

Hardee County Schools

VISION STATEMENT

Empower and inspire all students for success

MISSION STATEMENT

We provide all students a high-quality education in a nurturing and creative environment to develop responsible citizens

Wauchula Elementary School

400 South Florida Avenue
Wauchula, Florida 33873

Phone: 863-773-3141
Fax: 863-773-0416
School website: wes.hardee.k12.fl.us

Principal Mary N. Farr
Assistant Principal Shadow Ward

School Hours

School Opens	7:00 AM
Classes Begin	7:25 AM
Classes End	1:55 PM
Office Closes	3:30 PM

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

We, the administration, faculty, staff, parents, and students of Wauchula Elementary, work together to create an atmosphere of fairness and mutual respect. Every opportunity is provided for students to learn and become creative, thoughtful decision makers and effective communicators. This environment, combined with high expectations for all, creates productive, happy, and responsible citizens.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

School hours are 7:25 AM to 1:55 PM. Students should not be on the school grounds before 7:00 AM, since supervision is not provided before that time. When bringing student (s) to school, drivers need to remain in the right lane. To maximize safety and ease traffic congestion, the left lane will only be used for staff and visitors planning to park. The parking lot is reserved for staff and visitors coming into the office --the parking lot should not be utilized for student drop off. Parents should pull down as far as possible in front of the Bobcat's Den before dropping off their children.

When students arrive at school each morning, they should go directly to the cafeteria if eating breakfast. If not, they can go to the library, or their designated hall assignment. Students will line up when directed by the teacher or tutor on duty. When the 7:25 bell rings, they will go to their classroom in an orderly fashion.

DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

The dismissal schedule is as follows:

1:55 All bus riders will be dismissed. Kindergarten through second grade walkers and bike riders will be dismissed.

2:00 All car riders will be dismissed. Third through fifth grade walkers and bike riders dismissed.

Students waiting out front are to be seated until their ride arrives. Students are to be picked up in front of the school office area.

NOTE:

- Supervision is **not** provided after 2:15 PM
- Parents are asked not to park in the loading area.
- Students are not permitted back in the building after dismissal.

RAINY DAY DISMISSAL

Parents should tell their children what to do when school dismisses in bad weather. If your child is a walker, please establish a plan for your child and document it on your child's Rainy Day Dismissal Form, found in the Welcome Packet issued at the beginning of the school year. Rainy day forms should be completed and returned to your child's teacher during the first few days of school. If your child's rainy day plan is altered at any point in the school year, please notify your child's teacher. The teacher will dismiss your child according to your directions on that form, unless they receive written notice from you stating otherwise. All other dismissals may experience a minor delay, but will proceed as normal.

RULE ON TARDINESS

Instructional time begins at 7:25 AM. It is very important that your child be prompt to the classroom so that he/she will not miss valuable instruction.

If your child arrives at school after 7:35 AM, he/she must sign in at the front office and receive a tardy pass before being allowed to go to his/her class.

In accordance with Hardee County School Board Policy, when the minutes a student is late equals a six hour school day, that day will be marked as an unexcused absence. After five unexcused absences in a thirty day period, the child is considered truant.

Please note that students who are **tardy five times** will be assigned lunch and recess detention. They will also serve lunch and recess detention for every fifth tardy thereafter.

Please make an extra effort to see that your child is here at school before 7:35 AM so that he/she will not be marked tardy.

EARLY PICK-UP

Just as important as arriving on time is staying at school until the bell rings at 1:55 PM. Classroom

instruction continues until that time, so your child will miss needed academic time if he/she is taken out of school early. Please try to make medical appointments after school hours. Early sign outs will not be permitted after 1:30 PM.

For the protection of children, early release of a child may be granted only at the school office where children are permitted to leave school only in the custody of a parent or an adult who submits verified authorization that matches the child's emergency card. Telephone calls to release students are discouraged. We cannot verify the validity of these requests.

All parents and guardians will provide photo identification in order to sign students out or to come on campus or be approved by the principal. This is in compliance with the Jessica Lunsford Act, 1012.465.F.S. (August 2005).

ELEMENTARY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Florida Statute 1003.21 requires that all students between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school 180 days a year, unless properly excused. Parents are encouraged to set the goal of regular attendance as a top priority. Students must be present in order to learn.

- When a student has been absent from school for **3 days**, the parent/guardian will be contacted by the classroom teacher to find out the cause of the absence.
- When a student has been absent **5 days**, the parent/guardian will be contacted by the classroom teacher and a truancy letter will be sent home from the school.
- When a student has been absent **10 days**, an official Attendance Child Study Team meeting will be held at the school with the parent/guardian, school administration, School Resource Officer, and a counselor from Youth and Family Alternatives. If the parent/guardian does not attend, a Wellness Check will be conducted by the local law enforcement office or the Hardee County Sheriff's Department.
- When a student has been absent **15 days in a 90 day period**, an official referral is made with Youth and Family Alternatives. Within 7 days, a counselor from Youth and Family Alternatives will make contact with the parent/guardian to complete the screening process, open a case, and begin services.
- If a student continues to have absences, the student will be referred for a Child-In-Need-of-Services (CINS) Case Staffing. Case Staffing is a legal hearing to determine what further actions can be taken to improve the youth's school attendance. The committee, a representative from the school and YFA, can recommend placement in a youth shelter for up to thirty-five (35) days.
- If the family fails to comply with any of the established plans with YFA and the student continues to have unexcused absences, a Child-In-Need-of-Services petition will be filed with the court system. Once adjudicated, the student will be ordered to attend school, among other orders. Failure to attend school, once court ordered, can result in placement at a youth shelter for up to thirty-five (35) days. Repeated non-compliance can result in placement up to ninety (90) days.

