

# Bryan County Schools



# Student/Parent Handbook 2025-2026

**BRYAN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Paul T. Brooksher, Ph.D.,  
Superintendent**

**BOARD MEMBERS**

**Amy Murphy  
Chairman of the Board**

**Marianne Smith  
Vice-Chairman of the Board**

**Shawn Page  
District 1 Representative**

**Dennis Seger  
District 2 Representative**

**Derrick Smith  
District 3 Representative**

**Karen Krupp  
District 4 Representative**

**David Schwartz  
District 5 Representative**

**Bryan County Schools Mission:  
“We are dedicated to rigorous educational tasks that challenge and motivate students while always  
being focused on continuous improvement.”**

**Bryan County School System is accredited by COGNIA**



Table of Contents

Superintendent’s Welcome .....5

**Attendance Policies** .....6

Absences.....6

Reporting Absences.....6

Attendance Protocols.....7

Children in Need of Services (C.H.I.N.S.) Program.....8

Progression for Excessive Unexcused Absences.....8

FAQ on the Attendance Policy.....9

Custodial/Guardianship Changes.....9

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS).....12

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).....12

Homeless Children and Youth.....13

Behavior and Expectations.....14

Purpose and Scope of the Behavior Code.....14

Rules.....16

Bus Disciplinary Procedures.....17

General Discipline Information.....17

Elementary School Discipline Guidelines.....17

Middle School Discipline Guidelines (Daily Infractions).....18

Middle School Automatic Discipline Actions.....18

High School Discipline Guidelines (Daily Infractions).....19

High School Automatic Discipline Actions.....20

Range of Consequences.....21

Student Removal from Class.....21

Dress Code.....21

Electronics/Network Expectations.....22

Extracurricular Activity Expectations.....23

Consequences.....24

Glossary of Discipline Terms.....25

Bus Suspension.....25

Enrollment, Transfers & Withdrawals.....30

**Instruction**.....27

Curriculum .....27

Dual Enrollment .....27

Exceptional Student Services .....27

Georgia Milestones Assessment “Test Out” Option for High School.....27

Grade Scale.....28

Professional Qualifications of Teachers .....28

Promotion Policy.....28

Grades 1-8.....28

Grades 9-12.....28

Student Support.....28

Title I, Parental Involvement Plan.....29

Valedictorian, Salutatorian & Honor Graduate .....29

Class Ranking .....30

**Health & Safety**.....33

Bedbugs .....33

Bryan County School System Safety Plan.....33

Child Abuse and/or Neglect.....33

Concussion Policy.....33

Diabetes Medical Management Plan.....34

COVID-19 Positives.....34

Emergency Contact Information.....34

Fever .....34

First Aid/Illness .....34

Head Lice .....34

Health Services: Clinic.....34

Health Services: Immunization.....34

Health Services: Medication.....34

Students with Health Plans .....34

Accident Insurance .....35

Centegix Crisis Alert System.....35

School Closings .....35

Tip411 .....35

Hospital/Homebound Program .....35

Vomiting.....35

School Closings.....35

Self-Administration of Medication .....35

Seizure Action Plan .....35

Water Safety.....37

Weather and Safety Drills .....37

Weapons Detection System .....37

School Nutrition Program Information .....37

**Legal Information** .....39

Annual Notice of Nondiscrimination.....39

Complaint Procedure .....39

Bryan County School System Complaint Procedure for Title II; Title IX; and Section 504.....39

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).....41

Harassment Statement.....42

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.....42

Child Find Responsibility .....43

Sexual Misconduct .....43

Student Complaints and Grievances .....44

Parents and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).....48

Release of Directory Information.....49

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.....42

**Miscellaneous District Information**.....46

Electronic Media for Students.....46

Financial Procedures.....46

Money and Valuable Objects.....46

Other Services to Students.....46

Photography/Digital Media.....46

Posters, Invitations, and Announcements.....47

Student Solicitations and Fundraising.....47

Transportation .....47

Visitors on School Property .....47

Volunteer Information .....48

July 2025							<b>29-31 Pre-Planning</b> (In-Service Days)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
		1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30	31			

January 2026							<b>1-2 Semester Break</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)  <b>5 In-Service Days</b> (Student Holiday)  <b>6 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester Begins</b>  <b>19 M.L.K. Holiday</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
				1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2025							<b>1-5 Pre-Planning</b> (In-Service Days)  <b>6 First Day of School</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> Semester Begins)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
					1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
31							

February 2026							<b>16 Winter Break</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)  <b>16 President's Day</b>  <b>17 PL Day/Workday</b> (Student Holiday)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	

September 2025							<b>1 Labor Day</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)  <b>2 PL Day/Workday</b> (Student Holiday)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30					

March 2026							<b>16 Holiday Break</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)  <b>17 St. Patrick's Day</b>  <b>17 PL Day/Workday</b> (Student Holiday)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30	31					

October 2025							<b>10-13 Fall Break</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)  <b>13 Columbus Day</b>  <b>14 PL Day/Workday</b> (Student Holiday)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
26	27	28	29	30	31		

April 2026							<b>6-10 Spring Break</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
26	27	28	29	30			

November 2025							<b>24-28 Thanksgiving Break</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
						1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30							

May 2026							<b>22 Last Day of School</b> (End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester)  <b>25 Memorial Day</b>  <b>26-27 In-Service Day</b>
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
					1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
31							

December 2025							<b>19 End of 1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>  <b>22-31 Semester Break</b> (Staff and Student Holiday)
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30	31				

June 2026							
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30						

- Beginning of Term
- Professional Learning Day or Teacher Workday/Student Holiday
- Staff and Student Holiday
- End of Term

# Superintendent's Welcome,

Dear Bryan County Students and Families,

On behalf of the Bryan County Board of Education, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2025–2026 school year—a year that holds great promise and transformational growth for our community and our schools. This school year marks a historic and exciting moment for Bryan County Schools as we proudly open the doors to the new Richmond Hill High School.



This state-of-the-art facility is a testament to our community's commitment to educational excellence and will provide students with innovative spaces designed for collaboration, creativity, and academic success.

At the same time, we are actively engaged in planning a new Bryan County High School, a project that will further elevate opportunities for students in the northern part of our county. These bold developments reflect our shared vision for a future-focused school system rooted in high-quality teaching, learning, and student achievement.

As always, student success, instructional excellence, and school safety remain at the heart of all we do. The Student & Parent Handbook has been created to provide important information on district policies, procedures, and expectations. You'll find details about the Code of Conduct, transportation services, nutrition programs, extracurricular offerings, and other valuable resources designed to support a successful school year.

I encourage you to review this handbook with your student(s) and to stay connected throughout the year. Updated information will be shared regularly on our district website at [www.bryancountyschools.org](http://www.bryancountyschools.org) and through our official Bryan County Schools Facebook page. These tools are the best way to stay informed and engaged with the exciting things happening across our schools.

We are grateful for the continued support of our families and community partners. Together, we will make the 2025–2026 school year a truly remarkable one.

Welcome back—and let's make it a great year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul T. Brooksher".

Paul T. Brooksher, Ph.D.  
Superintendent  
Bryan County Schools



## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### ***Reporting Absences***

Parents or guardians are encouraged to contact the school on the day of the student's absence to indicate the reason for the absence. This includes, but is not limited to, local schools requesting appropriate documentation from the parent/guardian of a student with excessive absences (excused or unexcused). If a student has accumulated excessive absences, the school will contact the parent, guardian, or person having charge or control of the student to notify them of these absences and the possible consequences.

### ***State Attendance Requirements***

School attendance is very important to the learning process. The good work habits students develop now will be beneficial to them later in life. Attendance also correlates strongly with test results. The greater a student's attendance in class, the more success they will have in school. Student attendance is a specific indicator on the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI). **Student attendance impacts all additional areas of CCRPI as well.**

Georgia law requires compulsory school attendance for all students between the ages of 6 and 16 residing in Bryan County. Any parent, guardian or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of a child or children and who violates the law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, can be subject to a fine not to exceed \$100 or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, or both, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1). In addition, a child under six years of age who has attended more than 20 days in public school will be subject to the compulsory attendance law. {(O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150 (C))}.

Any child subject to the compulsory attendance, who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences, shall be deemed truant per the Georgia Department of Education State Board Rule 160-5-1-10 STUDENT ATTENDANCE and Bryan County Schools Board Policy JB STUDENT ATTENDANCE.

Students are not counted absent from school if they are present at least half of the instructional day. Students will be marked absent from every class they miss, however, even if counted present for the day. Attendance is checked every block/class in the middle and high schools. If a student is not present for at least half of a class, they are marked absent from that class. Students should make up the missed work within five (5) school days.

For more information about student attendance please visit the following site: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/>

### ***Bryan County Attendance Requirements***

Students not subject to compulsory school attendance laws who are enrolled for the current school year who do not attend school for ten (10) consecutive days, and the local school is not notified of the absence by parent/guardian are considered withdrawn. These students may be dropped from the school's rosters after attempting to notify the parent or guardian. Students determined to no longer be a resident of the system may be withdrawn even if the student is subject to compulsory school attendance laws. The withdrawal shall be retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

Students who have received a short-term suspension (1–10 days), will be allowed to make-up their work; however, it is incumbent upon the student to do so in a timely fashion. Students are responsible for making arrangements and completing make-up work **within five school days**.

**For currently enrolled students who are subject to compulsory school attendance laws, it is required that schools make a good-faith effort to obtain documented information that the student no longer resides in the school's attendance zone before the student is withdrawn. Parents/Guardians may be asked for proof of residency at any time. Students who have emergencies necessitating their absence from school for a portion of the school day must have been present for the majority of the school day in order to be counted present.**



**Attendance-Tardiness and Early Checkout**

**Early Checkouts** occur when a student is removed from class and leaves school prior to the official end of the school day with a parent or legal guardian. An early checkout can be marked as excused if it is aligned to the excused absences guidelines.

**Tardies** for purposes of this section of the student handbook occur when a student is late to school. A tardy can be marked as excused if it is aligned to the excused absences guidelines.

**Attendance- Full day Consideration**

**ES/ MS** - To be considered in attendance for a school day, the student must be present for at least one-half of the school day, excluding lunch period.

**HS** - High School attendance is taken by class. In order for a student to participate in an extra-curricular activity he/she must be present for at least 2 periods that school day. Exceptions can only be made by the principal prior to the school day.

**Attendance- Absences and Excuses**

The basis of Bryan County Schools **excused absences** definition comes from OCGA 160-5-1-.10.

The Bryan County Schools procedure reads as follows:

- Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others. Bryan County Schools will request medical documentation upon the return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
- A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family necessitating absence from school. In the event of a serious illness in a student's immediate family, Bryan County Schools will request students to present appropriate medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
- A court order or an order by a government agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
- Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety. (For Bryan County Public Schools, the closure of schools for hazardous conditions may only be made by the Superintendent to qualify as an excused absence.)
- A period not to exceed one day (1) is allowed at the discretion of the local school for registering to vote or voting in a public election.
- Students will be counted present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly.
- Students who are in a foster home or otherwise in the foster care system under the Division of Family and Children Services of the Department of Human Services will be counted present for any day, portion of a day, or days missed from school when attending court proceedings related to that student's foster care.
- A student who participates in the Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) program will be counted as present and given full credit for the school day during which he or she served in the STEP program.
- Military Dependent Absence: Code Section 20-2-692.1 provides that a student whose parent is in the armed forces of the United States military or National Guard, and said parent has been called for overseas deployment or is on leave from overseas deployment, will be granted up to five (5) school days of excused absences per school year to visit with said parent, prior to their deployment or while they are on leave.

**Progression for Excessive Unexcused Absences****Elementary/Middle School Progression for Excessive Unexcused Absences (Determined by School Year) 5 Absences—**

- Parent/guardian will be notified by a letter sent home of the number of unexcused absences and will be reminded of the state's attendance requirements.
- Student is considered truant by Georgia State Board of Education Rule

**7 Absences—**

- Parent/guardian will be notified by phone.
- A letter, attendance protocol, and form will be sent home for the parent to sign and return to the school indicating that they received and understand the school's attendance protocol.
- A mandatory meeting will be arranged with the parent/ guardian, student, and school's Student Support Team.

**10 Absences—**

- Parent/guardian will be sent a letter to inform them that any more unexcused absences will result in a referral to the CHINS Program through the Juvenile Court.

**10+ Absences—**

- The student will be referred to the CHINS Program through the Juvenile Court.
- Fifteen (15) absences could result in the failure of a class.

**High School Progression for Excessive Unexcused Absences (Determined by Grading Period/Semester)****3 Absences—**

- Parent/guardian will be notified by a letter sent home to inform of the number of unexcused absences and the state's attendance requirements.

