

**Pickens High School
Student/Parent Handbook**



2024-2025

Table of Contents	
Topic	Page #
Alma Mater	1
School Information Page	2
School Year Calendar	3
Bell Schedules	4
Attendance/Tardy/Make-Up Work Policy	5-7
Birthday Banners on Dragon Drive	8
School-Issued Technology	8-12
Certificate of Enrollment/ADAP	13
Discipline	13
PACE (Pickens Alternative Center for Education)	13
Cell Phone Guidelines	14
Dress Code Policy	15-16
Dual Enrollment	17
GHSA Eligibility for Athletics	17
Final Exam Exemption Policy	18
Gifted Policy	19
Grade Reports & Grading Policy	20
Graduation & Promotion Requirements	21
Guidance and Counseling	22-24
Homecoming, Prom, & Mr./Miss PHS Info	25-26
Honor Graduate Eligibility	27
HOPE Scholarship Information	27
Meal Information	28-31
Media Center Use	32
Parking Policy for Students	33-34
PHS Disaster Preparedness Plan	35
Senior Fees for Graduation	36
STAR Student/Valedictorian/Salutatorian	36-37

Topic	Page #
STAR Student/Valedictorian/Salutatorian	36-27
Student Government Association	38
Student Insurance	39
Telehealth & Mobile Health Services	39
Telephone Use for Students	40
Test Dates	40
Textbooks	41
Tobacco Use Policy	41
Vape Use/Possession Policy	41
Visitors	41
Work-Based Learning Program	42
Acknowledgement of Handbook	43

ALMA MATER

Pickens High School Alma Mater

Planted in the Blue Ridge Mountains,
High above the plains,
Stands our noble Alma Mater,
Kissed by sun and rain.

Pickens High our Alma Mater.
Deep in our hearts we'll hold.
Love and loyalty we'll give thee,
Green and white of old.

Years may dim our recollection,
Change with time will come,
While we live we'll ever cherish
Friendships here begun.

Pickens High our Alma Mater,
Deep in our hearts we'll hold.
Love and loyalty we'll give thee,
Green and white of old.



Pickens High School

500 Dragon Drive

Jasper, GA 30143



Phone (706)253-1800 • Fax
(706)253-1815

Main Office	(706) 253-1800
Fax Line	(706) 253-1815
School Mascot	Dragons
School Colors	Green and White
Principal	Matt Combs
Assistant Principals	Wendy Arnold
	Jenna Shaw
	Brandon Tippens
	Brandon Thomas
CTAE Director	Carissa Parker
Counselors	Tara Joyce
	Candy Thomas
	Elisha Wilson
College and Career Coach	Daniel Bell
Registrar/Data Clerk	Candy DiPrima
Athletic Director	Chris Williams
Cafeteria Manager	Andrea Wood
Media Specialist	Kristie Moss

Pickens County Schools

2024-2025 Calendar

2024	2025
July	January
24 th –31 st Pre-Planning	1 st – 2 nd Holiday Break cont.
August	3 rd Teacher In-Service Day
1 st First Day of School 30 th Virtual Learning Day	6 th Students Return
September	20 th MLK Jr. Holiday
2 nd Labor Day Holiday	17 th – 21 st Winter Break
16 th – 20 th Fall Break	March
October	14 th Virtual Learning Day
11 th Virtual Learning Day	31 st -Spring Break
November	April
5 th Virtual Learning Day	1 st – 4 th Spring Break
25 th – 29 th Thanksgiving Break	May
December	23 rd Last Day of School/Report Cards
20 th Last Day of 1 st Semester, End of Grading Term I	23rd Graduation
23 rd – 31 st Holiday Break	26 th – Memorial Day Holiday
	27 th – 29 th Post Planning

****Inclement weather announcements and school closure information will be distributed through the automated call system, social media outlets, our district website, and local/regional media outlets.***



2024-2025 Bell Schedules

Regular Bell Schedule			
Doors Open		7:00 AM	
Release from Aud/Café		7:35 AM	
Period	Start	End	
1st Period	7:45 AM	9:10 AM	
<i>Transition</i>	9:10 AM	9:16 AM	
2nd Period	9:16 AM	10:41 AM	
<i>Transition</i>	10:41 AM	10:47 AM	
3rd Period	1st Lunch	10:47 AM	11:12 AM
	<i>Transition</i>	11:12 AM	11:17 AM
	2nd Lunch	11:17 AM	11:42 AM
	<i>Transition</i>	11:42 AM	11:47 AM
	<i>11:42-11:49 Café Cleaning</i>		
	3rd Lunch	11:49 AM	12:14 PM
	<i>Transition</i>	12:14 PM	12:19 PM
	4th Lunch	12:19 PM	12:44 PM
<i>Transition</i>		12:44 PM	12:50 PM
4th Period		12:50 PM	2:15 PM
Student Driver Release		2:15 PM	
Parent Pick-up/1st Bus		2:15 PM	
2nd Bus Release		2:30 PM	