- Court supervision continues until the youth is compliant with all court orders or turns eighteen (18) years old.
- **Any student who has been absent from school must bring a note from a parent/ guardian or doctor stating the cause of his absence.** Please be certain that your note includes the date, full name of your child and that it explains exactly why he/she was absent or tardy. This note must be brought to the office within five days after an absence or it will be recorded as unexcused. Excessive absences or tardiness without notification will be investigated.
- **NOTE:** A **doctor's note** will be **required** for all absences over a total of **15**.
- Classroom behavior and school attendance may be considered when approving a student to participate in a field trip. A parent conference will be held to address any concerns prior to denying a student's approval to attend a field trip.
- Students will be counted as half-day absence if checked out before 11:00 a.m. or checked into school after 11:00 a.m.

TYPES OF ABSENCE

Excused absences are days missed for personal illness, death of a member of the immediate family, special appointments or emergencies approved by the school and the parent or guardian. Absence for head lice will be excused the day the student is sent home and the following day only. Students will be responsible for making arrangements with teachers to make up work missed for excused absences.

Unexcused absences are days missed for activities that can be arranged on days other than school days. These include avoidable absences such as shopping or pleasure trips, vacations, and truancy. Absence for head lice will be unexcused after the second day of notification of lice.

Planned/non-emergency absences are days planned in advance and missed for personal reasons. The parent or guardian must submit a written request to the principal or assistant principal at least two days in advance of the absence. These will be excused, if approved. The student will need to make arrangements with the teacher to complete the assignments that would be missed. These assignments will be given full credit if returned in the allotted time.

BEGINNING SCHOOL DAYS

Parents will be allowed to walk their children to class the first two days of school, after that the student will have to walk by themselves. Keeping our children safe is our number one priority and with the Jessica Lunsford Act in place in the Florida Statutes (1012.465.F.S. August 2005), we must limit the amount of non-personnel on our campus. If your child has a medical condition, please advise the office so we may indicate on the registration form and the emergency care card.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The main goals of school discipline are to ensure the safety of staff and students and create an environment conducive to learning. Wauchula Elementary School follows the District Code of

Conduct; however, teachers develop their own classroom behavior plan.

Administrators are authorized by Florida Statute 1003.32 the right to administer corporal punishment.

NOTE: If parents or guardians do not approve of their child receiving corporal punishment, this fact must be **put in writing** and given to the principal **annually**.

CLASSROOM RULES

Each teacher has established and posted classroom rules, consequences and rewards.

After the classroom interventions have been exhausted, then the student will be referred to the office for disciplinary action.

PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES

1. Students are not permitted to hit, push, trip, or play excessively rough with one another. Tackling is not permitted.
2. Students are to line up when their class is called.

Jungle Gym:

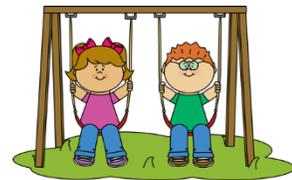
- You may only go DOWN the slides ... do not walk up the slides.
- You must slide down on your bottom – NOT head first
- When sliding – you must slide all the way to the bottom of the slide
- Rock climber – you must go UP only
- No jumping off any platforms (the rock climber platform seems to be the biggest problem)
- Do not play in the sand around the jungle gym. If you want to play in the sand – do so around the outside of the fire climber or mountain mole hill.
- Do not run or play chase around the jungle gym or swings
- Monkey bars – only go 1 way... start from platform and go across the monkey bars (rings) outward to the ladder. Do not start on the ladder and monkey over to the platform.
- Patiently wait your turn - No pushing / butting in front of others
- Do not sit down on the platforms of the jungle gym – keep the lines moving
- Play football in back field only – balls should not go into the “sandy” areas. If so, you are too close to the playground equipment, and your ball may be confiscated for the remainder of your recess time that day.
- When a student goes down a slide or pole or drops from the monkey bars – the next person must wait to go until the first person walked away from the drop/landing area.
- Do not drop down into the inside of the ringed climber (students could get stuck inside)

Mountain mole hill:

- Do not drop through the top hole onto the ground below.
- It is a climber – do not jump off the mole hill

Swings:

- Do not jump off of the swings while in the air
- Swing front to back only (not side to side)



Fire Climber:

- Do not play in the sand under the fire climber.
- If you drop down into the inside of the fire climber, immediately move out from under the fire climber.

***Note: If the staff on duty see a student violate one of these rules, that student will have to sit out the remainder of recess.**

PARENT COMMUNICATION

The school publishes newsletters and other notices as needed. The school also sends notes and letters home to parents, report cards every nine weeks, mid-nine week progress reports, and contacts parents for conferences when necessary. Additionally, the automated phone messaging system as well as Remind will be used to send voice, text and email messages school wide to parents.

