

Grade Distribution

- a. K-5 – Students must achieve grade level expectations in Reading/Language Arts and Math to be promoted to the next grade level.
- b. Grades 6-8 – See page 39.
- c. Grades 9-12 – 50% Major Assignments, 30% Minor Assignments, 20% 9-week exam/Midterm/Project

Ben Hill Primary School Standards Based Grading

Standards based grading is used at Ben Hill Primary School. Using this scoring approach allows the student, parent, and teacher to see the progression of the child's learning throughout a standard and know exactly where the child is with regards to their learning. Standards based grading only reflects academic growth without incorporating nonacademic factors which skew traditional grades. Standards-based grading aims to make classroom grades more valid, reliable, and transparent, ultimately providing an accurate reflection of what skills and knowledge students have mastered.

In grades K-2, standards based grading through the use of proficiency scales is utilized for communicating and reporting a child's progress through each power standard. Our proficiency scales focus solely on the child's progress towards mastering the standard and include the following levels: Beginning Learner (1), Developing Learner (2), Proficient Learner (3), and Distinguished Learner (4). The proficient learner level, which is level 3, is considered mastery.

The scale below explains the four levels of learning for reporting purposes.

PROFICIENCY SCALE		
4	Distinguished Learner	The student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond mastery of the standards.
3	Proficient Learner	The student consistently demonstrates mastery of the grade level standards. Evidence shows ability to apply concepts in a variety of contexts.
2	Developing Learner	The student is able to demonstrate partial understanding of the grade level standards. Student produces evidence that may contain errors.
1	Beginning Learner	There is lack of evidence to determine proficiency of the grade level standards.

Students not reaching the proficient learner level for a standard will receive additional instruction and re-evaluation whereas, students who reach the proficient learner level for a standard will receive accelerated instruction, provided they are a level 3 on all previously assessed standards.

BHES Standards Based Grading and Proficiency Scale

Standards based grading is used at Ben Hill Elementary instead of the traditional grading system. Using this scoring approach allows the student, parent, and teacher to see the progression of the child's learning throughout a standard and know exactly where the child is concerning their learning. Standards based grading only reflects academic growth without incorporating non-academic factors, which skew traditional grades. For more information, please see the report card companion. You can locate this document on Ben Hill Elementary website under the Curriculum and Instruction tab.

In grades 3-5, standards based grading through the use of proficiency scales is utilized for communication and reporting a child's progress through each power standard. Our proficiency scales focus solely on the child's progress towards mastering the standard and include the following levels: Beginning Learner (Level 1), Developing Learner (Level 2), Proficient Learner (Level 3), and Distinguished Learner (Level 4). The proficient learner level, which is level 3, is considered mastery.

The scale below explains the four levels of learning for reporting purposes.

PROFICIENCY SCALE		
4	Distinguished Learner	The student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond mastery of the standards.
3	Proficient Learner	The student consistently demonstrates mastery of the grade level standards. Evidence shows ability to apply concepts in a variety of contexts.
2	Developing Learner	The student is able to demonstrate partial understanding of the grade level standards. Student produces evidence that may contain errors.
1	Beginning Learner	There is lack of evidence to determine proficiency of the grade level standards.

Students not reaching the proficient learner level of a standard will receive additional instruction and reevaluation whereas, students who reach the proficient learner level for a standard will receive accelerated instruction, provided they are a level 3 on all previously assessed standards.

Grades

- Grading periods will now reflect 9 weeks of instruction.
- Progress reports will be crucial for parent communication concerning student academic achievement.
- Ben Hill County Schools (BHMS) grading system is as follows:

A=90-100 B=80-89 C=70-79

NOT YET- they have not mastered the standard

[NO GRADES BELOW 70 on the report card]

Non-numerical report cards: Satisfactory-S, Needs Improvement-N, and/or portfolio checklists may be used in some grades.

- A child should only receive a grade if they are receiving instruction at their grade level. If a child is in the TIER process for remediation (meaning that they are not on grade level and they are receiving instruction that is behind their grade level) they should receive a grade of "NY"-NOT YET.
- "Not Yet" Their report card should reflect this at each 9 weeks. They should also have under the comments section "they are not meeting grade level standards for the specific subject area." This means that the student is not meeting grade level power standards according to State Policy.
- Grades should reflect the progress or student growth of an individual and NOT the group. If a child earns what would be a failing grade they will have a chance to redo the assignment for mastery of the standard.
- Contact should be made with the home whenever a student is not mastering the standard and receiving (NOT YET) as a grade. Parents should not learn of failures for the first time when receiving report cards.
- Please keep records in a grade book and always be able to report individual and overall grades to parents

when necessary. Keep representative papers for documentation in the students' portfolio. These will be used in parent conferences.

- Teachers are afforded a great deal of academic freedom in assigning grades as long as the grades are determined by a fair and reasonable representation of the student's work that is determined in their PLC meetings.
- Grades must never be used to reward or punish; therefore, grades are not to be correlated with student behavior.
- Parents should be made constantly aware of the progress of their children by direct communication each 4 ½ weeks or as determined in their individual plan.
- Grade weighting guidelines will be given by the system. This must be done before, and shared with parents, at Open House and sent home with those who do not attend Open House.
- Teachers (Grades 6-12) will keep records on Infinite Campus and be able to report these grades to parents. Progress reports will be sent home with students 4½ weeks into the grading period.

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION IN GRADES K-8

Students shall be expected to continuously achieve at a rate commensurate with their ability for achievement.

Grade placement decisions shall be made on an individual basis. Written documentation of evidence (Tier 2 minutes, Tier 3/Student Support Team minutes, Individual Education plan, or Individual Assistance Plan) which supports the individual retention decision shall be on file in the student's portfolio.

The IEP Placement Committee will recommend promotion decisions for students with Individual Education Plans.

A. Standards for Promotion Grades K-2

A student shall demonstrate mastery of all grade level essential reading and math standards as evidenced by the student portfolio.

B. Standards for Promotion Grades 3-5

A student shall demonstrate proficiency by achieving a level 3 on the proficiency scale on a minimum on 70% of the grade level power standards. In addition, achievement at grade level as defined by scoring at/ above Grade Level for Reading and scoring Developing Learner (Level 2) or higher for Mathematics on the Georgia Milestone Assessments. Other appropriate data such as Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) will be reviewed for growth.

Promotion Procedures for Grades 3, 4, and 5- Students who demonstrate grade level proficiency as defined above will be promoted to the next grade. Students who do not demonstrate grade level proficiency on a minimum of 70% of the grade level power standards and achievement at grade level as defined by GMAS in grades 3 and 5 will have a retention/promotion meeting with the grade level teacher, parents, and RTI team. This team will review all portfolio documents and available data to determine the most appropriate placement for the following year.