Club/Advisement Bell Schedule				
Doors Open		7:00 AM		
Release from Aud/Café		7:35 AM		
Period	Start	End		
1st Period	7:45 AM	8:54 AM		
<i>Transition</i>	8:54 AM	9:00 AM		
Combo Period	9:00 AM	9:42 AM		
<i>Transition</i>	9:42 AM	9:48 AM		
2nd Period	9:48 AM	10:57 AM		
<i>Transition</i>	10:57 AM	11:03 AM		
3rd Period	1st Lunch	11:03 AM	11:28 AM	
	<i>Transition</i>	11:28 AM	11:33 AM	
	2nd Lunch	11:33 AM	11:58 PM	
	<i>Transition</i>	11:58 AM	12:03 PM	
	<i>11:58-12:05 Café Cleaning</i>			
	3rd Lunch	12:05 PM	12:30 PM	
	<i>Transition</i>	12:30 PM	12:35 PM	
	4th Lunch	12:35 PM	1:00 PM	
	<i>Transition</i>		1:00 PM	1:06 PM
	4th Period		1:06 PM	2:15 PM
Student Driver Release		2:15 PM		
Parent Pick-up/1st Bus		2:15 PM		
2nd Bus Release		2:30 PM		

****The PHS administrative team reserves the right to revise rules and regulations at their discretion.***

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is very important at Pickens High School. Student attendance is vital in order for us to provide them with the best opportunities to learn.

Please refer to the Pickens County School District Student Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for further information. [Link Here](#).

Check-out Procedures for Students

Students will be allowed to check out with written permission verified by a telephone call. Students will present the note to the administrative/clerical staff and will be issued an early dismissal pass. Students **will not** be released on a note alone; parental permission **MUST** be given over the phone in **every case**. The student's name will be placed on the daily attendance sheet under early dismissals with the time noted.

No Check-outs after 1:45 PM.

In the event of an emergency, the student's parent/guardian or their designee(s) will be contacted by phone and arrangements will be made for the student to check out.

From the time students arrive on campus, students who leave school campus at any time must first check out through the office. A student who comes on campus then leaves without checking out will be considered skipping.

Students Counted as Present in Class

Students are counted present for the day if they have been present for 1/2 of their scheduled classes for that day. Students should be counted present when they are actually present in class, when serving as an official page in the legislature, when assigned in-school suspension, when representing the school at a school function, or when served by the hospital/homebound teacher.

Minimum Attendance Requirements

Students are required to be counted present a minimum of 85 out of 90 class days per semester. **Those students accumulating five unexcused absences in a class will be submitted to the attendance officer or school social worker for review.** Transfer students will be subject to the same policy with their previous attendance record accompanying them.

Make-up Procedure for Missing Work After Absence(s)

Following an excused absence, a Pickens High School student will have five (5) school days to request make-up assignments or assessments from his/her teachers. Teachers will then have three (3) school days to provide the requested make-up work or schedule the assessment. Teachers may initiate the make-up work, or require alternative assignments/assessments from students who have been absent, but ultimately it is the student's responsibility to request assignments. The grade of **M** will be entered into the grade book until the student makes up the assignment/assessment. The **M** will be replaced once the work is graded. Failure to satisfactorily complete make-up work in accordance with the teacher's procedures will result in the *student not receiving any credit for the make-up assignment(s).*

**** Students should refer to their syllabi for all of their teachers' policies regarding turning in and the grading of late or missing work.***

Hospital/Homebound

If medically extended absences are necessary, hospital/homebound instruction is available for students who meet certain criteria. You must contact the Student Services Department at the PCSD office (706) 253-1700 to obtain papers to begin hospital/homebound services.

**The State of Georgia does not provide homebound instruction for students who are pregnant; therefore, students who are pregnant are not eligible for homebound services. There must be a medical condition other than pregnancy that qualifies a student for homebound services.

TARDY /UNEXCUSED CHECK-IN/OUT TO CLASS

Students should be in the classroom when the tardy bell rings at the beginning of school and at the beginning of each class period. Any student who is not in class when the bell rings is considered tardy. Students who are tardy to school should report to the front office to receive a late check-in slip. Students who are tardy to other classes will be counted tardy by the teacher and put into Infinite Campus. Students who check in later than halfway through the class period will be counted absent. Tardies, unexcused check-outs and unexcused check-ins are all calculated cumulatively (added together for all classes). The tallies are accumulated per semester.

Please refer to the Pickens County School District Student Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for further information. [Link Here.](#)

Birthday/Celebration Banners on Dragon Drive

The following guidelines must be followed:

- Must be school appropriate and encouraging.
- Must be hung on the green posts provided.
- Must include the date of occasion (Somewhere on the banner; can even be written on the back).
- Please take down following the celebrated event.

**School personnel may take down 3 days after the date. If date is not included, the banner is subject to removal at any time. PHS is not responsible for damaged or discarded banners. Install/remove banners at your own risk.*

School-Issued Technology Policy

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

(A) Students will be held accountable for any violation of the following policies (as would be the case for any classroom disciplinary matter). A student and his/her parents will be responsible for damages and will be liable for costs incurred for service or repair.

(B) Students are only allowed to utilize the computers and network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their teacher.

(C) Students are not permitted to explore the configuration of the computer, operating system or network, run programs not on the menu, or attempt to do anything they are not specifically authorized to do.

(D) Students are responsible for ensuring that any computers or computing devices, diskettes, CDs, memory sticks, USB flash drives, or other forms of storage media that they bring in from outside the school are virus free and do not contain any unauthorized or inappropriate files.