INTERPRETING TEST RESULTS FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

- Each spring, state tests are administered to all students in the school. The results of the test are made known to parents and students with a special report from the testing company.
- Parents are encouraged to request conferences for test interpretation if they do not understand the explanation offered on their copy of the results.
- In the Exceptional Student Education area, the Counselor, Staffing Specialist, E.S.E. Teachers and the Classroom Teacher confer with the parents about the results of any psychological evaluation done on children being evaluated for possible placement into the Exceptional Student Program. Procedural Safeguards, in accordance with Federal Law 94-142, are issued to and discussed with parents of exceptional students.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Each teacher will contact the parents or guardians of the students in their class during the first nine weeks for a “get to know you” conference. At that time the teacher will discuss classroom policies and procedures.

We also encourage parents to meet regularly with their child’s teacher to monitor progress and maintain an open line of communication. To schedule a conference, please contact your child’s teacher or call the school office (863-773-3141) and inform the secretary of your availability and a meeting time will be set. Please note, teachers cannot be called out of classrooms to take phone calls during the day.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Healthy breakfasts and lunches are served each day at no charge for ALL students through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs called the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

Breakfast is served from 7:00-7:20 A.M.. Children planning to eat breakfast should go directly to the

cafeteria as soon as they arrive.

Lunches are served between the hours of 10:30 A.M. and 12:30 P.M., depending upon the grade of your child.

VISITORS

Parents are encouraged to visit the school; however, the safety of our students and the preservation of our instruction is of high priority. All classroom visitations must be pre-arranged with the teacher. All visitors are required to sign in at the office and receive a visitor's badge. **All parents and guardians will provide a photo identification in order to sign students out or to come on campus.** This is in compliance with the Jessica Lunsford Act, 1012.465.F.S. (August 2005).

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Parents are encouraged to participate in the School Advisory Council (SAC). The purpose of this group is to actively involve parents, community members, and business partners in making decisions concerning the progress of our school programs. Three to four meetings are held during the school year. Written notification will go home to voting members. Please contact the front office for meeting times.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

All parents and other interested persons are encouraged to join the Wauchula Elementary School PTO. Membership materials can be found in the Welcome Packet issued at the beginning of the school year. The PTO participates in and sponsors programs and activities to benefit students and faculty. Meetings are held at various times during the year.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers increase the quality of education that our students receive. The willingness of our parents and community members to provide volunteer service to Wauchula Elementary School is both supported and appreciated.

Volunteer applications must be updated every year and must be submitted ***at least two weeks prior*** to your first volunteer date. This will allow time to screen the applicant and place them on our school's approved volunteer list. The assistant principal is the coordinator of the volunteer program. Please contact the school if you have any questions or are interested in serving as a volunteer.

A volunteer log book is maintained in the front office. Volunteers should report to the office to sign in and receive a volunteer badge before serving. Volunteers should sign-out before leaving. School volunteers shall not bring pre-school or children not registered full time at any of the elementary or secondary schools of the district.

Volunteers are to perform all service under the supervision of a staff member. It is the supervising

staff member's responsibility to give the volunteer a clear understanding of the duties, procedures, expectations and any other knowledge needed for performance in the school setting. School volunteers are not to establish lesson plans or instructional objectives, assume responsibility for an entire class in the absence of staff supervision, or work under the direction of a substitute.

Any person who plans to chaperone a school field trip must be a district approved volunteer. Please see "Field Trips" for other important information on chaperoning a field trip.

TRAFFIC IN SCHOOL ZONES

Parents and guardians are expected to obey all traffic signs on and around the school grounds. Do not block driveways, streets or bus loading zones. It is especially important to maintain the 15 mph speed limit within our school zone.

TRANSPORTATION

Walkers/Bike Riders

All walkers crossing highways or streets should cross at points where school guards are posted. They should obey police and crossing guards at all times.

Bicycle riders under the age of 16 must wear a helmet according to state statute. A bicycle rack is located on campus for students to park bicycles. Students should provide locks for securing their individual bicycles.

Students who ride bicycles to school must place them in the bike rack in front of the school and should ensure their safety by placing locks on the bicycles while they are parked. Bicycle registration forms are available in the front office. This form will be used if vandalism or theft should occur. Students should walk their bicycles while on campus.

No skates or skateboards will be allowed on school grounds.

Bus Students

Students who ride the bus must obey the rules posted on the bus. Failure to obey the bus rules or the driver could result in an accident. The principal or his designee may suspend any student transported to or from school at public expense from the privilege of riding the bus, giving notice in writing to the student, parent or guardian and to the superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours. If a pupil has been suspended from riding a school bus, it is still the parent's or guardian's responsibility to see that the student attends school regularly, unless he is suspended from both the bus and school in the same action. The principal's authority to suspend a student from bus transportation is Florida Statute 1006.09.

Children may ride only assigned buses. If a parent or guardian wishes his/her child to vary from this policy, he/she **must contact the district transportation department for permission to change buses. This must be done well in advance of the child boarding the bus.** Children will not be permitted to board a bus other than their own unless they have a form approved by the district transportation department.