C. Standards for Promotion Grades 6-8

Students shall demonstrate satisfactory progress in all four academic subjects: Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Satisfactory progress will be determined by the yearly averages of 70 or above in 3 out of 4 core content classes and achievement at grade level as defined by scoring at/ above Grade Level for Reading on the Georgia Milestone Assessment as well as other data such as Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). Students must also maintain a 70 or above average in two of four connection courses if they are 18 week courses, or four of the eight connection courses if they are 9-week courses.

PROMOTION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES FOR GRADES 3-8

- A. Each school principal shall distribute student data from the Georgia Milestone Assessment to teachers prior to the beginning of each school year. Each teacher shall use data to focus instruction on identified student academic performance in grades 3-8 as appropriate.
- B. The school principal or designee shall annually notify parents or guardians that placement or promotion of students into a grade, class, or program will be based on criteria established in this policy.
- C. Students shall be tested in accordance with requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.
- D. For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee shall serve as the placement committee.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 3, 5, AND 8.

- A. Requirements in these sections shall apply to students in 3rd, 5th, and 8th grades.

B. Promotion of a student shall be determined as follows:

1. No third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment and meets promotion criteria established in this policy.
2. No fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level for Reading and scoring Developing Learner (Level 2) or higher for Mathematics on the Georgia Milestone Assessments and meets promotion criteria established in this policy.
3. No eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level for Reading and scoring Developing Learner (Level 2) or higher for Mathematics on the Georgia Milestone Assessments and meets promotion criteria established in this policy.
4. The school principal or designee may retain a student who achieves grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment but who does not achieve a yearly average of 70 or above in the academic areas as defined in this policy. (See Section IV of this policy)

FIRST GEORGIA MILESTONE ASSESSMENT TEST ADMINISTRATION

A. When a student does not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment specified in section B above, then the following shall occur:

1. Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends, holidays, or receipt of the Georgia Milestone Assessment individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing the parent/guardian of the student regarding the following:
 - a. The student's failure to achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment;
 - b. The specific retest(s) to be given to the student and testing date(s);
 - c. The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student's performance on the Georgia Milestone Assessments; and
 - d. The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year if they do not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level for Reading on the Georgia Milestone Assessment.
2. The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and
3. The student shall be retested with appropriate section(s) of the Georgia Milestone Assessment(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board.
4. A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia Milestone Assessment in reading and/ or mathematics on the first administration, which includes its designated make-up day(s), shall take the Georgia Milestone Assessment in reading and/ or mathematics on the second administration day(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board. Placement or promotion of these students shall follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment.

SECOND GEORGIA MILESTONE ASSESSMENT TEST ADMINISTRATION

A. When a student does not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment in grades 3, 5, and 8, and also does not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/above Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment at grade level on a second opportunity to take the assessment, then the following shall occur:

1. The school principal or designee shall retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided for in this policy.
2. The school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student and the teacher(s) regarding the retention of the student.
 - a. The notice shall describe the option of the parent/guardian or teacher to appeal the retention of the student;
 - b. The notice shall describe the composition and functions of the placement committee; it shall describe the option of the parent/guardian, teacher (s), or principal to invite individuals who can provide information or facilitate understanding of the issues to be discussed to attend the placement committee meeting;
 - c. The notice shall include the requirement that the decision to promote the student must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee comprised of the parent/guardian, teacher(s), and principal or designee.
3. A student's failure to take the Georgia Milestone Assessment in grades 3, 5, and 8 in reading and/or mathematics on

any of the designated second administration testing date(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board shall result in the student being retained. The option of the parent or guardian or teacher(s) to appeal the retention of the student shall follow the procedure set forth in this policy.

APPEALS PROCESS

1. If the parent/guardian or teacher(s) appeals the retention of the student, then the school principal or designee shall establish a placement committee to consider the appeal.
 - a. The placement committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) of the subject(s) of the Georgia Milestone Assessment or the alternative assessment instrument on which the student failed to achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/below Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment.
 - b. The principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent/guardian and teacher(s) of the time and place for convening the placement committee.
 - c. The placement committee shall review the overall academic achievement of the student in light of the performance on the Georgia Milestone Assessment or the alternative assessment instrument and promotion standards and criteria established in this policy and make a determination to promote or to retain. Achievement data should include Measures of Academic Progress assessments (MAP) and could include other available data such as grades, informal reading inventories, other skills assessments, and standards checklists.
 - d. The decision to promote must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee and must determine that if promoted and given accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction during the next year, the student is likely to achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/below Grade Level for Reading on the Georgia Milestone Assessment by the conclusion of the school year.
 - e. The placement committee shall prescribe such additional assessments as may be appropriate in addition to assessments administered to other students at the grade level during the year.
 - f. The placement committee shall provide for a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student (progress monitoring.)
 - g. The decision of the Placement Committee regarding the appeal of the parent/guardian of promotion or retention of the student shall be final.
2. A plan for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction must be developed for each student who does not achieve grade level as defined by scoring at/below Grade Level on the Georgia Milestone Assessment specified in section (a) above whether the student is retained, placed, or promoted for the subsequent year. The grade level Response to Intervention (RTI) Team should be convened within the first 5 weeks of the following school year to develop and begin implementation of this plan.
3. For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee shall serve as the placement committee.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued at the end of each nine (9) weeks, with progress reports being issued at the midpoint of each nine (9) week period. See system calendar for specific dates.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism, as defined by Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition, as "to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source," will not be tolerated. Plagiarism will be treated as a cheating infraction and will warrant appropriate disciplinary consequences.

GIFTED

The gifted program in Ben Hill County serves students in all grades. Students may be referred for screening by administrators, teachers, and parents.

Students may also be automatically referred if they score at the ninety percentile or above in reading and/or math on a standardized achievement test. Once students are referred, they will be evaluated in four areas: Mental Abilities, Achievement, Creativity, and Motivation. To be eligible for the gifted program, the student must qualify in three of the four areas. Eligibility is based on guidelines established by the State Board of Education.

The **Criteria for Continuation of Gifted Services** will be presented to students receiving services in gifted education and their parents at the beginning of each school year.

PRIMARY SCHOOL (Grades K-2)STUDENT ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL INFORMATION

Students shouldn't be dropped off before 6:45AM

Check In Procedures: All students arriving after the 7:40 AM tardy bell must report to the office. A parent/guardian must walk the student into the front office. The parent or guardian will be required to state the reason for the student's tardiness. Our goal is to begin instruction at 7:40 AM after roll is taken and announcements are made. Please make every effort to have your student prepared to begin the school day on time. Parents of students who are consistently tardy will be referred to the Attendance/Tuancy Committee.

