Irwin County Elementary School
Student Handbook

The Future Starts Here!

Principal
Mrs. Rontee Barnes

Assistant Principals/Directors
Mrs. Jodi Roberts (API)
Mrs. Capucine Walker (Pre-K Director)
Mr. Justin Willingham (AP)

Table of Contents

SCHOOL CALENDAR **4**
DAILY SCHEDULE **5**
SCHOOL POLICIES **5**
Enrollment Entrance Requirements 5
Attendance Policy 6
Compulsory School Attendance Law of Georgia 6
Unexcused Absences 6
Tardies/Early Check-Outs 6
Lice 7
Behavior Plan- PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) 7
Homework 7
Honor Roll 8
Parties and Toys 8
Phone Calls 8
Promotion and Retention 8
Report Cards and Grading 8
Testing 8
SCHOOL SERVICES **9**
Drug Prevention Program 9
Gifted Program 9
Health Services 10
Hospital Homebound Services 10
Lunch and Breakfast Programs 10
Special Services 11
Georgia Early Literacy Act (HB 538) 11
GA Tiered Systems of Supports/ Response to Intervention 11
Child Find 11
Exceptional Student Education 11
Screeners 12
HB 402 12
504 13
Yearbook 13
PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES **14**
Child Custody 14
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC 1232g) 14
Teacher Qualifications/Parent's Right to KNow 14
Parent/Teacher Conferences 14
Parental Involvement 14
Resolving School-Related Concerns 15
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT **15**
Applicability 15
Student Interrogations and Searches 15
Philosophy 15
Specific Actions and Procedures 16
Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students (O.C.G.A 20-2-765) – Willful and persistent violation of student codes of

3
conduct) 16
House Bill No. 605 17
Statement of Authority of the Principal 17
Student Rules of Conduct 18
K-2 25
Student Dress Code 25
Student Rights and Responsibilities 25
AMENDMENTS **27**
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY **27**
Appendix **29**
Parent-School Compact 30
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION / BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY 33
ATTENDANCE POLICY 36
Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Corruption Procedure 37
GA School Safety Hotline 38

Irwin County Elementary School

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http://www.irwinelementary.org

Mission: The mission of the Irwin County School System is to:

CARE: College and Career Readiness – Academic Support – Relationships – Excellence

Vision: Our Vision is to embrace innovation, initiate positive change, and provide an equitable and excellent educational opportunity that prepares all graduates for success in their endeavors.

Motto: Every Child, Every Day!

Belief Statements:

1. All students can learn.
2. Student learning is the chief priority for the school.
3. Students learn in different ways and should be provided with a variety of instructional approaches including technology to support their learning.
4. A safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.
5. Teachers, administrators, parents, and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school's mission.

Members of the Irwin County Board of Education:

Mr. Kerry Billingsley, Superintendent
Mr. Lamar Purvis, Chairperson
Mr. Kurt Wilmot
Ms. Paige Wynn
Mr. James Curtis
Mrs. Holly Conner

SCHOOL CALENDAR

July 29- August 1, 2024	Teacher Work Days
August 2, 2024	First Day of School
September 2-3, 2024	Holidays
October 7, 2024	Teacher Work Days
October 16-18, 2024	Holidays
November 25-29, 2024	Holidays
December 20, 2024	Early Release
December 23-31,2024	Holidays
January 1-3, 2025	Holidays
January 6-7, 2025	Teacher Work Days
January 8, 2025	Students Return to School
January 20, 2025	Holiday
February 17, 2025	Holiday
March 14, 2025	Student Holiday/Teacher Work Day
April 7-11, 2025	Spring Break
May 23, 2025	Last day of school/Early Release
May 26, 2025	Holiday
May 27-28, 2025	Teacher Workdays

Report Card Dates:

October 22, 2024
January 21, 2025
March 26, 2025
May 23, 2025

Open House

July 31, 2024 4:30-6:30 PM

DAILY SCHEDULE

Students: 8:00 AM-3:00 PM

For your child's safety, parents and visitors must sign in at the main office and pick up a visitor's pass. Visitors are required to wear a **Visitor's Pass** while in the building.

"DROP OFF" and "PICK UP" must take place at the front of the building unless otherwise directed.

Schedule:

- **7:30 – 8:00 AM**: Students will arrive and breakfast is available in the lunchroom.
- **8:00 AM:** Students must be in their homeroom by **8:00 or be considered TARDY**. Parents must bring students into the office after 8:00 AM.
- **3:00 PM:** School day ends. **"Pick up" time is 3:00 PM**
- **2:30 PM: Deadline for any student checking out**
- The **morning** drop-off zone is located in the front of the building. Please do not use the side teacher parking lot or other outside doors.
- The afternoon pick-up zone for Pre-K, K, 1st, 5th graders AND THEIR SIBLINGS will be in the front of the school. Adults picking up students in the front of the school will no longer be permitted to occupy the open lanes in the parking lot until 2:40, due to safety concerns. The afternoon pick up zone for 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade students will be the side bus lane after bus dismissal.
- **All bus/pick up changes for students must be arranged with the front office no later than 2:00 pm.**

Important: NO student may leave this campus by walking. If your child's after school schedule should change for any reason, a NOTE MUST be sent with your child to their classroom teacher with instructions (i.e., friend's name, bus number, etc.).

Early Leave/Pickup: Every effort should be made to schedule medical or dental appointments after school if possible. Otherwise, students are expected to stay in class until the end of the school day. If an appointment must be made during school hours, please inform the teacher. Parents are asked to wait for their children either in the car or in the front office of the building. Penalties will apply for excessive early leave (see attendance policy).

SCHOOL POLICIES

Enrollment Entrance Requirements

- Social Security Number or FTE number
- Immunization Records on Georgia Form 3231*
- Birth Certificate or Certificate of Birth
- Valid photo ID for parent or guardian.
- Proof of legal residency in Irwin County** **(An updated proof of residency may be requested at any time.)**
- Ear, Eye, Dental Form, and Nutrition Form #3300

*If you are moving to Georgia from another state, you must take the child's immunization records to a Georgia County Health Department and transfer the data to Georgia Form 3231 (OCG: 20-2-771).

Acceptable proof of residency in Irwin County may include the following: Current lease/rental agreement; current residential property tax statement or bill; current homeowner's insurance policy; current light bill or gas bill receipt with the physical address. A Post Office Box address **is not acceptable as proof of residency in Irwin County.

Students may be enrolled for a probationary period pending the receipt of all the following documents from previous school by Irwin County Elementary:

- Permanent records from previous school
- Discipline records - Irwin Elementary will request data from the student's previous school.

Attendance Policy

Compulsory School Attendance Law of Georgia

Compulsory Attendance Ages: "between 6th and 16th birthdays." Official Code of Georgia Annotated O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1 requires any person in this State who has control or charge of a child between the ages of six and sixteen to enroll and send that child to school including public, private and homeschooling. However, if a child is under 6 and has attended more than 20 days in a public school, he/she is then subject to the compulsory attendance laws (20-2-150(C).

Under and by virtue of the school laws of this state, you are required to cause the continuous attendance of said child/children in a school. Failure to do so will make you liable to the penalties provided therein. Violation of the law is a misdemeanor, and violation makes you subject to a fine of up to $100.00 and 30 days in jail, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court. Each day of absence from school in violation of this law shall constitute a separate offense.

Regular school attendance is mandated by the state and necessary for students to make adequate progress each year. Excessive absences and failure to meet promotional requirements may result in retention of a student. As we are committed to each child's mastery of all essential skills, we will continue to closely monitor absences, tardies, and early checkouts.

Unexcused Absences

After a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences in a semester, a meeting will be required with the District Level Attendance Review Committee and parents/guardians to review the student's attendance to date (absences, tardies, and early check-outs), attendance history, compulsory attendance law, and potential consequences and penalties for failure to comply and to sign an Attendance Contract. The School Social Worker will document attempts to work with the family on improving attendance to avoid a referral to the court system. After the 5th unexcused absence, each additional unexcused absence warrants a separate offense.

Failure to attend the District Level Attendance Review Board meeting could result in a referral to the School Social Worker for possible intervention.

Upon the 6th or next unexcused absence, after signing the Attendance Contract, a Referral shall be made to the School Social Worker and possible warrant issued for parents/child when appropriate.

Tardies/Early Check-Outs

Each accumulation of (5) unexcused tardies and/or early checkouts will equal one unexcused absence. Reward trips/movies/activities may be affected by the accumulation of unexcused tardies/early check outs. See your child's teacher for specific guidelines. Also, in order to be eligible for Student of the Month, students can have only 1 unexcused OR 1 excused tardy/early check out for the month. In order for a tardy or early check out to be considered excused, a doctor's note must be on file. The student will have 5 days to bring the note to school**.**

State Board Rule 160-5-1-.10 delineates absences which all schools must consider excused. It also provides that school days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.
Excused absences shall include:

- Personal illness or when attendance in school would endanger the student's health or the health of others;
- A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family (mother, father, sister, brother, grandparent, or legal guardian) that necessitates absences from school;
- Celebrating special, recognized religious holidays observed by their faith, necessitating absence from school;
- A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school (high school). The first day for armed forces will be counted present.
- Conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
- A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave. Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to require a local school system to revise any policies relating to maximum number of excused and unexcused absences for any purposes. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-692.1)
- Local boards of education shall count students present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly as set forth in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-692.

Written excuses for absences should be sent with the child on the day he/she returns to school. E-mail or text excuses are also acceptable if received within the 5-day limit. **It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure the excuse was received.** Excuses not received by the 5th day of returning back to school will not be accepted. Excuses will be evaluated by the principal or a designee to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. **Parents will still be responsible for providing a note for children going home from the clinic or school nurse.**

The School Level Student Attendance Review Committee will be composed of an administrator and teachers from the school and/or the counselor and/or School Social Worker if deemed necessary.

The District Level Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) includes representatives from the Court System, Department of Family and Children's Services, Department of Juvenile Justice, School Administrators, a school counselor and the School Social Worker, local Law Enforcement, and/or a representative from any of the other community partners on the Irwin County Attendance Protocol Committee.

If a referral to the School Social Worker (SSW) is required, the SSW will schedule a conference with the child and the parent, or make a home visit to explore reasons for absences. The SSW will check for other siblings in the family who may be having truancy problems so all children may be seen in one conference. At the conference, the SSW, the child and the parent will identify barriers to regular attendance and devise strategies to remove those barriers. Additionally, the SSW may contract with the child and parent regarding improved attendance or may initiate a referral to community resources.