The following rules help maintain a safe transport:

1. Stand off of the roadway in an orderly line while waiting for the bus.
2. Remain in your seat at all times when the bus is moving.
3. Keep your arms and head inside of the window. Do not throw objects in or out of the window.
4. If you cross in front of the bus, walk 10 feet in front of the bus. Stop and wait for the driver's signal before crossing the road.
5. Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct is to be observed on all buses.
6. Absolute silence is required at all railroad crossings.
7. The driver is in full charge of the bus and pupils. The driver has the right to assign seats if necessary.
Pupils must obey the driver.
8. No eating, drinking, or use of any tobacco products will be allowed on the bus.
9. Pupils must be on time; the bus cannot wait for those who are tardy.
10. Respect the bus; do not write on or cut the seats.
11. You may not bring any glass objects, balloons, firearms, knives or any weapon onto the bus.
12. You may not bring reptiles, insects or any animals, dead or alive, contained or not contained, onto the bus.
13. No large objects are allowed; the aisle must be kept clear at all times.
14. You may not get off of the bus any place except your assigned stop without written permission from your parents and the school principal.
15. Prior arrangements must be made with the transportation office before visitors will be allowed on the bus.

If you have any questions concerning bussing, please contact the transportation office at 863-773-4754.

SAFETY DRILLS

Safety of students is a priority at Wauchula Elementary School. At least one safety drill is practiced each month.

Fire Drills: A loud horn will announce a fire drill. At the teacher's direction, students will file out of the building quickly and quietly. Students are to line up in assigned areas and quietly return to their classrooms when the all-clear signal is given.

Other emergency drills, such as tornado and lockdown drills, will be scheduled throughout the year.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the proper care of school property. Students who purposefully destroy school property must pay restitution. Payment may be in cash or by serving community service on the school campus during or after school hours. If required to serve, after school transportation will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Accidental property damage will result in similar consequences as a purposeful act.

TEXTBOOKS AND LIBRARY BOOKS

Textbooks and library books are furnished free to students by the taxpayers of the State of Florida, and students are responsible for taking proper care of books issued or checked out to them. Books lost or damaged beyond use shall be paid for by the student's parents or guardian in accordance with Florida Statute 1006.42, according to the book's age and condition when issued.

Guidelines for the care of textbooks and library books are as follows:

1. Do not mark or underline in textbooks or library books
2. Do not damage or allow damage to occur to textbooks or library books.

MEDIA CENTER

The media center can be an exciting place, and we encourage children to use it. In addition to their regular class time visit, students may visit the library from 7:00 until 7:25 AM, and any time their teacher gives permission during the school day.

DRESS CODE

We feel that students should take pride in their grooming and general appearance by selecting appropriate dress for school in order that they may develop proper and acceptable habits.

- Sleeveless shirts and blouses must be at least two inches on the shoulder (muscle shirts, tank tops, or halters will not be permitted).
- Garments which are sexually suggestive, vulgar, or display drug related wording or graphics are prohibited.
- Clothing which provokes, or may tend to provoke violence or disruption in the school shall not be worn.
- Pants must fit at the waist.
- The length of shorts should be in good taste for an educational setting.
- For the safety of students, all shoes must be secured to the foot by a strap or a heel.
- Shoes should have a hard sole and skate shoes are not allowed.
- No head coverings will be allowed inside the building. Hats and sunglasses will be allowed outside only.

GRADE REPORTS

Grades for Kindergarten and First Grade Language Arts* and Mathematics will be expressed in terms of A, B, C, D, and F as follows:

A	90 – 100%
B	80 – 89%
C	70 – 79%
D	60 – 69%
F	Less than 60%

*Language Arts Grades are comprised of Reading (50%), Writing (25%),

Grammar (10%), Spelling (10%), and Handwriting (5%).

Kindergarten and First Grade will issue grades in Social Studies, Science, and Conduct as follows in terms of E, S, N, and U:

E	More than Satisfactory
S	Satisfactory
N	Inconsistent
U	Unacceptable

Grades 2 Through 5 Second through Fifth grade will issue Language Arts*, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies grades as follows:

A	90 – 100%
B	80 – 89%
C	70 – 79%
D	60 – 69%
F	Less than 60%

*Language Arts Grades are comprised of Reading (50%), Writing (25%), Grammar (10%), Spelling (10%), and Handwriting (5%).

Second through Fifth Grade will express grades for Conduct in terms of E, S, N, and U as follows:

E	More than Satisfactory
S	Satisfactory
N	Inconsistent
U	Unacceptable

Parents will be sent a Progress Report at the midpoint of each grading period. If at any point your child is not demonstrating satisfactory progress, please feel free to call and set up an appointment with his/her teacher as soon as possible.

A Report Card will be sent to parents after the end of each nine-week grading period. The report card should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the classroom teacher no later than three (3) days after it is issued.

Grades can be accessed online at any time using the Focus Parent Portal (<https://focus.hardee.k12.fl.us>). Parents are strongly encouraged to register for use of this site by visiting the district website (www.hardee.k12.fl.us), and accessing the registration link from the parent page. This site has also been provided as a link on the WES website. Please note, after starting the registration process, you will need to bring a photo id to the front office so they can allow you access to the account.

AWARDS

A Top Cat awards assembly will be held each nine weeks recognizing students who meet the following criteria:

- Assumes responsibility
- Is considerate of others
- Has good behavior
- Cooperates with others
- Has self-control
- Uses time effectively

Honor Roll awards will be given each nine weeks and student names will be listed in the Herald Advocate.

Each nine weeks, Perfect Attendance rewards will be presented to those students who have been enrolled, present, and on time to WES for 45 days. Half day absences will disqualify a student from receiving Perfect Attendance.