Check Out Procedures: All students must be signed out through the main office. Teachers will not be allowed to release students. All checkouts must be documented by the receptionist. **No student check-outs after 2:00 PM.** While BHP understands it is occasionally necessary for children to be checked out before the end of the day, we strongly encourage parents to make dental, medical, and other appointments for their children after school hours. Parents must provide written authorization for other family members or friends to pick their children up from school. Please be advised that the office may request to see identification before releasing a child to a parent, family member, or friend. Please remember that if we request identification we are only doing it for the protection of your child. Students who are checked out early on a continual basis - like students who are chronically tardy - will be referred to the Attendance/Tuancy Committee. Please make every effort to have your child in school for the entire school day.

Transportation changes should be made prior to 1:30 PM.

MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 6-8)ACADEMIC INFORMATION

ACADEMIC COUNSELING

Counselors are available in each school to assist students with their problems and concerns of an academic, a vocational or a personal nature. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss their child's problems or progress with counselors and/or their child's faculty advisor and/or teacher(s). Information concerning requirements for college, vocational technical school, etc., S.A.T. dates, scholarships, and career planning is also available in the Guidance Office. Beginning July 1, 2015, Dual Enrollment and ACCEL will not be labeled Move On When Ready (MOWR). Eighth grade students will be notified by April 1 of each academic year the opportunity to Move On When Ready (MOWR).

BEN HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADING

BHMS uses Proficiency Scales to gauge student outcomes. These scales are based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence and our Essential Standards Charts. Each activity completed in the classroom (homework, project, assessment, etc.) is directly tied to these charts and scales. This guarantees that there is a goal-oriented purpose to each activity! Our PLC(Professional Learning Communities) teams work diligently to make certain that our curriculum is broken down into specific learning targets and goals. This helps to ensure that our students are able to pinpoint the learning objectives daily, giving them goals to strive for. Students are then able to comprehend which learning targets they need to master in order to achieve mastery on the standard.

BHMS GRADING SCALE

BHMS uses the following grading scale:

A = 90 - 100

B = 80 - 89

C = 70 - 79

D = 60 - 69

F = 59 - Below (NO GRADES BELOW A 60 ON REPORT CARDS)

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

The objective of grades at BHMS is to help students and parents understand the level of mastery each student has in particular content and on specific standards. This can be gauged through a variety of practices. As is such, all assignments are weighted (NO Major or Minor) the same and any difference will be computed in the point value on each activity.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN COMPETITIVE INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

Sixth, seventh and eighth grade students participating in competitive interscholastic activities (including activities governed by the Georgia High School Association) must meet eligibility requirements. Competitive interscholastic activities are defined as any school-sponsored program involving competition between individuals or groups representing two or more schools. Cheerleading is included in this definition.

Eligibility is concerned with subjects passed the previous semester. If a student has an incomplete, the student is ineligible until all incompletes are made up and the passing grades are recorded in the student's permanent record.

(Summer tutorial credits earned in a non-accredited homestudy program or non-accredited private schools may not be used to

gain eligibility.)

A student who participated in competitive interscholastic activities may have 14 calendar days after the close of each semester to complete make-up work, provided this is available to all students. OTHERWISE, THE STUDENT IS INELIGIBLE FOR THE ENTIRE SEMESTER. Students who are ineligible for competitive interscholastic activities cannot participate in ANY competitive interscholastic activity. Ineligible students cannot practice or travel with the team or program. Ineligible students cannot try out for a team or program, even though the team or program will not be in operation until the next school year.

STUDENT DRIVING AND PARKING REGULATIONS

Middle school students are not allowed to drive under ANY circumstances.

HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC INFORMATION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

ACADEMIC COUNSELING

Counselors are available in each school to assist students with their problems and concerns of an academic, a vocational or a personal nature. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss their child's problems or progress with counselors and/or their child's faculty advisor and/or teacher(s).

Information concerning post-secondary education and training, college admissions testing, (ACT, SAT, ACCUPLACER, etc.), scholarship searches, military options, and career decision-making is also available through classroom guidance and individual guidance services. Parents and students are encouraged to utilize all of the services provided by the Georgia Student Finance Commission website, for helping students plan, apply, and pay for college.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

The Dual Enrollment Program allows high school students to earn college credit while working on their high school diploma. The new law streamlines the existing options (Dual Enrollment, Accel and HOPE Grant) into one program. Beginning with Fall term 2015 (FY 2016) the program is offered during all terms of the school year; fall, spring and summer semester or fall, winter, spring, and summer quarter. Students and parents should contact the school counselor for more information.

House Bill 444 established *O.C.G.A. 1604.2a* "students in the 11th and 12 grade may enroll in any approved dual enrollment courses at an eligible participating postsecondary institution (USG, TCSG, or private)".

House Bill 444 established *O.C.G.A. 1604.2b* "students in the 10th grade may enroll in approved Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) courses at a participating TCSG institution only".

House Bill 444 established *O.C.G.A. 1604.2c* "Students in the 10th grade with minimum SAT score of 1200 or minimum ACT composite score of 26 in a single national test administration, taken prior to the term of enrollment in the GSFC Dual enrollment system, may enroll in any approved Dual Enrollment courses at a TCSG, USG or private eligible participating postsecondary institution".

Option B: Career Ready Program

High School Graduation Option B (formerly known as Senate Bill 2) offers qualified students an alternate path to high school graduation. Students choose to simultaneously earn a high school diploma and a Wiregrass degree, diploma or two (2) Technical Certificates of Credit in a specific career pathway. High School Graduation Option B is only available for those students attending a public high school in Georgia.

Students in option B must complete all required high school courses (2 ELA including American Lit), 2 Math (including Algebra I), 2 Sciences (including Biology), 2 Social Studies, 1 Health/PE; AND complete any one Wiregrass Associate Degree Program, Any one Wiregrass Diploma Program, or 2 TCCs (Technical Certificate of Credit).

PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY for FHSCCA

Students are classified and must have earned the appropriate number of units listed below to enter the respective grade highlighted in the following grid. Promotion to the next grade requires students to pass the core course work prior to taking the next required course, i.e. ninth grade literature before taking tenth grade literature. This applies to all core content. (See chart)

For Graduating Classes of 2024 and Before:		
Grade	Block Units Earned	Courses that must be passed
3 units in academic classes	10th	5
6 units in academic classes	11th	11
10 units in academic classes	12th	17

For Graduating Classes of 2025 and Beyond:		
Grade	Block Units Earned	Courses that must be passed
3 units in academic classes	10th	6
6 units in academic classes	11th	13
10 units in academic classes	12th	20

Students will be asked to make up course work not passed by attending credit recovery programs or attending Summer School for credit repair. Will meet with the central office to discuss required earned credits to graduate.