(E) Students are permitted to connect to the district network via the secure wireless connection provided by the school system, but all access must be in accordance with this Acceptable Use Policy. Students are NOT permitted to use their own computing devices to access the Internet via personal Wi-Fi accounts or by any manner other than connecting through the secure wireless connection provided by the school system.

Safety Issues:

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

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

- A. Audio or video recording of any nature, regardless of the device, is strictly prohibited except when consented by the Instructor and must be for educational purposes once consented.
- B. Accessing, sending, creating or posting materials or communications that are damaging to another person's reputation; abusive; obscene; sexually oriented; threatening or demeaning to another person; contrary to the school's policy on harassment; harassing or illegal.
- C. Using the network for financial gain or advertising.
- D. Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without their consent.
- E. Posting anonymously or forging electronic mail messages.
- F. Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other system users.
- G. Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bankcard or checking account information.
- H. Using the school's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music or images, or violation of copyright laws.
- I. Downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware or any other unauthorized program on any school's computer or computer system.
- J. Purposely bringing on premises or infecting any school computer or network with a program designed to damage,

alter, destroy or provide access to unauthorized data or information.

- K. Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person.
- L. Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account.
- M. Using the school's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended.
- N. Using the school's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with a teacher's directions and generally accepted network etiquette.
- O. Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software.
- P. Attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any network or computer component.
- Q. Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by their teacher or inconsistent with school policy.
- R. Providing another student with user account information or passwords.
- S. Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which are not school system property or in the district's technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel. Students are permitted to connect to the district network via the secure wireless connection provided by the school system, but all access must

be in accordance with this Acceptable Use Policy. Students are NOT permitted to use their own computing devices to access the Internet via personal Wi-Fi accounts or by any manner other than connecting through the secure wireless connection provided by the school system.

- T. Bringing on premises any computer, disk or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data.
- U. Downloading or accessing via e-mail or file sharing, any software or programs not specifically authorized by Technology personnel.
- V. Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies.
- W. Possessing or accessing information on school property related to “Hacking”, altering, or bypassing network security or policies.
- X. Participating on message boards without teacher direction, or in live chat using but not limited to AIM, Yahoo, or MSN Messenger.

Please refer to the Pickens County School District Student Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for further information. [Link Here.](#)

CERTIFICATE OF ENROLLMENT/ADAP CERTIFICATION

The Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act requires that schools must verify that students between the ages of 15 -18 are currently enrolled in school to receive a Georgia driver's permit or license. It is required that students obtain a Certificate of School Enrollment when receiving a learner's permit, and obtain another Certificate of School Enrollment and an ADAP Certification when receiving a driver's license.

The Certificate of School Enrollment and the ADAP Certification must be requested from the front office at **least two school days in advance**.

DISCIPLINE

Please refer to the Pickens County School District Student Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for information regarding discipline. [Link Here.](#)

PACE (Pickens Alternative Center for Education)

Please refer to the Pickens County School District Student Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for further information. [Link Here.](#)

CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICE GUIDELINES

Students are not allowed to use cell phones or other electronic devices (including but not limited to smart watches, earbuds, headphones) during instructional time (this includes both inside and outside of the classroom during times when instruction is taking place in school). If a student brings a cell phone or other electronic device(s) to school, he/she will place the device(s) in an area designated by the classroom teacher (phones/electronics cannot be on their person during instruction). Devices are expected to be silenced or powered off while inside the classroom. If a device storage area is utilized by the classroom teacher, it will be in an area that is visible to all students during class.

Please note: If a student leaves the classroom during instruction, his/her device will remain in the classroom in order to receive the pass.

Unauthorized photographing or video recording is not allowed. PHS and its employees are not responsible for loss or damage to devices.

Students needing to make an emergency call during the day should request a pass to the main office, and parents needing to make an emergency call to their student should call the main office at (706) 253-1800.

PHS students may use electronic devices such as cell phones, headphones/earbuds, and smart watches before and after school, between classes, and during lunch in accordance with the district's technology-acceptable use policy (refer to pages 8-12). Students may also use devices at any time designated by the classroom teacher. There are no phone calls or video chats allowed at anytime.

If a phone can must be made, students can go to the front office. Please refer to the Pickens County School District Student Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for further information. [Link here.](#)

DRESS CODE POLICY

The Pickens County School District's Student Dress Code was developed through the direction of the administrators and with the cooperation of parents, students, and teachers. The purpose of a dress code is to promote an orderly learning environment in our schools while preparing all students for later success in the world of work. Students of the Pickens County School District are expected to dress in a manner that is **conducive to a productive learning environment**. Additionally, administrators reserve the right to prohibit an item of clothing if that clothing creates a potential safety or injury risk to the individual student or others, or if the item of clothing creates a reasonable disruption to the school environment.

In matters of opinion regarding all aspects of this dress code, the judgment of the principal shall prevail.