PICTURE USAGE

There will be pictures taken throughout the year for the newspaper, Facebook, the school yearbook, and website. Please let your wishes be known for use of your child's pictures by completing the Picture Usage Agreement found in the Welcome Packet issued at the beginning of the school year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

During Physical Education, our students are expected to:

1. Practice good sportsmanship
2. Practice safety
3. Remain in the designated area
4. Follow the instructions of the coach
5. Participate in all activities unless excused by physician or a note from home

Extended non-participation will require a note from the doctor.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

It is imperative that students have available to them appropriate activities which will foster enhancement of their self-concepts, develop responsibility, leadership and initiative, foster cooperation and self-direction, and provide experiences which will have both short-term and long-term positive effects on their lives.

Each day, all students are provided time for socialization. Programs such as physical education and special events, allow for the development of socialization skills necessary to the emerging adolescent.

Children are afforded a wide variety of activities at Wauchula Elementary School including school clubs, classroom field trips and a variety of free assembly programs throughout the year. Other activities/events include: Battle of the Books, Book Skirmish, Parent Nights, and P.E. Field Day

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Our school offers a variety of activities and incentives to encourage students to strive for excellence in areas of interest. These activities include but are not limited to:

- Battle of the Books
- Book Clubs
- Book Skirmish
- Chess Club
- Chorus
- Library Assistants
- National Elementary Honor Society
- Safety Patrol
- Student Council
- WBOB – Student Morning News Broadcast

FIELD TRIPS

- Field trips are planned by the teachers/grade level as enrichment to the educational program. Field trips must include instructionally based activities and be pre-approved by the principal. Permission slips **MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED** to school prior to each trip. Children who do not meet the deadlines for permission may not be eligible to go. In addition, students must demonstrate proper behavior and the ability to follow directions to be eligible to attend field trips. Classroom behavior and school attendance may be considered when approving a student to participate in a field trip. A parent conference will be held to address any concerns prior to denying a student's approval to attend a field trip.

NOTE: Students **will not** be able to attend field trips without a **notarized emergency card** on file in the office.

Field Trip Chaperones:

Adults who plan to chaperone field trips and supervise students must:

1. be a district approved volunteer (applications must be done annually)

2. complete all chaperone requirements within grade level timelines
3. complete and sign a chaperone agreement form

NOTE: Once chaperone names have been submitted, chaperone changes are not permitted. All monies collected for students and chaperones are non-refundable.

TELEPHONE USE

The school telephone may be used by students in the case of an emergency only. Students are permitted to have cell phones, but phones must remain turned off. Students are not permitted to use their phones without prior approval from a staff member.

NOTE: Any long distance call made from Wauchula Elementary School, including calls charged to a credit card or to a third party phone, must be cleared either through the office manager or through the administration.

INTERNET ACCESS

General Guidelines for Computer Usage

The use of a network is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action by school officials. A student's activities while using the network in this school must be in support of their education and consistent with the educational objectives of the Hardee County District School Board. In addition, a student accessing the network from a school site is responsible for all online activities which take place while using the networked computer. When using another organization's network or computing resources on the Internet, the student must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Students and parents must sign the Acceptable Use Policy found in the Welcome Packet issued at the beginning of the school year.

Acceptable uses of the Network

- All activities which support learning and teaching in Hardee County Schools
- Users are encouraged to develop uses which meet their individual needs and which take advantage of the networks function: electronic conferences, bulletin boards, databases and access to the Internet.

Examples of Unacceptable Uses of the Network

- Using unauthorized chat rooms
- Using electronic mail (e-mail) for anything other than educational purposes
- Using impolite, abusive, or objectionable language
- Using the network in ways that violate federal, state, or local laws
- Activities which cause congestion of the network or otherwise interfere with the work of others
- Using the network for commercial purposes or financial gain
- Sending or receiving copyrighted materials without permission
- Using the network for sending or retrieving obscene materials
- Circumventing security and/or authentication measures
- Unauthorized access to another's resources, programs, or data
- Vandalizing network resources, including the uploading or creation of computer viruses
- Installation of unauthorized software on the computer networks

- Use of network resources to commit forgery, or to create a forged instrument
- Any other infraction deemed inappropriate by school or county personnel

Public Information

Electronic communications should never be considered completely private. Hardee County School Board is subject to Florida Statutes regarding public information access. As such, all electronic messages are a matter of public record.

DOGS/PETS

Please do not allow your dog to follow you to school. You will be held responsible if your dog bites anyone. Dogs found on the school grounds may be removed by animal control at the owner's expense.

LOST AND FOUND

Any article found by a student should be turned in to the clinic. These articles may be reclaimed by the owner at any time. Any article not reclaimed in a reasonable length of time will be disposed of. All sweaters, coats, gloves, caps, etc. should be labeled with the child's name. Remind your children not to bring valuables from home, because they may be lost.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

School insurance is not required, however, it is recommended. Two types of insurance are available. One covers the student during school hours, the other covers the student twenty-four hours a day. Both cover a one year period. Information is sent home with each student in the Welcome Packet issued at the beginning of the school year.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Florida Law 81-18 requires that parents or guardians be informed at the beginning of each school year that children in schools will receive non-invasive screenings during the year. Such screenings and examinations will be for vision, hearing, height, weight, head lice, etc. These screenings are visual checks for any health problems the child may have. Should we find any problems; parents will be notified at once.