Please note that if your child checks in late or checks out early, a note must be sent within the next 5 school days in order for it to be considered for an excused absence. The signed check in/out sheet will not be sufficient.

Lice

If your child has been diagnosed with having nits or lice you will be called to come and pick your child up from school. He/she will be excused for up to two (2) days to take care of the situation. All days out after two days will be unexcused absences.

A "No Nit Clearance Note" from the Doctor, Health Department or School Nurse will be needed upon returning to school. Please call the school to schedule a time for you to bring your child to the school if you want the school nurse to check and determine if the child is "clear to return to school." If your child is sent to school without a "clearance note" you will be called to come pick your child up. **Please note that if you plan on using the school nurse, you MUST have an appointment and the parent or guardian MUST come with the child.**

Behavior Plan- PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports)

The Irwin County Elementary School has set up a school wide positive intervention behavior plan. School and class rules and expectations have been established and posted throughout the school. Consequences for not following the rules have been written for each grade level.

The positive intervention (PBIS) part of the plan will be followed by the entire school. Students can earn rewards on individual level, class level, and grade level for following our set expectations (Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe, Be Positive) in each area: Classroom, Hallway, Lunchroom, Assemblies, Bus. Acknowledgements consist of praise, positive notes, Indian Bucks, Golden Feathers, Grade Level Reward Party. Students can earn Indian Bucks to spend on prizes in our PBIS store. Golden Feathers are given out to each class from any faculty or staff member when they notice the class following school expectations. Classes will set a goal based on choices set by the PBIS team for a reward that they work on together. (Example: Popcorn party for 25 Golden Feathers, Movie for 20 Golden Feathers, etc) Grade level reward parties are given each 9 weeks for students who meet criteria set by each grade level and they have no office or bus discipline referral for that 9 week period and have not missed more than five days of the 9 week period. Our grade level parties will have to be adjusted in accordance with CDC guidelines at the time.

Homework

It is the policy of ICES that homework given is age appropriate. Each grade level team develops assignments that will reinforce skills and content previously taught in the classroom. Research shows a positive relationship between students who regularly complete homework and academic success.

Honor Roll

Students exhibiting exemplary academic performance are recognized each 9 weeks. In grades 1-5:

- Academic honor roll – all A's (90 or above in all content areas)
- Merit honor roll – all A's and B's (85 or above in all content areas)
- End Of Year Honor's Day- grades up until mid 4th 9 weeks count for Yearly Awards

Parties and Toys

Administrative approval is needed for parents to bring in cupcakes and snacks to celebrate students' birthdays. Individual birthday parties will not be allowed during the instructional day. The teacher will schedule classroom holiday parties.

Irwin County Elementary School celebrates Valentine's Day in a very traditional manner and adheres to specific policy governing the celebration. The policy states that there will be no delivery of commercial items to students at Irwin County Elementary School during the celebration of Valentine's Day. These commercial items include, but are not limited to, balloons, flowers, and candy. Additionally, the Irwin County Board of Education has endorsed a policy that affects the transportation of vision impairing items on school buses.

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other valuables to school unless the teacher sends a note home.

Phone Calls

No phone calls will be sent to classrooms. Messages will be taken and delivered as promptly as possible. If there is a need to speak with a teacher directly, please plan these phone conferences during the teacher's planning time.

Please make sure all transportation changes have been made **BEFORE** 2:00 pm.

Promotion and Retention

The Irwin County Board of Education endorses the concept that a student's success in school will depend to a great extent upon the cooperation between home and school. The Board believes its primary function is to provide students a quality educational opportunity. It is the responsibility of the school, home, community and the individual learner to take full advantage of that educational opportunity.

Although the Irwin County Board of Education strongly believes that students should continue to advance to the next grade level annually, promotion is based primarily on student achievement and is not an automatic process. It is recognized that under certain circumstances retention or placement may be required for some students. In accordance with Georgia law, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282 through 20-2-285 and Georgia Board of Education rule 160-4-2-.11, the promotion, placement or retention of a student into a grade, class or program shall be based on an assessment of the academic achievement of the student and a determination of the educational setting in which the student is most likely to receive instruction and other services needed in order to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

Report Cards and Grading

Report cards are sent home with your child at the end of each nine weeks. Grades are assigned based on your child's mastery of the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

Students in grades 3-5 have weighted grades. Grade level teachers will share content weights at the beginning of each school year.

Testing

Irwin County Schools will administer Georgia Milestones to all students in grades 3-8 in the spring of each school year. The Georgia Milestones is designed to measure how well students know the state curriculum. Students will be assessed annually in grades 3-8 in the content areas of reading, English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. These assessments will be administered as long as the state makes provisions for them.

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, students must meet or exceed the state standard in reading on the third grade Georgia Milestones assessments and reading and mathematics on the fifth and eighth grade Georgia Milestones assessments. However, the school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the Georgia Milestones, but who does not meet

promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education. If the state does not provide Georgia Milestones assessments in grades 3, 5, 8, the local promotion/retention policy for grades K, 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 will also apply to grades 3, 5, and 8.

A student in grades 3, 5 or 8, who does not meet or exceed the Georgia standard on the Georgia Milestones will not be promoted to the next grade without major intervention by the student, parent, and school. Parents will be notified by first-class mail if their student fails to perform at grade level on the Georgia Milestones. Irwin County Schools will offer support for students who need to improve their performance on this critical assessment. Students will be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction prior to a retesting opportunity. Students who do not achieve grade level scores on the second administration of the Georgia Milestones or who do not take the second administration will be retained or administratively placed based on the totality of the data and principal's discretion. A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia Milestones in reading and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) will take the Georgia Milestones in reading and/or mathematics on the second administration day(s). A student's failure to take the Georgia Milestones in grades 3, 5, and 8 in reading and/or mathematics will result in the student being retained. Parents will be notified of their student's retention by first-class mail.

The parent/guardian or the teacher(s) may appeal the decision to retain a student. A Placement Committee, composed of the parent or guardian, the teacher(s), and the principal or designee, will hear appeals. The Placement Committee will review the overall academic achievement of the student in light of the performance on the Georgia Milestones and may consider the results of the following approved assessments: norm referenced achievement test; GKIDS 2.0 (Kindergarten only); Reading and Math fluency assessments; computer assisted assessments; teacher-made assessments and the number of subjects passed. The decision to place students in the next grade in response to an appeal must be made unanimously by the Placement Committee. For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Committee will serve as the Placement Committee. The decision of the Placement Committee is final and may not be appealed.

A plan for accelerated, additional and/or differentiated instruction will be developed for each student who does not achieve grade level performance in grades 3, 5, or 8 on the Georgia Milestones whether the student is retained, placed or promoted for the next year.

Irwin County Schools shall annually notify parents/guardians that placement or promotion of a student into a grade, class or program will be based on the academic achievement of the student on Milestones assessments and other criteria as described in this policy.

SCHOOL SERVICES

Drug Prevention Program

Drug Abuse Resistance Education ("D.A.R.E.--5th Grade): This program is a cooperative effort of the Ocilla Police Department and Irwin County School System to prevent drug abuse in children and youth. The program emphasis is to help students recognize and resist the many subtle pressures that influence them to experiment with alcohol and marijuana. In addition, program strategies are planned to focus on feelings relating to self-esteem, interpersonal and communication skills, decision-making, and positive alternatives to drug abuse behavior. New to the D.A.R.E. curriculum this year are ways to resist gangs and gang violence, as well as more stress on safe and nonviolent schools. A uniformed D.A.R.E. Officer (Ocilla Police Department) will conduct these classes. For more information, please contact Trae Thomas, our on site SRO Officer.

Gifted Program

Students K-12 in the Irwin County School District who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual, academic, and/or creative ability are provided with special instructional services by the program for gifted students. Eligibility criteria for placement in this program are determined by the State Board of Education. Referrals for consideration for eligibility for gifted services may be made by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. For a summary of eligibility criteria or for further information about Irwin County's Program for Gifted Students, please contact the gifted education teacher at your child's school or Andrea Reeves, System Gifted Program Coordinator at (229) 468-9510. The Irwin County School System gifted manual is also available on the Irwin County School System website.

To qualify for gifted placement, a student must meet the criteria in three of the four categories according to State of Georgia/Irwin County Eligibility Criteria*:

1. Mental ability – 99th percentile (K-2); 96th percentile (3-5) on a mental ability test
2. Achievement – 90th percentile on total math or total reading on a school administered, standardized, norm referenced test.
3. Creativity - 90th percentile.
4. Motivation – Standardized motivational rating scale at 90 or above on a scale of 1 – 100.

Gifted students will be served through the advanced content collaborative model.

Utilizing the advanced content collaborative model , students will receive differentiated tasks that are leveled in content pacing, process skills emphases, and expectations of student performance. Students may qualify for the advanced content model as determined by recent test scores, past classroom performance, and teacher and administrator recommendation.

Health Services

Medications: If a prescription or over-the-counter medication is necessary during the school day, a parent should bring the medicine to school in a pharmacy labeled bottle. A school medical form must be completed and given to the school official responsible for administering the medication.

Nurse: A Health Clinic is provided for students at our school by a Registered Nurse

Vision and Hearing: Vision and hearing screenings for students are available at the request of the parent or teacher. Annual screenings are completed on all students with current IEPs and/or receiving Ga-TSS services.

Special Health Needs: If your child has a special documented health need or problem, this should be communicated to the teacher and school nurse. (This information is kept confidential.) In cases that warrant specific precautions or emergency procedures, an individual protocol will be developed by a team consisting of the nurse, teachers, and parents/guardians.

Hospital Homebound Services

(HHB) O.C.G.A. 160-4-2-.31 (effective 11/24/09) – academic instruction and other services provided to eligible students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods of time that would prevent normal school attendance based upon certification of need by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist who is treating the student for the presenting diagnosis.

- HHB Services are available to students who need to be absent from school for a minimum of ten (10) consecutive days because of a non-communicable disease or illness.
- HHB Services must be requested through the school office by the student and parent/guardian.
- A completed written medical referral form signed by a licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist who is currently treating the student for the diagnosis presented must be submitted to the LEA for HHB services to be considered.
- Following approval of HHB services, a meeting will be required including the student, parent/guardian, administration, and all classroom teachers to develop an Educational Service Plan (ESP), discuss services and expectations. The ESP shall include a school re-entry plan.
- A student who is on the Hospital Homebound Program is counted present in school. Work is assigned by the classroom teachers.

Lunch and Breakfast Programs

At Irwin County Elementary, we are proud to serve nutritious meals each school day. We also offer a variety of a la carte items which can be purchased by students. Breakfast and lunch are provided to all our students at no cost.

