

**Habersham County Schools
Middle School Student Handbook
2016-2017**

This agenda belongs to:

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/Town: _____
Phone: _____
Student Number: _____

Hilliard A. Wilbanks Middle School

3115 Demorest-Mt. Airy Hwy. Demorest GA 30535
Phone: 706-894-1341
Fax: 706-894-1342
<http://wilbanksmiddle.ga.hcm.schoolinsites.com>

North Habersham Middle School

1500 Wall Bridge Rd. Clarkesville GA 30523
Phone: 706-754-2915
Fax: 706-754-8218
<http://northhabersham.ga.hcm.schoolinsites.com>

South Habersham Middle School

237 Old Athens Hwy. Cornelia GA 30531
Phone: 706-778-7121
Fax: 706-778-2110
<http://southhabersham.ga.hcm.schoolinsites.com>

Agenda Adoption Date: July 1, 2016

HABERSHAM COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION 2015-2016

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Matthew Cooper
Office Phone 706-754-2110



HABERSHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS
PO Box 70
Clarkesville GA 30523

BOE Approved 3/9/2015

- ★ Teacher Training / System Improvement Day August 3-6
 - First Day for Students August 7
 - Holiday September 7
 - End Nine Weeks October 8
 - ★ Teacher Training / System Improvement Day October 9
 - Fall Break October 12
 - Holiday Break November 23-27
 - End Nine Weeks/Early Release December 18
 - Holiday Break December 21-January 1
 - ★ Teacher Training / System Improvement Day January 4
 - Holiday January 18
 - Holiday February 15
 - End Nine Weeks March 10
 - ☐ Teacher Training / System Improvement Day/Weather Make-Up March 11
 - Weather Make-Up March 24
 - Good Friday Holiday March 25
 - Spring Break March 28-April 1
 - Last Day for Students May 20
 - ★ Teacher Training / System Improvement Day May 23-24
 - Possible Teacher Weather Make-up Days May 25-26
 - Holiday May 30
- 177 Student days (189 equin)*
- 1st Semester - 88 days (1st-44, 1st-44)*
2nd Semester - 89 days (2nd-45, 46-44)

- First / Last Day
- Holiday
- Holiday/Weather Make-Up
- ★ Teacher Training / System Improvement
- Nine Weeks End
- Nine Weeks End / Early Release
- Possible Teacher Weather Make-up Days
- ☐ Teacher Training/System Improvement Day/Weather Make-Up

October 2015

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March 2016

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June 2016

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRINCIPAL

On behalf of our Habersham County Middle Schools staff, we are pleased and excited that you are a student at one of our schools. We look forward to a productive year with you enjoying many rewarding learning experiences as a student in our schools. This agenda serves as an important part of your school materials. Your teachers will review the information contained in this agenda and will provide you with suggestions for its use. It is very important that you read and become familiar with the contents of this agenda.

Parents:

We encourage you to read the contents of this agenda with your child. Many of our school's policies and procedures are explained. This agenda may function as an assignment organizer for your child and may be used for communicating with your child's teachers. Students are required to have their agendas each day. Some teachers may also choose to use the agenda as the hall pass for students. We look forward to a productive year and appreciate the opportunity to work with you and your student.

The first agenda is provided free of charge. Replacement agendas are \$5.00 each.

OUR SHARED MISSION

- One TEAM, One MISSION, Success for ALL students.

OUR BELIEFS

- We believe a safe, non-threatening environment is essential for the learning process to occur.
- We believe the educational development of the child should be a cooperative effort involving the student, the parents/guardians, the school, and the community.
- We believe multimedia technology instruction is necessary to meeting the needs of a changing world.
- We believe a rigorous curriculum and challenging expectations increase student performance.
- We believe our diverse population is an asset in fostering understanding of others.

District Information Sources

Web Site: The district's web site offers a wealth of information about Habersham County Schools, including school closings and delays, student achievement data, Board of Education meeting minutes, Parent Information, Title IX coordinator information, and school contact information. Information on the county website is updated regularly to keep parents and students up to date.

Emergency School Closing

The radio stations WCON and WCHM will carry all school closing announcements due to inclement weather or other emergencies as soon as possible. When it becomes necessary to dismiss during the regular school day, announcements will be made at once via WCON and/or WCHM. The Habersham County School System is on Facebook and on the web at www.habershamschools.com. Weather closing and announcements will be broadcast in multiple formats for parental convenience, including One Call.

Equal Educational Opportunities

It is the policy of the Habersham County School System not to discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, national origin, religion, or disability in its educational programs or activities. For information concerning Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments compliance, contact:

Mrs. Angela Robinson, Human Resources Director
132 Stanford Mill Road, P. O. Box 70, Clarkesville, GA 30523 706-754-2118 ext. 130

Section 504 Policies and Procedures

Any student or parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system's Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing

Activities

Habersham County Middle Schools offer a variety of clubs and activities for the students. Students are encouraged to join and be a part of these clubs and activities. They may include: Yearbook, Student Council, Beta, FFA, FCA, and other clubs that meet on a regular basis.

For any non-curriculum related club organized on the campus of a Habersham County Middle School, the following must be in place for the club/organization to be recognized.

1. The club must have a minimum membership of 30 students.
2. The club must have a written purpose and mission that is consistent with the purpose and mission of the school and system.
3. The club must have at least one non-school business entity to support and/or sponsor, which is approved by the school administration.
4. The club, before organizing, must confer with the school principal who must assign faculty sponsor(s) to oversee the club's activities.
5. Any parent has the option under Georgia law to notify the school that their child may not participate in any club.

Failure to meet any one of the above criteria will prohibit the club from being organized.

Student Attendance

The Habersham County Board of Education believes that punctual and regular attendance is important and expected. Students need to participate in the experiences, discussion, activities and special projects integral to the learning process. Regular attendance in school is the joint responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardians. In responding to student attendance issues, the school system shall comply with all the requirements of state law, State Board of Education rule, and the Student Attendance Protocol that has been developed by the Habersham County Attendance Protocol Committee.