EANC (Excessive Absences No Credit)

This policy will be enforced at the end of each semester. Carnegie Unit credits will be denied for all students with more than

7 unexcused absences in a semester class or 14 in a year long class. Credits will be rewarded to students that have the following documentation: medical, excused, school related, and other excused codes. Students missing only 7 days may be awarded credits without penalty.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE APPEAL

An administrator will oversee the attendance appeal process. He/she will be assisted by an attendance committee composed of teachers, counselors and/or administrators. If a student has more than 7 absences in a semester class or 14 in a year long class and is passing the class, he or she must follow the attendance appeal process as follows:

1. Two weeks before the end of the semester, students with 7 or more excused or unexcused absences in any class must pick up an appeal form from the assistant principal's office; have it signed by a parent or guardian, and return form to office.
2. Students and their parents will be notified of the date and time that the Attendance Committee will meet.
3. The student and a parent or guardian must meet on the designated day with the committee.
4. The Attendance Committee will have all documented excuses on file at the attendance appeal.
5. Students and parents will be informed at the end of the semester if credit will be given in classes with excessive absences.

Students will not repeat courses which they have passed. Exceptions to this practice will be made only in extenuating circumstances.

Exceptions are to be considered on an individual basis by the principal and are to be documented with details in the student's academic folder with a statement signed by the principal.

ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

A student will have the first fourteen (14) SCHOOL days after the close of the semester to complete work and change an incomplete grade. If a student with an incomplete grade has not passed three (3) subjects the previous semester, the student will be ineligible. The student is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities during these fourteen (14) days and cannot practice, play, or participate until he or she has passed three (3) subjects. If three (3) subjects have not been passed by the end of the fourteen (14) calendar days of the semester, he or she is ineligible for the entire semester. No make-up work is to be graded until after an absence has been determined to be excused.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Juniors and Seniors transferring into Ben Hill County Schools can meet state graduation requirements and be exempt from system requirements if meeting system requirements would delay graduation. Students graduating must meet all unit requirements for graduation and or meet the requirements for a "Diploma of Performance" as specified in a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) to walk in the graduation ceremonies.

Certificates of Attendance – student with disabilities assigned to a special education program who has not met the state assessment requirements or who has not completed all requirements for a high school diploma, but who has completed his/her Individualized Educational Program.

High School - Course Requirements for Students in the Class of 2024 and Before

I.	English/Language Arts	4
II.	Mathematics	4
III.	Science	4
IV.	Social Studies	3
V.	CTAE/Modern Lang./Latin/Fine Arts.....	3
VI.	Health and Physical Education (.5 unit each)	1
VII.	Electives	7
	TOTAL UNITS (MINIMUM).....	26

High School - Course Requirements for Students in the Class of 2025 and Beyond:

I.	English/Language Arts	4
II.	Mathematics	4
III.	Science	4
IV.	Social Studies	4
V.	CTAE/Modern Lang./Latin/Fine Arts.....	3
VI.	Health and Physical Education (.5 unit each)	1
VII.	Electives	8
	TOTAL UNITS (MINIMUM).....	28

All students in the 2020 graduation cohort and beyond will be required to complete the Capstone Project as part of their graduation requirements. This project is completed in the Career Ready Canes class.

All students in the 2023 graduation cohort and beyond will be required to complete the Freshman Seminar class as part of their graduation requirements. This class is taken during their freshman year.

Two years of foreign language is required for admission to a four-year college or university. Three years successful completion of JROTC will meet the requirements of Health/PE. Students must complete requirements as prescribed by the State Department of Education and Ben Hill County Board of Education. All students must meet attendance requirements, perform satisfactory on state assessments, and attain the specified number of Carnegie units of credit as required for graduation to receive a diploma.

Will meet with the central office to discuss required earned credits to graduate.

CAREER PATHWAYS

Agricultural Mechanics Systems, Agricultural Science Systems, Agriculture Leadership in Animal Production, Agricultural Leadership Plant Science, Audio-Video Technology/Film, Automobile Maintenance & Light Repair*, Business and Technology, Certified Customer Service*, Certified Manufacturing Specialist*, Computer Science, Culinary, Early Childhood Care & Education*, Engineering and Technology, JROTC-Army, Health Informatics/Health Information Management-Medical Office, Shampoo Technician*, Nail Technician*, Teaching as a Profession, Therapeutic Services-Patient Care*, Visual Arts, Web and Digital Design*, Welding*, *Can be Dual Enrollment with WGTC

Students are encouraged to complete 3 units in a career path.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT/HONORS COURSES

Advanced Placement Courses will be offered in English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Computer Science, and 2D Art Design. These courses are recognized by the College Board and the University System of Georgia. Upon completion of these courses, students have the opportunity to earn college credit through the successful completion of an exit exam, which is administered in the spring of each year. It is recommended that students enrolled in AP courses take the exit exam. The student is responsible for paying for AP exam fees; however, the State of Georgia pays the fees for one AP exam for students in a STEM course. The Accel program is also an option for seniors wishing to earn college credit. Students that passed three Advanced Placement courses and/or Accel classes will receive cords to be worn at graduation and will be recognized as Advanced Placement Scholars.

Fitzgerald High offers Honors and AP (Advanced Placement) courses for students desiring a more rigorous program of study. Honors courses are designed to prepare students for AP courses. Compared with regular high school courses, the advanced courses are more demanding, often requiring more time and more work, but students find them rewarding in preparation for college-level work.

Criteria for Advanced Classes: Consideration for placement in an advanced course will be given to duly processed gifted students and other academically promising students. Students are recommended for courses by their teachers in various subject areas. These recommendations are made based on past and present classroom performance and teacher evaluation. However, students may register for any course at or above the recommended instructional levels. Parents may also request a student's placement in advanced courses but will require a signed waiver by parent/guardian. Dual Enrollment classes will be offered through ABAC and Wiregrass when numbers justify. Students must meet the individual requirements of each post-secondary institution and have a 3.0 or higher G.P.A.

HIGH SCHOOL REQUIRED/CORE/ ELECTIVE CREDIT

Core area courses successfully completed may not be repeated except as determined by an administrator as being necessary for success in later courses. In that case, only elective credit will be awarded.