**5 Absences—**

- Parent/guardian will be notified by phone.
- A letter, attendance protocol, and form will be sent home for the parents to sign and return to the school indicating they received and understand the school's attendance protocol.
- A mandatory meeting will be arranged with the parent/guardian, student, and school's Student Support Team.
- Student is considered truant by Georgia State Board of Education Rule

**7 Absences—**

- Parent/guardian will be sent a letter with the return receipt requested to inform them any more unexcused absences:
  - will result in a referral to the CHINS Program through the Juvenile Court
  - could result in course credit being denied

**10 Absences—**

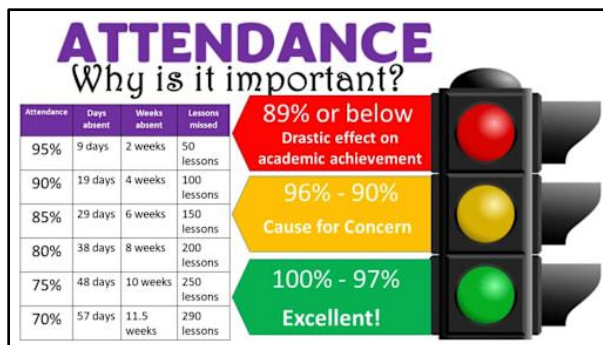
- Student is considered truant by Georgia State Board of Education Rule
- The student will be referred to the CHINS Program through the Juvenile Court

**What is Children in Need of Services (C.H.I.N.S.) Program?**

C.H.I.N.S. is an approach to dealing with status offenses including truancy as created by the Juvenile Justice Reform Act (House Bill 242) and went into effect January 1st, 2014. It promotes early intervention and effective alternatives to low-risk offenders and uses juvenile courts as a last resort for discipline.

**CHINS referral process:**

When the school brings a complaint, it must show written documentation and attempt to address the issue at the school level. This includes addressing any disabilities or suspected disabilities that may be contributing to the child's behavior and/or evaluating the child for additional services, when appropriate.





## FAQ on the Attendance Policy

### Do I have to take my child to the doctor if they are too sick to attend school?

No.

### How do I know if my child is too sick for school?

Bryan County Schools knows it is difficult to make those early morning decisions. The main reasons for keeping your child at home are as follows:

- If he/she is too sick to be comfortable at school
- If he/she will spread a contagious illness/disease to another child
- If he/she has a fever 100 degrees or more

For more information visit: <https://www.choa.org/medical-services/wellness-and-preventive-care/parent-resources/all/too-sick-for-school>

### Are handwritten or typed notes signed by a parent/guardian going to be accepted at all to excuse absences under the Bryan County School Attendance Protocol?

No, only official documentation (i.e. healthcare provider notes, court papers, etc.) will be accepted to excuse an absence from school and it will only be accepted if received by the school **within five school days** of the student's return to school.

### Can a student make up work when an absence is unexcused?

Whether the absence is excused or unexcused, students have five school days after returning to school to complete make-up work. The Bryan County Schools Attendance Protocol does not require parents/guardians to take students to the doctor. The parent/guardian of a student must determine when to take their children to a healthcare provider. In terms of the Bryan County Schools Attendance Protocol, if a student does not attend school and does not have appropriate documentation from a healthcare professional, then the absence will be unexcused. If a student is seen by a healthcare professional, the parent/guardian has five school days after the student returns to school in order to turn in the medical documentation to excuse the absence(s).

### If a child is sent home by a school administrator or a school nurse, is the child marked with an excused or unexcused absence?

When a child is ill and sent home by a school administrator or a school nurse, the absence is considered **excused** for the period of time they were sent home. If the child continues to be absent from school, the absences beyond the day sent home will be marked unexcused until a healthcare provider's documentation is received by the school. The documentation from a healthcare provider must be submitted to the school within five school days from the student's return to school.

### What if my child has regular healthcare appointments during school time and leaves school early multiple times a week?

The situation would be an early check-out. Early checkouts occur when a student is removed from class and leaves school prior to the official end of the school day with a parent or legal guardian. An early checkout can be marked as excused if it is aligned to the excused absences guidelines. Please note that according to the Bryan County Schools Attendance Protocol after any combination of 10 early checkouts and/or tardies, a residency letter will be sent home to verify that the student lives in the district. If residency documents are not produced within 10 school days, then a withdrawal letter will be issued. The residency verification process will be triggered for excused or unexcused early checkouts and tardies.

### What options do I have, as a parent/guardian, if my child has concerns with attendance?

All Bryan County Schools have Student Support Teams that meet after a student has accumulated 5 unexcused absences. The committees are comprised of the parent/guardian, student, school counselor, and other personnel that are necessary including but not limited to the teacher, school social worker, and school administrator. The purpose of the Student Support Team is to examine individual student attendance data with parents/guardians to develop interventions and ensure that the proper support is in place to support student achievement.

**What happens after any combination of 10 unexcused early checkouts and/or tardies?**

A residency letter will be sent home to verify that the student lives in the district. If residency documents are not produced within 10 school days, then a withdrawal letter will be issued.


**If my child has a disability under Section 504 or receives special education services, is he or she exempt from the Bryan County Schools Attendance Protocol?**

The Bryan County Schools Attendance Protocol is in place for all students including students with disabilities. Many students with disabilities require frequent healthcare appointments for their disabling conditions. Healthcare provider notes will continue to be accepted to excuse absences from school if received by the school within five school days from the student’s return to school.

**Where can I go if I still have questions about the Bryan County Schools Attendance Protocol?**

School administrators, school counselors, and school social workers are available to address questions related to the Bryan County Schools Attendance Protocol.








Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow!


# Attendance Matters!

Students with good attendance...









Elementary	Middle School	High School	College/Work
...increase reading, math and foundational skills.	...develop meaningful relationships and communication skills	...gain essential life skills needed beyond graduation	...are successful at their jobs and/or earn degrees

Students at all levels experience less stress with good attendance!

## **BEHAVIOR, CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student, and other relevant factors. **Parents and/or guardian must be called for all disciplinary actions whether verbal and/or written.**

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

The following is general information regarding discipline:

- Students under short-term suspension (1–10 days), long-term suspension (10 or more days), or expulsion are not allowed on any Bryan County school campus or to attend any school activity, function, or event. Students assigned to out-of-school suspension are not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities during that time period. Students who are under suspension or expulsion through the spring semester will not be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored activities, including the prom, graduation exercises, or baccalaureate ceremonies.
- All dangerous weapons, instruments, or controlled substances confiscated by school authorities are to be turned into school administration.
- A student is considered to be in possession of an illegal and/or banned item(s) or substance(s) when such item(s) or substance(s) is found on the person of the student, in his/her possession, in his/her locker, in a student's vehicle on school or property, or in any vehicle a student brought on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, or any school event held away from the school.
- Students are prohibited from engaging in gang/hate groups or hazing related activities in school.
- School administrators and/or their designated representatives possess the authority to conduct a reasonable search of students, their possessions, their lockers, and their vehicles when on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, or at any school event held away from the school if it is established there is reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal a violation of the law, the Student Conduct Behavior Code, or local school rules.
- A student may be considered a party to a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code and disciplined for the underlying offense when the student: (1) Directly violates the Student Conduct Behavior Code; (2) Intentionally causes some other person to commit a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code; (3) Intentionally advises, encourages, hires, counsels, or procures another to commit a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code. A student may be considered a party to a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code even when the responsible persons are not students subject to the Code.
- Certain violations of the Student Conduct Behavior Code may also be violations of state law and juvenile authorities. Other law enforcement agencies may address the student's misconduct in accordance with state laws, in addition to the school system's administrative procedures and regulations.
- Students are to notify an administrator or staff member when suspected illegal items, dangerous items, or other items banned from school are found in the school building, on the school campus, or on the school bus. Students are advised not to pick up or handle illegal, dangerous, banned, or unidentified items. State law requires that certain criminal offenses committed by a student while on school property or at a school-sponsored activity, function, or event be reported to the principal, school superintendent, appropriate law enforcement authority, and the District Attorney. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1184).
- Students should recognize their responsibility to know the contents of this student discipline handbook and to ask the local school administration or staff for clarification. All students, regardless of age, are subject to the rules and regulations of the Bryan County Schools. Parents will review the contents of this handbook with their students.
- Georgia law makes it unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, disperse, or possess with the intent to distribute a controlled substance or marijuana in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, secondary school, or school board used for elementary or secondary education. Any person who violates or conspires to violate this code section shall be guilty of a felony. (O.C.G.A. § 16-13-32.4)



- Students coming from Department of Juvenile Justice placement, public or private residential treatment facility, or incarceration for longer than 30 days will transition through the Bryan County School System's Alternative Program.
- After a disciplinary hearing has been held, textbooks, materials, or equipment belonging to the local school must be returned to a school administrator at their local school, upon assignment to the Alternative Program.
- The Unsafe School Choice Option provides students at schools classified as "persistently dangerous" with the option of transferring to another school. Major offenses, including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to a school being named "persistently dangerous" or unsafe pursuant to State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16.

## ***Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)***

Bryan County Schools is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment. We implement **PBIS** as a proactive, school-wide approach to teaching and supporting appropriate student behavior. Through PBIS, students are explicitly taught behavioral expectations in all school settings and are recognized for positive conduct. Our PBIS model emphasizes a **school-wide behavior matrix** outlining clear expectations for behavior in the school. A **tiered approach to behavioral support**, ensuring that all students have access to the interventions they need. By promoting and reinforcing positive behavior, PBIS helps create a culture of respect, responsibility, and safety. PBIS encourages students to take ownership of their actions, develop strong decision-making skills, and engage meaningfully in the school community. Our goal is to equip students with the habits of mind and behavior that support lifelong learning and civic responsibility.

## ***Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)***

In addition to PBIS, we use a **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** to ensure that each student receives the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional assistance they need to succeed. MTSS is a data-driven framework that provides **Tier 1** High-quality instruction and support for all students, **Tier 2** targeted interventions for students who need additional assistance and **Tier 3** Intensive, individualized interventions for students with significant needs. Our MTSS process involves regular progress monitoring, data-based decision-making, and close collaboration with families and staff to provide the most effective support possible. Parents are encouraged to reach out to their child's teacher, counselor, or administrator to learn more about the support available through PBIS and MTSS.



### **Student Codes of Conduct**

Bryan County Schools is committed to creating a safe, positive environment for all our students, staff, parents, stakeholders, and community partners. BCS will work to ensure that all students and staff are well-motivated, fully aware of their potential, and dedicated to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills and behavior. BCS believes that all children can thrive in a safe learning environment. The district utilizes a range of activities to recognize, celebrate, and reward positive behavior at the classroom, school and district levels.

BCS has adopted this Code to support the creation of a safe learning environment for all members of the school community. The purpose of this Code is to state clearly our standards for the acceptable conduct of students. The Code also explains the consequences for not meeting these standards of conduct. This Code establishes a strict policy for behavior that endangers the safety of the schools and/or disrupts the educational experience for other students. BCS does not permit corporal punishment.

The Code also sets forth the disciplinary procedures for the students who have committed violations of the Code. This Code is not meant to be a contract between the district and the students and may be amended at any time. It is a place for Bryan County Schools to explain certain guidelines applicable to students.

The rules in this Code are designed to notify students (grades K–12) as to the types of behaviors that are not acceptable; nevertheless, every specific situation may not have been included. Consequently, students should expect to be disciplined for misconduct that is obviously inappropriate. A specific rule need not be written for every conceivable variation of behavior that directly affects the orderly mission of the school.

Everyone is entitled to a safe, secure, and orderly environment in which to learn and work. The rules and regulations in this Code are designed toward that end and are effective during the following times and places:

- On school grounds at any time;
- Off school grounds at a bus stop, on a school bus, at a school activity, function, or event;
- Off school grounds when the behavior of a student (1) could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony or which could result in a felony criminal charge if committed by an adult; and which (2) makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to person or property at school or which disrupts the educational process. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.5(c)).
- Off school grounds while the student is participating in or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities such as field trips, conferences or athletic events, or is otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of school authorities;
- Off school grounds when the misconduct is directed at a school student or employee and is related to the victim's school affiliation, or when the off-campus conduct directly affects the safety and welfare of the school community or the orderly mission and function of the school; and
- Off school grounds and when a student leaves without permission (AWOL) of a school official or anytime Rule 12 would apply.

### **Range of Consequences**

The decision to address a student's violation of the **Student Conduct Behavior Code** shall be made by the **local school administration**, based on the nature and severity of the incident, the student's prior behavior, and the best interest of the school community. The following **disciplinary actions** may be imposed, individually or in combination, for any violation of this Code of Conduct:

- Warning and/or counseling with a school administrator or counselor
- Notification of parents or guardians
- Parent conference
- Loss of privileges (e.g., extracurricular participation, campus access)
- Isolation/time-out/reset
- Temporary removal from class or activity
- Detention or Saturday School
- In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Short-term suspension from school



- Restitution for stolen or damaged property
- Suspension or expulsion from the school bus
- Suspension or expulsion from the school
- Referral to a disciplinary hearing
- Placement in Bryan County Schools' Alternative Education Program

Disciplinary actions are determined **on a case-by-case basis**, ensuring fairness, due process, and alignment with district policy. The goal is to provide opportunities for reflection, accountability, and positive behavior change. References to **Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.)** within this Student Conduct Behavior Code are provided for context and clarity. However, **school disciplinary actions do not require that the legal elements of a specific criminal code section be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.** These references do not impose additional legal intent requirements on school personnel when enforcing this Code of Conduct.