Invasive screenings, such as immunizations, tuberculin tests, etc. will **always** require prior written permission from parents or guardians before they are accomplished.

HEAD LICE

If a child is found to have head lice, he/she will be sent home or removed from the classroom. The child will not be permitted to return until his/her hair is free of lice and nits. If a student has nits only, he/she will be permitted to complete the school day. Before being readmitted to the classroom, however, the student must be free of nits. Nits are the eggs lice lay, which adhere to strands of hair.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Any child suspected of having a communicable disease shall immediately be excluded from school and may not return to school until the disease has completely subsided and/or the child presents a written statement by a physician or the health department that he/she is free of communicable diseases and may return to school. If the child is to be out of school for an extended length of time, notify the guidance counselor so the child can receive services by our teacher of the homebound.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

If a student becomes ill or injured at school, he/she should notify his teacher or the duty teacher, who will make arrangements for the necessary care.

The school has responsibility for first aid only. In case of illness, the child will be cared for until the parent arrives or he/she is returned to class. In case of major injuries, first aid will be administered and the parent will be immediately notified.

NOTE: Be sure that a phone number or some way of contacting the parent is available to the front office. **If the information on the emergency card changes at any point during the year, please inform the front office immediately.**

MEDICATION

In order to ensure student safety and health, the Hardee County School Board has established a policy for the administration of medications during school hours. If your child must be given medication of any kind during school hours, **including over-the-counter medications**, you have the following choices:

1. You, or someone chosen by you, may come to school and give the medication to your child.

OR

2. You may get a copy of the **Authorization for Medication form** from your child's school and take it to your child's physician, medical provider, the Health Dept. or a walk-in-clinic. This form must be filled out and **signed** by the doctor/mid/level practitioner and by you. Once completed, return this form to your child's school. Medication may be given at school only when an Authorization for Medication is on file.

Medication must be delivered personally by the parent/guardian to the School Health Team in the original bottle. **Students may not bring medicine to school themselves in any form. All medication to be given at school must be properly identified with the following:**

1. Name of the student who is to take the medication
2. Name of the medication
3. When the medication is to be taken

4. Date the medication was prescribed
5. Name of the doctor who prescribed the medication

No medicine will be given to your child unless it is identified in this way on the bottle, box, or inhaler. We ask for your cooperation as we are primarily concerned with the safety and the health of your child. If you have any questions, please call and ask to speak with the school nurse 863-773-3141.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

A character education program will be on-going throughout the year. Its goal will be to assist your child in developing into a responsible, productive member of society.

CAFETERIA

PROCEDURES:

1. Use an inside voice once seated
2. Use good table manners
3. Be respectful
4. Keep hands and feet to self
5. Stay seated

CONSEQUENCES:

1. Warning
2. Silent Lunch or loss of recess
3. Referral to office (After 3 silent lunches in one week)

***NOTE:** Glass containers and carbonated drinks are not allowed in the cafeteria.*

FLAG SALUTE

Florida requires all public schools to notify students that they do not have to recite or stand for the Pledge of Allegiance as in compliance with FS 1003.44. This law went into effect July 1, 2016.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

As a recipient of Title I funds, we are required to notify parents that they can request information regarding their child's teacher, including, at a minimum: (1) whether the teacher has met the State requirements for licensure and certification for the grade levels and subject-matters in which the teacher provides instruction; (2) whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; (3) the college major and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; (4) whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their

qualifications.

DISTRICT CONTROLLED OPEN ENROLLMENT PLAN

For the Hardee County District Controlled Open Enrollment Plan formerly known as Waivers, please consult the Hardee County District Schools Website @ www.hardee.k12.fl.us

IDENTIFICATION OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

The Hardee County School District actively seeks to locate exceptional students and maintains information on those students screened and identified as exceptional. The term “exceptional student” includes the mentally handicapped, the speech and language impaired, the deaf and hard of hearing, the blind and partially sighted, the physically handicapped, those with specific learning disabilities and the gifted.

Information gathered may include the student’s social, emotional, physical, psychological, academic, and communication behaviors and abilities.

Information is collected through screening programs, checklists, teacher observations, standardized tests and from such individuals as parents, guardians, teachers, psychologists, audiologists, social workers, physicians, other professional personnel and the child himself/ herself.

Information is used to assist in the development of appropriate educational programs for exceptional students and for reports to the state and federal agencies.

Students are screened periodically for vision, hearing, speech and academic achievement as the initial step in the process of identifying those students with suspected exceptionalities. If your child is selected for further testing, you will be notified and the contents of the evaluation and the Procedural Safeguards will be made available to you.

Exceptional Student Education Reports will be destroyed five (5) years after the student graduates (or its equivalent in time). Parents or guardians may contact the school and receive an official copy of these records prior to destruction.

STUDENT RECORDS MAINTAINED BY THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

EDUCATION RECORDS

A permanent cumulative education record is maintained for each student from entrance into school through the twelfth grade or its equivalent. The school which initially enrolls a student is responsible for establishing the record. Each school principal has the legal responsibility for maintaining the record.

Educational records are those records, documents and other materials which contain information directly related to the student and which are maintained by an educational institution or agency. Information contained in the record is classified as follows:

Category A: Permanent educational importance which is retained indefinitely. This information includes the student's full name, location and dates of last school attended, days present, days absent, date of enrollment and withdrawal, courses taken, achievement record, graduation date and requirements.