SEAL OF ENDORSEMENT

High school preparation for college allows students to earn a formal seal of endorsement. The Ben Hill County Board of Education requires a college-preparatory program for all students for a rigorous academic experience. A formal seal of endorsement from the Georgia Board of Education will be awarded to those students who successfully complete the endorsed course of study. In addition to the college-preparatory seal of endorsement, a technology/career-prep seal is also awarded to students who successfully complete a program of study.

CREDIT RECOVERY

The goal of the credit recovery is to give high school students the opportunity to graduate in a timely manner. This program allows students who have failed core courses (courses required for graduation) a chance to make-up non-mastered standards without

repeating the entire course. The credit recovery program is conducted using Edgenuity. The online system does not require a teacher, but is managed by a facilitator. Since the credit recovery program will be offered in an online learning environment, participants in the credit recovery program should be self-motivated and independent learners who exhibit a strong personal commitment towards earning credit in an online environment.

Requirements for Program

1. Grade of 60-69 in the course in which attempting to recover credit or principals written approval.
2. The parent/guardian and student must participate in an interview with the counselor in order to review the program goals and requirements.
3. Early dismissal from credit recovery is not allowed. Disruptive behaviors, and/or abuse of technology privileges will result in removal from credit recovery.
4. If the course requires an EOC, the student must retake the test at the end of the course.
5. Transportation (if applicable) will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
6. All assessments must be taken in the presence of the facilitator.

Awarding Credits

1. Recovered credit will only be awarded when students have completed all work satisfactorily. Recovered credit will be entered on the transcript as repeat attempts and will not replace the previously earned grade. Both the original and the Credit recovery grade will be included in the student's cumulative grade point average.

IMPORTANT

The National Colligate Athletic Association (NCAA) does NOT approve this program for students seeking course credit to be eligible for college/universities under the regulations of the NCAA. Students receiving credit from these programs will not be eligible under NCAA guidelines.

GRADUATION

Graduation is planned by the administration at Fitzgerald High School. ALL requirements for graduation MUST be completed for any senior to participate in graduation, which is to walk across the stage and be recognized at the graduation ceremony. The following requirements must be completed:

1. Seniors must meet the specific credit requirements.
2. Meet all attendance requirements (refer to Attendance Policy).
3. Have settled all outstanding fees as noted in Infinite Campus.

The principal must be notified by May 1st of intent to participate in graduation exercises for students not physically on campus. Senior invitations, caps, and gowns will be arranged through a school approved company representative. Graduates are only allowed to wear stoles or cords awarded by the school and presented at Honors Night. The junior class marshals will be selected based on academic high school academic GPA through the third term of the junior year. The junior class marshals will be selected as the top two juniors, who have been enrolled at FHS since the beginning of the current academic year, with the highest academic GPA's in the junior class. The ushers for graduation will be those juniors with the next highest GPA's in the junior class.

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

Calculations for determining valedictorian and salutatorian will be done at the conclusion of 3rd term. The valedictorian will be the Honor Graduate with the highest academic G.P.A. and meets the requirement to be accepted to a 4-year institution of the university system of Georgia, and the salutatorian will be the Honor Graduate with the second highest academic G.P.A. and meets the requirement to be accepted to a 4-year institution of the university system of Georgia. They will lead the senior class in the commencement procession. The Valedictorian and Salutatorian must be enrolled at FHS on or before the first FTE count in October of their sophomore year and remain enrolled through their senior year.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF TOP TEN

The Top Ten is a Fitzgerald High School recognition program sponsored and funded by the Fitzgerald Rotary Club. The intent of the program is to recognize students who excel in the most academically challenging courses. All grades considered for that academic year must be earned at FHS. To be considered for Top Ten, a student must be enrolled at FHS on or before the first FTE count in October of the current school year. The top ten students in each grade level will be calculated by using students' academic GPA for that school year only. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of at least 3 "higher level" courses – including Honors, AP, Dual Enrollment, and/or Move on When Ready Classes. No bonus points will be figured into the criteria including grades calculated above 100 percent. Calculations for Top Ten will be made at the end of third term.

HONOR GRADUATE

In order to qualify as an Honor Graduate from his/her high school a student seeking a regular education diploma must have attained an average of 90 or better and have an academic grade point average of 3.5 or higher through the third term of their senior year. Honor graduates are expected to maintain high academic standards for the remainder of the year and conduct themselves in a manner becoming an honor student.

No residency requirement exists concerning the qualification of Honor Graduate. Grades from ACCEL university classes will be considered in calculations of the numerical averages. Grades from Honors courses and approved Dual Enrollment courses will be weighted and considered in calculations of the numerical averages.

For purposes of identifying honor graduates, the averages shall be computed at the conclusion of the third nine weeks of the fourth year.

HOPE PROGRAM

The HOPE (Helping Outstanding Students Educationally) grant and scholarship programs will assist graduating high school colleges, universities or technical institutes and in some instances, private institutions. Counselors can provide additional information to students and parents.

GEORGIA GOVERNOR'S HONORS PROGRAM

The Georgia Governor's Honors Program (GHP) is a residential summer program for gifted and talented high school students who will be rising juniors and seniors during the program. The program offers instruction that is significantly different from the typical high school classroom and that is designed to provide students with academic, cultural, and social enrichment necessary to become the next generation of global critical thinkers, innovators, and leaders.

GHP is held in mid-summer (mid-June to mid-July) at a residential educational a college or university campus. Students attend classes in the mornings and afternoons in specific areas of study, and they participate in a wide variety of social and instructional opportunities every evening. The program with the only required and expected costs provides meals and rooms to the students being travel expenses to and from the interviews, a few basic supplies for classes and dorm rooms, and spending money as desired during the program.

CAREER, TECHNICAL AND AGRICULTURE EDUCATION (CTAE) WORK-BASED LEARNING

Any student desiring to participate in the Work-Based Learning (WBL) Program must have successfully completed the tenth grade and be 16 years of age. (Juniors – 11 units; Seniors – 17 units) Only juniors and seniors are eligible for the work program. Other requirements are as follows:

1. Students absent from school are not permitted to go to work without prior approval from the WBL coordinator or CTAE supervisor.
2. Work students should leave for work and must leave campus at designated time
3. Students on the WBL program cannot quit their jobs or give a notice of quitting without approval of the coordinator or the CTAE supervisor.

ARMY JROTC

The Junior Reserve Officers Training Corp is conducted in accordance with Army Regulations and in agreement with the Ben Hill County Board of Education. Participation is open to all students in grades 9-12. Participation imposes no military obligation upon a cadet outside or beyond the school environment. The major objective is to lay the foundation for patriotism, intelligent citizenship, leadership training and development, respect for constituted authority, and self-discipline. Cadets will normally receive at least five hours of military instruction each week between classroom and drill field activity. The Department of the Army provides clothing and equipment, textbooks and other reference material free of charge to the cadets.