Excused Absences

The Habersham County Board of Education supports the idea that there are some justifiable reasons for exemption from mandatory school attendance. Students shall be considered excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangering a student's health or the health of others. (Medical, counseling, dental, and other agency appointments that cannot be scheduled before/after school hours)
2. A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. A period not to exceed one day is allowed for registering to vote or voting in a public election.
7. A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U.S. armed forces or National Guard, and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or support posting will be granted up to 5 days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the parent's leave.
8. Any other absence not explicitly defined in this policy but deemed to have merit based on circumstances as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Students shall be counted present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly, and they shall be counted present when participating in local/state activities for 4-H or bona fide CTAE-related activities as approved by the CTAE director. Students in foster care shall be counted present when they attend court proceedings relating to their foster care. (School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy - S.B.O.E. 160-5-1-.10.)

Written documentation of absences should be turned in to the school within 3 days of an absence. If a student turns in a note after the three-day deadline, schools officials are still required to keep the note for purposes of documentation in case the student appeals the failure of a course due to the stipulations set forth in this policy.

Examples of written documentation include a parent note explaining a child's absence, a doctor's excuse, a hospital intake form of an immediate family member, an obituary of an immediate family member, a copy of a court order or subpoena, government documentation the student served as a page or had a pre-induction physical examination for the armed forces. If a student has several parent notes explaining that a child has been ill, the school may ask for verification from a doctor or medical advisor.

An excused absence is required before middle and high school students can make up work. All work should be completed satisfactorily by the due dates specified by the classroom teacher. Asking for make up work is the responsibility of the students/parents.

Absences shall not penalize student grades if the following conditions are met:

1. Absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons.
2. Make up work for an absence is completed satisfactorily.

Policies and Procedures to Reduce Unexcused Absences: Notification

Punctual and regular attendance is important and expected. Regular attendance in school is the joint responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardians. While the following procedures indicate the required contacts on behalf of the school, the Principal or his/her designee may, at his/her discretion, contact parents/guardians by phone, mail, or in person, at any time school attendance is a concern.

- At the beginning of the year and upon enrollment, the school will review the attendance procedures, list of excused absences and possible consequences and penalties of excessive absences with the students. This attendance information will be sent home to parents/guardians. Students 10 years old (as of September 1st) and older, and parents/guardians will sign their name indicating that they have received the attendance information. After two attempts to obtain signatures, a copy will be sent via first class mail.
- When a student has 5 unexcused absences and is under age 16, the school will send a letter to the parent/guardian to notify them of the law, attendance procedures, and possible consequences and penalties of absences. Documentation of contacts will be kept by the school.
- When a student has 5 unexcused absences and is under age 16, the school will have an Attendance Support meeting with the parent/guardian and student to develop a contract for improving attendance.
- If there are further unexcused absences following the attendance contract or if a parent/guardian fails two times to respond to attempts to schedule or to attend the attendance meeting, a referral will be made to the School Social Worker. If a student accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences during the school year, truancy charges may be filed in Juvenile Court. Parents/ guardians will be notified by the School Social Worker via first class mail prior to the case being referred to the legal system.
- When a student has 10 absences (excused or unexcused) the school will send a letter to the parent/guardian.

Consequences & Penalties for Excessive Absences

Mandatory attendance is required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. All children enrolled for twenty school days or more in a public school prior to their sixth birthday shall become subject to the compulsory attendance law even though they have not attained six years of age (O.C.G.A § 20-2-150). Every parent, guardian, or other person residing within the state of Georgia having control or charge of any child subject to mandatory attendance shall be responsible for enrolling in a public school, private school, or home school program. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1) Legal complaints may be filed with Juvenile Court against the parent(s) or guardian(s) and/or student for violating the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law after all reasonable efforts to resolve and address absenteeism and/or tardiness have been exhausted by the Board of Education.

STUDENT CONSEQUENCES include but are not limited to:

- permitting the child to remain with their caregivers with or without conditions prescribed by the court (O.C.G.A. § 15-11-212);
- placing the child on probation;
- requiring community service;
- requiring the child to attend structured after school or evening program;
- requiring the child be supervised during the day (O.C.G.A. § 15-11-442);
- transferring temporary custody of the child;
- ordering the child and his or her parent, guardian, or legal custodian to participate in counseling;
- ordering the Department of Family and Children Services to create a case plan and ordering parent participation (O.C.G.A. § 15-11-212);
- requiring as a condition of probation that the child obtain a high school diploma or equivalent (O.C.G.A. § 15-11-601);
- continuing court involvement supervision for the time necessary for compliance, not to exceed two years (O.C.G.A. 15-11-443); and/or
- utilizing progressive discipline or sanctions as needed to protect and safeguard the best interest of the student's educational future.
- Student may also earn poor grades and test scores resulting in being retained.
- High School students may have their parking permit revoked for the remainder of the school year.

PARENT(S) CONSEQUENCES include but are not limited to:

- using contempt powers to incarcerate the parent or guardian for up to 20 days (O.C.G.A. § 15-11-31);
- imposing a fine up to \$1000.00;
- requiring the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian to participate in parenting classes (O.C.G.A. § 15-11-31); and/or
- requiring the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian to enter into a contract or plan as part of the disposition of any charges against the child to provide supervision and control for the child (O.C.G.A. § 15-11-31)

Any violations or non-compliance by the parent(s) or guardian occurring beyond a contempt charge shall immediately be referred to the District Attorney's office by the Juvenile Court for prosecution of the parent(s) or guardian under O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1. Any person found in violation of said Code shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00; imprisonment not to exceed 30 days; community service; or any combination of such penalties.

Each day's absence from school in violation of this part after the child's school system notified the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of five unexcused days of absences for a child shall constitute a separate offense.