In accordance with **Georgia law**, certain acts of misconduct must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Additionally, school officials **retain the discretion to refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement** when it is determined that such a referral is necessary or appropriate based on the nature or severity of the incident.

## **RULES**

### **Rule 1- Disruption and Interference with School**

No student shall cause or attempt to cause directly or indirectly disruption or interference with school.

### **Rule 2- Damage, Destruction, or Misuse of School Property or Equipment**

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to school property or alter/misuse school technology or any other equipment, including accessing unauthorized areas on the computer. A student shall not steal or attempt to steal school property. A student shall not possess, sell, use, buy or transmit stolen school property or attempt to possess, sell, use, buy or transmit stolen school property. Students may not record or transmit recordings of School Employees, students, or the school building without prior authorization of the school.

### **Rule 3- Damage, Destruction, or Misuse of Private Property**

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to private property or steal or attempt to steal private property. A student shall not possess, sell, use, buy, or transmit stolen private property on school grounds. Further, off school grounds, a student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to private property belonging to a school employee where such theft or damage is on account of that school employee's performance of his/her official duties. A student shall not sell or buy or attempt to sell or buy personal property on school grounds.

### **Rule 4- Abuse, Threats, Intimidation, Assault, or Battery of a School Employee**

#### **Section A**

Regardless of intent, a student shall not make oral or written communication, create a document, or make a symbolic gesture or contact of a threatening, undermining, or provoking nature to or about a school employee or in the presence of a school employee. This includes, but is not limited to, disrespectful conduct, insult, use of profanity, ethnic, racial, sexual, disability, or religious slur, or harassment and includes the development of a "hit list," "people to kill," "people to shoot," or a statement about bringing a weapon to school and injuring people. Students may not record or transmit recordings of School Employees without prior authorization of the school.

#### **Section B**

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way that could reasonably cause physical injury or make physical contact of a threatening or provoking nature to a school employee. Rule 4B also applies off school grounds when the misconduct by the alleged perpetrator is because of the school employee's performance of his or her official duties.





## **Rule 5- Abuse, Threats, Intimidation, Assault, or Battery by a Student regarding another Student or to Any Other Person Not Employed by the School**

### **Section A**

Regardless of intent, a student shall not make oral or written communication, create a document, or make a symbolic gesture or contact of a threatening, distracting, instigating, or provoking nature to or about a person/student or in the presence of a person/student. This includes, but is not limited to, bullying/cyberbullying, disrespectful conduct, insult, use of profanity; ethnic, racial, sexual, disability, or religious slur; or harassment and includes the development of a "hit list," "people to kill," "people to shoot," or a statement about bringing a weapon to school and injuring people. Students may not record or transmit recordings of other students without prior authorization of the school. Students are prohibited from engaging in gang/hate groups or hazing related activities in school.

State law defines Bullying as: 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 substantial physical harm; b) substantially interferes with a student's education; c) is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating/ threatening educational environment; or d) disrupts the orderly operation of school. Upon finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, such student shall be assigned to an alternative school. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4) Retaliation for reports of bullying/cyberbullying will not be tolerated and will be subject to independent disciplinary action.

### **Section B**

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause bodily injury to any student/person. A student shall not engage in any behavior that threatens the safety or well-being of another person or has the likelihood of provoking a fight.

The Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited.

## **Rule 6- Weapons, Dangerous Instruments, and Explosive or Implosive Devices**

A student shall not solicit to buy or sell, or buy or sell or possess, handle, transmit, threaten with or discharge/use, any object that can reasonably be considered or converted to and/or used as a weapon, such as, but not limited to knives; guns; pellet guns; brass knuckles; fireworks; lighters, tear gas, mace, explosives, pepper spray; bats (other than for athletics); clubs, sticks or other instruments of a bludgeoning type.

Students are prohibited from possessing firearms (including a handgun, rifle, shotgun, or other weapon which will or can be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or electrical charge), dangerous weapons (as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121) or hazardous objects (as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-751), while on school property or at school functions.

## **Rule 7-**

### **Section A - Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco & Vaping**

A student shall not be in possession of any substance, drug, alcohol, or tobacco involved in any transaction, including, without limitation, to but, possess, sell, use, transmit, solicit; attempt to buy, possess, sell, use, or transmit involved in any substance, drug, alcohol, or tobacco transaction, including, without limitation to buy, possess, sell, use, transmit, solicit; attempt to buy, possess, sell, use, or transmit; or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, depressant, or stimulant drug including without limitation caffeine pills, hallucinogenic drug, anabolic steroid, cannabinoid, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, inhalant, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. A student shall not possess, sell, buy, or transmit, or attempt to sell, buy, or transmit any substance under the pretense that it is, in fact, a prohibited substance as described in this rule. The misuse or unauthorized possession of a prescription drug or non-prescription drug shall be considered a violation of this rule; however, this rule shall not

apply to proper possession and/or use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician.

Self-administration of asthma medication and prescription auto-injectable epinephrine is permitted with written parental approval and required documentation to the principal or his or her designee. See administrator for completion of proper county forms and procedures.

### **Section B- Drugs, Alcohol, Vaping Paraphernalia**

A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, buy or solicit any drug-related paraphernalia which includes, but is not limited to pipes, vape chargers, water pipes, clips, rolling papers, or any other items related to drug use or depicting drugs or drug use except where such items are related to an approved curriculum.

### **Rule 8- Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, and/or Paraphernalia**

A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, buy or solicit tobacco products, or tobacco/tobacco related paraphernalia such as, but not limited to e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco, nicotine vapes, matches, lighters, nicotine pouches, vape chargers, and the like.

### **Rule 9- Disregard of Directions or Commands**

A student shall not fail to comply with reasonable directions or commands of teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, administrators, school bus drivers, or other authorized school personnel.

### **Rule 10- Sexual Misconduct/Indecency**

A student shall not engage in any act of sexual harassment of a physical nature or verbal nature. A student shall not perform any act of indecent exposure, lewd exposure, gesture or lewd caress or indecent fondling/touching of the student's own body or the body of another person, or any act of sexual intercourse. A student shall not use any inappropriate gestures that mimic or imply sexual acts or engage in any acts of "streaking" or "mooning" as those terms are commonly understood. Such acts will not be regarded lightly or considered pranks.

A student shall not possess, view, copy, sell, buy, or transmit printed or non-printed pornographic materials including any non-curricular sexually explicit printed or non-printed materials; or a student shall not possess, view, copy, sell, buy, or transmit printed or non-printed pornographic materials including but not limited to non-curricular materials depicting the human male or female genitals or buttocks with less than a fully opaque covering or any portion of the female breast with less than a fully opaque covering.

### **Rule 11- Unexcused Absences**

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school function during required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, except with written permission of the teacher, principal, or other duly authorized school official. A student may not leave school grounds prior to the end of the school day, after his or her initial arrival on campus, without the permission of a duly authorized school official.

### **Rule 12- Other Conduct Which is Subversive to Good Order**

A student shall not perform any other act which is subversive to good order and discipline in the schools. This includes, but is not limited to, violating local school rules; violating local law, state law, or federal law; violating compulsory attendance; gang-related activity or behavior; hate or hate-group related activity or behavior; violation of state and federal law, provide false information (lying); cheating; paging devices; laser pointers; electronic communications (cellular telephones, radios, televisions, etc.); actions that are ethnically or racially inflammatory; loitering; being in unauthorized areas of the school; criminal trespassing; community misconduct that would pose a threat to the school community; altering grades in a teacher's grade book or any other record or misrepresent information on school records or forms; driving on school grounds without a license; and/or gambling or community misconduct that would be so serious as to pose a threat to the school community.

The administration of the school system and the local schools reserve the right to punish behavior which is subversive to good order and discipline in the Bryan County Schools though such behavior is not specified in the preceding written discipline rules.

### **Rule 13- School Bus Infractions**

No student shall cause or attempt to cause (either directly or indirectly) a disruption or interference with a school

bus by any means to include:

- Talking, whistling, shouting, or making other noises from the time the bus stops for a railroad crossing until the bus is safely across the tracks.
- Throwing any object from the windows of a bus at any time causing any part of his or her or another person's body to protrude, extend, or project from any window, door, or other opening of the bus at any time.
- Eating and drinking while on the bus (water is allowed)
- (Georgia Code 20-2-751.5) Students shall be prohibited from acts of physical violence as defined in Code Section 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined in Code Section 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior.
- Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices that might interfere with communication on the school bus or the school bus driver's operation of a safe school bus environment. This includes headphones and any device that prevents the bus driver from easily communicating with the student.
- Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.
- Possess, handle, transmit or use a weapon, as defined in Rule 6.
- Possess, sell or attempt to sell, use or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages, vapes, tobacco products, narcotics or controlled substances as defined in Rules 7 and 8.

### ***Bus Disciplinary Procedures***

Disciplinary action for misbehavior on school buses is administered by school administration at the local school. School buses and bus stops are considered extensions of the school campus. All rules that govern students 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. School administration 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.

Georgia Code 20-2-1181 states that parents, guardians and others should not attempt to board a school bus during the bus route. It shall be unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public school bus stop as designated by local school boards of education. Any person violating this code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.



### ***Elementary Bus Discipline Guidelines:***

**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 parent. The driver will document these actions.

**Offense 2:** School administration will counsel and submit a warning to the student. The student will be placed on probation. The driver will provide documentation of action taken during the 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 seven (7) days.

**Offense 7:** Student will be suspended from riding the bus for ten (10) days.

Subsequent offenses will warrant a 10 or more days' suspension from all school buses.

## ***Middle/High School Bus Discipline Guidelines:***

**Offense 1:** School administration will counsel and submit a warning to the student. The student will be placed on probation. The driver will provide documentation of action taken during the 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 seven (7) days.

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

Subsequent offenses will warrant a 10 or more days suspension from all school buses.

When suspended from any bus, the student is suspended from all buses (including vehicles used for extra-curricular activities).

**NOTE: All other BCS rules still apply while on the bus or at the bus stop. Safety is the first priority while transporting students to and from school. While on a bus, the bus driver/manager is the school official who has supervisory responsibility for the students. Drivers must be able to concentrate on their driving at all times. A momentary distraction from their concentration can lead to a serious accident resulting in injury or death. The bus driver may return a student to the school if the student is endangering others or seriously misbehaving. Students who jeopardize the safety of others will be susceptible to disciplinary measures that may include being permanently suspended from school transportation services. Riding the bus is a privilege not a right.**

## ***Middle School Discipline Guidelines (Daily Infractions)***

ASD- After School Detention, ISS- In-School Suspension, OSS- Out of School Suspension, SS- Saturday School

### **Offense Suggested Discipline**

**Offense 1:** Warning or Detention

**Offense 2:** 1 day of ISS or Detention (Progressive)/ Saturday School) if applicable)

**Offense 3:** 3 days of ISS

**Offense 4:** 2-3 days of ISS or 1 day of OSS/ Team mtg./ Referred to School Counselor

**Offense 5:** 3-4 days of ISS or 1-2 days of OSS/ Behavior Contract

**Offense 6:** 3-5 days of OSS

**Offense 7:** 5-10 days of OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing

The principal or his/her designee have the right to forego the discipline guidelines at any time, if the incident is deemed severe.

## ***Middle School Automatic Discipline Actions***

### **Blades (less than 2 inches)**

**Offense 1:** 1 day OSS

**Offense 2:** 3 days OSS, Behavior Contract

**Offense 3:** 5 days OSS, with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

### **Blades (more than 2 inches)**

**Offense 1:** 5 day OSS, Behavior Contract, report to law enforcement, with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

**Offense 2:** minimum of 5 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing & report to law enforcement

### **Bullying/ Cyberbullying**

**Offense 1:** 3 days OSS/ School Counselor Referral/ Formal notification of parents with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

**Offense 2:** 5 days OSS & Behavior Contract with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

**Offense 3:** 10 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing



## **Fighting**

**Offense 1:** 5 day OSS, possible Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges (school policy)

**Offense 2:** 10 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges (school policy)

## **Firearms/ Weapons**

1-10 days OSS pending a Hearing & file all mandatory legal charges

## **Instigation of an Altercation**

**Offense 1:** 3 days ISS or 1 day OSS

**Offense 2:** 3 days of OSS

**Offense 3:** 5 days of OSS Behavior Contract

**Offense 4:** 10 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing

## **Physical Aggression**

**Offense 1:** 3 days ISS or 1 day OSS

**Offense 2:** 3 days of OSS & Behavior Contract

**Offense 3:** 10 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing

## **Physical Aggression towards Faculty/Staff**

10 days of OSS, pending a Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges

## **Profanity towards Faculty/Staff**

3-10 days of OSS, with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges

## **Skipping class (AWOL) (in other school location during class without permission of staff)**

**Offense 1:** Minimum 1 days ISS

**Offense 2:** Minimum 3 days ISS

**Offense 3:** Minimum 1 to 3 days OSS, Behavior Contract (parent meeting)

## **Skipping school (leaving campus without permission)**

**Offense 1 & 2:** 3 days of ISS or 1 day OSS; possibility of revoking parking permit

**Offense 3:** 3 days OSS, Behavior Contract (parent meeting)

## **Threat (oral or written)**

**Offense 1:** (that did not specifically target a student or staff member): 1-3 days OSS

**Offense 2:** (or Offense 1 that specifically targeted a student or staff member): 4-6 days OSS

**Offense 3:** (incident and/or specifically targeted a student or staff member and/or caused significant harm and/or disruption): 10 days OSS and possible disciplinary Hearing

## **Tobacco, E-Cigarettes and Paraphernalia**

**Offense 1:** 2 days OSS and assignment to a mandatory Drug and Alcohol class with parent.

**Offense 2:** 3-day OSS and assignment to a mandatory Drug and Alcohol class with parent. Student will be placed on a behavior contract.