DRESS CODE POLICY VIOLATION CONSEQUENCES

1st & 2nd Offense	Change Clothes/Report to ISS until clothes are delivered
3rd Offense	Detention
4th Offense	1 Day ISS
5th Offense	Parent Conference/2 Days ISS
6th Offense and beyond	For every subsequent event, administration reserves the right to continue to add days to ISS

Unacceptable Items (not limited to):

- Articles that may reasonably be considered to be a safety hazard or potential weapon
- Extremely oversized, over-length, or baggy clothing items (pants must be worn at the waist)
- Garments that expose midriff or chest area; sheer, translucent, and/or transparent clothing (front or back) with nothing worn underneath the article of clothing
- Halter and/or tank tops with less than 2" shoulder straps, tube tops
- Sleep/loungewear (except for school- approved days)
- No items on the head that obscure the student's face and make identification of the student difficult are allowed.
- Shoes with cleats or wheels
- Baby pacifiers
- Clothing promoting products such as tobacco, alcohol, e-cigarettes, illegal drugs, or weapons
- Large, long, or heavy chains
- Dog collars
- Sunglasses inside the building, except for medical necessity
- Jeans/pants/leg coverings with no excessive skin shown through pants Clothing, accessories, or body art depicting gang affiliation, racial or ethnic slurs, hate speech, vulgar/obscene/subversive/sexually explicit language or images, or weaponry

DUAL ENROLLMENT

The postsecondary options rule provides for a student who is in a Georgia public high school to take approved courses, full-time, or part-time, at a Georgia public college or university where he/she has been accepted and will receive postsecondary credit hours, high school Carnegie unit credit and state funding. A student shall be eligible to participate in the programs if he or she is:

- Enrolled in a Georgia public school
- Has not received a high school diploma
- Has been recommended by a counselor or administrator
- Has been accepted by an eligible institution (each institution establishes their own criteria for admissions and it is the student's responsibility to research admissions requirement to ensure they meet the minimum standards)
- Must provide own transportation, unless student rides school-provided bus.

All grades from colleges and universities will be reported as A, B, C & F. These letter grades will be entered into our transcript file at Pickens High School as 95 (A), 85 (B), 75 (C) & 65 (F). D's will be recorded as a 70 if it is a passing grade from the school. If a D is not passing it will be recorded as a 65. Dual enrollment course selection must be approved by the high school counselor or administrator, and the advisor at the college or university.

ELIGIBILITY FOR GHSA ACTIVITIES

State guidelines for GHSA eligibility require that students earn 2.5 units in the immediately preceding semester and be on track for graduation (sophomores must have 5 units; juniors must have 11 units; and seniors must have 17 units.

This is different from promotion requirements-see page 21).

FINAL EXAM EXEMPTION POLICY

A student will earn exemption from taking block class Final Exams/Mid-Term Exams* if he/she qualifies per the following:

- **Has a 92 percent or above Average in the class**

IN ADDITION, students must be free and clear of all fines & charges. Students must not have been suspended from school nor assigned to ISS during the semester. Students having more than **four tardies and/or unexcused early checkouts, unexcused late check-ins**, or any combination (to total 4 or more) during the semester makes a student ineligible for exemption. ***NOTE: THIS POLICY DOES NOT ALLOW STUDENTS TO EXEMPT AN END OF COURSE TEST; THOSE ARE ALWAYS MANDATORY.** Also, this exemption policy does allow students to exempt Final Exams/Mid-Term Exams on the last two days of each semester. Students are not allowed to take exams early except in the case of a medical absence; all exams must be taken on the assigned days.

Report Cards

At the end of each grading period an electronic copy of the student report card, that lists all subjects, will be distributed to students and/or be available for viewing in Infinite Campus. Grades will be recorded for each nine weeks, the semester, and end of the year.

Mid-term and End-Term Electronic Grading Reports will be issued approximately every nine weeks, as follows:

- **Semester I Mid-Term Report: Oct 6, 2023**
- **Semester I Ends: Dec 20, 2023**
- **End of Term I Report Card: January 5, 2024**
- **Semester II Mid-Term Report: March 15, 2024**
- **Semester II End Date and Report Cards: May 23, 2024**

GIFTED PROGRAM POLICY

The Pickens County Board of Education shall develop and provide curricula for gifted students that incorporate the State Board of Education-approved student competencies and required curriculum. The curricula for gifted students shall be consistent with the requirements of Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38, Education Program for Gifted Students, and the Georgia Department of Education's *Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

The Superintendent and appropriate staff shall review and revise (if revisions are needed) its curricula for gifted students

at least annually. An updated copy of the local program description shall be submitted to the Georgia-Department of Education whenever changes are made.

Pickens County Schools routinely screens for gifted services; however, students may also be referred by teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, guardians, peers, or make a self-referral by contacting the school's counselors or Gifted Coordinator.

GRADING POLICY AT PICKENS HIGH SCHOOL

Pickens High School operates on a semester grading period. There are two semester periods in a school year. Credit is awarded at the end of each semester. Students will be made aware of the exact grading procedure for each class by the course instructor.

Term grades are calculated cumulatively and constitute 80%-90% of the student's final grade. End of Course Tests will constitute no less than 10% based on school district guidelines. Final Exams will constitute a percent of the student's final grade as specified in the course syllabus.

Grade Weighting Policy

Courses listed below will be weighted as "Honors/AP Weighted Courses."

Any courses listed as "Honors" will receive an additional **6%** added to the final GPA. Any courses listed as "AP" will receive an additional **10%** added to the final GPA.