EDUCATION AND CAREER PARTNERSHIP (ECP)

ECP is an agreement between Fitzgerald High School and technical colleges of Georgia for the transfer of credit. Many courses at the high school level have been identified to align with postsecondary programs. Programs of study include business office technology, medical assisting, mechatronics, criminal justice, early childhood education, welding, agricultural diesel mechanics, automotive technology and telecommunications. For more information, see your ECP manager or high school counselor.

YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP (YAP)

Youth Apprenticeship is an opportunity for students to work in their chosen career area. It provides school-based learning with work-based learning. Students apply for work experiences that are acquired by the YAP coordinator. Students divide the

school day between classes and the worksite. Only juniors and seniors are eligible for youth apprenticeship.

BRINGING STUDENTS TO SCHOOL

Students may be dropped off and picked up at front entrance of the building. If arriving prior to 8:00 a.m., students must report to the cafeteria or courtyard area.

All student drop offs and pickups must be at the mainentrance in front of the main office.

PARKING REGULATIONS

Parking for students will be in the following approved areas: (a) gymnasium parking lot, or the (b) vocational parking lot. Parking decals will be provided for a cost of \$30.00 for the year and \$15.00 after January 2022. Students desiring to obtain a parking permit must present a valid driver's license and proof of insurance upon request for the permit. All work based learning students (fall or spring semester) must park in the vocational parking lot. Replacement of parking decal will cost \$10.00.

1. Students must park in school approved parking areas only.
2. Permits must be displayed at all times on the inside rear view mirror facing the front windshield. If a different vehicle is driven, the permit in this vehicle must be in the same place.
3. If a permit is lost or left at home, the discipline director's office will issue a temporary parking permit. This is only valid for one day.
4. If another vehicle is parked in the student's space, the vacant space in the vocational parking lot may be used. A report must be filed in the discipline director's office. Students **MUST NOT** park in another's space.
5. Students are not allowed to go to automobiles during the school day. If an emergency should occur, the student must bring a note from the teacher to the discipline director's or another administrator's office.
6. Vehicles to be repaired should be approved by the transportation instructor and brought before school to the transportation shop.
7. Students wishing to exchange parking spaces should come to the vocational office with the person with whom they wish to exchange.
8. Failure to comply with the rules will result in administrative discipline.
9. Students may not loiter in the parking lot before or after school. Students must report to their designated area in the mornings and leave the parking lot in the afternoon.
10. Tickets will be written and fines assessed by the school resource officer for parking and moving violations on campus.
11. Parking violations will be issued and a fine of \$10, payable to the main office, is due within two weeks or student will lose parking privileges and a hold notice will be put on report card or diploma.
12. Students with large vehicles can buy permits for their car only.

NOTE: The administration of Fitzgerald High School reserves the right to search vehicles at any time. Any items forbidden by Fitzgerald High School rules are not allowed in vehicles.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES BY STUDENTS

For the purpose of this policy, electronic communication device is defined as any computer, personal digital assistant, cell phone, smartphone, digital camera or camcorder, pager, two-way radio or other electronic communication device. Students are allowed to possess an electronic communication device while on school premises during the school day **if permitted by staff for instructional purposes in the classroom**. When not being used for instructional purposes during the school day, the electronic device must be kept in the students' book-bag, purse, pants or trouser pocket, or such other location which will keep the device out of the sight and view of other students and school personnel. "Use" of an electronic communication device shall not only include the obvious meaning of that term, but also having the device in the "ON" or operating position. Students who fail to complete and submit the Student and Parent/Guardian Permission Form prior to bringing such personal electronic communication device on school premises are subject to having the device confiscated and other punishment pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

The administration has the authority to scroll through/ search the entire contents of electronic communication devices contents including but not limited to its pictures, video, voice and text messages, address books, incoming/outgoing calls, calendars, emails and instant messages if the administrator has "reasonable suspicion" that there is student misconduct regarding the electronic communication device. Additional punishment will be issued if the electronic communication device is used for purposes such as inappropriate pictures, cheating violations, or student's refusal to turn over electronic communication device. Students may not remove batteries, memory cards, or component parts before handing over the electronic communication device to school authorities. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen electronic communication devices. If a phone or other device is being used, heard, or visible for any reason then the same consequences will apply as listed in the Student Code of Conduct.

MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE

Fitzgerald High School observes a moment of silence as provided by the State Legislature. This period of time is held immediately after the pledge to the American Flag. Both of these observances deserve respect. The flag will be respected and absolute silence is required during the moment of silence.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Students will be expected to behave themselves in such a way so as to facilitate a positive learning environment for themselves and other students, respect each other and school district employees, obey student behavior policies adopted by the Ben Hill County Board of Education and obey student behavior rules established by individual schools.

Students are encouraged to seek the help of school officials in resolving conflicts with other students. Fighting is not permitted under any circumstances.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to inform your children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

A student who believes he/she has been the victim of sexual harassment, racial harassment, or disability harassment by another student or by any school employee should immediately report the incident to a teacher, counselor, assistant principal, principal, superintendent, or to another adult or school official in the school system.

Local boards of education shall provide for the distribution of student codes of conduct to each student upon enrollment and to the parents and guardians of each student and may solicit the signatures of students and parents or guardians in acknowledgement of the receipt of such student codes of conduct. Student codes of conduct shall be available in each school and classroom.

Behavior support processes designed to consider, as appropriate in light of the severity of the behavioral problem, support services that may be available through the school, school system, other public entities, or community organizations that may help the student address behavioral problems. This rule neither mandates nor prohibits the use of student support teams as part of the student support process. The principal, or the principal's designee, shall send written notification to the teacher, and to the student's parents or guardians, of the student support services being utilized or the disciplinary action taken within one school day, and shall make a reasonable attempt to confirm receipt of such written notification by the student's parents or guardians 160-4-8-15. Written notification shall include information regarding how student's parents or guardians may contact the principal or principal's designee.

Local board policies shall require the filing of a report by a teacher documenting a student's violation of the student code of conduct which repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his or her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn within one school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior. The report shall be filed with the principal or principal's designee, shall not exceed one page, and shall describe the behavior. The principal or principal's designee shall, within one day of receiving such report, send to the student's parents or guardians a copy of the report, and information regarding how the principal or principal's designee may be contacted. Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-16 Unsafe School Choice Option.