**Offense 3:** 10 days OSS and referral to Division of Student Services for a disciplinary hearing.

## **Unauthorized Recording or Transmission of School, School Personnel or Students**

All recordings/ transmissions have to be authorized by the school 2-5 days OSS, possible Discipline Hearing

## **Unauthorized Area**

2-10 days of OSS, with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

## **Verbal Fight**

Profanity laced or threatening argument 2-5 days OSS, possible Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges

## High School Discipline Guidelines (Daily Infractions)

ASD- After School Detention, ISS- In-School Suspension, OSS- Out of School Suspension, SS- Saturday School

### Offense Suggested Discipline

**Offense 1:** Warning or ASD

**Offense 2:** 1 day of ISS or ASD or SS

**Offense 3:** 1-3 days of ISS or ASD or SS

**Offense 4:** 3-5 days of ISS or 1 to 2 days of OSS/ Mandatory parent conference

**Offense 5:** 1-3 days of OSS/Behavior Contract/ Counselor Referral

**Offense 6:** 5-10 days of OSS pending a disciplinary hearing

**Offense 7:** 10 days of OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing

### High School Automatic Discipline Actions

#### Alcohol/ Drugs

10 days OSS and a referral to the Division of Student Services for a disciplinary hearing.

A student may be referred to the appropriate court or arrested and charged with appropriate criminal statutes.

#### Blades (less than 2 inches)

**Offense 1:** 1 day OSS

**Offense 2:** 3 days OSS, Behavior Contract

**Offense 3:** 5 days OSS, with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

#### Blades (more than 2 inches)

**Offense 1:** 5 days OSS, Behavior Contract, report to law enforcement, with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

**Offense 2:** minimum of 5 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing & report to law enforcement

#### Bullying/ Cyberbullying

**Offense 1:** 3 days OSS/ School Counselor Referral/ Formal notification of parents with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

**Offense 2:** 5 days OSS & Behavior Contract with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

**Offense 3:** 10 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing

#### Fighting

**Offense 1:** 5 days OSS, possible Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges (school policy)

**Offense 2:** 10 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges (school policy)

#### Firearms/ Weapons

1-10 days OSS pending a Hearing & file all mandatory legal charges

#### Instigation of an Altercation

**Offense 1:** 3 days ISS or 1 day OSS

**Offense 2:** 3 days of OSS

**Offense 3:** 5 days of OSS Behavior Contract 10 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing

#### Physical Aggression

**Offense 1:** 3 days ISS or 1 day OSS

**Offense 2:** 3 days of OSS & Behavior Contract

**Offense 3:** 10 days OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing

#### Physical Aggression towards Faculty/Staff

10 days of OSS, pending a Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges

## **Profanity towards Faculty/Staff**

3-10 days of OSS, with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges

## **Skipping class (AWOL) (in other school location during class without permission of staff)**

**Offense 1:** Minimum 1 days ISS

**Offense 2:** Minimum 3 days ISS

**Offense 3:** Minimum 1 to 3 days OSS, Behavior Contract (parent meeting)

## **Skipping school (leaving campus without permission)**

**Offense 1 & 2:** 3 days of ISS or 1 day OSS; possibility of revoking parking permit

**Offense 3:** 3 days OSS, Behavior Contract (parent meeting)

## **Threat (oral or written)**

**Offense 1 (that did not specifically target a student or staff member):** 1-3 days OSS

**Offense 2 (or Offense 1 that specifically targeted a student or staff member):** 4-6 days OSS

**Offense 3 (incident and/or specifically targeted a student or staff member and/or caused significant harm and/or disruption):** 10 days OSS and possible disciplinary Hearing

## **Tobacco, E-Cigarettes and Paraphernalia**

**Offense 1:** 2 days OSS and assignment to a mandatory Drug and Alcohol class with parents.

**Offense 2:** 3 days OSS and assignment to a mandatory Drug and Alcohol class with parents. Students will be placed on a behavior contract.

**Offense 3:** 10 days OSS and referral to Division of Student Services for a disciplinary hearing.

## **Unauthorized Recording or Transmission of School, School Personnel or Students**

All recordings/ transmissions have to be authorized by the school 2-5 days OSS, possible Discipline Hearing

## **Unauthorized Area**

2-10 days of OSS, with the possibility of a Disciplinary Hearing

## **Verbal Fight**

Profanity laced or threatening argument 2-5 days OSS, possible Disciplinary Hearing & legal charges



## **Dress Code**

The Bryan County Dress Code applies to all students while on any school system property, on any school bus, or during any school-sponsored activity or event, wherever located. Bryan County Schools believe that appropriate dress has a positive impact on behavior. Any extremes in dress or appearance and/or any items which adversely affect safety are not permitted. Neat and appropriate dress is expected of all students. Any exceptions to the following must have prior approval of the principal.

A general guideline to follow is the length of shorts should be the length of your child's thumb and for skirts or dresses they should be the length of your child's middle finger when it falls against their legs. Anything shorter than that may subject them to being deemed inappropriate by a school administrator.

## **Dress Code Guidelines**

- All students are required to wear safe and appropriate shoes. For grades K-2 only (required as a safety measure for elementary children), shoes must have a strap around the heel if the heel back is bare.

- Hats, caps, hoodies worn on the head, bandanas, other head coverings, and sunglasses (excluding medical masks) are NOT to be worn at all inside school buildings.
- Undergarments cannot be worn as outer garments.
- Sleepwear items cannot be worn.
- Sleeveless tops must have at least three (3) fingers (the student's fingers) of garment in width across the shoulders. No undergarments are allowed to be seen over the shoulder or under the arm.
- Excessively tight clothing that is inappropriately revealing will not be allowed.
- Clothing with holes and/or slits that are inappropriately revealing cannot be worn.
- Unacceptable statements, symbols, or designs (including inappropriate sexual references) or drug or alcohol advertising are not permitted on any article of clothing. No gang symbols will be worn or be found in a student's possession. Unacceptable items include references to all racial symbols, unacceptable sayings, and any other unacceptable symbols.
- Students cannot wear articles of clothing, jewelry, or accessories which, in the opinion of the school administration, pose a clear and immediate threat to the physical well-being or safety of other students on campus.
- Statements, symbols, or other items cannot be worn on the seat of clothing.
- Students assigned to the Bryan Alternative Education Program shall adhere to the Bryan Alternative Education Program uniform dress code.
- All clothing is to be worn in a normal, conventional fashion at all times. Pants/shorts/skirts must be worn at the waist. Clothing is to be of a size appropriate for the wearer. An appropriate length for shorts and skirts is a mid-thigh length or fingertip length with hands down by the side.
- A layer of opaque, non-see-through clothing should be worn at all times.
- Clothing should appropriately cover a student's upper torso (midriff should be completely covered).
- All students' shorts, dresses or skirts should be appropriate length. Schools may provide further guidance.

## Elementary School Guidelines for Electronic Use

Elementary Students shall not have cell phones or any other communication device turned on during school hours unless by a doctor's request. It is determined by a licensed physician or surgeon to be essential for the student's health. These students shall have a written plan including the doctor's written verification for cell phone use which has been approved by the school administrator, and which is on file in the school office.

- **1st Offense-** Students will have their cell phone taken away and returned at the end of the day.
- **2nd Offense-** Students will have their cell phone taken and locked up in the office until a parent can come to school to retrieve it.
- **3rd Offense-** Students will no longer be allowed to bring a cell phone to school until a parent conference with the administration.
- **Subsequent Offense(s) - (defiance) -** Additional parent contact and more severe disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension.

## Middle/ High School Guidelines for Electronic Use

Each schools' administration determines the guidelines for appropriate use of cell phones and any other communication device inside their own building.

The Bryan County Schools System is a member of the Google Apps for Education program. With this initiative, all elementary through high school Bryan County students are enrolled in this program which provides students and teachers with access to online tools such as digital storage, word processing, and a collaborative email system for classes. The overall goal of this program is to provide a digital educational resource that appropriately serves the students throughout their tenure in the Bryan County School System.

All Bryan County students are granted access to the internet. When using Bryan County School System technology or network access, students are expected to follow the Student Conduct Behavior Code, including respecting others' privacy. Online student accounts are to be used for legitimate educational purposes and are subject to monitoring and review, including review of text and attachments that are related to that student or students. At **NO TIME** should a student consider e-mail, networked applications, or account or technology access private or confidential in any way.



While the school district does maintain internet filters, there may be times when a student may accidentally or purposefully discover inappropriate materials online. Bryan County School System DOES NOT CONDONE the use of such materials. Inappropriate use of system technology or network access is a violation of the Student

Conduct Behavior Code. If the parent/guardian wishes to prohibit their child from accessing the internet, the school or school system must be notified in writing, within 30 days of the beginning of the school year or the date of enrollment.

Internet access is a privilege, not a right, and all students are expected to treat this learning tool with respect. System technology, network access, and electronic resources must not be used to:

- Harm other people
- Interfere with other people's work
- Steal property
- Gain unauthorized access to other people's files or programs
- Gain unauthorized access to online resources, including using someone else's password
- Make changes to the hardware or software configuration of any machine, including installing or deleting any software
- Improperly use the network, including introducing software viruses and/or bypassing local school or office security policies
- Steal or damage data and/or computers and network equipment
- Access, upload, download, and/or distribute pornographic, hate-oriented, profane, obscene, or sexually explicit material

Failure to follow these guidelines can violate the Official Code of Georgia, O.C.G.A., Codes 16-9-90, 16-9-91, 16-9-93, and 16-9-93.1 as well as Title XVII of United States Public Law 106-554, known as the Children's Internet Protection Act. Such use can also lead to disciplinary actions, up to and including loss of access to the Bryan County School System technology resources and further disciplinary actions as defined by existing Bryan County School System policies. Such disciplinary actions may include confiscation of technology being used inappropriately if an incident occurs.

## **Extracurricular Activity Expectations**

Participation in interscholastic athletic competitions is a privilege extended to the students by the Bryan County Board of Education. Students participating in Georgia High School Association (GHSA) extracurricular athletic activities act as representatives of Bryan County Public Schools (BCS). All students are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner as to always meet the highest standards.

The Code of Conduct is designed to establish high expectations and standards for all students participating in GHSA sanctioned athletic activities. All students, parents, and coaches understand that the top priority is academic achievement. The Code of Conduct establishes high expectations regarding behavior and consistent consequences when violations occur.

The Code of Conduct goes into effect on the first day a student joins a BCS high school athletic team. The Code remains in effect for the entire calendar year, including time when school is not in session.

The offenses and consequences listed below are in addition to (not in lieu of) any school or criminal consequences associated with the student misconduct.

All consequences listed in this Code of Conduct are minimum standards. The coach has the discretion to set consequences over and above the minimum standards.

## **Violation A: Long-term Suspension (exceeding 10 days, with or without alternative school placement) Consequence:**

Ineligible to attend or participate in any athletic or extracurricular activity during time of suspension

## **Violation B: Arrest for, or charged with the commission of, any act that is a felony or would constitute a**

**felony if committed by an adult (regardless of location or time of the alleged act; in or out of school)**

### **Consequence:**

Immediate suspension from all participation until such time as:

- School officials determine that the student did not commit the act(s) or other felony conduct; or
- Local prosecutors dismiss or drop all pending charges and petitions; or
- The student pleads guilty to a misdemeanor charge, in which case refer to Violation D listed in this Code;
- The student is convicted and sentenced to a felony or is adjudicated delinquent in the Juvenile Court of conduct which if committed by an adult could be charged as a felony and serves any and all portions of the sentence including all periods of probation.
- For the following violations (3, 4, and 5), the school administration must have valid evidence and/or verifiable record of the violation as defined by the following:
  - Self-admitted involvement by the student
  - Witnessed student involvement by the sponsor, coach, or any staff member
  - Parent admission of their student's involvement in tobacco, alcohol or other drugs
  - Verified by official police report given to the school
  - Evidence of violations through investigation by school officials

If the offense occurs at school or on school property (at any time), off school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity, function or event, or in route to and from school, the student will be subject to the actions described in the Student Conduct Behavior Code (Policy JCD) and the following consequences for extracurricular activities.

### **Violation C: Tobacco (any type)**

#### **Consequence:**

- Offense 1: Consequence determined by approved local school athletic/extracurricular policy
- Offense 2: Suspension from athletic extracurricular competition for a minimum of 10% of the remainder of the season
- Offense 3: Dismissed from team but allowed to try out for subsequent athletic extracurricular activities after that sport/activity has completed its season

### **Violation D: Alcohol/Other Drugs (Possession and/or Use)/Misdemeanor Criminal Law Violations**

#### **Consequences:**

Coach/Sponsor and Administrator will meet with the student and parent(s) or guardian.