****All other courses will be considered "regular courses."***

Grades - CREDIT RECOVERY (Inside the School Day)

Credit Recovery is provided as an option for students who have already attempted a class, but did not receive credit. This option is offered as an option to keep students on track for graduation and keep them from falling behind. Adequate progress must be made, satisfactory attendance must be achieved, and good behavior must be exhibited in order to participate.

Grade Promotion Requirements (GRADES 9-12):

Students are assigned to a grade level based on accrued units at the beginning of each school year. Summer school credits are included. Promotion/placement shall be made on the following basis:

- To be promoted to the tenth grade – 6 units
- To be promoted to the eleventh grade – 13 units
- To be promoted to the twelfth grade – 20 units

High school students will follow local board policies IHF, IHF(2), IHF(3), IHF(4), IHF(5) and the State Board of Education Rule for High School Graduation Requirements.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduation requirements are established by the Georgia Department of Education and the Pickens County Board of Education. Students must earn 28 credits in order to receive a conventional Pickens High School Diploma. Students pursuing other Georgia Department of Education-approved graduation options will meet the minimum required courses and credits for such option(s). There are minimum standards in the areas of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

For students entering Pickens High School:

All students will be required to complete a total of 28 units for graduation to include these minimum requirements in the following core areas:

4 units of English

4 units of math

4 units of science

4 units of social studies

At least 3 total units required from: Foreign Language* and/ or CTAE and/or Fine Arts

1 unit of Health/Personal Fitness

8 electives from any area

***Students planning to enter or transfer into a University System of Georgia institution must take two units of the same foreign language.**

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Students are assigned to counselors by the first letter of their last name.

The primary goal of the comprehensive PHS counseling program is to promote the success and overall well-being of each PHS student. Our program helps students succeed by utilizing consultation and collaboration with a variety of stakeholders. Those stakeholders include but are not limited to the following: the student, parents/guardians, teachers/staff, administration, social workers, mental health providers, and outside organizations.

There are several objectives and tasks of the professional school counseling services at PHS that include:

Assisting students in their self-understanding, self-development, and self-evolution. Individual and/or group counseling are used to aid in helping students to develop sound methods of self-appraisal as well as healthy communication/social skills.

Assisting students in developing healthy decision making and critical thinking skills. Formulation of tentative plans based on utilization of student strengths and interests is an integral part of the program.

Providing appropriate information and assistance to students that help them in making their own personal, social, educational, and vocational decisions. Our goal is to help students gather the information and resources needed to make the best decisions for themselves.

Collaborate and consult with teachers and staff regarding students. By collaborating and consulting with the teachers and staff of PHS, the counseling program is best able to

advocate for the needs of the student. The professional school counselors will provide meaningful interpretation of any information given to staff to best help them in designing the educational needs of the students and the overall educational program at PHS.

The comprehensive PHS counseling program will assist teachers and staff in understanding and meeting the special needs, abilities, limitations, and exceptionalities of our students. Recognition of these needs and abilities will often be interpreted from tests and pertinent data.

The school counselors will help the teachers and staff to understand the student population in which they serve so that they are as multiculturally respectful and competent as possible to the needs of our PHS students.

Through collaboration with a variety of community stakeholders, the comprehensive PHS counseling department will provide the students, families, and staff of PHS with appropriate and helpful community resources.

Assistance to parents/guardians will be provided so that they can best help their children/students be successful. The PHS professional school counselors will aid parents in their children's educational success by coordinating individual conferences as needed in which special concerns and needs are explained. This will assist both the school and home to coordinate together.

The PHS professional school counselors will aim towards helping the students, parents/guardians/families, and staff of PHS to understand the function and goals of both PHS and the comprehensive PHS counseling department. Student, parental/familial, and staff understanding of PHS and its

programs are sought through orientation meetings, individual conferences, and the PHS counseling department. It is our hope that students and their parents/guardians will view PHS as an ally in the student's overall educational journey and success. With the help and collaboration of the students' parents/guardians, PHS hopes to play a major role in helping students develop and evolve into the best and healthiest versions of themselves.

Counselor Assignments:

Last Name A-F:

Mrs. Candy Thomas

Last Name G-O:

Mrs. Elisha Wilson

Last Name P-Z:

Ms. Tara Joyce

**HOMECOMING COURT, PROM COURT,
AND MR. & MISS PHS ELIGIBILITY**

For all courts:

1. Student must be on track for graduation.
2. Student must exhibit good conduct, never having been assigned to out-of-school suspension or exceeding 3 days of in-school suspension during the current and most previous semesters.
3. Student must be in compliance with the attendance policy for PHS.
4. Student must have an overall average of at least 70 for the previous semester.
5. Miss PHS may not be on the Homecoming Queen court or on Prom Queen court.
6. Homecoming Queen and Princess may not be on the Prom courts.
7. Homecoming and Prom representatives will be nominated and selected by PHS students.

Guidelines for Mr. & Miss PHS selection

The following guidelines are used as the criteria for the selection of Mr. & Miss PHS and the Court.