As students arrive, breakfast will be offered in the lunchroom.

Beginning this school year, fees for adults purchasing breakfast or lunch in the school cafeteria are as follows:
Breakfast: $2.50
Lunch: $4.25- Dine-In
$4.50- Carryout

NOTE: All students must acquire milk for their lunch or breakfast tray. If your child has a milk allergy, please send a doctor's note to our school nurse. Students are allowed to bring water bottles to school to use for water refilling stations. Only drinks included in a student's lunch box will be allowed for consumption at lunchtime. However, no glass-bottled drinks may be brought to school due to safety concerns.

Special Services

Georgia Early Literacy Act (HB 538)

The Georgia Department of Education is committed to our goal of increasing literacy outcomes for ALL of Georgia's students. Georgia is currently experiencing a unique synergy around literacy with several developments that have impacted literacy policy and practice statewide. The Georgia Early Literacy Act (House Bill 538), Georgia's new K-12 English Language Arts Standards (implementation SY 2025-26), and Georgia's dyslexia efforts (Senate Bill 48) are all important initiatives that will help guide Georgia's literacy journey over the next few years.

The Georgia Early Literacy Requirements, codified as Rule 160-4-2-.40, outline the state's initiatives to enhance literacy for students from kindergarten through third grade. This rule mandates:

1. **Instructional Support**: Schools must provide teachers with training on the science of reading, including structured literacy and foundational literacy skills.
2. **Universal Screening**: Students must undergo reading proficiency screenings three times each year. Schools are required to develop and implement individualized reading improvement plans for students needing support.
3. **High-Quality Materials**: The State Board of Education must approve instructional materials aligned with evidence-based literacy practices.

These measures aim to standardize literacy instruction and improve reading outcomes statewide

GA Tiered Systems of Supports/ Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention is a continuum of evidence-based, system-wide academic and behavioral practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making to empower each student to achieve high standards. Support is provided through a multi-tiered intervention system including the following components:

Tier 1: Standards-Based Classroom Learning
Tier 2: Needs-Based Learning
Tier 3: Student Support Team (SST) Driven Learning

Behavior support processes designed to consider, as appropriate in light of the severity of the behavioral problem, support services that may be available through the school, school system, other public entities, or community organizations that may help the student address behavioral problems; this rule neither mandates nor prohibits the use of student support teams as part of the student support process.

Child Find

The purpose of Child Find is to identify, locate, and evaluate children and youth, birth to age 21, who are suspected of, or have a disability or developmental delay in order to provide free and appropriate Special Education Services. Irwin County Schools serves children ages 3 through 21 with identified Special Education needs.

Parents/guardians of students who suspect their child may have a disability should contact the teacher, principal or the school's Ga-TSS Coordinator.

Exceptional Student Education

Special Education services are provided to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Programs are provided for students in all disability areas recognized by the State of Georgia. Programs are provided based on the identified needs of each student. If your child has a learning or behavior problem, or if you suspect that your child has a disability, you should contact the principal or Ga-TSS Coordinator at your child's school, or contact Andrea Reeves, Irwin County School System Special Education Director.

Under provisions of the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship, parents of students who receive Special Education services may choose to transfer their children to other public or private schools in Georgia. For additional information, please visit the Georgia Department of Education website at http://public.doe.k12.ga.us, or contact Irwin County School System Special Education Director, Andrea Reeves, at (229) 468-9510.

Screeners

Students at ICES are given screeners throughout the year., which include math, reading and dyslexia screeners. Screening is an assessment process that helps teachers identify students who are at risk for not meeting grade-level learning goals.Teachers or support personnel conduct screenings to check your child for warning signs that he or she might be at risk for academic difficulties later. Teachers use the results of the screening to inform next steps in teaching for your child. Even though all children are given screening assessments, only the students who show risk by having lower scores get extra help are provided additional support in the area of challenge.

HB 402

HB 402 requires school systems to provide information on water safety:
(a) As used in this Code section, the term 'water safety education' means education intended to promote safety in, on, and around bodies of water and reduce the risk of injury or drowning.
(b) At the beginning of each school year, each public school or local school system shall provide the parents and guardians of each child enrolled in such school or school system with information on the important role water safety education courses and swimming lessons play in saving lives. Such information shall be provided in electronic or hard copy format. Such information shall include options, if available within the vicinity of the public school or local school system, for age-appropriate water safety education courses and swimming lessons that can result in a certificate indicating successful completion, including courses and lessons offered for free or at a reduced price; provided, however, that such information shall be provided directly to students who are 18 years of age or older.

Swimming is an important hobby, as well as a great skill for your children to learn. While kids need to learn to swim early, you should also ensure they understand the crucial habits of water safety. Why is it important to learn about water safety? Well, one of the reasons is that drowning is one of the leading causes of death in the whole world. Drowning is the second-leading cause of unintentional injury death for children and sixth for people of all ages.

1. Water Safety Tips
Ensure you follow the following tips to ensure the safety of your children.

Enroll in Swimming Lessons
To ensure your children will not drown when swimming, you should ensure that they get top-notch swimming lessons. Learning to swim impacts children with survival skills and great techniques to prevent exhaustion, hence conserve energy. The good thing is that you can start teaching your child to swim as early as one year old. Infant swimming lessons reduce the risk of drowning for your child as they grow.

Why Kids Need to Learn Swimming
Without a doubt, swimming is full of fun. It also provides a host of health benefits. This means that your kid will stay healthy and feeling happy. Remember swimming is an exercise, hence it ensures your kid is fit all the time. It keeps your heart pumping, thus enhancing lungs and heart health.

Physical activities help in preventing health issues such as obesity. It also enhances stamina, posture, and balance. Another benefit is that it makes swimmers more strong and flexible. Swimming also improves mental health. Many people go for swimming to relax and enjoy, which enhances your overall mood. Lastly, it offers a great opportunity for kids to meet new friends and socialize.

Before enrolling your kid in a swimming program, ensure the instructors are well trained. They should also hold certifications from a recognized curriculum. The instructors and lifeguards should have current first aid and CPR certifications.

Swimming classes for infants usually include children and parents. Although infants can show swimming movement, they are not old enough to swim properly on their own. Therefore, it is prudent to enroll in a parent-child class. These water play classes help your kid to get used to staying in the water. It is also a fun activity for you and your kid. It is a great way to introduce your kid to build readiness skills and introduce water safety skills.

2. Focused Supervision
Swimming lessons should guarantee your kid's safety in the water. Focused supervision is a very important water safety habit. Most of the kids who drown are not expected to be swimming at the time of the accident. Therefore, it is imperative to block access to a swimming pool during a non-swimming time.

Whether your kid is swimming in the ocean or pool, you should always be alert when they are in the water. Keep an eye and stay close to them all the time. Remember, kids, love to try dives, flips and all kinds of tricks in water. This makes it more dangerous to allow them to swim on their own.

3. Never Let You Kid Swim Alone
Many people have made the mistake of leaving a child to swim alone because there is a lifeguard on duty. Note that lifeguards have a big job of watching the water, responding to emergencies, and advising swimmers on safety concerns. Therefore, you should advise your kid to always swim in the company of a sibling or friend.

4. Swim Within Designated Areas
It is important to stay only in designated areas, whether it's in the ocean, pool, or lake. Children should never swim in areas where water is deeper than their abilities, especially in the ocean or lakes.

5. Learn Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
While most people observe water safety guidelines, accidents are prone to happen. Therefore, it is important to arm yourself and kids with lifesaving techniques such as CPR. It can mean the difference between life and death.

Conclusion
While swimming is fun for kids, it comes with potential risks. To guarantee their safety, you should ensure they know the basic water safety guidelines and learn how to swim well. Adhering to water safety habits ensures you have fun swimming, kayaking, or enjoying other sports in the water. (Resource: https://americanswimacademy.com/water-safety-the-importance-of-swimming-lessons-to-kids/)

Water safety flyer can be found at: https://www.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/get-help/water-safety/water-safety-tips.pdf

504

Section 504 protects all qualified students with disabilities, defined as those persons having a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (Caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, learning).

Parents or guardians of students who have reason to believe their child may have a disability as defined under Section 504 and may require special accommodations in the general education setting should contact the school's principal, counselor, or Irwin County School System 504 Director, Leslie Young at (229) 468-9510.

The following additional services are available as needed and as students qualify.

- Migrant Education
- Gifted Program
- Early Intervention Program (O.C.G.A.: 20-2-153)
- Counselors
- Speech and Hearing
- Psychologist
- Refer for outside resources upon request

Yearbook

Yearbooks are available for purchase each year.

PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Child Custody

The Irwin County Elementary School keeps a confidential list of students whose parents have limited and/or restricted custody rights. Students are placed on the list when and only when the school receives a legal document from the courts indicating a restriction. **In the absence of legal papers, both parents have a right to visit and/or pick a child up from school**. If circumstances should ever develop during the year and you have a concern about your child's safety, please contact the school immediately and explain the circumstances. These confidential lists are reviewed annually for accuracy; it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the court papers are in proper order and updated if necessary.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC 1232g)

Parents or eligible students have the right to the following:

- Inspect and review education records;
- Request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except when requested by a government agency. Directory information contains the following: student name & grade.
- Complaints may be filed with the U.S. Department of Education.
- Copy of the FERPA may be reviewed in the principal's office (E:28.3).

Parents who wish to have student information withheld from printed documents and other agencies may contact a school administrator.

Teacher Qualifications/Parent's Right to Know

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, the **Irwin County Elementary School** would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

· Whether the student's teacher—

- o has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- o is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
- o is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.

· Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher and/or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the Principal at **229-468-9476.**

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parents may initiate a conference with a teacher anytime during the school year. It works best for all concerned when parents contact the teachers for an appointment. If parents go to the classroom without an appointment, it interrupts the teaching/learning process. Please contact the teacher for parent/teacher conferences.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is essential to the success of students in school. Studies have shown a direct correlation between involved parents and successful students. Therefore, it is important that parents have opportunities to know what is happening with their children on a regular basis. Parents may stay informed about their child's progress through regular progress reports and report cards. Parents are encouraged to review these materials with their children regularly.

Additional notices will be sent home with students when they are referred to the school administrator for a violation of the code of conduct. When notices of disciplinary action are sent home, it is the responsibility of the parent to sign and return the notice to the school. At any time, a parent may request a conference with the principal, assistant principal, or teacher to discuss issues related to discipline and the code of conduct. The Irwin County Elementary Code of Conduct was developed with input and review by parents (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-735). Suggestions for improvement from parents, students, teachers, school council members, and staff are always welcome.