Tardy/Sign-in/out Procedure:

Middle School students are required to check in at the front office when arriving to school after the beginning of the official school day. Records of tardiness are monitored and maintained in the PowerSchool Student Information System. A tardy slip will be issued which must then be presented to the teacher of the class to which the student reports. A student will not be allowed to leave with someone not listed on the student emergency card without prior written and verbal permission from the parent/guardian – ID required. Likewise, a student will not be permitted to ride a bus other than his or her primary bus without prior written and verbal permission from the parent/guardian. A note from the parent or guardian granting permission should be presented to the office **before the start of the school day** if possible for phone verification and to avoid unnecessary delays.

Early Dismissal Procedure:

In order to leave school early,

- students should bring a note from the parent/guardian stating the reason and time for the early dismissal; or

- parent/guardian should call the school to explain the reason for the early dismissal; or
- parent/guardian can come to the school to pick up their child and explain the reason for the early dismissal.

The note must be turned in to the office for verification and approval. Students must be signed out by a parent/guardian at the front office before leaving campus.

Excused Tardies and Early Dismissals:

A tardy or early dismissal may be considered excused for any of the reasons for which absences are excused. Written documentation should be provided to the school for tardies or early dismissals in the same manner as for excused absences.

Excessive Tardy and Early Dismissal Consequences

Upon any middle school student's 5th unexcused tardy and/or unexcused early dismissal during a single nine-weeks grading period, the student will receive appropriate administrative consequences. The student will thereafter receive additional administrative consequences for each subsequent unexcused tardy and unexcused early dismissal during the same nine-weeks grading period. Administrative consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following: being prohibited from participating in a school activity (e.g., incentive); break detention; lunch detention; time-out in the ISS room; one or more days of ISS; Saturday School; any other administrative disciplinary consequence to be used at the discretion of school administration.

Chronic Unexcused Tardies and/or Early Dismissals:

Students with 10 unexcused tardies and/or early dismissals will be referred to the School Social Worker. The school and the School Social Worker will communicate with the parents/guardians about the student's chronic unexcused tardies and/or early dismissals. After the parents/guardians are informed and the situation persists, a referral may be made to the Department of Juvenile Justice by the School Social Worker.

Hospital Homebound Services

The Habersham County Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide instruction to those students enrolled in an education program who have a medically-diagnosed condition that restricts them to a hospital or their home for a period of time that will significantly interfere with their education.

Automobiles

Students may not drive vehicles to Habersham County Middle Schools.

Cafeteria/School Nutrition

The Habersham County School District participates in the USDA administrated National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and Afterschool Snack Program. In order to participate in these programs, Habersham County Schools adopted and agreed to implement program mandates and standards as set forth by USDA and the federal government. This program is a non-profit federal grant program and receives no local funding in Habersham County.

Cafeteria/School Nutrition Procedures

The cafeteria will serve breakfast and lunch daily. Breakfast will be served from 7:15 until 5 minutes before official start time. Habersham County Middle Schools participate in the federally funded free lunch program. Applications are sent home at the beginning of the school year. The following will be observed when in the cafeteria:

Free and Reduced Price Meal Benefits

The Habersham County Board of Education School Nutrition Program is federally funded. Under the federal guidance of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), free or reduced price meal benefits are available to families whose income meets the federal eligibility standard; families **must complete a new application each school year** to see if they qualify. The 2016-2017 Free or Reduced Price Meal Benefit application is available to all students at their school cafeteria or office or households may obtain an application online at the district website www.habershamschools.com. Once you access the website, click on Departments, then on School Nutrition and then on Free/Reduced Meal Application. Applications are also sent home with every student on the first day of school. Meals must be paid for until the application is processed

and benefits are determined. Applications are processed within 10 days of receipt by the School Nutrition office. Households will be notified by letter if they have been approved or denied for benefits. If you need assistance completing the application you may contact someone in the School Nutrition office @ 706-754-2110.

The School Nutrition Department plans meals to meet the required meal pattern set forth by USDA. The meal pattern consists of meat/meat alternates, grains, fruits, vegetables and fluid milk. Menus are published monthly and posted to the district and school website. Each school nutrition manager is ServSafe certified in food safety and sanitation as required by the state.

Meal payment and charges

Meals may be paid for online at www.mealpayplus.com or at school in the cafeteria. The online service accepts payments using a debit card, check card, or credit card (a small transaction fee applies); payments are posted the same day. Schools are not equipped to take debit or credit cards at the registers. Meal cost: Breakfast: 1.20, Lunch: 2.00; Visitors: Breakfast: 2.00, Lunch 3.50. **Student charges are limited to five days of meals only or \$14.00.** Parents will be sent home a note daily in elementary school and students will be discreetly notified at all levels that they need lunch money for the next day. After the fifth day of charges, students will receive a courtesy meal that will consist of a cheese sandwich and a piece of fruit with water available in the cafeteria, until the charges are paid. Students may not charge a la carte or extra items. Accounts with charges that remain unpaid for 90 days may result in legal action.

If you have questions or need assistance with any part of the nutrition program, please feel free to contact Andrea Thomas, School Nutrition Director, or a member of the nutrition staff @ 706-754-2110.

Procedures for Enforcing Cafeteria Charge-Collection Procedure:

State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.12(h) states "Local Units of Administration shall not withhold any student record because of nonpayment of fees. However, schools may withhold grade cards, diplomas or certificates of progress until fees are paid." In addition, schools may not allow students to participate in book fairs, field days, field trips, and dances, purchasing yearbooks, snacks, graduation ceremonies or other special events or extra-curricular activities until charges are paid.

School nutrition managers and cashiers will remind students to bring money, make calls to parents and send home charge notices. School administration will also aid in contacting parents about charge balances and payment arrangements. If possible, parents of students that are to receive a courtesy meal will receive a call from the school's "All Call" system the night before the student receives the courtesy meal, if their child's school has the system.