- The PHS Court will be made up of 10 senior boys and 10 senior girls
- The Court will be nominated by senior students from a roster of senior Advisement students
- Nominees should exhibit qualities of leadership, dependability, and a good attitude
- Nominees should demonstrate cooperation with the faculty
- Nominees should be active participants of at least three school activities
- Nominees were enrolled full-time at PHS during their junior and senior years
- A faculty committee will review the nominations and determine eligibility, after student generated nominations.
- Students in grades 10-12 will select one boy and one girl from the nominated students as Mr. & Miss PHS

HONOR GRADUATES

To be recognized as an honor graduate, a senior must achieve a weighted cumulative GPA of 90.000 or greater for all courses taken during their high school career.

The calculation is carried to three decimal places and is not rounded up. The honor graduate GPA is calculated at the end of the 1st semester of the student's senior year.

HOPE SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Grades from **all** high school coursework attempted in the core curriculum subjects (Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and Foreign Language) will be included in the grade point average used for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility. Weighting will be given only to courses designated as “AP/Honors”.

Grades will be converted to a 4.0 scale as follows:

A-4.0

B-3.0

C-2.

0 F-0

Students must also have taken and passed 4 rigor classes.

For more information on Hope eligibility, current changes, implementations and updates please visit www.GAfutures.org or call toll free at 1-800-505-GSFC (4732).

Final transcripts are submitted after graduation and the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) determines eligibility.

PUBLIC TECHNICAL COLLEGES

Georgia Residents who are attending a Georgia public technical college to earn a certificate are eligible for the HOPE GRANT. The HOPE Grant covers tuition. Contact the Financial Aid office of the school for more information.

MEAL INFORMATION

All students will report to the cafeteria during their assigned lunch time. No student will leave the cafeteria area without permission from the administrator on duty.

Students are not allowed to leave campus for lunch; such action will be treated as “skipping.” Students are not allowed to have lunch brought in or delivered without written consent from the principal or their designee. If food is delivered without written consent, it will remain in the front office until the end of the day and be released to the student at the end of the school day.

All student meals are to be eaten in the cafeteria with the exception of students assigned to ISS. **No lunches will be allowed in classrooms or the Media Center.**

2024-2025 School Meal Prices (meal prices are subject to change):

Students -	Breakfast \$1.60	Lunch \$2.70
Staff -	Breakfast \$2.50	Lunch \$4.50
Visitors -	Breakfast \$2.50	Lunch \$4.50
Additional milk price \$.60		

Reduced price breakfast and lunch this year is \$0 due to GA Dept. of Ed. funding.

Applications for Free or Reduced-Price meals can be found on the Pickens County School District website, by logging onto

<https://frapps.horizonsolana.com/PICCO1>, or provided by school staff.

Convenient pre-payment for school meals is available in the school cafeteria:

1. Students may pre-pay for their school meals. Each student has an account that will accept any amount of pre-payment money, and as meals are purchased, the cost of the meal or individual items will be deducted from the account balance.
2. Students are assigned a five digit ID number which they will key in at the cashier station as they receive a meal or purchase side items. All students will be required to enter their I.D. number on the line regardless of their eligibility status (full paid, reduced-price or free). Their name will appear on the computer screen and will be verified by the cashier who will total the purchase.
3. Students are encouraged to pay by the week, month or year. Pre-payments and/or daily cash payments are made as students go through the line at breakfast or lunch. **Checks may be written to PHS. The total amount of the check will be applied to the student's account for use in the cafeteria. No change will be returned for checks.**
4. Parents may also access the Meal Pay Plus info at **www.pickenscountyschools.org** (Choose the Cafeteria Menus link then select Prepayment Options) to register to check meal account activity and balances on-line. Student meals can be paid for using an e-check, debit or credit card at this website for a small percentage of the deposit. Check the PCBOE website for link availability or go to www.mypaymentsplus.com . Student account records will document all payments and purchases made by the student.

Meal Charges- Customary Procedure

School Nutrition Program (SNP)

- Students may charge up to \$12.00
- Adults (district employees) will only be allowed **one** charge this year.
- Visitors may not charge.
- Charges will not be allowed during the last two weeks of school.
- School Nutrition staff will inform students that their meal balance is low or delinquent as they come through the serving line.
- Student meal account notices for all students with a delinquent meal balance will be generated weekly and sent to households via students, telephone calls, or emails.
- Students who owe for charges are not allowed to purchase supplemental sale items like chips or slushies.
- Students may not charge supplemental sales.
- When a child exceeds the charge limit, a phone call will be made to the household by school nutrition staff.
- If a successful resolution has not been reached, a referral will be made to the principal or his/her designee who will contact the parent. At the principal's discretion, further referral may be made to the school social worker.

- Middle and High School students that exceed the charge limit will not be allowed to charge additional meals until the delinquent funds are paid. These students will be offered a replacement meal of milk and either a cheese sandwich or peanut butter sandwich.
- It is the goal of the SNP to eliminate unpaid charges at the end of each academic year, however unpaid meal charges will be carried over at the end of the school year as a delinquent debt and SNP will continue collection efforts into the next school year.
- SNP may seek reimbursement for excessive funds owed through all legal means.

MEDIA CENTER USE

As our school grows in population and our space gets more use, we must take everyone's needs and safety into account. The Media Center follows these procedures to make it possible for everyone to have maximum access to the media center and its services.