Parental involvement can take many different forms. Speak to your classroom teacher, resource teachers, school administrators, school council member, and/or parent involvement coordinator about ideas that will work for your child and you ***(see Student – Teacher – Parent Compact for Education in Appendix).***

Resolving School-Related Concerns

Parents should try to resolve any concerns you may have at the level where they occur. Unless the situation is extreme, teachers should be contacted to resolve concerns before contacting school administrators, the superintendent, and/or Board of Education (BOE) members. However, student discipline problems relating to buses should be referred to the school administrator.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

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

Student codes of conduct shall be available in each school and classroom.

Applicability

The United States Supreme Court has said that a student may not be deprived of the right to a public education without adherence to procedural due process. It is the responsibility of the Board of Education (BOE), Irwin County School System and its staff to ensure that no student is arbitrarily denied the right to an education. Likewise, it is the *responsibility of each student to act in a manner that does not threaten, interfere with, or deprive other students of their right to an education*.

In accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.5(c), and student who engages in off-campus behavior which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process shall be disciplined at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee and may range from ISS, Long-term suspension, or expulsion.

Student Interrogations and Searches

The principal or assistant principal or their designee of each school in the Irwin County School System shall be responsible for conducting reasonable interrogations of students in order to investigate misconduct properly. Searches are based on a reasonable suspicion if reasonable cause has been established. Student cars brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, desks and other school property shall be subject to random inspection and search by school authorities at all times without further notice to students or parents.

The Irwin County School System reserves the right to use "walkthrough" and "hand-held" metal detectors and "drug-sniffing" dogs at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus. Students are notified that these metal detectors will be used at the discretion of administrators. An individual student may be searched if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or in violation of school rules.

Use of metal detectors to search a student is permitted when there is reasonable suspicion that the student possesses a weapon of any kind or when a student exhibits predisposition to violent behavior or the use of force. *LEA: JCAD*

Philosophy

The Irwin County Elementary School **Student Code of Conduct** (OCGA 20-2-751.5(a)) is based on the philosophy that discipline is a tool that is used to teach students to become responsible for their own behavior. Since our students live in a society in which citizens are expected to obey laws and abide by commonly accepted standards of behavior, we must teach them to be self-disciplined. This Student Code of Conduct is built upon commonly accepted standards of behavior sometimes called character traits as taught in our character education program (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-145). These character traits include: citizenship, cheerfulness. cleanliness, compassion, cooperation, courage, courtesy, creativity, diligence, fairness, generosity, honesty, kindness, loyalty, method of discouraging bullying and

violent acts against fellow students, patience, patriotism, perseverance, punctuality, respect for others, respect for the creator, respect for the environment, sportsmanship, school pride, self-respect, self-control, tolerance, and virtue.

In order to educate students to become productive citizens as adults, we must create a safe, non-threatening and orderly school environment that enables teachers to teach and students to learn. We expect students to "behave themselves in such a way so as to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and others, respect each other and school district employees, obey student behavior policies adopted by the local board of education, and obey student behavior rules established by individual school" (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-735). This Code of Conduct establishes expectations for the maintenance of a positive learning environment at school.

It is the preferred policy of the board that disruptive students are placed in alternative education settings in lieu of being suspended or expelled.

The **Student Code of Conduct** (OCGA 20-2-751.5(a)) is effective during the following times and in the following places:

1. At school or on school property at any time;
2. Off the school grounds at any school-related or school-sponsored activity, function or event, and while traveling to and from such events; and
3. On vehicles *(see Bus Policy in Appendix)* provided for student transportation by the school system.

Specific Actions and Procedures

Local board policies shall require the filing of a report by a teacher documenting a student's violation of the student code of conduct which repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his or her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn within one school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior. The report shall be filed with the principal or principal's designee, shall not exceed one page, and shall describe the behavior. The principal or principal's designee shall, within one day of receiving such a report, send to the student's parents or guardians a copy of the report, and information regarding how the principal or principal's designee may be contacted.

The principal or the principal's designee shall send written notification to the teacher and to the student's parents or guardians of the student support services being utilized or the disciplinary action taken within one school day and shall make a reasonable attempt to confirm receipt of such written notification by the student's parents or guardians. Written notification shall include information regarding how a student's parents or guardians may contact the principal or principal's designee. Each local board of education shall approve Tribunal Training Providers.

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students (O.C.G.A 20-2-765) – Willful and persistent violation of student codes of conduct)

Students that have exhibited behaviors that repeatedly interfere with the teacher's ability to conduct his or her class in an effective manner, interfere with the learning process of others or continually create an unsafe environment for other students may be identified as being a chronic disciplinary problem.

K-3: Student behaviors that exceed consequences per office referral for a total of 20 or more days being assigned to timeout/ISS/OSS (collectively) must be referred to the Ga-Tiered Systems of Support (Ga-TSS/RTI) as an initial step of the Disciplinary and Behavioral Correction Plan.

4-5: Student behaviors that exceed consequences per office referral for a total of 15 or more days being assigned to timeout/ISS/OSS (collectively) must be referred to the Ga-Tiered Systems of Support (Ga-TSS/RTI) as an initial step of the Disciplinary and Behavioral Correction Plan.

Students falling in this category must be placed on a Disciplinary and Behavioral Correction Plan that may include any or all of the following:

1. Referral to the Response to Intervention Team
2. Administrative conference with parents and student
3. Referral to school counseling services
4. Time Out assignment (or additional days as needed)
5. Possible referral for psychological testing
6. After school detention
7. Police may be notified

Disciplinary action will be determined by considering a number of factors, including student's discipline history, degree of premeditation, impulse, or self-defense, age, disability, and cooperation/remorse.

Progressive discipline processes are designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior, that the previous discipline history of the student and other relevant factors will be taken into account; and that all due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed. Parental involvement processes are designed to create the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. Local boards of education shall provide opportunities for parental involvement in developing and updating student codes of conduct.

House Bill No. 605

Under Georgia law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-738) a "teacher shall have the authority, consistent with local board policy, to manage his or her classroom, discipline students, and refer a student to the principal or the principal's designee to maintain discipline in the classroom." A teacher also has the authority to remove from his or her classroom a student who repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn, where the student's behavior is in violation of the Code of Conduct. Should a teacher, exercising this authority, remove a student from class, the principal or a placement review committee will determine the proper temporary and permanent placement for the student. This process may take up to three days. Parents will be notified whenever a teacher exercises his or her authority to remove a student from class.

Corporal Punishment: The Irwin County School System does not permit the use of Corporal Punishment by teachers, staff, or administrators.

Informal Discipline: When the violation is not serious, the administrator may use assistance of the home, educational support services, and professional agencies to help the student change the behavior.

Time-Out: The student is removed from attending regular classes and the students' assignments are sent to the student by the teachers. The student may not attend or participate in any extracurricular activities while assigned to time-out. This includes, but is not limited to, field trips, field day, assemblies, and parties.

Detention: A student may be required to report to a specific school location and to a specific teacher or school official before, after, or during school hours. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from school.

Short-term Suspension: If a student violates the rules as stated in the handbook, the principal or assistant principal may prohibit the student from attending school for not more than 10 school days.**LEA:JDD-3*

Long-term Suspension:** *Long-term suspension* means the student loses the right to attend school or to participate in school activities for more than ten (10) school days. **LEA: JDD-3*

Expulsion:** *Expulsion* means the student loses the privilege of continuing school for the remainder of the current school semester, grading period, year, or longer.

A student who has been assigned a short or long-term suspension or has been expelled will receive a grade of zero (0) on graded class work missed during the suspension or expulsion. Long-term assignments that were assigned before the suspension and due during the suspension may be turned in on the day the student returns from suspension. LEA: JDD-1

Statement of Authority of the Principal

The principal is the designated leader of the school and along with the staff is responsible for its orderly operation. In case of discipline violations not covered by prescribed disposition in this handbook, the principal may enact corrective measures which he/she feels are in the best interest of the school and the student involved. ***Due to the immaturity of elementary students, administrators may use discretion in resolving some misbehavior.***

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

Each local board of education shall observe Georgia law in developing and implementing disciplinary hearings held by a disciplinary hearing officer, disciplinary panel, or disciplinary tribunal pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-751 through 20-2-759 including the ability to honor disciplinary orders of private schools and other public schools/school systems pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.2.

ALL DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND MAY BE CHANGED AS NEEDED.

Student Rules of Conduct

1. Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Illegal Drugs
2. Arson, Vandalism, and Malicious Destruction of Property
3. Assault or battery on a faculty or a staff member employed by the Irwin County School System
4. Bullying
5. Cheating
6. Disrespect-Verbal Assault of Teachers, Administrators, Other Students and School Employees
7. Disruptive Behavior
8. Electronic Communication Devices
9. False Alarms
10. Fighting/Physical Assault or Battery of Other Students
11. Gambling
12. Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts:
13. Insubordination
14. Profanity
15. Digital Devices, Phones, Games, Cameras, Toys, Laser Pointers, ETC
16. Sexual Harassment
17. Public Displays of Affection
18. Stealing, Extortion, Coercion, or Blackmail
19. Weapons or Other Dangerous Objects
20. Issue with COVID-19 Virus
21. Horseplay
22. Inappropriate Touching/ Behaviors of a Sexual Nature
23. Gang Related Activity

1) **Alcohol, Tobacco/Vape, and other Illegal Drugs** are prohibited at school or any other school function. A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or any illicit drug product when:
   - On the school grounds immediately before or after school hours.
   - On the school grounds at any time when the school is being used by any school group.
   - Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event.

   a) Alcohol and Illegal Drug Use or Possession:
      1st Offense: 10 days time-out, possible short/long term suspension, notification of police and parent/guardian, parent/guardian conference required, and a completion of 8 sessions of extensive drug awareness education. A DFCS referral will be made.

   b) Tobacco or Vape Use/Possession
      1st Offense: 2 days time-out. Parents/Guardians contacted.
      2nd Offense: 4 days time-out. Parents/Guardians contacted.
      3rd Offense: 6 days time-out. Parents/Guardians contacted.

   Two additional days of time-out will be added for each subsequent occurrence.

2) **Arson, Vandalism, and Malicious Destruction of Property:** A student shall not burn, attempt to burn, destroy, or deface any building or property of the school. This includes property belonging to, rented by, or on loan to the school system, and property belonging to school employees or other students. Fireworks and related items are not permitted at school.
   1st Offense:
   - Parents/Guardians will be contacted. Notification will be made to the police and/or fire department.
   - Restitution for damages will be required.
   - School suspension, time-out, or expulsion (per admin discretion).