Any student with outstanding charges over \$50.00 that remain unpaid for 90 days will receive a letter from the district office requesting payment. If all attempts to collect money owed fail, then legal collection procedures will be implemented. In no way does the Habersham County School District wish to pursue this course of action unless absolutely necessary.

Federal funds received by the school meal program are to supplement to the cost of producing student meals only. Habersham County receives no federal funds for adult or second meal sales. Adults and parents of students are responsible for paying the sale price of any meals purchased. In order to continue receiving federal funding, Habersham County Schools are responsible for any charges (bad debt) not collected from parents or employees. Payment of this debt could become the responsibility of the school district, if required by state audits.

Care of School Property

Habersham County Middle Schools are fortunate to have some of the best equipment and facilities found anywhere. Students can best show their appreciation by taking care of the building, equipment and grounds so they can be passed on to future students in good condition. Any student who defaces, damages, or destroys school property will be required to repair or replace the damaged item and may face further disciplinary action. Except in cases of unavoidable accidents, students are liable for all damage they may do to school property.

Counseling Services

Habersham County Schools offer full-time guidance and counseling services. The door is open to all students and parents. The purpose of the guidance program is to be of assistance to students, families, and teachers and to assist in making the educational process as effective as possible. Guidance/counseling services include classroom guidance, individual/group counseling, parent/teacher consultation, and referrals/coordination with agencies/professionals outside the school setting. Please feel free to contact the guidance counselor at any time.

Emergency/Safe School Drills

Drills will be held periodically to insure procedure and safety for school. Students are taught proper procedures for emergency situations. If a student wishes to report an incident or potential problem concerning school violence, they should call Habersham County Sheriff's Department (754-6666) or contact your school principal. On the state level call 1-877-SAY-STOP/1-877-729-7867.

- **Fire Drills:** Students are expected to exit the building according to procedure when a fire drill is held.
- **Tornado Drills:** During tornado drills students are expected to remain in or exit to designated areas and sit down along the wall.
- **Lock Down Drills:** Students are to remain quiet in the designated area for them at the time of the lock down.
- **AED Drills (Code 66):** Students are to remain quiet in the designated area for them at the time of the drill.

Connections Classes

Habersham County Middle Schools may offer Band, Chorus, Exploration of the Arts, Agri-science, Art, Computers, General Music, Health/PE, and Technology. Students may change connection classes every semester unless they are in Band or Chorus.

Field Trips

All field trips must be related to the instructional program of the school and meet requirements of administrative rules set forth for field trips by the school and central office. Student eligibility for participation in field trips may depend on administrative and/or teacher discretion regarding factors including, but not limited to, attendance, grades, and behavior.

Grading Period/Report Cards

Report Cards are given out after the end of each nine weeks. Parents are to sign the report card and it is to be returned to the homeroom teacher (the day after going home). Final report cards for the year will be mailed to the student's home address.

Grading Policy

The grade level determines the grading policy. These policies are sent home with the student at the beginning of the school year. Parents are to sign these and students should return the acknowledgment form to the teacher. Connection teachers will send their grading policy at the beginning of each semester. Make up work is addressed in the grading policy. A student must earn a grade of 70 to be considered as passing.

Grading System

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 75-79

D = 70-74

F = Below 70

I = Incomplete (Incomplete work not made up by the assigned due date will become an F).

Homework Policy

Assignment of homework shall be left to the discretion of the teacher.

Promotion/Retention Policy

Essential communication and mathematical skills are criteria whereby a school committee begins to make placement decisions about individual students. Each school will identify essential and/or benchmark skills

needed by each student to be successful in each grade. Students must demonstrate grade-level competency of essential and/or benchmark skills to be promoted from one grade to the next. The local promotion criteria is based on the assessment of the academic achievement of students at each grade level based on benchmark/essential skill assessments, teacher-made assessments, standardized measures, and criterion-referenced tests.

Students who have been placed in special education programs through a regular screening process adopted for each system level will be required to meet academic subject area standards appropriate for their grade level and specified in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). In general this means that students with an identified special education eligibility such as Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Emotional Behavior Disordered (EBD), Other Health Impaired (OHI) Autism (AUT) etc., shall meet the promotion standard as written with identified accommodations and modifications as deemed appropriate by the IEP team.

The decision to promote or retain will be based on a review of a broad range of indicators of academic achievement. Middle school students in grades 6 – 8 must pass five of the six academic courses (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and connections). Connection classes will be averaged together and counted as two of the six grades. A student must be in compliance with Board Policy JB regarding attendance.

Honor Roll / Honor Roll with Distinction

Students who have attained an overall average of 90-94 are included on the Honor Roll. Students who have attained an overall average of 95-100 are included in Honor Roll with Distinction.

Media Center

The media center is open daily. A signed agenda or hall pass should be presented at the desk upon arrival. Students may have out two library books at any given time. Books are checked out for two weeks and may be renewed for two additional weeks if needed. A fine of 5 cents a day is charged for an overdue book and checkout privileges will be suspended until the student clears the charge. Overdue lists are provided through homerooms and at the checkout desk. Students will be charged for any lost/damaged items as well. All school library accounts must be cleared before the end of the school year.

Clinic

The goal of the Habersham County School's Health Services program is to assist students and parents in dealing with health-related barriers to learning. The objectives of the program are to provide a wide variety of health care services to students and personnel of the Habersham County School System. These services include health promotion and illness prevention, assessment and screening, serving as a liaison between school, home, personal health care provider and community, providing treatment for existing health conditions, decreasing absenteeism, and serving as a resource on health and safety issues in schools.

Immunization Policy

Georgia state law mandates that all children enrolled in Georgia public schools are age appropriately immunized with required vaccinations. This law protects students from many vaccine preventable diseases. Immunization information must be documented on a Georgia Department of Community Health Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) and be a part of your child's school record no later than 30 days from the first day of school. (Official Code of Georgia Law, Annotated, Section 20-2-771, Section 49-4-182, and Section 49-4-183.) Please contact the school nurse with questions about immunization certificates.