Hours of operation: 7:35 AM – 2:45 PM, Monday-Friday

There will be no Media Center Passes issued for students during their lunch or before school.

Students need an official Hall Pass during the hours of 7:45 am – 2:15 pm except for break, before school, and after school. Every student needs an academic purpose for being in the Media Center. Please bring your good attitude and best behavior inside with you. The computers are for academic purposes only, as indicated by the Pickens County Board of Education. They must not be used for personal email, games, or any other purposes restricted in the student handbook. Students who misuse the computers are subject to having their privileges revoked. A book may be checked out for a two-week period and is renewable if no one else has placed it on reserve. Groups of students may not use the study rooms without prior arrangement between their teacher and the Media Center staff.

PARKING POLICY FOR STUDENTS

There will be a \$40 fee for an annual student parking permit. The fee will be reduced if purchased in the 2nd semester of school and will be prorated each month thereafter (see the Parking Pass form available on the school website, the counseling website, or in the front office). The parking permit must be visible at all times when on the PHS campus. If a student loses his or her permit, a replacement **MUST** be purchased for a fee of \$5.00.

All monies owed to Pickens High School must be paid in full before purchasing a parking permit. (Ex. book fines, lunch monies, uniforms, text books, etc.)

A student may earn the privilege of parking his/her automobile on campus during school hours subject to the following terms and conditions:

- 1) The student must have a valid Driver's License and proof of insurance.
- 2) The student agrees by signing a form that he/she fully understands that at no time when the student's vehicle is on campus will the vehicle contain a weapon as defined by the Student Code of Conduct, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, any non-prescription drugs or illegal substances or any pornographic material. The student understands and agrees that he/she will be accountable for any item or substance in his/her vehicle, regardless of who places the item or substance in the vehicle or whether the student was aware of the same. The student agrees to inspect the vehicle before bringing the vehicle

on campus each time in order to determine whether anything forbidden by the permit is in the vehicle.

- 3) The student agrees that his/her vehicle is subject to random searches at any time the principal or designee deems appropriate and the student agrees upon request to unlock his/her vehicle, glove compartments, trunk or any other locked storage compartments in the vehicle.
- 4) This permit is subject to revocation by the administrative staff at any time any of the above conditions have not been met or the student is otherwise disciplined for any violation of the Student Code of Conduct. Student parking will be in individually assigned spaces only. Parking in unauthorized areas or violation of these rules may result in the student's car being towed away at the student's expense and/or loss of parking privileges.

While on campus, the maximum speed is 10 MPH.

Buses and pedestrians have the right-of-way at all times. No reckless or dangerous driving will be tolerated. Once the student parks, he/she will immediately come into the building. Students will not go to their cars during the school day without permission from the administration. Any student driving on banks or other unauthorized areas may lose their driving privileges. All students being brought to school should report to the front of the school building. For all afternoon car rider students, dismissal (parent pick-up) will be located at the cafeteria courtyard (tennis court side of the school).

PHS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN

- State standards require that Pickens High School develop and maintain a School Disaster Plan that would prepare the school to save lives, minimize injuries, and reduce property damage in the event of a man-made or natural disaster.
- The principal or assistant principal will implement this plan immediately upon receipt of notification that a disaster has occurred or is anticipated.
- School personnel or students will not be allowed to leave this school unless permission is granted by the principal or an authorized individual that represents the principal.
- All teachers that have student responsibility will keep an accurate account of students under their supervision.
- Students may be released to their parents/guardians if the situation permits parents to come for their children.

SENIOR FEE

There will be a \$75.00 (including shipping charges and taxes) fee required of all students who are planning to graduate in May, 2024. This will pay for the costs of graduation including diplomas, diploma covers, graduation programs, caps, and gowns.

STUDENT AWARDS - STAR STUDENT, VALEDICTORIAN, SALUTATORIAN

The Professional Association of Georgia Educators recognizes the highest SAT score in each school through the **STAR** student program. In order to become eligible to compete for this award, a student must meet the following requirements:

- Be legally enrolled as a senior (including dual enrollment).
- Graduate with the current graduating class.
- Have the highest score on one test date, with each score equal to or exceeding the national average
- Be in the Top 10% of the class based on cumulative high school grades 9-11.
- STAR Student must have been taught or coached by the STAR Teacher he/she selects.

The student with the highest class ranking as determined by the highest weighted HOPE GPA, as calculated by the Georgia Student Finance Committee, shall be recognized as the **VALEDICTORIAN**. The student with the second highest weighted HOPE GPA shall be recognized as the **SALUTATORIAN**.

In order to be named either Valedictorian or Salutatorian, as a minimum, students must have attended high school in the school system the last semester of their junior year and during the first semester of their senior year. Students must be and have been at the school of graduation during those semesters. Transfer credit used for calculation of the highest GPA for determination of class ranking for Valedictorian and/or Salutatorian shall be accepted only from high schools accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (or agency recognized as a regional accrediting agency by SACS). All grades will be calculated based on the Pickens High School grading scale.

Class ranking shall be determined by the highest GPA completed at the end of 1st Semester of the year in which the student is a graduating senior.

Note: As a minimum, in order to be named either Valedictorian or Salutatorian, in addition to the requirements listed, students must complete a minimum of two Advanced Placement courses.