- Offense 1: Consequence determined by approved local school athletic/extracurricular policy
- Offense 2: Suspension from athletic extracurricular activities for a minimum of 20% of the season

### **Violation E: Violations of school rules meriting OSS**

#### **Consequences:**

Out-of-School Suspension (Short-term, not exceeding 10 days) – Participation may resume after suspension is served. (Policy JDD)

### **Violation F: Hazing**

#### **Consequences:**

Coach/Sponsor and local administrator will meet with the student and parent(s) or guardian.

- Offense 1: Suspension from any athletic extracurricular activity for a minimum of 10% of the remainder of the season
- Offense 2: Suspension from all athletic extracurricular activities for remainder of school year
- Offense 3: Possible permanent suspension from all athletic and school activities



## Glossary of Discipline Terms

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

**AWOL:** Refers to a student's unauthorized absence and/or leave from class, school, activity or event

**Battery:** Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person. This includes attacking another person with a weapon or one that causes serious bodily harm to the victim. This also includes the placement of a bomb or an explosive material sent through the mail, regardless of whether or not the material explodes.

**Bullying/Cyberbullying:** 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 substantial physical harm, b) substantially interferes with a student's education, c) is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating/ threatening educational environment or d) disrupts the orderly operation of school. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4)

For the purposes of this handbook cyberbullying will be treated as the same as bullying. Cyberbullying which occurs through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such an electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication....

- a. Is directed specifically at students or school personnel,
- b. Is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and
- c. Creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

**Bus Suspension:** The student is suspended from the bus 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 and from school.

**Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student:** A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics that interferes with the learning process of other students.

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

**Expulsion:** Suspension of a student from a public school beyond a calendar year. Such action may be taken only by the hearing officer.

**Felony Charge:** It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance or marijuana in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, middle school, secondary school, or school board used for elementary, middle, or secondary education. (O.C.G.A.16-13-32.4)

**Fighting:** Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender or major injury.

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

other devices containing an explosive substance.

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

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP):** An Individualized Education Program (IEP) supports a student with disabilities who requires specially designed instruction and related services.

**In-School Suspension (ISS):** Removal of a student from assigned and extracurricular classes and placement of that student into an isolated educational setting.

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

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

**Unauthorized Area:** Student(s) were on campus in an area they have not been given permission to be in or they are occupying a space that was not intended for use by a student or multiple students.

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

**Weapons:** The term weapon is defined as any object which is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear of personal safety or well-being. The following items are defined as weapons:

1. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in **O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121**, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.
2. Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.





## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

### Academic Standards

The curriculum at Bryan County Schools (BCS) aligns with the academic standards set by the Georgia Department of Education, which specify learning objectives for each grade level. The core content areas—mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies—are developed by a dedicated team of BCS teachers and curriculum leaders.

These professionals design both the curriculum and the assessments, ensuring that educational strategies are continuously refined based on student performance and needs. Overall, the BCS curriculum is designed to equip students with the essential knowledge and skills necessary for their future academic endeavors, careers, and roles as responsible citizens in an ever-changing world.

### Accelerated Career Path

Georgia's High School Graduation Accelerated Career Path offers an alternative pathway to high school graduation for students who want to simultaneously earn a high school diploma and postsecondary credentials such as an associate degree, Technical Diploma, or two Technical Certificates of Credit (TCCs). This program aims to prepare students for high-demand careers by allowing them to engage in dual enrollment and complete both high school and college-level coursework. Students who are interested in Accelerated Career Path should visit their school counselor.

### Dual Enrollment

High school students may earn credits through eligible participating post-secondary institutions. To learn more about Dual Enrollment options and scholarships/ grants please visit the Georgia Student Finance Commission web site at <https://www.gafutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/scholarships-grants/dual-enrollment/> or you may contact your high school counselor.

### Exceptional Student Services

The Exceptional Student Services Department meets the individual needs of students ages three through twenty-one who are eligible for services according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A full continuum of services is available, ranging from the least restrictive to more restrictive environments, depending on the specific needs of the student. The department also supports schools in ensuring students with disabilities appropriately access the curriculum and provide specialized instruction as determined necessary by the Individualized Education Program.

In collaboration with students, schools, families, and the community, the Exceptional Student Services Department assists students with disabilities in increasing academic performance and enhancing post-secondary options. More information about BCS Exceptional Student Services at the following link: <https://www.bryan.k12.ga.us/page/ess>

### Georgia Milestones Assessment “Test Out” Option for High School

As provided for in State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.15 (AWARDING UNITS OF CREDIT AND ACCEPTANCE OF TRANSFER CREDIT AND/OR GRADES), the opportunity exists for students to demonstrate subject area competency (“test-out”) for any course for which there is an associated End of Course and earn credit for the course through that process, prior to taking the course. Students who reach the Distinguished Learner achievement level will have reached the required threshold for the awarding of course credit. Students who are interested in this option should speak to their school assessment coordinator or school counselor. Under the provisions of the Rule and guidelines, Bryan County Schools shall award course credit to students who reach a designated performance level on an EOC taken prior to taking the course. Students must meet the following eligibility requirements to exercise this option:

- The student must receive a teacher recommendation from the teacher in the most recent course in the same content area for which the student is attempting the Georgia Milestones Assessment. If the student does not reach the performance level of Distinguished when attempting to test-out, they will be required to enroll and complete the associated course to receive credit and will retake the End of Course.

**Grade Scale**

For students in kindergarten, student performance is assessed using the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills 2.0 (GKIDS 2.0).

For students in grades 1–5, student performance is assessed through standards-based grading. Standards-based grades communicate the student's progress on Georgia standards.

Performance levels, or grades, based on evidence from the student's most recent work is assessed on the following scale:

- 1 - Beginning to demonstrate proficiency of the standard
- 2 - Developing proficiency of the standard
- 3 - Meeting proficiency of the standard
- 4 - Distinguished

For students in grades 6–12, student performance is assessed using the following scale:

- 90% and above A
- 80% - 89% B
- 70% - 79% C
- Below 70% F

**Professional Qualifications of Teachers**

In compliance with the requirements of Every Student Succeed Act, parents are entitled to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher. The following information may be requested:

- has the teacher met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction
- is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived
- is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher
- whether the child is being provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, their qualifications

If you wish to request information concerning the qualifications of your child's teacher and/or paraprofessional, please contact the school principal.

All Georgia paraprofessionals must hold a valid state license issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, (based on state certification rule 505-2-.18).

**Promotion Policy Grades 1-8**

To be promoted from one grade to another, a student must pass all but one subject, satisfy requirements of policy IHE, and satisfy attendance requirements. Students in grade 3, 5, and 8 must have passed the appropriate Georgia Milestones Assessment. If a student receives services through the Exceptional Services Department or has been retained before, a special committee will determine appropriate placement.

**Grades 9-12**

Students must meet the following minimal number of credits to be promoted to the next grade level: 6 credits to be promoted from 9th to 10th grade. 12 credits to be promoted from 10th to 11th grade 18 credits to be promoted from 11th to 12th grade. Students must also meet attendance requirements.

**Student Support**

Student's needs are monitored and addressed through the Bryan County Schools Multi-Tiered System of Support. All students in Bryan County participate in evidence-based instruction that is developed based on state-approved grade level standards. This general education learning also includes universal screenings, differentiation of instruction, and progress monitoring using multiple formative assessments.

The instruction provided at Tier 1 is standards-based using the core curriculum. For students who are not making appropriate progress toward grade level mastery, Needs Based Learning will occur at Tier 2. In this tier, in addition to Tier 1 supports, students participate in learning that is different by including a standard intervention protocol process for identifying and providing research-based interventions. Movement between Tiers 1 and 2 are fluid and flexible.

When students continue to struggle in the general education curriculum, Tier 3 – Student Support Team interventions should occur. These interventions are in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports and include intensive, formalized problem solving to identify individual student needs. Targeted research-based interventions are

tailored to individual student needs and frequent progress monitoring and analysis of student response to interventions also occur.

Based on the review of progress monitoring data, students who are determined as not making adequate progress with the individual interventions provided at Tier 3 may be referred for a comprehensive evaluation to determine eligibility for special education and related services.

Additional information can be provided by contacting the Bryan County Schools Division of Curriculum and Instruction at 912- 851-4000 and by visiting the GA Department of Education website at [www.gadoe.org](http://www.gadoe.org).

Prior to consideration of services under IDEA, various interventions must be used, documented, described, and discussed. In limited instances, the Student Support Team may make an immediate recommendation to determine eligibility. These cases are those in which the necessity for services is so clear that use of other options would be non- productive or harmful to the child and are well documented.

## **Title I, Parental Involvement Plan**

The Board of Education recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and the family. To effectively educate students, the schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners. Parent and family involvement is an ongoing process that assists the teachers in meeting their obligations to the child. As their child's first teacher, the parent helps to promote clear, two-way communication between the home and the school.

The Board and all Bryan County public schools shall abide by and support all rules and regulations pertaining to Title I, Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Public Law 107-110, and Georgia's ESEA Flexibility Waiver approved Feb. 9, 2012. A written plan for Title I parental involvement that establishes programs and practices to enhance parental involvement and reflects the needs of students and families will be jointly developed by parents and school staff. The plan will be unique to each school and will include a home/school compact. The plan will support the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of the parental involvement program.

## **Valedictorian and Salutatorian Determination**

### **Eligibility Criteria:**

- Highest Weighted GPA: The student with the highest weighted GPA will be the valedictorian and the student with the second highest weighted GPA will be the salutatorian.
- Credit Scope: Only the most recent 28 credits earned within Bryan County Schools are included in the Valedictorian/Salutatorian (Val/Sal) calculation
- Cut-Off Date: The determination will be based on grades finalized at the end of Quarter 3 of the senior year
- Course Inclusion Rules:
  - Excluded: "Self-pay" courses will not be considered
  - Included: Only credits earned under Bryan County Schools jurisdiction



**Tie-Breaker Protocol:**

If more than one student qualifies based on the above rules, the following steps will be used sequentially:

1. **Numerical GPA Precision:**
  - a. Use numerical grade averages (e.g., 94) instead of letter grades/weighted GPA to distinguish ranks
2. **Advanced Coursework:**
  - a. The student with more Comprehensive Research Dual Enrollment (DE) and/or Advanced Placement (AP) courses taken will be favored.
3. **Standardized Test Scores:**
  - a. If still tied, the student with the higher SAT composite score will be selected

Grade	AP/DE Courses <small>*Comprehensive and Research Universities</small>	Honors Courses	Regular Courses
90-100 A	5.0	4.5	4.0
89-80 B	4.0	3.5	3.0
79-70 C	3.0	2.5	2.0
Below 70 F	0.0	0.0	0.0

\*Comprehensive and Research Universities include: UGA, Georgia Tech, Georgia Southern, Augustana University

## **ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Enrollment Requirements**

A child must have attained the age of five (5) on or before September 1 of the fiscal year to be eligible for admission into kindergarten. A child is entitled to admission to the first grade if he or she will be six (6) years of age on or before September 1 of the school year. A birth certificate is required for a student to initially enter school. The student must also have a Social Security Card or waiver.

Students initially entering school or transferring from another state shall be given an eye, ear, and a dental examination by the local Board of Health or a private physician and a certificate provided pursuant to the rules issued by the State Department of Public Health and the State Board of Education. The statement must be on a Georgia Department of Human Resources form.

A certificate of immunization from a physician or a qualified employee of a county Board of Health shall be furnished by the child's parents to the school where attendance is sought. The statement of immunization must be on a Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3231. The certificate shall be placed in the student's folder.

In the interest of maintaining a safe and productive school environment for all children, and in accordance with state law, parents will also be asked to provide any information about a child's history with law enforcement and the judicial system, if such exists. Under O.C.G.A § 20-2-751.2 (b), a local board of education which has a student who attempts to enroll or who is enrolled in any school in its school system during the time in which that student is subject to a disciplinary order is authorized to refuse to enroll or subject that student to short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion for any time remaining in that other school system's or school's disciplinary order upon receiving a certified copy of such order if the offense which led to such suspension or expulsion in the other school system or school was an offense for which suspension or expulsion could be imposed in the enrolling school.

Additionally, under O.C.G.A § 20-2-768 (a), each local board of education 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 under O.C.G.A. §§ 15-11-602 and 15-11-707 which would be a felony if committed by an adult.

**Parent/Legal Guardian Identity**

Parents and legal guardians must identify themselves by submitting one (1) form of picture identification. This identification may include a driver's license, a state identification card, a passport, or other official photo identification, such as an ID card obtained through an official government agency.

To register a child, you must live in the household with the child, have primary responsibility for the child, and be one of the following:

A natural or adoptive parent. Stepparents may not register a child for school.