3) **Assault or battery on a faculty or a staff member employed by the Irwin County School System (G.A. 20-2-751.5):** Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature, causing physical harm to another, verbal or written threats or intimidation without actual physical contact in an attempt to cause reasonable fear of immediate bodily harm, or an attempt to hurt another person at school are prohibited. Violation of this rule constitutes grounds for immediate removal of the student from the school setting (*O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23-1).*

K-2:

- 1st offense, 3-5 days ISS. Duration is at the discretion of administrators and will be determined by the severity of the students actions.
- 2nd and subsequent offenses will result in assignment of current written guidelines.

3-5:

1st Offense: Penalty may range from short/long-term suspension, alternative placement or permanent expulsion and/or the filing of a juvenile complaint.

4) **Bullying:** When a person or a group behaves in ways—on purpose and over and over—that make someone feel hurt, afraid or embarrassed. It is important to distinguish bullying from other unkind, mean and harmful behavior. Calling someone a name or pushing someone once, being rude or having an argument with someone is not bullying. Of course, these behaviors should be addressed but may have different consequences and interventions, which is why the distinction is critical. To be defined as bullying, all three components must be present: (1) repeated actions or threats, (2) a power imbalance and (3) intention to cause harm.

In accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4, it is the policy of the Irwin County Board of Education that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

As used in this Code section, the term **'bullying'** means an act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

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

The parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student upon a finding by a school administrator that such student has committed an offense of bullying or is a victim of bullying will be notified (New HB, 6/10).

K-2:

- **1st Offense:** Meeting with administrator and parent contact made.
- **2nd Offense:** Administrative referral and 1-3 days Timeout assigned. Duration to be determined by the severity of students actions.
- **3rd Offense:** 3-5 days Timeout assigned. Duration to be determined by the severity of students actions.
- **4th Offense:** 3-5 days OSS.

3-5:

- **1st Offense:** Meeting with administrator and parent contact made.
- **2nd Offense:** Administrative referral and assignment to time-out.
- **3rd Offense:** Assigned to time-out (number of days determined by severity of offense).
- **4th Offense:** 5-10 days out of school suspension.

Any Offense of Bullying: Discipline for any act of bullying shall be within the discretion of the principal, which may range from a reprimand, time out, after school detention, out of school suspension, and/or the filing of a juvenile complaint.

5) **Cheating:** The assignment will not be graded, and the student will be given an alternate assignment.

6) **Disrespect-Verbal Assault of Teachers, Administrators, Other Students and School Employees:** A student shall not be disrespectful to teachers, administrators, other school employees, or other students by speech or actions. A student shall not intentionally argue in a demanding or disruptive manner with any teacher or administrator.

K-2:

1st offense: Meeting with Administration warning provided and parent notified.

2nd offense: 1 day timeout and parent contact made.

3rd offense: 2 days timeout and parent contact made.

4th offense: Parent Conference and student home for the day.

3-5

- **1st Offense:** Meeting with Administration warning provided and parent notified.
- **2nd offense:** 2 days timeout and parent contact made.
- **3rd offense:** Parent Conference and student home for the day.

7) **Disruptive Behavior: Disruptive behavior is considered to be any behavior resulting in an interruption of school events, activities, or processes.**

K-2:

- **1st offense:** Student-Teacher conference.
- **2nd offense:** Student-Teacher conference/ Parent Contact Made.
- **3rd offense:** Student-Teacher conference/ Minor infraction recorded/ Parent contact made.
- **4th offense:** Meeting with Administrator/ Minor infraction recorded/ Parent Contact made.
- **5th offense:** 1 day timeout of lunch or recess.
- **6th offense:** 1 day timeout of both lunch and recess.
- **7th offense:** ½ day timeout.
- **8th offense:** 1 day timeout. Parent conference required.

3-5:

- **1st offense**: Student-Teacher conference.
- **2nd offense:** Student-Teacher conference/ Minor infraction recorded/ Parent Contact Made.
- **3rd offense:** Meeting with Administrator/ Minor infraction recorded/ Parent contact made.
- **4th offense:** 1-3 days timeout during lunch or recess. Duration to be determined by the severity of students actions.
- **5th offense:** 1-3 days timeout during both lunch and recess. Duration to be determined by the severity of students actions.
- **6th offense:** 1 day timeout.
- **7th offense:** 1-3 days timeout**.** Duration to be determined by the severity of students actions.
- **8th offense:** 3-5 days timeout. Duration to be determined by the severity of students actions. Parent Conference required.

8) **Electronic Communication Devices:** Students may not have in his/her possession a cellular phone, smartwatch, or any other electronic communication device that is visible or in use during the school day. Students who openly possess a cellular telephone, smartwatch, or any other electronic communication device during normal school hours shall be required to turn in such a device to their homeroom teacher, for safekeeping, upon the beginning of the school day. Devices will be returned at the end of each school day. The school will not assume responsibility for any loss.

K-5:

1st Offense: 1 day timeout**.** Parent Notified. Confiscate device and return to student at the end of the day.

2nd Offense: 2 days timeout. Confiscate device and parent/guardian may pick up device from the principal.

9) **False Alarms:**

a. A student shall not activate the school fire alarm.

1st Offense: 3-days time-out assignment.

2nd Offense: Students will remain in time-out until parent/guardian conference. The student will serve a minimum of 5 days in time-out.

b. A student shall not report a fire or a bomb which he/she knows does not exist.

1st Offense: Notification of police and a 10 day out of school suspension. Students cannot return to the school campus until a parent/guardian conference.

10) **Fighting/Physical Assault or Battery of Other Students (G.A. 20-2-751.5).** Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature, causing physical harm to another, verbal threatening or intimidating without actual physical contact in an attempt to cause reasonable fear of immediate bodily harm, or an attempt to hurt another person at school are prohibited.
Note: Fighting and Physical Assault or Battery of Other students will remain defined as the current guidelines suggest. However, in terms of disciplinary actions, the act of fighting will require mutual participation of one or more persons.

Fighting:
K-2:

- **1st offense:** 1 day timeout. Parents Notified.
- **2nd offense:** 2 day timeout. Parents Notified.
- **3rd offense:** Parents are contacted. Choice of 5 day timeout or 1 day out of school suspension.

3-5:

- **1st offense:** 3 days timeout. Parents Notified.
- **2nd offense:** 5 days timeout. Parents Notified.
- **3rd offense:** Parents contacted. Choice of 8 days timeout or 2 days out of school suspension. (Possibility of a Juvenile Complaint being filed).

Physical Assault/Battery
K-2:

- **1st offense:** 1 day timeout. Parents Notified.
- **2nd offense:** 2 day timeout. Parents Notified.
- **3rd offense:** Parents are contacted. Choice of 5 day timeout or 1 day out of school suspension.

3-5:

- **1st offense:** 1-3 days timeout. Duration is dependent upon the severity of the students actions. Parents Notified.
- **2nd offense:** 3-5 days timeout. Duration is dependent upon the severity of the students actions. Parents Notified.
- **3rd offense:** Parents contacted. Choice of 8 days timeout or 2 days out of school suspension. (Possibility of a Juvenile Complaint being filed).

Discipline for any act of fighting/physical assault or battery shall be within the discretion of the principal. This may range from time out, out of school suspension, and/or the filing of a juvenile complaint. If proven by the administration that a student was defending him or herself, the use of punishment will be at the discretion of the principal.

11) **Gambling:** No one may participate in games of chance or skill for money or profit.
K-2

- **1st offense:** Student-Teacher conference/ Minor infraction recorded/ Parent contact made.
- **2nd offense:** Meeting with Administrator and parent contact.
- **3rd offense:** ½ day timeout. Parent Notified.
- **4th offense:** 1 ½ day timeout. Parent Notified.
- **5th offense:** Parents contacted. Choice of 3 days timeout or 1 day out of school suspension.

3-5

- **1st offense:** Meeting with Administrator and parent contact.
- **2nd offense**: 1 day timeout. Parent Notified.
- **3rd offense:** 3 days timeout. Parent Notified.
- **4th offense:** Parents contacted. Choice of 5 days timeout or 2 days out of school suspension. (Possibility of a Juvenile Complaint being filed).

12) **Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts:**
K-5

- Students committing this violation of the rules will be assigned ½ the consequence of the prohibited act they were inciting or encouraging.

13) **Insubordination/Defiance:** A student shall not refuse to respond to or follow reasonable directions from authorized school personnel.

K-2

- **1st offense**: Meeting with Administration warning provided and parent notified.
- **2nd offense**: 1 day timeout and parent contact made..
- **3rd offense**: 2 days timeout and parent conference requested.
- **4th offense**: Parent Conference and student home for the day.

3-5

- **1st Offense:** Meeting with Administration warning provided and parent notified.
- **2nd offense:** 2 days timeout and parent conference requested.
- **3rd offense:** Parent Conference and student home for the day.

***If the defiant behavior is in regard to missing or incomplete assignments, administrators reserve the right to extend the durations of timeout consequences to ensure assignments have been completed. However, students will not be sent home for the day in regards to missing work, but a parent conference will be requested.**

14) **Profanity/Obscene Behavior:**

Profanity: Students are not allowed to use profane language or behave in an obscene manner. Profanity is interpreted as any vulgar or obscene utterance, gesture or written expression directed toward another person or presented in an overt manner. Profanity directed toward a school employee can result in immediate suspension at any time.

K-2:

- **1st offense**: Meet with an Administrator. Parent Notified.
- **2nd offense:** 1hr. Timeout. Parent Notified.
- **3rd offense:** ½ day Timeout. Parent Notified.
- **4th offense**: 1 day Timeout. Parent Conference Required.
- **5th offense**: 3 day Timeout Parent Conference Required.
- **6th-subsequent offenses**: Parents notified and choice of 3-5 days Timeout or 1 day Out of school suspension. Duration depends on severity of profanity used.

3-5:

- **1st offense**: ½ day Timeout. Parent Notified
- **2nd offense**: 1 day Timeout. Parent Notified.
- **3rd offense**: 3 days Timeout. Parent Conference Required
- **4th Offense**: 5 days Timeout. Parent Conference Required
- **5th-Subsequent Offenses**: Parents notified and choice of 5-8 days Timeout or 1-3 days Out of school suspension. Duration depends on severity of profanity used

Obscene Behavior: Obscene behavior includes, but is not limited to, deliberate indecent exposure or gestures of a subjective nature.

K-2:

- **1st offense:** Meet with an Administrator. Parent Notified.
- **2nd offense:** 1/2 day Timeout. Parent Notified.
- **3rd offense:** 1 day Timeout. Parent Notified.
- **4th offense:** 3 day Timeout. Parent Conference Required.
- **5th-subsequent offenses**: 1 day Out of School Suspension.