Head Lice Guidelines

Habersham County Schools has a no lice and no nit guideline, which means students are required to be free of lice and nits from child's hair before he/she can be readmitted to the classroom.

Medication

All medication must be left in the office unless it is pre-approved such as; epipen, inhaler etc. and the parent provides a form releasing the school district and its employees from liability if the self-administering student suffers an adverse reaction. Students taking long-term prescriptions will need to have a form completed by the physician. Students taking short-term prescriptions may have their parents/guardian fill out a medication form.

Both forms may be obtained from the secretary in the office. Students who do not bring their medication to the office will be in violation of school rules and subject to an appropriate punishment. Students are expected to keep up with the times for taking their medication.

Parent Conferences

Parents are encouraged to meet with their child's classroom teachers on a regular basis. If you would like to meet with a teacher on the team, please call the school and set up a time for a conference. Please understand that teachers are expected to be with their students during instructional time, and **conferences should be held during teacher planning periods or before/after school hours.**

Parent Pick-up

Parents will enter the designated driveway and move one way through the parking lot. Students are to be let out and picked up at the designated area only.

School Council

The school council will be made up of administrators, teachers, parents, and community members.

Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act

SB 100, signed into law on April 16, 2015, makes significant changes to the **Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act (TAADRA)** by eliminating the requirement for schools to certify that a minor's attendance pattern and discipline record permits him or her to have a Georgia learner's permit or driver's license. Effective July 1, 2015, schools are simply required to certify that a student is enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school to be eligible for a driver's license or learner's permit. Students will no longer have their driver's license or learner's permit suspended for excessive unexcused absences or discipline infractions.

Telephone

Students are not allowed to use the school phone during instructional hours. In cases of sickness/emergency, a school secretary or nurse will call for the student. It is the student's responsibility to bring to school necessary items for class. Students will not be called out of class to come to the phone except in extreme emergencies. If parents need to get in touch with their child, a message may be left with the secretary, and we will see that the child gets the message.

Valuables

Habersham County Middle Schools will not be held liable for the loss of any personal property belonging to a student. Students are urged to leave money and other valuable items at home.

Visitors

All visitors must sign-in in the main office and be issued a visitor's pass. No exceptions.

Student Discipline

We believe that discipline, when used correctly, builds character, a good attitude, self-esteem, and a well-rounded individual who will contribute positively to society. Appropriate behavior is the primary responsibility of the parent/guardian, and discipline should be taught at home. In recognizing that we also play a vital part in developing the morals and values of our students, we believe students should be held accountable for any unacceptable actions. When rules are broken and responsibilities are not upheld, students must accept consequences for their behavior. In order to provide a safe environment for all of our students, we have set forth a well-defined and comprehensive school-wide behavior code. When necessary to impose discipline, school administrators will follow a progressive discipline process. Ignorance of the rights and consequences will not be acceptable.

Minor acts of misconduct, which interfere with orderly school procedures, school functions or student learning process must be dealt with quickly and effectively by the teacher(s) involved. Teachers are to use discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation, including, but not limited to the following:

- Before or after school detention.
- Classroom isolation from peers.
- Notification and/or conference with parent(s)/guardian.
- School service project (with parental approval).
- Completion of a written assignment that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, expected behavior, and other related character traits.

Discipline offenses or misconduct that require administrative intervention shall be imposed by the principal and/or assistant principal and/or his/her designee. The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of this code of conduct:

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Supervised Isolation or Time Out
- Isolated Lunch
- Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Parent/Guardian required to attend school with their child for a day
- Detention/Saturday School
- In-School Suspension
- Short-term Suspension out of school
- Referral to a Hearing Officer for Long-term Suspension, Assignment to an Alternative Education Setting or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The School will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

Maximum Penalties: The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension, assignment to an alternative education setting, or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a hearing officer or tribunal as outlined in the Habersham County Board of Education Policies.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

All students at Habersham County Middle Schools have the right to:

1. A free education if they meet the eligibility requirements of Georgia law.
2. Equal educational opportunity without being disturbed by the misbehavior of other students or by people who do not belong on campus.
3. Freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, or disability in the educational programs or activities.
4. Due process for long term suspension or expulsion.
5. Report sexual misconduct
 - (a) Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.
 - (b) Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.

(c) Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

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

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

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the Habersham county Board of Education to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the district staff to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students or any school employee through conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the school staff to a student or when made by any student to another student or to a system employee constitutes sexual harassment

6. Report instances of bullying.

(a) What does bullying mean? Bullying is deliberate and hurtful behavior meant to belittle, frighten, hurt, or exclude someone. Bullying usually does not happen just once. It continues to happen over and over.

(b) Why does someone bully? Most bullies have a hard time understanding or being sensitive to another person's feelings. The bully may:

- Feel powerful by bullying others;
- Feel bad about themselves and bullying makes them feel smarter, stronger, or more popular;
- May have been bullied themselves;
- Blame the victim by saying the person is annoying, different, or deserving of being bullied.

There are **no good excuses** for bullying. **No one deserves** to be bullied no matter how different they may be.

(c) What are common forms of bullying?

- **Physical bullying:** hitting, shoving, kicking, poking, breaking someone's belongings, giving mean looks, or making threats.
- **Verbal bullying:** teasing, lying to get the victim in trouble, name-calling, or taunting.
- **Social bullying:** ignoring or excluding the victim, encouraging others to dislike the victim, spreading rumors and gossip.
- **Cyber bullying:** using technology to harass, threaten, spread gossip or even impersonate someone.