Each local board of education shall approve Tribunal Training Provider(s). Each local board of education shall make available to all Qualified Student Discipline Hearing Officers and Disciplinary Tribunal or Panel Members the initial and ongoing tribunal training course prior to the individual(s) serving in such capacity. The local board of education shall ensure initially trained student discipline hearing officers and disciplinary tribunal or panel members under go continuing education so as to continue to serve in such capacity.

Local board policies relating to student codes of conduct shall provide that each local superintendent shall fully support the authority of principals and teachers in the school system to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to O.C.G.A.20-2-738. It is the preferred policy of the board of education that disruptive students are placed in alternative education settings in lieu of being suspended or expelled. Any off-campus behavior of a student which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process is part of the state discipline code.

The following student conduct regulations are applicable to students at any time on school grounds, off the school grounds, at a school activity, function, or event, and on school transportation.

INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

The Ben Hill County Board of Education recognizes that as telecommunications and other new technology change the ways that information may be accessed, communicated and transferred by members of society, those changes may also alter instruction and student learning. The Board generally supports access by students to rich information resources along with the development by staff of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources.

The Ben Hill County Board of Education makes available to its students and employees a wide variety of media resources, including electronic media such as the Internet. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees during an Age of Information. The Board expects employees will blend thoughtful use of such information

throughout the curriculum and that employees will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of such resources.

Access to telecommunications will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. The Board believes that the benefits to students from access in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. Please read the following “Student Internet Appropriate Use Regulations and Administrative Procedures.” You and your child’s signatures of the Student Handbook indicate you have read the previously mentioned documents to which you are bound and by which your actions are governed if your child accesses the Internet at any time and under any circumstances as a student of the Ben Hill County School System. To that end, the Ben Hill County Schools support and respect each family’s right to deny internet access for their child. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may obtain a “Request to Deny Internet Access” form available in the principal’s office.

Student Internet Appropriate Use Regulations and Administrative Procedures

The School District will enforce the following administrative procedures. Although some specific examples of prohibited uses by students are stated, they are intended as illustrations only and do not purport to be an all-inclusive list of inappropriate behaviors. Failure to comply with these administrative procedures shall be deemed ground for revocation of privileges, potential disciplinary and/or appropriate legal action.

Terms and Conditions

Acceptable Use: Access to the school’s Internet is provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the school system’s educational mission and goals.

Privileges: The use of the school system’s Internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in the cancellation of those privileges. The Superintendent or designee(s) shall make all decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated these policies and procedures and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time.

Unacceptable Use: The user is responsible for all his/her actions and activities involving the network. Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to the following:

A. Accessing materials or communications that are:

1. Damaging to another’s reputation
2. Abusive
3. Obscene
4. Sexually oriented
5. Threatening
6. Contrary to the school system’s policy on harassment.
7. Harassing
8. Unauthorized access including so-called “hacking,” and
9. Other unlawful activities

B. Sending or posting materials or communications which are:

1. Damaging to another’s reputation
2. Abusive
3. Obscene
4. Sexually oriented
5. Threatening
6. Contrary to the school system’s policy on harassment
7. Harassing
8. Other unlawful activities

C. Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts or transmitting any material in violation of U.S. and State regulations;

D. Copying or downloading copyrighted material on any system connected to the School System’s hardware/ software without the owner’s permission. Only the owner(s) or individuals specifically authorized in writing by the owner(s) may copy or download copyrighted material to the system;

E. Copying or downloading copyrighted material without the owner’s written permission - Copyrighted material can only be distributed with the owner’s written permission. Such permission must be specified in the document or must be obtained directly from the owner in accordance with applicable copyright laws, Board policy and administrative procedures;

F. Using the network for private financial or commercial gain;

G. Wastefully using resources;

H. Utilizing any software having the purpose of damaging the unit’s system or user’s system;

- I. Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities(hacking);
- J. Invading the privacy of individuals;
- K. Using another user's account or password;
- L. Posting material authorized or created by another without his/her consent;
- M. Posting anonymous messages;
- N. Using the network for commercial or private advertising;
- O. Forging of electronic mail messages
- P. Attempting to read, delete, copy or modify the electronic mail of other system users and deliberately interfering with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail;
- Q. Using the network while access privileges are suspended or revoked; and
- R. Using the network in a fashion inconsistent with directions from teachers and other staff and generally accepted network etiquette.

Compensation: The student and/or the student's parent's/legal guardian(s) shall be responsible for compensating the school system for any losses, costs, or damages incurred by the school system relating to or arising out of any student violation of these procedures and policy.

Security: Network security is a high priority. If the student identifies or perceives a security problem or breach of these responsibilities on the Internet, the user must immediately notify the principal, his/her designee OR other appropriate staff. They must not demonstrate the problem to other student users.

Vandalism: Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and other disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy the school unit's equipment or materials, data of another student, the Internet network, or agency. This includes but is not limited to the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

Telephone Charges: The Board of Education assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or fees including but not limited to long distance charges, per minute surcharges and/or equipment or line costs.

Network Etiquette: The user is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include but are not limited to the following:

- 1. Be polite. Do not become abusive in messages to others.
- 2. Use appropriate language. DO NOT swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- 3. Do not reveal the personal addresses or telephone numbers of any students.
- 4. Recognize that electronic mail (E-mail) is not private. People who operate the system have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- 5. Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt its use by other users.
- 6. Consider all communications and information accessible via the network to be private property.
- 7. Limiting streaming music and video files for educational use only.

Unauthorized Disclosure: Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors is illegal under the Children's Internet Protection Act.

If you have questions about this policy and these procedures, you may wish to speak to your Principal, and/or Technology Coordinator.

Bullying: The term "bullying" means an act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or "cyber-bullying" 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 CodeSection 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 educational environment; or
 - D. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

PHOTO USE PER PERMISSION

Unless the parent or legal guardian requests otherwise, pictures and/or audiovisual recordings of students may be taken by the news media and/or the school system or individual schools during sporting events, awards ceremonies, and general interest events. Pictures and/or audiovisual presentations of students may appear on the school system or individual web sites. Pictures may also appear in school, school system and/or news media publications. If the parent or legal guardian wishes to prohibit the taking of any picture or the making of any audiovisual recording of their child by the news media, school system, or by individual schools, notification must be filed, in writing to the school principal, within 10 days of the beginning of the school year or the date of enrollment. Pictures and/or audiovisual recordings that identify students as receiving special education instruction will not be allowed without prior approval.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS (NOTIFICATION OF)

Under the laws of Georgia, any teacher, principal, or other school official who has reasonable cause to believe that a student has committed criminal acts upon school property or at any school function has a duty to make a written report of that act in order that the act shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

The acts which must be reported to law enforcement officials include certain criminal offenses under Georgia law including aggravated battery, carrying deadly weapons at public gatherings, possession/use and/or sale/ transfer of marijuana or illegal drugs, and certain sexual offenses. In addition, terroristic threats will be reported.