3-5:

- **1st offense**: 1 day Timeout. Parents Notified.
- **2nd offense**: 3 day Timeout. Parents Notified.

- **3rd offense**: 5 day Timeout. Parent Conference Required.
- **4th-subsequent offenses**: 1-3 days Out of School Suspension. Duration depends on severity of offense.

15) **Digital Devices, Phones, Games, Cameras, Toys, Laser Pointers, ETC** are not allowed at school unless the teacher or administrator grants permission. Any item brought to the school without permission will be confiscated. The confiscated item(s) may be picked up by the parent/guardian. Fidgets or any other items intended to relieve symptoms of ADHD, anxiety, etc. will only be allowed if used appropriately AND their use is not distracting to the child or any other students.

16) **Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment has no place at Irwin County Elementary School and is illegal (Federal Register vol.62, no.49).** Sexual harassment shall be defined as physically touching another person inappropriately, making sexual or lewd remarks (orally or written), or any other overt sexual act. Administration and/or Law Enforcement will investigate any accusation of sexual harassment. Following the investigation, the administration will determine appropriate punishment. A juvenile complaint may be filed. **Students making false charges and students retaliating for being reported will be disciplined. Parents and guardians should inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult (OCGA 20-2-735(e)).**

17) **Public Displays of Affection**: Kissing, hand-holding, hugging, etc. between students are inappropriate. Consequences are outlined and the nature of the situation may be handled at the principal's discretion.

K-2:
- **1st offense**: Verbal Warning
- **2nd offense**: Minor infraction recorded and parents contacted.
- **3rd offense:** Meeting with administrator. Parent Contact Made.
- **4th offense**: 30 minute timeout. Parent Notified.
- **5th-subsequent offenses**: ½ day timeout. Parents Notified.

3-5:
- **1st offense**: Verbal Warning
- **2nd offense**: Minor infraction recorded and parent contacted.
- **3rd offense**: Meeting with administrator. Parent Contact Made.
- **4th offense**: 30 minute timeout. Parent Notified.
- **5th-subsequent offenses**: 1 day timeout. Parents Notified.

18) **Stealing, Extortion, Coercion, or Blackmail:** A student shall not steal private or school property. A student may not threaten or force another person to hand over money or property.
K-5:
Parents/Guardians will be contacted. Local Resource Officers or Police will be notified. Administrative discipline will consist of but is not limited to Timeout or out of school suspension depending upon the severity of student actions.

3. **Possession of Weapons or Other Dangerous Objects:**
It is the policy of the Irwin County Board of Education that a student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

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 terms shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

1) Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. The Superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one-year expulsion under circumstances where the one-year expulsion appears excessive to the Superintendent.

2) The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirements on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment. Finally, in any tribunal decision appealed to the Board of Education, the Board may reduce the mandated punishment but shall consider whether the Superintendent and/or tribunal considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction.

3) Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to progressive discipline applied to the facts of the case. Consequences can include in- school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or up to a recommendation for a tribunal hearing. Tribunal hearing decisions may be appealed only as provided for in Board Policy JCEB-Student Hearing Procedure.

20) **Issue with COVID-19 Virus** - Students intimidating other students with possible virus contamination will receive consequences for their actions. Students who fail to comply with established health protocols and rules; this includes failure to wear required items such as face masks.

K-5:

1st offense: Verbal Warning
2nd offense: Minor infraction recorded. Parent Contact made.
3rd offense: Meeting with Administrator. Parent Contact made.
4th offense: 30 mins. Loss of privilege.
5th offense: 1 hr. Loss of privileges.
6th-subsequent offenses: 3 hr. timeout.

21) **Horseplay**: Horseplay is any physical contact or verbal statements by and/or between students which may result in a fight or other physical altercation due to the rough nature of play or derogatory statements being made.

K-2

- **1st offense**: Minor infraction recorded and parent contacted.
- **2nd offense**: Meeting with administrator. Parent Contact Made.
- **3rd offense:** 30 min. Timeout (recess). Parent Notified.
- **4th offense**: 1 hr. Timeout (recess). Parent Notified.
- **5th offense:** 3hr. Timeout. Parent Notified.
- **6th-subsequent offenses**: 1 day timeout. Parent Notified.

3-5

- **1st offense:** Minor infraction recorded and parent contacted.
- **2nd offense:** Meeting with administrator. Parent Contact Made.
- **3rd offense:** 1 hr. timeout (recess). Parent Notified.
- **4th offense:** 3 hr. Timeout. Parent Notified.
- **5th offense:** ½ day timeout. Parent Notified.
- **6th-subsequent offenses:** 1-3 days timeout. Duration to be determined by the severity of students actions. Parent Notified.

22) **Inappropriate Touching/ Behaviors of a Sexual Nature**: Inappropriate touching or other behaviors of a sexual nature are defined as physically touching others in inappropriate places or in a suggestive manner. Included is the use of sexual or lewd sounds, comments, or gestures of a sexual nature (Oral or Written). *A third offense of this nature will be considered Sexual Harassment.

K-2

- **1st offense:** 1 day of timeout and Parent Notification.
- **2nd offense:** 3 days timeout and Parent Conference required.
- **3rd offense: See Sexual Harassment.**

3-5

- **1st offense:** 3 days of timeout and Parent Notification.
- **2nd offense:** 5 days of timeout and Parent Conference required.
- **3rd offense: See Sexual Harassment.**

23) **Gangs:** A student shall not be involved in "gang type" activity that hinders educational progress and endangers the health, safety, and moral well-being of other students or employees within the school system or another school system. The wearing of any dress, emblems, or other items that are symbolic of involvement in gang type activity is not allowed.

1st Offense: Administrative referral. Appropriate action will depend on the severity of involvement. Possibility of ISS, OSS, or Tribunal.

Student Dress Code

Students should come to school appropriately dressed. For physical education, students should wear shorts or pants and tennis shoes. Shorts must be worn underneath dresses or skirts. Students are NOT to wear:

- Glitter, glitter paint, paint or stickers on the skin or in the hair.
- Drawings or writings on the skin.
- Shirts or any clothing that exposes the midriff (stomach) area.
- Inappropriate bicycle shorts or cutoff shorts. **Shorts worn by girls in 3rd through 5th grades must be hemmed to a length equal to the student's fingertips held to the side of the legs.**
- Students who wear tights/leggings must wear appropriate length tops.
- Jeans with holes above the knees.
- Open sided muscle shirts.
- Tank tops, spaghetti-strap tops, halter-tops, tube tops, or fishnet tops.
- Clothing which suggests pornography or obscenity in any manner.
- Clothing which advertises the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or gang affiliation.
- Sunglasses, sun visors, caps, hats, stocking caps, or inappropriate headbands.
- Clothing or hairstyles that pose a distraction to the educational environment.
- Excessively long fingernails that interfere with work or play.
- Pants **unsecured** at the waist (sagging).
- Hoods should not be worn in the common areas of the school (hallways, bathrooms, lunchroom, etc).

Note: If a student is dressed inappropriately, the school will provide the student with appropriate clothes from the Clothes Bank to facilitate the student staying in school, or the parents will be contacted if clothes cannot be provided.

Various student misbehaviors and the consequences/punishments that apply have been listed in this handbook. However, the Irwin County School System recognizes that other behaviors may endanger the welfare and/or safety of other students, faculty, staff, or cause disruption to the good order and discipline in the schools. The school system reserves the right to punish such behavior not specified in this written student Code of Conduct. Students should recognize their responsibility to know the contents of this handbook and to ask faculty or staff members for any clarification.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Our ultimate goal is to provide students with an environment that is conducive to learning.

Students have the right to:

1. Learn at school.
2. A safe environment in school.
3. Be free from bullying in school.
4. Not be hurt in any way by others.
5. Be free from teasing and put-downs
6. A fair turn.
7. Make mistakes.
8. Seek help from adults.

Students have the responsibility to:

1. Be accepting, helpful and kind to others.
6. Use acceptable language.

2. Settle arguments peacefully.
3. Be fair and be a good sport.
4. Share toys and equipment.
5. Take care of things.
7. Be considerate of others' feelings
8. Be respectful and cooperate with adults.
9. Work to the best of your ability.
10. Work and play safely.

Students' Responsibilities also include:

- Not having candy or gum unless provided by the teacher.
- Not showing affection to other students (i.e., kissing, hugging, hand holding, etc.).
- Not having tobacco, alcohol, controlled substances, or weapons on campus.
- Not conducting commercial sales unless given permission by the Irwin County BOE.
- Not possessing or distributing pornographic materials.
- Not using skates, roller blades, and other related devices inside the building at any time.

AMENDMENTS

During the school year it may become necessary to change or add to the policies, rules, and regulations found in this handbook. The principal, the superintendent, and the board of education, reserve the right to amend or modify the policies, rules and regulations at any time.

If situations occur which are not covered in this handbook, the principal will make decisions based on the merits of the individual situation. The primary purpose of these policies, rules, and regulations is to foster a safe atmosphere conducive to learning and to increase student responsibility at Irwin County Elementary School.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, language, veteran status, genetic information, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972 and Title II of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and American Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101336) in educational programs or activities receiving federal assistance and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Employees, students, and the general public are hereby notified that the Irwin County Board of Education does not discriminate in any educational program or activities or in employment policies. The Irwin County Board of Education prohibits retaliation against individuals who oppose this policy or file any complaint.

State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Acts, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that Irwin County local school system does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. The sports equity coordinator for this school system is: Kerry Billingsley, 210 North Apple Street, Ocilla, Ga. 31774 or call (229)-468-9510. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this school system may be submitted to the sports equity coordinator.

The following individuals have been designated as the employees responsible for coordinating the system's effort to implement this nondiscrimination policy.

Title V, ADA, Section 504	Andrea Reeves	areeves@irwin.k12.ga.us	229-468-9510
Title II	Candice Cobb	ccobb@irwin.k12.ga.us	229-468-7485
Title IX, Sports Equity, Homeless Liaison	Candice Cobb/ Jessica Sirmans	ccobb@irwin.k12.ga.us jsirmans@irwin.k12.ga.us	229-468-7485 229-468-7485
Title I	Jessica Sirmans	jsirmans@irwin.k12.ga.us	229/468-7485
School Nutrition Services	Lisa Pettis	lpettis@irwin.k12.ga.us	229/468-9510

Inquiries concerning the application of Title I, Title II, Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and ADA in the policies and practices of the board may be addressed to the Irwin County Board of Education, P.O. Box 225, Ocilla, Georgia 31774; to the Regional Office for Civil Rights, Atlanta, Georgia 30323; or to the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Education Department, Washington, D.C. 20201.