Bullying is a bad habit and bad habits can be broken. Be careful not to develop bullying habits by always remembering this simple rule: ***Treat others the way you would like to be treated.***

(d) Who gets bullied? Every day, nice, ordinary people become victims of a bully. Both boys and girls can be bullies and both boys and girls can be a target. Anything that makes a person different e.g., being too short, too tall, or too smart, can make him or her a target for bullying. Remember the things about you that are different are the things that make you special. Bullies often pick on people who seem to lack self-confidence. The best protection is confidence. Victims are often afraid to

embarrassed and think telling an adult is tattling or is a bad thing to do. Everyone has the right to feel safe in and out of school. Often, once a trusted adult becomes aware and involved, the bully will back off.

(e) What are ways to stop a bully?

- Avoid the bully. Avoid places you know he/she will be.
- Ignore the bully. Walk away; bullies want a reaction. Don't give them one.
- Be confident, not aggressive. Use a firm voice to tell the bully to "Stop."
- Practice – Work with a friend or adult to practice how to best handle a confrontation.
- Hang with friends who will stand by you. Join school activities to make more friends. Stand up for your friends if they are bullied.
- Believe in yourself. Good self-esteem helps you cope with bullies.
- Distract the bully by changing the subject or making a joke.
- Don't bully back. Fighting back will likely get you into trouble.
- Remain calm. Self-control gives you power.
- Avoid places where no adults are present.
- Leave expensive items at home.
- Don't be afraid to yell; the bully won't be expecting that.
- Tell a friend or trusted adult.
- Have your parents help you block the bully from your e-mail.
- If the bully makes serious threats, in person or online, ask an adult to contact police.

Never blame yourself for being bullied...It's not your fault!

(f) What can you do if you see someone being bullied? Ignoring or tolerating bullying makes the bully think what they are doing is acceptable. Believe it or not, when a bystander speaks out and tells a bully to stop, many times the bully actually stops. Follow these tips:

- Don't join in or encourage the bully;
- Do your best to calm the situation;
- Offer your support to the bullied person;
- When your support doesn't help, tell a teacher what's happening.

(g) What can you do to encourage the victim? Be a friend to the victim. This lets a bully know the victim is not alone. Invite the person to spend time with you and your friends. If you reached out to help someone in need, you can be sure they will be there when you need help.

(h) What can you do to stop bullying? **START A CAMPAIGN!** Together with parents and teachers, start a campaign in your school to let everyone know **Bullying isn't OK here!** Make posters and banners showing this is everyone's school and everyone has the right to:

- Feel safe, and not be hit or teased;
- Be treated fairly and with respect;
- Be accepted for who he or she is;
- Be free of negative peer pressure.

You can make a difference by showing respect for yourself, respect for others and being responsible for your actions.

Students at Habersham County Middle Schools have the responsibility to:

1. Attend classes daily unless legally excused and be on time for all classes.
2. Come to class with necessary books & materials. Complete all class work & homework, participate in class, & meet deadlines.
3. Dress appropriately for school.
4. Respect and cooperate with school personnel at all times.
5. Respect and protect the rights of other students.
6. Respect public & private property. Pay for any lost/damaged books, materials, or equipment.
7. See that all correspondence for parents reaches home and is returned as requested.
8. Obey school, county, and state rules.
9. Keep up with their own personal property brought to school or school activities.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Use of electronic communication devices and other electronic media during the regular school day must be

in support of, and consistent with the vision, mission and goals established by the Habersham County Board of Education and for the purpose of instruction and learning. All use of electronic devices and technology resources must comply with Habersham County Board of Education Policy JCDA, Student Behavior Code.

When approved by the principal or designee, students may be permitted to use their own electronic devices to connect only to the designated Habersham County Schools network. To enforce this policy consistently, the Habersham Board of Education authorizes the administration of Habersham County Schools to establish acceptable use guidelines. Any failure to follow established protocols and acceptable use guidelines is subject to disciplinary action as determined by the principal or designee.

2016 – 2017 Dress Code – Habersham County Middle Schools

Each student is expected to observe a code of personal conduct, dress, and appearance that in no way interferes with or disrupts the educational opportunities of others. Policies and regulations are made and enforced to assure the efficient operation of the school and to protect the learning environment of all students. We encourage students to use good judgment and to avoid extremes in dress and personal appearance. Each student has the responsibility to dress appropriately for the school environment. Students should avoid wearing apparel that could cause a disruption to the classroom learning environment, could become unusually distracting, or that could pose a health or safety risk to the student or others.

These minimum standards of dress shall apply to all students (excluding students enrolled in the Habersham Success Academy/Alternative School) in grades 6-9 in the Habersham County School System. A separate dress code for students in the Habersham Success Academy/Alternative School is provided upon enrollment. Examples of dress that may be inappropriate for school, include but are not limited to the following:

1. Shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes in certain lab classes and PE classes must meet the required standards of those settings. Heelys, skate shoes, bedroom shoes, or bedroom slippers are not allowed at any time.
2. Halter tops, strapless tops, midriff tops, tank tops, and spaghetti straps are not permitted. Shirts must be long enough to extend beyond the top of the pants, shorts, or skirt. No cleavage should be exposed. Sleeveless shirts/dresses are permitted providing the clothing meets the end of the shoulder and does not expose undergarments or have arm openings large enough to expose the sides, back or chest of the student. Shirts with cutoff sleeves are not permitted. Exposing undergarments is prohibited. Pajamas or other bedroom apparel are not permitted to be worn as outer garments.
3. No see-through/mesh garments are allowed without proper undergarments that meet dress code requirements.
4. No clothing shall be worn that displays messages which are profane, vulgar, indecent, sexually suggestive or racially or ethnically insensitive. Advertisements or messages that promote alcohol, tobacco or drug use are prohibited. Clothing, symbols or messages that advocate criminal or gang activity are prohibited. Messages that promote hate, death, suicide or violence are prohibited.
5. All pants, shorts, dresses, and skirts must be worn at normal waist level and be no more than 3 inches above the knee when the student is standing upright. Any exposed undergarments are inappropriate. Pants and shorts should not contain holes or rips that are more than 3 inches above the knee. Holes may be patched.
6. Leggings, "jeggings", tights or yoga pants are permitted ONLY if the outer garment (shirt, skirt, dress, etc.) appropriately covers the student's front and back.
7. Hats or head coverings (except religious head coverings) are not allowed to be worn while inside of the school building.
8. Spikes, chains, or other items which might be considered weapons are not permitted.
9. Trench coats, floor length coats, etc. are not permitted at anytime.