Academic requirements are changing for the HOPE Scholarship. Please visit this page for information regarding these changes: <https://gsfc.georgia.gov/>

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Class Officers and Representatives

Members must refer to bylaws for further information.

Participation is required in but not limited to the following:

- Attend all meetings
- Attend two BOE meetings per school year
- School improvement projects
- Community service projects
- Fundraisers
- Teacher helper days during pre- and post-planning
- Freshman and parent orientation
- Open house nights
- Homecoming week activities (spirit days, parade and bonfire, dance, etc.)
- White Christmas
- Special Olympics
- Prom

Qualifications for Student Government include, but are not limited to:

- An overall average of 80 or higher
- No pass, no play rule
- No cheating: Students found guilty of cheating will not be allowed to hold office. Students turned in for cheating while holding office will be removed from Student Government if such cheating is proven.
- Be on track for graduation with his or her entering class
- Never been denied credit for a class
- Never been assigned In-School Suspension or Out of School Suspension
- Participation in mandatory meetings and events
- In compliance with Pickens High School attendance policy
- Daily enrollment at Pickens High School; **Dual enrollment** students must be enrolled in at least one class that meets at PHS daily.

STUDENT INSURANCE

Information about student insurance can be found at **pickenscountyschools.org** under Student Services.

NOTE: Any student who is going to participate in football must be covered by the preferred option of this student insurance program **or** his parents must sign a waiver form stating that they have insurance coverage and they will pay any additional expenses incurred from an injury **or** that they do not have insurance and understand they are financially responsible for any medical expenses incurred due to injury. All other students who are going to compete in athletic events other than football must have at least the basic coverage listed in this policy **or** sign the waiver forms noted above for football.

TELEHEALTH AND MOBILE HEALTH SERVICES

Pickens Urgent Care is available to see students and school employees. Register at **pickenscare.com** Below is a video outlining these services. Forms are available online or in the school nurse's office.

<https://onedrive.live.com/?authkey=%21AEMnYf8z96FxW1k&id=FB385496DC32FC82%212693&cid=FB385496DC32FC82&parId=root&parQt=sharedby&parCid=59ED2DB07544F1E6&o=OneUp>

TELEPHONE USE FOR STUDENTS

Telephones located in school offices or classrooms can be used by students should an emergency situation arise. Students are asked to inform their friends, employers and relatives that they may not take personal telephone calls at school. Messages will not be taken and relayed to students except in **emergency situations**. Students are also expected to make afternoon transportation arrangements prior to arriving at school in the mornings.

TEST DATES-Important Information

PSAT:	End of Course:		AP EXAMS and End of Pathway Assessments for CTAE:
10/09/24	Fall: 12/10 – 12/17/24	Spring: TBD	TBD
ACT Test Dates:		SAT Test Dates:	
September 14, 2023		August 24, 2024	
October 26, 2023		October 5, 2024	
December 14, 2023		November 2, 2024	
February 8, 2024		December 7, 2024	
April 5, 2024		March 8, 2025	
June 14, 2024		May 3, 2025	
July 12, 2024		June 7, 2025	
For information on times, locations, and registration: www.act.org		For information on times, locations, and registration: www.collegeboard.org	

Test dates are subject to change

TEXTBOOKS

Students who lose books will be required to pay for the book immediately. A record will be made of this order that the fine be returned if the book is found. Fines for excessive damages or lost books will be assessed on the basis of the books lasting five years. Example: Cost of book is \$60.00; lost after 2 years. Therefore, the school loses $\frac{3}{5}$ of the use of the book. $\frac{3}{5} \times \$60.00 = \36.00 . This is the fine to the student. Excessive wear indicates that the life of the book will be reduced one year. The fine would be $\frac{1}{5}$ of the cost of the book. Abuses such as marking pages, torn pages, damaged covers, etc., will be assessed by the subject matter teacher. Fines should range from \$10.00 to the cost of the book.

TOBACCO USE/POSSESSION POLICY

Tobacco use or possession is not allowed. Please refer to the Pickens County School District Student Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for further information. [Link Here.](#)

Vaping Use & Possession of Vaping Paraphernalia

Please refer to the Pickens County School District Student Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct for further information. [Link Here.](#)

VISITORS

All visitors to PHS must check in at the front office and receive a visitor's pass. If a situation arises whereby visitor access to PHS is limited or suspended, parents will be notified.

WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM

Pickens High School offers cooperative training for students through the WBL program. Cooperative training programs are designed to teach students the knowledge and skills necessary for job entry placement. Students receive classroom training one period a day and on-the-job training. Students are supervised daily by the employer and periodically by the WBL coordinator. WBL students can be released from school after second or third period for on-the-job training and must work a minimum of 7.5 hours per week for the semester in order to receive 1 unit credit. If a student should lose a job during the year, he/she will be placed in a class during the time that was previously spent at work.

After reviewing this Handbook, please follow the link provided below or scan the QR code and complete the form acknowledging your receipt of, and understanding of, all information contained in the Pickens High School Student/Parent Handbook 2024-2025. Please reach out to your school administration with specific questions regarding the Handbook.

<https://forms.gle/aVAJBmDWVZ4J5jsx5>