OCGA 20-2-751.7(a)

Education; alleged inappropriate behavior by teacher or school personnel; provisions: 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 an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her 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 an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise 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 oral 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 an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to the child welfare agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts 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 allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

Bill Summary from the State: This bill addresses falsified reports of inappropriate behavior of educators toward students, establishes a complaint procedure, requires notice of the procedure in teacher and student handbooks, provides for statements to the media, and provides penalties for students who falsify reports.

Requirements:

- Student codes of conduct must add falsifying, omitting or erroneously reporting information regarding alleged inappropriate behavior of school personnel toward a student.
- PSC must establish a state-mandated process for students to report such claims; the process must reserve the right of the students to report to law enforcement, and the bill requires publishing the process in teacher and student handbooks.
- If the report is deemed unsubstantiated, the LEA shall, at the request of the employee, submit a written statement to that effect to the media outlets that previously reported the claim.
- A student over 10 years old who falsely reports with malice can be punished by:
    - Court ordered community service, or any other court sanction;
    - Suspension or expulsion from the school system; or
    - Both court and school penalties.

Appendix

Irwin County Elementary School

School-Parent Compact

521 Lax Highway
Ocilla, GA 31774
229/468-9476
irwinelementary.org

Principal
Rontee Barnes

Assistant Principals/Directors
Jodi Roberts
Capucine Walker
Justin Willingham

Parent-School Compact

What is a School Compact?

Our annual school-parent compact offers ways that we can work together to help our students succeed. This compact provides strategies to help connect learning at school and at home.
Effective compacts:

- Link to academic achievement goals
- Focus on student learning
- Share strategies that staff, parent, and students can use
- Explain how parents and teachers can communicate about student progress
- Describe opportunities for parents to observe, volunteer and participate in the classroom

Jointly Developed

The parents, students, and staff worked together and shared ideas to develop the school-parent compact. Teachers met with their subject area teams to design practical strategies for parents to use at home. Parents provided valuable feedback on their needs to help their students. Meetings are held each year to review and revise the compact based on the school's academic achievement goals and students' needs.

Parents are welcome to provide feedback on the compact at any time during the school year. All feedback will be collected and reviewed during the annual revision meeting with parents. Please call 229-468-9476 for more information on the school compact.

Building Partnerships

Irwin County Elementary School offers ongoing events and programs to provide parents and students with access to our staff

- Meet the Teacher
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Family Night Events-Grandparent's Night/Fall Festival/Movie Night
- Content Nights
- 100% Parental Contact each grading period
- 2nd & 4th Grade Musicals
- Honors/ Perfect Attendance recognition
- Field days

Communication About Student Learning

Irwin County Elementary School offers ongoing events and programs to provide parents and students with access to our staff:

- Parent PowerSchool Access
- Progress reports
- School telephone message system
- School website and Facebook
- To make an appointment with your child's teachers, please call 229-468-9476
- 100% Parental Contact each grading period
- Remind
- Email System

Academic Achievement Goals

District Goals

- A broad and challenging curriculum for pre-kindergarten through grade twelve
- Instructional strategies that are effective for all students
- Qualified and effective staff in all positions in the school system
- Partnership with business community and post-secondary institutions to ensure seamless transition for high school graduates
- Parents who are engaged in their child's education and in the school their child attends

School Goals

- Increase the percentage of students' scoring at Proficient or Distinguished Learner in iReady/GMAS by 10%.

Area of Emphasis

- Increase the percentage of students reading on or above grade level according to the iReady/GMAS by 10%.

Teachers, Parents, and Students—Together for Success

AS A SCHOOL, WE WILL...

- Show respect for each student and his/her family
- Provide meaningful and appropriate classwork and homework activities
- Provide a safe and pleasant atmosphere for learning
- Encourage students and parents by providing information about student progress
- Use special activities in the classroom to make learning engaging
- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction
- Provide opportunities for parental conferences
- Encourage parental involvement
- Set high expectations for students

AS PARENTS, WE WILL...

- Support the school in its efforts to maintain proper discipline
- Show respect for my child and school personnel
- Provide a time and place each evening for quiet study and reading at home
- See that my child is punctual and attends school regularly
- Provide adequate food, rest, and a nurturing home environment so that my child is ready to learn
- Support my child by being actively engaged in my child's learning, communicating regularly with my child's teachers, and volunteering as needed.
- See that my child has the proper materials to be successful in school
- Limit and supervise all technology and social media
- Keep a copy of the student handbook and know the policies

AS STUDENTS, WE WILL...

- Attend School Regularly
- Follow our school Motto: Be Respectful, Responsible, and Safe
- Come to school each day with pencils, paper, and other necessary tools for learning.
- Respect the rights of others to learn without distraction or disruption
- Complete and return all homework assignments
- Spend time at home daily studying or reading

My Goals

My own personal goal for MATH is:

_____

My own personal goal for READING is:

_____

My TEACHER can help me reach my goals by:

_____

My FAMILY can help me reach my goal by:

_____

Irwin County Schools

Mr. Kerry Billingsley– *Superintendent*

210 Apple Street Ocilla, GA 31774 Phone: (229) 468-7485 Fax: (229) 468-7220

Board Members
Lamar Purvis
Chairman
Kurt Wilmot
Paige Wynn
James Curtis
Holly Connor

To: All Parents

From: Superintendent

Date: July 31, 2024

Reference: School Bus Discipline Policy

The attached document is the School Bus Discipline Policy adopted by the Irwin County Board of Education. Please review this policy with your child. Sign, date, and return the permission form on the back cover to your child's homeroom teacher by **August 21, 2024**. If we do not receive the signed permission form by the deadline date, your child will not be allowed to continue to ride the school bus, and you will need to provide transportation to and from school for him/her. We are asking all parents to sign the permission form because at one time or another all students may ride the school bus on a field trip, activity trip, or go home with someone who rides the school bus.

The permission form will go into the student's file at the school for the school year and a copy will be given to the bus driver. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you and your family.

THE SPACE FOR YOU TO SIGN IS LOCATED ON THE PARENTAL PERMISSION SIGNATURE PAGE.

Note: *If your child does not ride a bus daily, he or she may ride during the school year on class trips or related activities. Parents may ride a school bus on a field trip if they are asked to assist their child on the trip. Therefore, please sign, date, and return the permission form to your child's homeroom teacher by* **August 21, 2024**.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION / BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY

Students who ride the school bus may do so as long as they display safe and reasonable behavior. Choosing and/or continuing to follow unacceptable behavior will result in loss of bus service. The bus driver is responsible for the safety and discipline of the students on the bus. The school administrator, in accordance with this policy, will determine consequences of misbehavior and the reinstatement of bus service for the offending students should a suspension become necessary. A suspension applies to all buses unless otherwise designated by school officials. The responsibility for student supervision by the school shall begin when the student boards the bus in the morning and is retained until the child leaves the bus at the end of the day. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right, and as such may be revoked for safety and discipline infractions.

I. Parent / Guardian Responsibility

Parents and guardians will be responsible for instructing their child in safe school bus ridership practices. If the student violates the school bus policy, the parent will provide transportation for their child. Students will be picked up and dropped off at their designated stop. Exceptions will require a written request from the parent to the teacher or administrator for initialing and presentation by the student to the bus driver. In an emergency or other special circumstance, a phone call by the parent to the school and subsequent written approval from the secretary to the bus driver will be acceptable.

The Transportation Department will print and distribute copies of the **Irwin County Code of Behavior Discipline Policy** to each school and the teacher will give one to each student. The school bus student Code of Behavior Discipline Policy will also be published each fall in the Student Handbook. The teacher will provide the student with a letter to be included, with the School Bus Discipline Policy for the parent to read and review with the student, then return signed by parent and student to the teacher. This letter will become part of the documentation required by the building administrator to ensure that all students and parents understand the policy.

The school bus ride is an extension of the school day and as such, is subject to all school policies and procedures. Bus Conduct Reports will be recorded in accordance with all other school record keeping procedures.

II. Transporting of School Related / Non-related Items

No animals, any other dangerous, or objectionable nature items will be transported in the school bus when children are being transported. Baseball and softball bats, hockey sticks, skateboards, or any other unacceptable recreational equipment will not be allowed on regular busses. Band instruments that will be allowed on the bus are those that are small enough to be held in the students lap. Instruments may not be in the aisle or take the space of a student if that space is needed to sit down. Damage to personal items is not covered by the school bus insurance coverage.

III. Behavior Guidelines - Each infraction of class I and II offenses shall be reported by the bus driver to the respective school administrator.

Class I Bus Offenses	Class II Bus Offenses
1. Eating or drinking on the bus. 2. Out of seat while the bus is in motion. 3. Loud noise (should be classroom behavior). 4. Horseplay. 5. Possession of unacceptable material, obscene gestures. 6. Profanity. 7. Yelling out the bus window. 8. Riding unassigned bus without signed note from parent and signed by school administrator. 9. Checking mailbox while bus is still in sight. (Area is in danger zone) 10. Other offenses as reported by the driver or Administrator, including but not limited to, the use of electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus. Also 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.	1. Profanity (directed at driver), verbal abuse and harassment (directed at student or driver). 2. Body parts out of the window. 3. Throwing/shooting of any objects. 4. Physical aggression against any person. 5. Use of tobacco and any controlled substance. 6. Destruction of school property (vandalism - suspended until restitution is made). 7. Loading or unloading buses improperly. Lighting of matches, fireworks, or any flammable object or substance 8. Unauthorized entering or leaving the bus through the emergency door. 9. Tampering with any portion of the bus or equipment on the bus. 10. Riding of any bus after being suspended from another bus. 11. Fighting (**of any kind**) treated as Class II 3rd offense. 12. Other offenses committed on any bus outside regular transportation to and from school (shuttles, activity, field trip) will carry a **minimum penalty of a Class II 1st offense**.

IV. Consequences of Class I and II Offenses (Grades K-5)

A. Class I (Grades K-5)

1. First Offense - Warning (note sent home by student to parent).
2. Second Offense - Warning or 1-day suspension from bus (parent called or note sent by student).
3. Third Offense - 3 to 5-day suspension from bus.
3. Fourth Offense - 5 to 10-day suspension from bus.
4. Fifth Offense - 10-day suspension from bus (mandatory parent meeting before granted transportation privilege again).
5. Sixth Offense - suspension for remaining grading period or remainder of year.