Any student who does not comply with these guidelines will be referred to the school administration for appropriate disciplinary consequences. Final approval of any questionable dress is left to the discretion of the school administration. In the event that the administration determines that a student's dress is disruptive to the

learning environment, is unsafe, or is determined to be immodest, the student will be required to change and disciplinary action may be taken.

Habersham County School System Student Code of Conduct

All student behavior shall be based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that will contribute to the best interest of the school system. Expected behavior is such that promotes a safe, healthy environment for all members of the learning community. Students should participate fully in the learning process. Students need to report to school and class on time, attend all regularly scheduled classes, remain in class until excused or dismissed, pay attention to instruction, complete assignments to the best of their ability, and ask for help when needed. Students should avoid behavior that impairs his/her own or other students' educational achievement. Students should know and avoid the behaviors prohibited by the Code of Conduct, take care of books and other instructional materials, and cooperate with others. Students should show respect for the knowledge and authority of teachers, administrators, and other school employees. Students must obey reasonable directions, use acceptable and courteous language, and follow school rules and procedures. Recognize and respect the rights of other students and adults. All students should show concern for and encouragement of the educational achievements and activity participation of others. This student handbook is designed to improve student learning by improving student behavior and discipline. Each school will ensure in their code of conduct through the student handbook the following:

- a. Standards for student behavior during school hours and at school-related functions
- b. Behavior support processes designed to consider, as appropriate in light of the severity of the behavioral problem, support services that may be available to help the student address behavioral problems.
- c. Progressive discipline processes designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior, that the previous discipline history of the student and other relevant factors will be taken into account; and that all due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed.
- d. Parental involvement processes designed to create the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers, and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior. Consequences which are age and developmentally appropriate for infractions will be developed by each school and placed in the student handbook, and discipline will be administered in a progressive manner. The rules and regulations of conduct shall apply to the following conditions:
 1. At school or on school property at any time of the day or week
 2. Off school grounds at any school activity, function or event and while traveling to and from such events
 3. On vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system
 4. At school bus stops.
 5. Off school grounds when the student's conduct is subversive to the mission and order of the school or school system.

The following code of conduct sets forth school rules prohibiting certain types of student conduct which constitute major offenses. A student found to be in violation of any one of them may be subject to suspension, expulsion or other disciplinary consequences. Disciplinary action for violations will include appropriate hearings and reviews. In all cases, the rights of individuals will be ensured and protected. The school system will make every reasonable effort to administer the discipline code consistently in all schools.

Rule 1: Disruption and Interference with School – No student shall:

- a. Occupy any school properties or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use, or where the effect thereof is to deprive others of its use
- b. Block the entrance or exit of any school building or property or room thereof so as to deprive others of access there to
- c. Damage any school building or school property
- d. Possess, discharge, display or otherwise threateningly use any firearms, explosives, other weapons, or any object construed to be a weapon on school premises or at school activities
- e. Prevent or attempt to prevent the convening or continued functioning of any school class, activity or lawful meeting or assembly on the school campus; or at school activities
- f. Prevent students from attending a class or school activity

- g. Block normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic on a school campus or adjacent grounds
- h. Make noise or act in any manner so as to interfere with the teacher's ability to conduct his/her class
- i. In any manner, by the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, bullying, any sexual harassment or misconduct, or any other conduct, cause the disruption of any lawful mission, process or function of the school, or engage in any such conduct for the purpose of causing the disruption or obstruction of any such lawful mission, process or function of the school
- j. Refuse to identify himself/herself upon request of any school or system teacher, administrator, school bus driver, or other school system personnel.
- k. Use profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity, or sexually harass others. Such use includes profane, vulgar, obscene words or gestures, indecent exposure, possession and/or distribution of profane, vulgar, or obscene material, or other similar materials, items, or gestures. This includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate electronic communication.
- l. Loiter and/or enter on any school campus without authorization. A student is not allowed to enter the premises of a school other than his/her school, unless prior permission is received from an administrator of the school to be visited. A student may not enter any school buildings on weekends or after school without authorization. The General Assembly of Georgia requires that the code of conduct include language encouraging parents to inform their children about the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.
- m. Inappropriately make bodily contact with other students including, but not limited to, sexual contact or misconduct. Students shall not engage in sexual misconduct between or among students on school property or away from school which may adversely affect the education process or endangers the morals, health, safety, or well-being of other students, teachers, or employees within the school system. Students engaging in sexual acts with any student under the age of 16 may be subject to criminal charges, which, depending on the age of the individuals, may include statutory rape or child molestation. Students who are 13 or older may be charged with a felony and tried as an adult for committing offenses of rape, aggravated sodomy, aggravated child molestation, and aggravated sexual battery. In addition, students who commit such offenses may be subject to criminal penalties if convicted, which may include probation and/or imprisonment.
- n. Display or wear gang articles, paraphernalia, or clothing. Students shall not display or wear clothing or articles relating to ethnic race or color, or logos relating to any sadistic cult, secret society, or gang, or that bears content that is obscene, libelous, or slanderous. Students shall not recruit or solicit membership in any gang, gang-related organization, or any secret society that poses a threat to the school mission or that is subversive to good order and discipline. Students shall not display, possess, transmit, distribute, or create writing, symbols, or gestures that reference gangs or gang-related activity. Students shall not claim membership or affiliation with a gang or with a secret society that that would be subversive to good order and discipline.
- o. Trade, buy, or sell goods and services on campus that have not been approved by the school administration. Students shall not participate in any type of gambling activity.
- p. Cause or allow electronic or other technological devices to be heard, used, or displayed without the express permission of authorized school system personnel. These devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones and other communication devices, personal entertainment audio devices and headphones, cameras, and handheld game systems. The school system assumes no responsibility for loss or damage to such devices.
- q. Urge, encourage, or counsel other students to violate any of the preceding items of this rule.