- A legal guardian with a court-issued guardianship order
- A person with a properly executed military power of attorney which authorizes them to register the child
- A person with a properly executed Kinship Caregiver Affidavit which authorizes them to register the child.
- This requires approval from a school system social worker
- A foster parent with proof of student placement from the Department of Family & Children Services or a representative thereof

**Note:** If a legal parent/guardian resides in the household with the child, this parent/guardian must complete the registration. In accordance with Georgia Law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-780), the authorized person who registers the child controls the child's list of approved persons who can pick up the child and sets pick-up restrictions.

**Proof of Legal Custody/Guardianship Changes**

If legal custody of a child is split between two parents, in addition to the registration documents, parents/guardians must also submit a copy of the most recent court order identifying each parent's respective award of physical custody. Parents/guardians are responsible for immediately informing the school of any changes to the court order. The district may request proof of legal custody in situations involving multiple adults claiming control of the same student.

Parents/guardians will be required to facilitate and obtain appropriate guardianship or custody of their child to avoid referral to an outside agency or withdrawal. State law generally prohibits attempts to make a change of custody of a minor child by removing the child from the premises of the school without permission of the person who enrolled the student. This prohibition applies even if there is a court order granting custody of the child to the person seeking to make the change. If the status of a student's custody changes after the student's enrollment, the parent or guardian shall notify the local school of the student's new address and contact information.

**Residency Verification**

To classify as a resident, a student shall be required to reside with his/her parent, legal custodian, or legal guardian within Bryan County. For purposes of this policy, a resident is defined as an individual who is legally domiciled in Bryan County. For enrollment purposes, a resident is defined as an individual who is a full-time occupant (7 days a week) of a dwelling located within the county and who, on any given school day and weekends, is likely to be at their stated address when not at work or school. A person who owns property in the county, but does not reside in the county, is not considered a resident for these purposes.

Students who are residents of Bryan County are eligible for enrollment in the schools of Bryan County. Students must reside in Bryan County with the parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Please note that notarized letters are not accepted for proof of Legal Guardianship. If you are the legal guardian, you must present a current copy of the court order signed by the Judge of Clerks of Probate Court. The Bryan County School System does not charge its students any fee for enrollment.

**Proof of Residency (Required Documents)**

- One of the following: Mortgage statement or payment, deed, property tax, or settlement statement
- One current utility bill (less than 30 days old)
- Acceptable utilities are gas, water, or electric bills.
- The bill must list the residence as the service address.



**Enrollment (Required Documents)**

- Copy of Birth certificate
- Social Security Card or signed waiver
- Eye, Ear, Dental form
- Certificate of Immunization

Individual schools may have additional documents required for registration. Upon enrollment, the school will request all educational documents from the previous school that the student attended.

Proof of residency is required. Students discovered to be ineligible for enrollment in Bryan County Schools will be withdrawn immediately.

**Joint Residency Affidavits**

A Joint Residency Affidavit form shall be completed for students seeking enrollment in Bryan County Schools, who live with their parents or guardians, but reside in the home of another adult. This form must be submitted for each child enrolled in the district. This form must only be completed by the adult with whom the student(s) and parent/guardian are living. All Joint Residency Affidavits must be renewed annually. The Joint Residency applicant must present to the school their driver's license or a form of state identification with an address change within 30 days of enrollment. Student(s) is subject to be withdrawn if not in compliance within 30 days identification change.

All new Joint Residency Affidavits applicants and the person with whom they are living must complete all proper paperwork at the Bryan County Board of Education.

**McKinney Vento Assistance Act**

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. This law identified any student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as homeless. It provides legal protections for children and youth in homeless situations to immediately enroll in, attend, and succeed in school and qualifying public preschool programs. It further provides provisions for student records maintenance and transfer, school of origin transportation, and appropriate dispute resolutions for homeless students. In accordance with this law, Bryan County Public Schools affords homeless children and youth equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including comparable services, such as Title I support, special education, gifted, English Language Learners (ELL), vocational/technical, and public preschool education, as provided to other non-homeless students. Homeless children and youth will have access to the services needed to support their academic achievement as they work to meet the same challenging standards to which all students are held.

**Foster Care**

Students in the temporary custody of the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) are experiencing foster care. Relatives and fictive kin should confirm with their DFCS case manager if the student is in DFCS custody, as students can experience foster care and can be placed with relatives or fictive kin.

In order for DFCS to enroll a student experiencing foster care, a DFCS worker should present DFCS ID, court order showing the student is in DFCS custody, and provide the address of where the student is currently residing. For a foster caregiver to enroll a student experiencing foster care, the caregiver should present an ID and letter from DFCS authorizing the enrollment. This Placement Authorization Letter includes the student's name, date of birth, the foster parent's name, and the foster home address.

**Purchase of Home or Construction**

If a parent(s)/guardian(s) is in the process of purchasing/ building a home in the Bryan County School district, proper paperwork must be provided to enroll. The parents must provide a sales contract and a sworn statement from the builder/realtor confirming that they will reside in the home within a 9-week period of school registration.

Parents must understand that bus transportation will not be provided until the move is complete and all paperwork is provided. If the parent does not provide the documentation after the 9-week period, the school has the right to withdraw the student on the last day of the 9-week period. This is nonnegotiable.

### **Student Withdrawals**

1. In order to prevent delay, a parent or guardian should notify the principal's office at least two days prior to the date of expected withdrawal.
2. The school shall forward a transcript of the student's records to the target school upon receipt of a signed request of the parent or guardian.
3. Students are expected to return all books and materials or reimburse the school system for the books and materials not returned.
4. Any student who fails to withdraw properly shall be considered a dropout and must go through the correct procedures before being readmitted.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

### **Bedbugs**

Schools will contact parents when their child is suspected of having bedbugs. Before your child can be admitted to school, he or she must be checked by the local school administrator or designee. Your child will not be readmitted to school until they are bedbug and egg free. Please accompany your child for him/her to be rechecked by the local school administrative designee.

### **Bryan County School System Safety Plan**

The Bryan County School System has developed an Emergency Preparedness Plan for the school system and for each of the Bryan County schools. A copy of each plan is on file in the Bryan County Board of Education office. A copy of the individual school plan is on file in the principal's office. Safety drills are held at each school based on the school's approved plan. The schools and the central office monitor weather conditions on a continuous basis.

### **Child Abuse and/or Neglect**

All Bryan County Schools faculty and staff are state mandated reporters and are required to report any suspected instances of child abuse or neglect to designated school officials, who in-turn report to the appropriate authorities.

### **Concussion Policy**

In accordance with Georgia law and national playing rules published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest and shall not return to play until an appropriate health care professional has determined that no concussion has occurred. (NOTE: An appropriate health care professional may include a licensed physician (MD/DO) or another licensed individual under the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management.)

No athlete is allowed to return to a game or a practice on the same day that a concussion (a) has been diagnosed, OR (b) cannot be ruled out.

Any athlete diagnosed with a concussion shall be cleared medically by an appropriate health care professional prior to resuming participation in any future practice or contest. The formulation of a gradual return to play protocol shall be a part of the medical clearance.

It is mandatory that every coach in each GHSA sport participate in a free, online course on concussion management prepared by the NFHS (available online at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)) at least every two years.

Each school will be responsible for monitoring the participation of its coaches in the concussion management course and shall keep a record of those who participate.

**Diabetes Medical Management Plan**

All diabetic students must have a Diabetes Medical Management Plan on file each school year that includes the doctor's orders and provisions specific to the student's needs during the school day and activities. The plan must be updated annually.

**Clinic**

Students who become ill or need to see a counselor or administrator during a time he/she is assigned to be in class should report to class FIRST, obtain permission to be excused, and receive a pass. If a student is too ill to report to the office, he/she should have another student or teacher notify the office in order that appropriate attention may be given to the student. A student's parents will be called to pick the student up if the student is unable to return to class.

**COVID-19 Positives**

All positives, or presumed positives will be quarantined for 5 days from the onset of symptoms. If symptom-free for 24 hours, the student may return after the 5-day period.

**Emergency Contact Information**

In the event of an emergency/illness at school, it is very important that the school has up-to-date contact information. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make transportation arrangements to pick up sick and/or injured students promptly from the school.

**Fever**

If your child has had a fever of 100F or above during the night they should not be sent to school. Also, any student with a temperature of 100F or above will be sent home from school. Students may return to school after 24 hours of being fever-free without use of fever reducing medication unless they are showing symptoms that may be COVID-19.

**First Aid/Illness**

Students who become ill during the school day or are in need of first aid must report to the principal's office or clinic. Arrangements are made for getting students to a doctor or home when an emergency arises. If a student is taken to a doctor or the hospital, the parent is notified immediately and is expected to pick up the student and assume responsibility for their well-being. STUDENTS MAY RETURN TO SCHOOL WHEN THEIR TEMPERATURE HAS BEEN NORMAL FOR 24 HOURS (WITHOUT MEDICATION TO CONTROL TEMPERATURE). Please immediately notify the school principal and school nurse upon enrollment or subsequent diagnosis of any allergies a child has.

**Head Lice**

Schools will contact parents when their child is suspected of having head lice. Before your child can be admitted to school, he or she must be checked by the local school nurse. Unless proof of treatment is presented and all live lice are gone, your child will not be readmitted to school nor will he/she be allowed to ride the school bus until these procedures are followed. Please accompany your child for him/her to be rechecked by the school nurse.

**Immunization**

According to Georgia Law (Georgia Code 20-1-771), every student MUST have a current Georgia Certificate of Immunization, on a form provided by the Department of Human Resources, in order to attend school. Georgia law also requires that students new to Georgia have a current Certificate of Eye, Ear, and Dental examinations on file.

Physicians or local health centers have the necessary certificates. Take any immunization records you have with you when you visit your physician or the health center. Families wishing to use the health department should contact their neighborhood health center to schedule an appointment for the screening.

**Medication**

All prescription medications are required to be stored in the clinic. Prescription medication must be in the original pharmacy container. All non-prescription medication must be in the original, labeled container or package and signed in at the nurse's clinic. All medications, along with a completed Authorization for Administration of Medicine form, must be carried to the clinic by a parent/guardian in the original labeled bottle and logged in with the school nurse. DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR STUDENT. Medication brought in by students will not be given and will be held until logged in by a parent or guardian. While the student is at school, medication

will be kept and administered by the school nurse or designee in the clinic or office, and the inventory will be updated as medication is taken.

## **Vomiting**

A child needs to be kept home from school for 24 hours after any episodes of vomiting. Students who vomit while at school will be sent home. They may return to school after being free of vomiting for 24 hours.

## **Hospital/Homebound Program**

The Hospital/Homebound Program is available for students who have a serious illness necessitating an absence of ten (10) days or more or who have a documented chronic illness necessitating long-term or intermittent absences. The parent must obtain forms from the school and have a doctor complete a statement that the student is too sick to attend school. When this form is returned to the school, a meeting will be scheduled to develop an educational service plan. The student is counted present for the time of confinement as long as s/he is served three (3) hours or more per week by the Hospital/Homebound Teacher.

Students who miss more than four weeks of school due to an illness should be referred to the student support team at the school. Modifications and adaptations in the classroom; services of the school nurse, and/or counselor; modifications in the length of day; and other alternatives should be considered in an effort to enable the student to participate in the educational process on the actual school campus.

A child who returns to school will be automatically removed from the hospital/homebound program. All students will be removed from the hospital/homebound program at the end of the last day of the school year.

## **Self-Administration of Medication**

Senate Bill 472 authorizes student self-administration of prescription asthma medication at school, thus relieving the school district and its employees of any liability in connection with such self-administration. In order for a student to keep an asthma inhaler in his possession, the bill requires (1) written authorization from a parent or

legal guardian; (2) a physician's written statement detailing the name and purpose of the medication, prescribed dosage, and time(s) or special circumstances for administration of the medication; and, (3) written authorization from the parent(s) or guardian(s) for the school to seek emergency medical treatment for the student when necessary and appropriate.

**Please contact the local school nurse to obtain the appropriate form.**

## **Seizure Action Plan**

Safely managing students with seizures in a school setting requires careful planning, preparation, and collaboration among school staff, parents, guardians, and healthcare professionals. The following are key requirements for ensuring the safety and well-being of students with seizures in the school environment.

The parent or guardian of a student being treated for a seizure disorder may seek support and services for the student's seizures while the student is at school or participating in a school-related function by annually submitting to the local school system or school at which the student is enrolled, a copy of a Seizure Action Plan (SAP). Following the request of a parent or guardian of a student being treated for a seizure disorder and the reviewed submission of such a student's SAP, a school nurse or trained SAP personnel, shall be onsite at each school where a student with an SAP is enrolled and shall be available during regular school hours to provide support and services to the student in accordance with the student's SAP.

## **Students with Health Plans**

Students with school-developed health plans may need to be referred for 504 evaluations. It is the responsibility of the school nurse or another BCS staff member to initiate the Section 504 referral; it is not the responsibility of the parent to do so, although they may also initiate the referral. After a 504 evaluation and eligibility determination, a 504 Accommodation Plan may be written to reflect needed accommodations. It is important to note that a student with a health plan need not exhibit limitations in learning in order to be referred for a Section 504 evaluation.