QUESTIONING AND APPREHENSION BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER ON SCHOOL PREMISES

Please be advised that Georgia Law authorizes law enforcement personnel to come onto school campuses for the purpose of both interviewing and arresting students. Although every effort will be made to contact parents prior to the student's interrogation or arrest, the school system cannot impede law enforcement personnel in their investigative efforts. Further, Georgia Law provides that juveniles charged with crimes do not have a right to have their parents present when being questioned by law enforcement officials. Law enforcement officials will be asked to sign a release form prior to removing a child from school.

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS OF STUDENTS SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student lockers or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search. As used in this policy, the term "unauthorized" means any item dangerous to the health or safety of students or school personnel, or disruptive of any lawful function, mission or process of the school, or any item described as unauthorized in school rules available beforehand to the student. A student's failure to permit searches will be considered grounds for disciplinary action.

For the safety of all persons on school campuses, buses and at school activities, school administrators may use metal detectors to search students and their personal property on a random basis for firearms and other weapons before, during or after the school day on school property, school transportation and at school related activities.

1. Personal Searches

A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, wallet, cell phones, etc.) may be searched by a school administrator whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of a weapon or any other object in violation of school policy. The search is not to be intrusive.

A student who refuses a reasonable request by an administrator to submit to a personal search shall be suspended for ten (10) days and the principal shall recommend his/her expulsion from the Ben Hill County School System.

2. Locker Searches

Student lockers are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers.

School authorities for any reason may conduct periodic general inspection of lockers at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

3. Automobile Searches

Students are permitted to park on school campus as a matter of privilege, not a right. The school retains authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspection of the exteriors of student automobiles on school property.

Automobiles may be opened and the interiors of the students' vehicles may be searched or inspected more thoroughly whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion or belief that illegal or unauthorized materials are contained inside whether or not the illegal or unauthorized materials are in plain sight. Such reasonable suspicion may arise from the school official having seen something in plain view through the vehicle's windows, from the school having been informed by a staff member or student that a weapon, drug or some other unlawful or dangerous item is located in the vehicle or from other

such circumstances.

4. School Safety Searches

Searches by Drug-Sniffing and/or Weapon Sniffing Canine and/or by Metal Detectors: Students should understand that school lockers, vehicles, classrooms, and other areas of the campus may be searched during school safety searches conducted by appropriate law enforcement agencies in cooperation with local school officials on unannounced dates during the school year using drug sniffing or weapon sniffing canines. In addition, in the interest of school safety, hand held and/or walk through metal detectors may be used during school safety searches.

Serious Violations/Special Circumstances: A serious violation is considered to be:

1. A student carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or the LEA
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or to a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or the LEA.
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or the LEA

Seizure of Illegal Materials: If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to proper authorities for ultimate disposition.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Ben Hill County School System has a Code of Conduct, and all students are expected to follow these rules unless a child's IEP provides otherwise. This Code is included in the Handbook that each student is given at the beginning of each school year or when he or she enrolls in school. All students are expected to know and follow these rules. School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case by case basis when determining discipline of a child with a disability. Parents and students return a signed form to each school acknowledging that they have read and understand these rules. Students with disabilities are expected to follow the rules, just like all of the students in the school unless otherwise noted in the IEP. Disciplinary information contained in these procedures pertains to all students with disabilities in any category of eligibility who violate the code of student conduct.

The school system will ensure that the parent and the child with a disability will receive notice of the rules and regulations that apply to children with disabilities with respect to child management, discipline and suspension/expulsion upon the child's entry into a special education program and at the annual IEP review meeting. The lead teacher or case manager is responsible for providing parents with procedural safeguards during the annual IEP meeting. At these meetings the lead teacher or case manager will provide discipline procedures.

The student will receive, as appropriate, a Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavioral Interventions as stated in the Behavior Intervention Plan and IEP that are designed to address the behavior violation so it does not recur.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Alternative Education Program addresses the general educational needs of students who have been unsuccessful in a traditional school setting. The AEP will serve as an alternative learning environment for students in grades 6-12 who have been referred to an alternative education setting.

The AEP program is a technology driven, individualized, competency-based program designed to meet the educational needs of all students. The primary curriculum is EDGENUITY.

Students and parents/guardians will complete an interview as part of the intake process. All parties must agree to the structured terms of the agreement. Upon acceptance, students will attend a non-traditional school day.

Graduating seniors who attend the Alternative Education Program due to disciplinary reasons are not allowed to participate in any Board of Education graduation activities. This does not include students who elect to attend by choice.

BEN HILL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2021-2022 School Calendar

BEN HILL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 2021-2022 School Calendar

JULY				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

4th of July

AUGUST				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

SEPTEMBER				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

6th Labor Day

OCTOBER				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

11th Columbus Day

NOVEMBER				
M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

22th - 26th Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

20th - Jan 2nd Christmas Break

JANUARY				
M	T	W	Th	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

1st New Year's Day
17th MLK Day

FEBRUARY				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28				

21st Presidents Day

MARCH				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

28th - 1st Spring Break

APRIL				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

28th - 1st Spring Break

MAY				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

20th Graduation 30th Memorial Day

JUNE				
M	T	W	Th	F
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

End of Quarter
Pre/Post Planning

PLC Training
First/Last day of School

End of Semester
Break/Holiday/Off

Work	
7	July
22	Aug
21	Sept
16	Oct
17	Nov
13	Dec
20	Jan
15	Feb
19	March
20	April
20	May
0	June
190	Total

Homeroom _____
Teacher _____

AFFIRMATION OF RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

(Please print)

I, _____,
Student's Last Name First Middle Preferred Name

have received a copy of the **Ben Hill County Schools 2021-2022 Student Handbook and the school supplemental handbook (for respective schools)**. The handbooks contain the student code of conduct, state law, state school board policy, and local policy on student attendance. I understand the policies, procedures, and directives set forth in these handbooks. Furthermore, I agree to abide by these policies, procedures, and directives.

Student Signature

We have read a copy (either electronic or paper) of the **Ben Hill County Schools 2021-2022 Student Handbook and the school supplemental handbook (for respective schools)** which contain the student code of conduct, state law, state school board policy, and local policy. We expect our son/daughter/student to abide by these policies.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please sign, date, and return to the school site within five school days.

INSIDE

BACK COVER

INTENTIONALLY

LEFT BLANK