Category B: Temporary information of clear education importance which will be periodically corrected and/or eliminated as prescribed by law. This information includes but is not limited to health information, test scores, honors/activities, disciplinary records, exceptional student records, driver education certificates and correspondences from external agencies.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

They are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask the Hardee County School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record that they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure with consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the District may disclose educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

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

Family Policy Compliance Office

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Hardee County School Board adheres to a policy of non-discrimination in educational programs, activities, benefits, and employment practices and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by the following:

No person shall, on the basis of race, national origin, sex, handicap, color, religion, age, or marital status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices of the Hardee County School Board.

*General Statutory Authority: 120.52, 120.53, 120.54, 120.55, 230.220, 230.23, 228.2001, 230.22(2), 230.23(17) F.S.
Specific Statutory Authority: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1967; Sec. 228.2001, 228.041, 228.2001, 230.23(5); 230.23005(11) F. S.; 34CFR200.43(c), P.L. 201-44 Code of Federal Register*

PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Step 1: If a student, currently enrolled in the Hardee County District, has a complaint, based on an alleged discrimination of the basis of race, sex, national origin, marital status, or handicap, the student has the right to voice this complaint to the school principal.

Step 2: The student may appeal to the Superintendent, or his/her designee, if not satisfied with the decision in Step 1. The superintendent, or his/her designee, will hear the complaint, investigate the facts, and render a decision as to the proper disposition of the complaint. This decision will be final unless the student wished to proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: The student may appeal to the School Board by requesting in writing that the superintendent place the appeal on the agenda for the next Board meeting. The Board, after hearing the facts, shall take whatever action is deemed appropriate. The decision of the Board is final.

POLICY AGAINST BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING AND HARASSMENTS

The school board of Hardee County, Florida is committed to protecting its students, employees and applicants for admission from bullying, harassment, or discrimination for any reason and of any type. The school board believes that all students and employees are entitled to a safe, equitable, and harassment-free school experience. Bullying, harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action. This policy shall be interpreted and applied consistently with all applicable state and federal laws and the board's collective bargaining agreements. Conduct that constitutes bullying, harassment or discrimination, as defined herein, is prohibited. Hardee County School Board's policy of nondiscrimination rule 2.43, addresses requirements for discrimination against defined federal, state and local protected categories of persons.

For additional information, please go to www.hardee.k12.fl.us to view the entire policy.

**POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT
PROHIBITED BY LAW**

A. The School Board desires to maintain an academic and work environment in which all employees, volunteers, and students are treated with respect and dignity. A vital element of this atmosphere is the Board's commitment to equal opportunities and the prohibition of discriminatory practices. The board's prohibition against discriminatory practices includes prohibitions against sexual harassment, or any other form of harassment based upon a person's membership in a protected class and specifically prohibited by applicable state or federal law. The School Board forbids sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment, of any employee, student, volunteer or visitor. The Board will not tolerate sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment by any of its employees, students, volunteers or agents.

B. The prohibition against discrimination including sexual and other forms of illegal harassment shall also apply to non-employee volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities, and to all vendors or service providers who have access to School Board facilities.

*For more information contact your school administration or Teresa Hall, District Equity contact at 863-767-0662.

LAW OFFICIALS

Release of Student to Law Enforcement Officials: Students may be released into the custody of law enforcement officials (police, sheriff, federal agent, Division of Youth Services, Social and Economic Services, etc.) only if (1) the officer has properly identified himself and (2) the officer has filled out the Release of Student to Law Enforcement Officials form.

STUDENT SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Locker and Personal Search (Including Vehicles Parked in the School's Parking Lots): Lockers are the property of the School Board of Hardee County and are subject to search or inspection at any time by school personnel (Florida Statute 1006.09). The school personnel may also remove any of the contents which may be stolen, unauthorized, or illegal. Students and their vehicle may be searched if:

- (1) school officials have reason to believe that the health and safety of that student or any other student are in jeopardy,
- (2) the pupil is told of the reasons for the search, or
- (3) the student gives his consent to be searched. If the student refuses to be searched, he will be removed to an area away from the other students and law enforcement officials will be called to conduct the search.

ASBESTOS HAZARD RESPONSE ACT

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Response Act (AHERA). The law required all school, kindergarten through twelfth grade to be inspected for asbestos-containing materials.

Hardee County School Board contracts with PSI to bring our schools into compliance with the AHERA regulations. PSI is the nation's largest and most experienced environmental engineering and analytical testing firm specializing asbestos testing.

The objectives of our contract with the consulting firm are to:

1. Sample, analyze and quantify asbestos-containing materials in our schools.
2. Determine any potential for exposure of building occupants to asbestos fibers.
3. Provide recommendations for corrective actions.
4. Establish priority levels for abatement activities.
5. Provide estimates for removal and replacement of asbestos-containing materials.

Our schools were inspected, in accordance with the law, by the EPA accredited PSI inspectors. We are happy to report that we have cleared all friable asbestos from our district. The only asbestos remaining is floor tile which has been removed in many areas. We are happy to report there is no dangerous asbestos in any area.

If you have any questions, contact the Maintenance Facilitator, Local Educational Agency at 863-735-2055. A copy of the Management Plan is on file for your review in the school office.