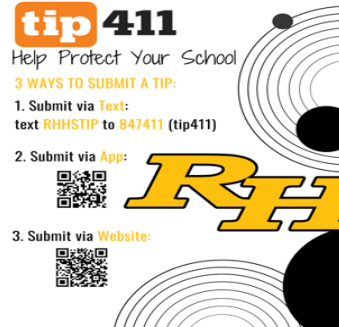


## **SAFETY**

### **Accident Insurance**

Student accident insurance is offered as a voluntary benefit to all students enrolled in Bryan County Schools. Please visit the website by clicking on K-12 Accident Insurance for additional information. Accident insurance coverage is offered annually as a service, and the school does not receive a profit from the fees paid. When an insured student has an accident in school, or on his way to or from school, he/she should report it immediately to the teacher in charge or to the principal's office. This insurance is a secondary coverage and will pay only after the insurance carried by the parents/guardians has paid. All athletes are required to have school insurance or proof of individual accident insurance coverage.

**Centegix Crisis Alert System:** All Bryan County Schools are equipped with the Centegix Crisis Alert system, which allows staff to discreetly call for help and provides first responders with precise location details, down to the room and floor.



### **School Closings**

School closings are determined by the Superintendent, not by the local school. If bad weather causes school to be cancelled or dismissed early, public announcements will be made on the school system's website ([www.bryan.k12.ga.us](http://www.bryan.k12.ga.us)). The basic premise is that school is open or will remain open unless it is specifically announced otherwise.

### **Tip411**

Bryan County Schools has partnered with tip411 to allow students to anonymously submit tips about threats, drugs, bullying, and suspicious activity. Tips may be submitted by text message, using the Bryan County Schools Tip411 app, or through the web.



**Water Safety**

In accordance to OCGA 20-2-779.3 the Bryan County School District is providing information of organizations that provide or may provide water safety training.

Lifeguard training information: [https://lifeguardandsafetytraining.com/LifeguardTraining/Georgia/bryan\\_county](https://lifeguardandsafetytraining.com/LifeguardTraining/Georgia/bryan_county)

Swim lessons: <https://www.ymcaofcoastalga.org/aquatics/>

Basic Boat safety (seasonal): <https://gwces.bryancountyschools.org/o/comeid>

**Weather and Safety Drills**

Every school conducts regular safety drills, including lockdowns and fire drills, to prepare students and staff for emergency situations.

**Enhanced Safety Screenings**

To ensure the safety and security of all students, staff, and visitors, Bryan County Schools retains the authority to implement weapons detection screening systems at any time and location deemed necessary. This includes the use of metal detectors or other screening technologies as part of our comprehensive school safety plan.

The district may conduct screenings on a routine or random basis, or in response to specific safety concerns. Participation in screenings may be required for entry into school buildings, events, or other designated areas. We appreciate the cooperation of students and families as we work together to maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

**SCHOOL NUTRITION**

As a partner in education, the Bryan County Schools Nutrition Program contributes to a successful academic experience and encourages a lifetime of healthy eating by providing each student with the affordable opportunity to consume meals that are nutritious, appealing, and served by caring professionals in a pleasant environment.

MEAL PRICES FOR 25-26	BREAKFAST	LUNCH
Free Students	No Cost	No Cost
Reduced Students	No Cost	No Cost
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	\$2.50	\$3.75
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL	\$2.50	\$4.00
STAFF AND STUDENT 2 <sup>ND</sup> MEAL	\$2.75	\$5.00
VISITORS	-----	\$5.25

Free and reduced-price meals are also available for those who qualify. Parents or guardians are encouraged to submit an application for free or reduced-price meals at any time throughout the school year by visiting <https://www.schoolcafe.com/BRYANCOUNTYSCHOOLSGA> or request a paper application from your child’s school. Qualifications and/or application procedures are also available on the school systems website. Students approved for free or reduced-price meals eat at no cost for both breakfast and lunch. For SY 2025-2026, households will not be required to pay the reduced price for meals due to Georgia Department of Education funding. Parents or guardians may pay for meals at the school with check or cash or may place money on your child’s account using a debit or credit card by going to <https://www.schoolcafe.com/BRYANCOUNTYSCHOOLSGA> or downloading the SchoolCafé App. Checks should be made payable to Bryan County School Nutrition.

Students may only charge up to \$20 and thereafter will receive an alternate meal. Additionally, students with a negative balance will not be allowed to charge a la carte options and snacks. Parents or guardians should refer to the meal charge guideline provided at the beginning of school and located on the school systems website for additional information. Schools are not responsible for lost or stolen cash and food from outside restaurants, caterers, and other vendors cannot be brought into students.





**schoolcafe**

**One app for your entire cafeteria.**

**APPLY FOR FREE & REDUCED MEALS**  
Parents can be informed of meal benefits that have been applied, apply, adjust, and track your application status from your phone.

**SEE NUTRITIONAL INFO**  
Check menus, see nutritional information and allergens, students can view and receive meal items all from their phone.

**MANAGE BALANCES**  
Make payments, view meal history, and receive low balance alerts. For convenience, when automatic payments to replenish their cafeteria funds.

Get it Now  



www.schoolcafe.com



**NOW USING SCHOOLCAFE!**

Bryan County Schools is excited to announce SchoolCafe as the new point of sale for school nutrition!

- Lower convenience fees
- Load money on to your child's account
- Set up alerts when balances are low
- View menu's and nutrition information
- Apply for meal benefits

**MORE INFORMATION TO COME!**



Bryan County Schools  
**School Nutrition**  
Fueling the Next Generation

Students with food allergies or who require a special meal accommodation may fill out a medical statement for accommodating disabilities signed by a medical provider and the school nutrition program will reach out to further assist. This form can be located on the school system's website or can be retrieved from your child's school nurse. Additional information regarding the school nutrition program can be located at: <https://www.bryan.k12.ga.us/page/food-service> including contact information for school nutrition staff.



**LEGAL INFORMATION****Annual Notice of Nondiscrimination**

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Bryan County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, or religion in any of its programs, services, activities, admissions, or employment practices. Equal access is also provided to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups in compliance with federal law.

The district's Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) programs are open to all students regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. These programs, available in middle and high schools, combine academic instruction with hands-on experience to prepare students for college and careers. Offerings include programs in Broadcast/Video Production, Business and Computer Science, Construction, Culinary Arts, Engineering and Technology, Education, Graphic Communication and Design, Government and Public Safety (including JROTC), Healthcare Science, Journalism, and Marketing Education. Program availability may vary by school. Students who are English language learners will not be excluded from any district activity or program due to language proficiency.

The Bryan County School System is also committed to nondiscrimination in its employment practices. Any student, employee, or applicant who believes they have been discriminated against or harassed based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability is encouraged to promptly report the issue to their school principal or directly to the compliance coordinator listed below.

**Contact for Nondiscrimination Compliance and Complaints:**

**Debi McNeal**  
**Assistant Superintendent of Business Services**  
**Bryan County Board of Education**  
**8810 Highway 280 East, Black Creek, Georgia 31308**  
**Phone: (912) 851-4000**

Questions regarding the application of Title II, Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, or the ADA, or assistance with filing complaints under these laws, may be directed to Ms. McNeal.

**Complaint Procedure**

Any individual—whether an employee, job applicant, student, or other person—who believes they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment under any of the civil rights laws mentioned above may submit a complaint either orally or in writing to a school principal or to the compliance coordinator. If a complaint is made orally, the recipient must promptly document it in writing, have the complainant review and sign it, and forward it to the appropriate coordinator. If the school principal receives the complaint, they are responsible for notifying the coordinator immediately.

If the complaint involves the designated coordinator, the issue should be reported to the Superintendent. If it involves the Superintendent, the complaint should be directed to the Board Chair through the coordinator, who will forward it without further investigation.

The coordinator or their designee has fifteen (15) workdays to investigate the complaint, gather facts, consider the requested remedy, and attempt resolution. A written response will be provided to the complainant, detailing the outcome and next steps. Copies will also be shared with the Superintendent and relevant personnel.

If the issue is unresolved or the complainant disagrees with the outcome, they may request that the matter be reviewed by the Superintendent within five (5) workdays of receiving the coordinator's response. The Superintendent will then have fifteen (15) workdays to review all information and issue a written decision.

If dissatisfaction persists, the complainant may submit a written appeal to the Board of Education within fifteen (15) workdays of receiving the Superintendent's response. This appeal must include reasons for disagreement and the requested action. The Superintendent will present the appeal to the Board at the next regular or specially called meeting. The Board may review all previous findings and may choose to hear from individuals involved. The Board will issue a final decision, which will be documented in the meeting minutes or issued separately in writing.

This procedure does not limit an employee's right to file a grievance under other policies of the Bryan County Board of Education, including those related to performance evaluations or employment issues covered under state-mandated due process rules. It also does not replace hearings or legal rights under Georgia's Fair Dismissal Act.

At any point, the complainant may contact external agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), or other state or federal authorities for support.

The Bryan County School System prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report discrimination or harassment or who participate in an investigation. Confidentiality will be protected as much as possible, in accordance with the law, while ensuring a thorough investigation and appropriate resolution.

### **Complaints may also be submitted to the following federal agencies:**

#### **U.S. Department of Education – Office for Civil Rights (OCR)**

**400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-1100**

**Customer Service Hotline: 800-421-3481**

**Fax: 202-453-6012 | TDD: 877-521-2172**

**Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov) | Web: [www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)**

#### **OCR – Region IV (Atlanta)**

**61 Forsyth Street S.W., Suite 19T10, Atlanta, GA 30303-8927**

**Phone: 404-974-9406 | Fax: 404-974-9471**

**Email: [OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov)**



### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) parents have certain rights with respect to student educational records pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). These rights transfer to the student when the student becomes an “Eligible Student” upon reaching the age of 18 or attending a school beyond the high school level. The rights of Parents and/or Eligible Students are summarized as follows:

- The right to inspect and review student educational records maintained by the school. A Parent or Eligible Student seeking to inspect and review educational records should submit a written request to the Principal of the school in which the student is enrolled or last attended.
- Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the school principal or appropriate school official, clearly identify the part of the record they would like changed and 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 the request.
- The right to notice of what information the school has designated as directory information and a reasonable time after such notice to inform the school that the designated information should not be released without prior consent. See the following section for information on the release of directory information.
- The right to consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in student educational records (other than directory information), except to the extent FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Disclosures for which the consent of the Parent or Eligible Student is not required include the following:
  - to school officials with a legitimate educational interest. A school official is any school employee or any contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other person who performs school system services or functions that would otherwise be completed by school employees. A legitimate educational interest is a need that arises out of a school official’s role in providing educational services, including instruction, evaluation, therapy, etc., to a student, or out of the performance of administrative, supervisory, clerical, or other responsibilities prescribed by the school system;
  - to other school systems in which the student seeks or intends to enroll as long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student’s enrollment or transfer;
  - to specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - in connection with the student’s application for financial aid;
  - to state and local officials pursuant to State law;
  - to organizations conducting studies on behalf of the school;
  - to accrediting organizations;
  - to parents of a dependent student as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
  - to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons; and
  - in compliance with judicial order or pursuant to any lawfully issued subpoena when the educational agency makes reasonable effort to notify the Parent or Eligible Student in advance of the compliance. In limited circumstances, an order or subpoena may require the District to disclose information without notifying the Parent or Eligible Student.
- A Parent or Eligible Student who believes his or her rights under FERPA may have been violated may file a complaint by writing to the Family Policy Compliance Office. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of FERPA occurred. Complaints should be sent to:

### **Family Policy Compliance Office**

**U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920**



FERPA permits the district to disclose information designated as **Directory Information** without the consent of the Parent or Eligible Student. Directory Information is data which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy when distributed. Among the purposes that the Directory Information exception facilitates is the release of student information in athletic and extracurricular programs, yearbooks, honor roll and other recognition lists, graduation programs, media releases, etc.

Bryan County Public Schools has designated the following information as **Directory Information**; name, address, telephone number, date of birth, electronic mail (e-mail) address, photograph, audio recordings, video recordings, grade level, years of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, and honors and awards received. Unless the Parent or Eligible Student decides to opt out of Directory Information disclosure, the items as indicated above may be distributed to appropriate legitimate agencies identified by the district, including, but not limited to, PTA, colleges, and military recruiters. You have the right to refuse this disclosure. In order to opt out, you must notify your student's principal in writing within 10 days of receipt of this handbook.

The written notice must include:

1. The name of the student;
2. A statement that the parent/guardian or eligible student is opting out of the disclosure of Directory Information under FERPA; and
3. Signed and dated by the parent, guardian, or eligible student.

**\*Please note that your written notice will be effective for the current year only and must be renewed on an annual basis should you wish to continue to opt out of the release of directory information.**

### Harassment Statement

It is the policy of the Bryan County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race, ethnicity, color, disability, religious belief, or national origin in educational programs and activities, nor in admissions to facilities operated by the Bryan County Board of Education, or in the employment practices of the school system. It is the express policy of the Bryan County School Board to comply with all laws and regulations relating to discrimination now in effect or hereafter enacted.