B. Class II (Grades K-5)

1. First Offense - 3 to 5-day suspension from bus (note sent home by student to parent).
2. Second Offense - 5 to 10-day suspension from the bus.
3. Third Offense - 10-day suspension from bus.
4. Fourth Offense - Loss of bus service (for one full grading period or remainder of year).

The Irwin County Board Policy requires a meeting between appropriate school district officials and the parent or guardian of any student found to have engaged in bullying, physical assault or battery on a school bus for the purpose of forming a school bus behavior contract for the student. The contract must provide for progressive age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Contract provisions may include but shall not be limited to assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus.

VI. Other

- A driver shall not cause a pupil to get off the bus at any place other than home or school.
- Bus drivers are expected to attend all meetings or clinics for drivers held during the year.
- The mechanism of the bus shall be decided daily by the bus driver. Brakes, steering, lights, windshield wipers, tires, and form should be in good condition.
- In crossing a railroad track, the bus driver shall bring his/her bus to a complete stop, open the door, and observe all safety procedures.
- Stops shall be established by the superintendent with proper input from staff.
- When children who live on the opposite side of the road are being picked up, they shall be instructed to remain on their side until the bus has stopped, the mechanical stop signal has been extended, and the door has opened. The same procedure shall be followed when students are being left off after the school day. The door shall be left open until the students have crossed the highway safely.
- Bus drivers shall not permit pupils to get on or off the bus while it is in motion.

Bus Riding Rules – Remember: Safety First!

- Obey the bus driver at all times. Bus drivers are authorized to assign seats.
- Be courteous, no profanity.
- Eating or drinking is prohibited on the bus.
- Do not throw objects or litter on the bus.
- Cooperate with the driver.
- Stay in your seat, face front, and keep the aisle clear.
- Do not be destructive.
- Windows are to be opened only with driver's permission.
- Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
- Do not throw objects out the window.
- Talk softly (whisper voice), no loud outburst.
- Students will always cross in front of the bus when loading and unloading, after the bus driver signals.
- Students must have a bus pass from the school office or from their parents to ride a different bus or leave the bus at a different stop.
- Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; pagers; audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver’s operation of the school bus.
- 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.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance Notification
By September 1 of each school year or within 30 days of a student's enrollment in Irwin County Schools, parents and guardians will be given a written summary of state laws and school board policies and procedures relative to student attendance including possible consequences for failing to comply with compulsory attendance.

The summary of possible consequences shall include possible dispositions for unruly children in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 15-11-67, and the possible denial or suspension of a driver's license for a student. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the school system, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1 shall sign a statement indicating receipt of a written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to the local system's policy.

Progressive Discipline
The Irwin County Student Code of Conduct lists the following as attendance related offenses: attendance policy violation, excessive or chronic early leaves/dismissals, excessive or chronic tardiness (Refer to handbook for guidelines), skipping class/school, and unexcused absence. School administrators will enforce the appropriate corrective actions listed in the code of conduct to implement a progressive discipline approach to attendance related offenses. Out of school suspensions should not be used for attendance violations as this is counterproductive.

Prosecution for Violation of School Attendance Law
O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1 requires any person in this State who has control or charge of a child between the ages of six and sixteen to enroll and send that child to school, including public, private and homeschooling. Children that have attained 20 days' enrollment in Kindergarten also fall under compulsory attendance according to O.C.G.A. 20-2-150.

A child is responsible to attend school and is subject to adjudication in Irwin County Juvenile Court as an unruly child for violation of this statute. If a parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the child causes the child's absence, then that person, and not the child, is in violation of this statute. Such a violation is a misdemeanor and carries a penalty of up to $100 fine and 30 days in jail, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction for each violation. The law specifies that each day's absence constitutes a separate offense.

For purposes of this Protocol, the term "parent" may include any adult who has charge and control over the child, including a biological, adoptive, foster, or step-parent, a guardian or any other person who has control or charge of the child's attendance at school. In this regard, two parents residing in the same household with the child are equally responsible for the child's attendance at school.

Prosecution of Parents/Those with Control
Upon failure to abide by the terms of the attendance contract, a warrant against the parent shall be applied / issued for Violation of Compulsory School Attendance.

Withdrawing Students
Irwin County School personnel will withdraw from school a student that is not subject to compulsory attendance under the following conditions: 1) the student has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences; 2) the student is not receiving instructional services required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); 3) the student is not receiving hospital homebound services. School personnel shall use their best efforts to notify the parent/guardian of a student who is younger than 18 years of age and not subject to the compulsory attendance law if the school plans to withdraw the student. This withdrawal may be retroactive to the first day of consecutive absences.

Irwin County School personnel will withdraw students subject to compulsory attendance only after a designated member of the Student Services staff determines the student is no longer a resident of the local school system, or is enrolled in private school or home school. This withdrawal may be retroactive to the first day of consecutive absences.

Attendance Definitions

Absent – not being present for school or class.

Excused – any absence, tardy, or early dismissal for a valid reason as specified in accordance with Georgia School Board Policy JBD. Excuses for absences must be furnished to the school by the student's parent no later than 3 school days (for middle and high school) after the student returns to school and 5 school days (for elementary school) after the student returns to school and must state the reason for the absence. Excuses for tardiness and early dismissals should be furnished upon check-in or check-out. All excuses will be evaluated by the principal or designee to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. Under certain circumstances, school personnel may require proper medical documentation to code an absence as excused.

Early Checkout/Dismissals - checking out or leaving school or class before the designated end time. See also partial attendance. As mandated by OCGA 20-2-690.2, the Attendance Protocol Committee must recommend policies regarding tardiness and early dismissals.

Partial Attendance - any day or class period that a student does not attend the full period/day. Tardies and early checkouts are both considered partial attendance and shall be treated in a similar manner.

Perfect Attendance – anytime a student has zero absences and fewer than 5 partial attendance days in a semester.

Tardy – a student is tardy when he/she checks in or arrives at school or class after the designated start time. Repeated or habitual tardiness is disruptive to the orderly instructional process; therefore, corrective action will be taken. Elementary School: A student is tardy to school when he/she arrives after 8:00 am

Truant – Per the Georgia State Board of Education Attendance Rules, "Truant" is defined as "any child subject to compulsory education (ages 6 through 16, and 5 year olds who have attended twenty (20) days in school) who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences. School days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension shall not count for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Unexcused – Unexcused absences shall include all absences that do not meet the criteria as outlined for excused absences. School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Refer to Page 2 of this handbook for an outline of specific attendance requirements and consequences.

The Irwin County Student Attendance Protocol can be viewed in its entirety at www.irwin.k12.ga.us.

Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Corruption Procedure

Purpose
In compliance with White House Executive Order 12731, the Irwin County School System provides all employees, clients, vendors, and individuals with confidential channels to report suspicious activities. The Irwin County School System shall not tolerate fraud, waste, abuse or corruption of any kind and has an established system for the reporting and investigating of suspicious activities.

Definitions
"Fraud" means the intentional deception perpetrated by an individual or individuals, or an organization or organizations, either internal or external to Irwin County Schools that could result in a tangible or intangible benefit to themselves, others, or the locality or could cause detriment to others or the locality. Fraud includes a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, by false or misleading statements, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, which deceives and is intended to deceive.
"Waste" means the intentional or unintentional, thoughtless or careless expenditure, consumption, mismanagement, use or squandering of resources owned or operated by the locality to the detriment or potential detriment of the locality. Waste also includes incurring unnecessary costs because of inefficient or ineffective practices, systems, or controls.
"Abuse" means the excessive or improper use of something, or the employment of something in a manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for its use; the intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, maltreatment, or misuse of resources owned or operated by the locality: or extravagant or excessive use so as to abuse one's position or authority.
"Corruption" includes dishonest proceedings, bribery, debasement, alteration, or perversion of integrity. Corruption threatens equal access, quantity and quality of education.
Examples of Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Corruption (Not all-inclusive)

- Personal use of district-owned vehicles
- Long distance personal phone calls
- Personal use of district owned supplies or equipment
- Violations of system and/or state procurement policy
- Excessive or unnecessary purchases
- Falsification of official documents (timesheets, leave reports, travel vouchers, etc.)
- Contract fraud
- Serious abuse of time
- Inappropriate expenditures
- Embezzlement
- Theft or misuse of school funds or property
- Neglect of duty
- Bribery

Statement of Administrative Regulations:
Any and all reports of suspicious activity and/or suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption, shall be investigated. The Irwin County School System shall not tolerate fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption of any kind, and any reported cases of suspected fraud, waste, abuse, and corruption will be thoroughly investigated to determine if disciplinary, financial recovery, and or criminal action should be taken.

Confidentiality
All reports of suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption must be handled under the strictest confidentiality. Only those directly involved in the investigation should be given information. Informants may remain anonymous but should be encouraged to cooperate with the investigators and should provide as much detail and evidence of alleged fraudulent act as possible.

Procedures and Responsibilities
1. Anyone suspecting fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption whether it pertains to local, state, or federal programs, shall report his or her concerns to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee of the Irwin County Board of Education at 210 North Apple Street, Ocilla, Georgia 31774.
2. Any employee with the Irwin County Board of Education (part-time staff, full-time staff and contractors) who receives a report of suspected fraudulent activity MUST report this information within the next business day. The employee should contact the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee at (229) 468-7485. Employees have the responsibility to report suspected fraud, waste, or abuse. All reports can be made in confidence.
3. The Irwin County Board of Education or its designees shall conduct investigations of employees, providers, contractors, or vendors against which reports of suspicious activity are made. All investigations shall be thorough and complete in nature and shall occur in a prompt manner after the report is received.
4. If necessary, the person reporting the fraudulent activity will be contacted for additional information.
5. Periodic communication through meetings should emphasize the responsibilities and channels for reporting suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption.
6. A hard copy of these Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Corruption Administrative Regulations shall be posted in a visible location at all schools and facilities and on the Irwin County Schools website (www.irwin.k12.ga.us)
7. A report shall be made to the Chairman of the Irwin County Board of Education if fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption is suspected of or by the Superintendent.
8. Each employee shall review the document and will sign attesting that he or she has indeed received this information and understands its contents.

GA School Safety Hotline

Toll-Free School Safety Hotline

1-877-SAY-STOP

MAKE THE CALL AND STOP VIOLENCE IN YOUR SCHOOL

- The 1-877-SAY-STOP toll- free hotline was created by the Georgia Department of Education.
- Students can anonymously report anyone who has a weapon, has threatened to bring a weapon to school, or has violated any other school safety rules.
- The hotline hours are Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm; after 5 pm all calls will be forwarded to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.
- Callers will not be asked to reveal their identities.

Make the call; you can make a difference!