HARDEE COUNTY SCHOOLS STATEMENT OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The fundamental objective for the Hardee County Public School System is to help develop each student's potential to the fullest. This development applies not only to his learning activities but also to his interaction with other people. It follows then, that the student's conduct has a very large effect upon his progress in every facet of his life.

The purpose of this document is to assist students, parents and school administrators in developing and maintaining an understanding of our local Code of Student Conduct relative to the rights and responsibilities of students, the grounds for disciplinary action and the procedures to be followed in response to acts requiring discipline, including corporal punishment.

Each student, parent, teacher and school administrator should read and understand this document so that we, collectively, can insure the daily development of a better atmosphere in the Hardee County Schools.

Section 1 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Students, of course, have all the rights of any citizen of the United States of America. Their rights are guaranteed in the Constitution and shall not be abridged.

Rights, however, are accompanied with very grave responsibilities based almost entirely on respect for others, as well as for oneself. For example, no student has the right to interfere with the education of his fellow students. He/she must respect himself/herself enough to respect others.

We must base all our statements concerning student conduct on one major idea -- RESPECT. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the right of all those involved in the process of education. Accompanying responsibilities follow the exercise of rights. Equal in value among these are the following:

- Respect for Oneself,
- Respect for Individual Dignity,
- Respect for the Property of Others and
- Respect for Others and Their Rights

Section 2

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

- Each student will show respect and courtesy to all faculty, staff, and other students. Any insubordination or disrespect displayed by a student will not be tolerated.
- All students will respect school buildings and their contents. Defacing or destroying school property will not be allowed.
- All students are expected to observe the safety rules while on the playground or school property. Fighting or physical contact will not be tolerated.
- No weapons of any kind are allowed on school grounds. This includes toy knives, guns, swords, etc..
- Use of any offensive language or gestures will not be allowed.
- Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for school. Articles of clothing, which distract the learning process, are not allowed. See your school site's dress code policy for further details.
- All students are expected to observe and practice high standards. Cheating or stealing will not be tolerated.

The Code of Student Conduct is a separate document, which outlines minimum consequences for certain infractions. This document includes guidelines for suspension, expulsion, and discipline for disabled students. It is offered to students and parents in the belief that full knowledge of school rules and regulations helps avoid accidental violations and promotes good school citizenship. This document is available to parents in the school office.

THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES APPLY TO AND

SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD BY ALL STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL

1. Attendance: All children of school age in Florida have the right to attend public school. **At the same time, each student, between the ages of 6 and 16, has the legal responsibility to attend school when not ill or prevented by any other major circumstance.** This responsibility extends to the student's parents, who according to Florida Statute 1003.24, "...shall be responsible for such child's attendance as required by law".
2. Respect for Persons and Property: Students have the constitutional right of property. That right, however, is balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, welfare, and safety of all its students. The student has the responsibility not to carry or conceal any prohibited material. The student also has the responsibility to accept the consequences for the contents stored within his locker. Finally, students and lockers are subject to reasonable search.
3. Knowledge and Observation of Rules of Conduct: Students have the right and responsibility to know and observe all school rules, as stated in the student handbooks of the various school centers. They have the responsibility to accept the consequences that come with violations of these rules.
4. The Right to Learn: Each student has the right to learn as much as he/she is capable of learning -- free from interruption by those who take this right lightly. He/she has the responsibility to exercise this right to the fullest extent, learning all that he/she can, preparing himself/herself for a full life.
5. Free Speech and Student Publications: One of the school's important rules is to provide effective avenues through which students may freely express themselves on a wide range of subjects, including the stating of opinions on issues. Students have the responsibility to adhere to student handbook guidelines and school policies regarding the posting of material on bulletin boards or wall areas designated for use by students and student organizations. They must also accept the responsibility for the effect that posting, publishing or distributing this literature might have on normal school activities. Students have the responsibility to refrain from posting or otherwise distributing libelous and/or obscene materials, to obtain full information on the topics about which they write, and to observe the normal rules of responsible journalism.

Principals may suppress or recall literature which they consider primarily commercial in nature or material which could endanger the orderly operation of the school.
6. The Right to Assemble: The right to peaceful assembly is guaranteed in the Constitution. It is not acceptable, however, to damage property, to disrupt scheduled activities, or to endanger substantially and directly the physical health or safety of others. Students also have the responsibility to plan for, seek approval of and conduct those activities which are consistent with the education objectives of the school.
7. Participation in School Programs and Activities: Each student has the right to participate in school programs and activities regardless of race, sex, color, creed or political belief. This includes both curricular and extra-curricular programs and activities. The responsibility is his, however, to enter into and to participate in each program and activity in such a way as to enrich classes and activities through cooperative and constructive behavior.

8. Pledge of Allegiance: In accordance with F.S. 1003.44, as of July 1, 2016, a student is not required to stand or recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS ON THE DISTRICT WEBSITE

The following documents can be reviewed on the Hardee County School District website at www.hardee.k12.fl.us :

- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy (Including Cyber-Bullying)
- FERPA
- Financial Reports
- McKay Scholarship Information
- Parent's Right to Know
- Pupil Progression Policy
- School Improvement Plan
- School Accountability Report
- School Report Card

See the District Parent Handbook distributed to each student at the beginning of the school year for additional information and for a report regarding the Asbestos Hazard Response Act