The Bryan County Board of Education does not and will not tolerate harassment of our students or employees. The term "harassment" includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, ethnicity, color, gender, religious belief, nationality, citizenship, age, or disability. "Harassment" also includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome or offensive touching, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Violations of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including immediate employment termination. Students violating this policy may be disciplined up to and including expulsion from school.

### Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance"

To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to: (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) have a record of such an impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment. Section 504 requires that school districts provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students in their jurisdictions who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Anyone that feels a child is in need of Section 504 protections may refer the child by contacting the school counselor and requesting an evaluation. Evaluation and Eligibility Determination: An evaluation under Section 504 is not

necessarily a comprehensive evaluation as required under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Section 504 evaluations draw upon a variety of sources and may include cumulative record and work sample

review; observational data; interviews with student, parent and/or school personnel; and/or administration of formal assessment measures. A physician's medical diagnosis alone is insufficient to suffice as an evaluation. Although a medical diagnosis is one source of data to consider, it is neither required nor sufficient for establishing eligibility under Section 504. The Section 504 team may request medical documentation to assist in determining eligibility. The 504 team should always include persons knowledgeable about the student, interpretation of evaluation data, and the placement options available. Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan): A student who is eligible for Section 504 and requires related services or accommodations in order for his/her educational needs to be met as adequately as those of non-disabled peers will have a Section 504 Accommodation Plan developed. The goal of the plan is to provide reasonable accommodations that ensure a student with a disability has the opportunity to participate and access the general education curriculum and extracurricular activities to the same extent as a non-disabled peer. This does not guarantee equal outcome, but provides equal opportunity, so that if appropriate effort is applied, a student will benefit the same as non-disabled peers. The 504 Plan will be developed by the Section 504 team and will be based upon the individual student's educational needs and least restrictive environment. For a diabetic student, whose endocrine system does not function properly and is at risk of serious health problems, and even death, if not properly treated, the 504 Plan may include, but is not limited to: monitoring of blood glucose levels, permission to carry and use blood glucose monitoring supplies, snacks, water, and insulin as per the student's Diabetes Medical Management Plan (DMMP), and frequent restroom breaks.

### **Child Find Responsibility**

Under Child Find for Section 504, a school district is obligated to identify students who are disabled and may need related services or accommodations because of their disability. Section 504 eligibility and the need for an accommodation plan are separate determinations. OCR (Office of Civil Rights) has indicated that a student does not have to demonstrate a need for related services or accommodations in order to be Section 504 eligible. Even if a student does not need a 504 Accommodation Plan, he/she can be determined eligible and receive procedural safeguards, periodic reevaluation, manifestation determination and the nondiscrimination protections of Section 504. Should the need for 504 Accommodation Plan develop, the team would reconvene and develop an appropriate plan.

Training to Address Medical Needs: Bryan County Schools will provide training by qualified medical personnel to staff who educate, serve, supervise, or transport students. Training for staff (includes, but is not limited to, administrators, school nurses, teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, substitute teachers, substitute paraprofessionals, substitute bus drivers, and staff supervising students on field trips or other off-campus locations), will address the needs of students with medical conditions requiring school-developed health plans and/or Section 504 Accommodation Plans. Detailed information will be provided with regard to addressing the needs of students with diabetes, including diabetic and emergency care and a review of a protocol reflecting required written notification by the school nurse to the parent/guardian one week in advance of a student needing medical and other related supplies. If supplies are not received within three calendar days, then the school nurse will follow-up with a phone call or email (parent-provided email address). All notifications must be documented by the school nurse.

**If a parent, guardian, or adult student has a question about their rights under Section 504, they may contact the district's designated Section 504 representative at 912-851-4000.**

No otherwise qualified handicapped individual ... shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

"20-2-751.7 (a) The Professional Standards Commission shall establish a state mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or

other school employee toward a student which shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities. Each local school system shall be required to implement and follow such a state mandated process and shall include the mandated process in the student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies.”

- Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make a verbal report of the act to their teacher, counselor, or an administrator at their school.
- Any teacher, counselor, or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make a verbal report of the incident immediately to the school principal or principal’s designee and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal’s designee, within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the verbal and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent’s designee.
- Any school principal or principal’s designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make a verbal report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

**Reports of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the alleged sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report is valid, the school principal or principal’s designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent.**

“Sexual Abuse” means a person’s employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing or coercing any minor who is not that person’s spouse to engage in any sexual act as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5.

“Sexual Misconduct” includes behavior by an educator that is directed at a student and intended to sexually arouse the educator or the child. Sexual misconduct by an educator may include, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

- Making sexual comments, jokes or gestures;
- Showing or displaying sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, or messages;
- Writing sexual messages/graffiti on notes or the Internet;
- Spreading sexual rumors;
- Unnecessarily supervising students as they dress, shower or use restroom areas at school;
- Flashing or “mooning” students;
- Touching, excessively hugging or grabbing students in a sexual manner;
- Forcing a student to make a sign of physical affection or any movement sexual in nature;
- Talking or asking about a student’s developing body, sexuality, dating habits, etc.;
- Talking repeatedly about sexual activities or sexual fantasies;
- Making fun of the student’s physical attributes; or
- Calling the students by a sexual name.

### **Student Complaints and Grievances**

The Bryan County Board of Education is committed to providing an environment free of sexual harassment and all forms of harassment and discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, nationality, or disability. If a student believes he or she is being mistreated on account of race, color, religion, gender, nationality, or disability, the student may utilize the following three-step procedure.

#### **Step I:**

If a student has a complaint of discrimination or unfair treatment, they should report their concern to the principal, the local school’s Title IX coordinator, teachers, counselors, or other school administrators. If a student is not satisfied with the complaint’s resolution, the student or their parent may request a meeting

with the principal, following which, the principal will inform the parent in writing of their decision regarding the complaint.

### **Step II:**

If, after meeting with the school principal, the student is not satisfied with the principal's decision, a written appeal may be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, Ms. Debi McNeal, within 10 working days of the receipt of the principal's decision.

The appeal must cite specific reasons for reconsideration of the complaint, stating precisely the source of dissatisfaction, and be limited to the matter under review.

### **Step III:**

For assistance with the student complaint or grievance process, you may contact the district Division of Student Services, Bryan County Schools.

**Retaliation on account of filing a complaint at any level is strictly prohibited.**

### **Parents and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment affords Parents and Eligible Students rights and protections regarding instructional materials used in educational programs, surveys administered to students, and the conduct of certain physical examinations. The rights and protections established by the PPRA include:

● **Instructional Materials:** The Parent or Eligible Student has the right to inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student; and

● **Surveys:** The Parent or Eligible Student has the right to inspect any survey created by a third party, prior to the administration or distribution of the survey and the right to opt the student out of participation in any such survey. In addition, before a student may be required to submit to a survey revealing "Protected Information," the written consent of the parent or the consent of the Eligible Student is required. Finally, a minor student may not volunteer to submit to a survey revealing "Protected Information" without providing the parent of the student with prior written notice of the administration of the survey and an opportunity to opt out of the survey. "Protected Information" falls into the following categories:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family; ○ Sexual behaviors and attitudes;
- Any self-incriminating behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of with lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program); or
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.

**Physical Examinations.** Parents have the right to notice of 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. Exceptions include hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law.

The Bryan County Board of Education has developed and adopted policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect students' privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution procedures.

The Bryan County Board of Education will notify parents and eligible students of these policies at least annually and after any substantive changes. Individual schools will directly notify parents and students, at least annually, at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution and the opportunity to opt of said services.

**Family Policy Compliance Office**  
**U. S. Department Education 100 Maryland Avenue, SW**  
**Washington, D.C. 20202-4605**

All notifications must be documented by the school nurse.

## **MISCELLANEOUS DISTRICT INFORMATION**

### **Electronic Media for Students**

Bryan County School System recognizes that the use of technology is prevalent in society. However, they also can become a major distraction to the learning environment and are vulnerable to theft. Bryan County Schools are not responsible for lost, damaged electronic devices (ie. laptops, phones, watches, gaming devices, etc.)

### **Financial Procedures**

Bryan County Schools has partnered with MyPaymentsPlus.com to offer an online payment system to parents and students. With MyPaymentsPlus, parents can easily enroll their student in school activities and pay for school related items such as club/class dues, yearbooks, field trips, senior fees, after school program care, and other activities. This portal allows parents to manage their student account from the convenience of their home or on their mobile device. Please visit [www.MyPaymentsPlus.com](http://www.MyPaymentsPlus.com) to enroll and register for an account.

Parents and students may continue to remit cash or checks for the payment of school fees and dues. All monies collected will be deposited in a timely manner and your student will be issued a receipt if the payment is \$10 or greater. In the event a check is returned from the bank as insufficient, notification will be made as soon as the school is notified by the bank. The school will attempt to redeposit the check once and then additional steps (certified letter, court collection process or collection processing organization) may be utilized. A check collection fee may be charged to the maker of the check. This fee may be the maximum amount allowed by state law.

### **Money and Valuable Objects**

Please do not bring large amounts of money to school. All valuable articles should be in possession of the owner at all times. The school cannot accept responsibility for stolen or lost money or other articles.

### **Other Services to Students**

No deliveries of flowers, balloons, or other such items can be accepted at school because of safety concerns and because of resulting disruptions to instruction.

### **Photography/Digital Media**

Unless the parent/guardian requests otherwise, pictures and/or recordings of students may be taken by the news media, individual schools, partnering colleges and universities or the school system during the school day or at school events. Such pictures and/or recordings of students may appear on school and school system website, on Bryan County School's social media pages/site or in other public places.

If the parent/guardian wishes to prohibit the taking of any picture and/or audiovisual recording of their child by the news media, the school, or the school system, notification must be filed, in writing, within 30 days of the beginning of the school year or the date of enrollment. Pictures and/or recordings that identify students as receiving specialized instruction or services provided through an Individualized Education Program will not be publicly displayed. Regardless of parental consent or notification, the school system has the right to record students with video cameras for safety, instructional purposes, and at extracurricular activities.



### Posters, Invitations, and Announcements

1. All posters/announcements to be displayed must first be approved by the administration. An indication of that approval must be displayed on the poster/announcement.
2. The individual posting the posters/ announcements is responsible for removing them.
3. All party or event invitations have to be given class wide. School administration has final review of all such items.

### Student Solicitations and Fundraising

The principal, superintendent, and the Board of Education must approve any fundraising project prior to its commencement. Individual student, staff, parent fundraising is not permitted.

School facilities are intended for use for programs for students, for staff, and for the community. Guidelines for community use of school facilities and forms for handling requests are available in school offices.

### Transportation

Bus drivers are not permitted to wait for students who are tardy. Students are to be at the bus stop on time each day. Students must be at the bus stop five minutes before the bus is due to arrive.

In order to transport items on a bus, students must be able to hold the item in his/her lap. Flowers, balloons, and other such items cannot be transported on the bus because of safety concerns. Parents must make provisions for transporting them.

Students are to ride only their assigned bus home or to their daycare provider. In emergency cases, the school will issue the student a bus pass for the student to present to the bus driver. Please provide information required on the bus pass for the administration.

Students should learn the proper school bus evacuation procedures. There are three basic types of evacuations. Evacuation instructions will be given and drills will be held as follows:

**Type A:** Evacuations through the entrance door. Students should file out in order, beginning with the seat nearest to the entrance door and ending with the seat farthest from the door.

**Type B:** Evacuations through the rear emergency door. Students should file out in order, beginning with the seat nearest the rear door.

**Type C:** Evacuations through both doors. Students should file out of the door nearest to them in order, beginning with the seats nearest the doors and ending with the seats farthest from the doors.

### Visitors on School Property

1. Parents and other visitors shall register with the office secretary upon arriving on campus.
2. Food from outside restaurants cannot be brought to school for use during breakfast or lunch time.
3. The school shall not issue visitor permits except to those persons on school related business as sanctioned by the administration. Students are not permitted to bring visitors with them to school.
4. The principal or other faculty member shall direct any unauthorized visitor to leave the school property. Upon refusing to leave, or upon returning a second time, the school shall file appropriate charges with the local law enforcement agency. Disruption of school operations is a misdemeanor.
5. Parents (except as invited by the administration) and other non-students cannot ride buses. Appropriate charges may be filed upon a person's refusal to leave the bus.
6. Violations of safety, security, or health procedures will result in forfeiture of visitation privileges.
7. Any parent, guardian, or person other than a student at the public school in question who has been advised that minor children are present and who continues to, insult, or abuse any public school teacher, public school administrator, or public school bus driver in the presence and hearing of a pupil while on the premises of any public school or public school bus may be ordered by any of the above designated school personnel to leave the school premises or school bus, and upon failure to do so, such person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$500 (O.C.G.A.20-2-1182)

## Volunteer Information

1. All individuals must complete the Parent Volunteer Training. The trainings will be hosted at the individual schools.
2. ALL parent volunteers MUST complete the Mandated Reporting Training every year. Please see designated Volunteer Coordinator in your school for future instructions.
3. All parents must complete the parent information form on Google docs. This will be on the school website to complete. If parent does not have access to a computer, the electronic form can be filled out at the school when completing the Mandated Reporting PowerPoint.
4. Once parent has completed training and/or mandated reporting power point, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator to begin volunteering.