Rule 2: Disregard of Directions or Commands - A student shall not fail to comply with reasonable directions or commands of teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, administrators, school bus drivers, or other authorized school personnel.

Rule 3: Bullying - Bullying is strictly prohibited and should be reported to a teacher, counselor or administrator. **Per Georgia law, if any student in grades 6 through 12 is found guilty by a disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer to have committed the offense of bullying three times in a given school year, such student shall be assigned to the alternative school.**

Rule 4: Tobacco Use – A student shall not possess, distribute, or use any form of tobacco and/or tobacco paraphernalia, lighters, or matches at any time, to include e-Cigarettes or any similar vaping-type items.

Rule 5: Illicit Drugs and Alcohol - A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of or in any way be detected to be in the presence of any illicit drug, alcohol or substance "represented" to be an alcohol, illicit drug, or chemical, or any chemical(s) intended to alter one's mood or behavior. Misuse of a prescription or nonprescription/over-the-counter drug shall be considered a violation of this rule. Major offenses in Habersham County Schools including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16.

Rule 6: Destruction of School Property – A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to or disrupt school property or school resources or attempt to steal school property or school resources. A student shall not possess, sell, use or transmit stolen school property or resources.

Rule 7: Damage or Destruction of Private Property – A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to private property or steal or attempt to steal private property. A student shall not possess, sell, use or transmit stolen property on school grounds.

Rule 8: Assault, Battery, or Harassment of a School Employee – A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to a school employee. A student shall not harass or insult a school employee. This includes, but is not limited to, verbal, written, and electronic means of insult, disrespectful conduct, threat, use of profanity, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious slurs, verbal and written harassment, and Internet harassment/threats.

Rule 9: Physical Abuse, Harassment, Assault, or Battery by a Student to another Student or To Any Person Not Employed By the School – A student shall not cause or attempt to cause bodily injury or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause bodily injury to any person. A student shall not make threatening, disrespectful, harassing or intimidating remarks, written or electronic statements, gestures or posturing toward any student which threatens the safety or well-being of that student or has the likelihood of provoking a fight. This includes, but is not limited to, fighting, pushing, hitting, use of profanity, sexual harassment or misconduct, Internet harassment/bullying/threats that disrupt the school environment, or ethnic, racial, or religious slurs.

Rule 10: Misbehavior on Bus – A student shall obey all reasonable rules and directives of the bus driver at all times and:

- a. Shall not do anything that interferes with the driver's ability to safely transport students
- b. Shall not participate in the unsafe or inappropriate use of electronic devices or reflective objects/devices on the bus
- c. Shall remain seated safely on the bus at all times
- d. Shall keep hands, arms, and/or objects to themselves and inside the bus
- e. Shall talk in a normal tone of voice that is conducive to safe bus transport
- f. Shall not bring any item on the bus that obstructs the bus driver's view
- g. Shall follow all other conduct rules established by the Board and school-level student handbook rules.

Rule 11: Weapons - Students shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

1. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.
2. Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be

known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the student handbook issued by the school.

Rule 12: Unexcused Absences/ Tardies/ Truancy – Truancy is defined as unexcused absences that violate system and school policy, as well as state law. A student shall not be absent from or tardy to school or any class or other required school function during required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, except with the written permission of the teacher, principal, or other duly authorized school official, nor shall a student encourage, urge, or counsel other students to violate this rule. A student may not leave school grounds prior to the end of the day, after his/her initial arrival on campus, without the permission of a duly authorized school official.

Rule 13: Dress and Grooming - A student shall not dress, groom, or wear or use garments, jewelry, emblems, hairstyles, insignias, badges, or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonably the attention of other students or otherwise to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school.

Rule 14: Academic Misconduct - A student shall not cheat in any form, whether using the ideas, knowledge, words, or visual images of another individual.

Rule 15: Conduct Subversive to Good Order - A student shall not perform any other act, on or off campus, which is subversive to good order and discipline in the schools. This rule includes any off-campus behavior of a student which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process. This rule also prohibits violations of local school rules, violations of state and federal law, providing false information to or about school system personnel, actions that are ethnically and racially inflammatory or other community misconduct that would be so serious as to pose a threat to the school community, mission, or environment.

Rule 16: False or Misleading Reports about School System Staff – Students may not falsify, misrepresent, omit, or erroneously report information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student.

Rule 17: Repeated Violations/ Willful Misbehavior – Students may not willfully and repeatedly violate school system rules and state/federal laws. Students who chronically disrupt the school environment or repeatedly violate school rules may be charged with repeated violations of school rules or behavior. This rule applies after remediation attempts such as: Behavior Support Processes or Student Support Team processes have been utilized. Discipline of Special Education Students - Disciplinary action involving students with disabilities will be handled in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and implementing regulations of same. Special education students who commit serious offenses which could otherwise result in suspension or expulsion shall be brought before the Student Discipline Tribunal for a determination as to whether the student is guilty of the offense charged. Students with disabilities who are found guilty of any misconduct shall be subject to a recommendation by the Tribunal for disciplinary action/placement, and the IEP committee will make the final determination on placement of these students.

Student Searches

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Student book bags, school lockers, desks and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without further notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags or lockers. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities that occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of administrators.

Student Support Processes

The Habersham County Board of Education provides a variety of resources that are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include Student Support Teams, school counselors, chronic disciplinary student plans, mentoring programs, peer mentors, and student leadership class support.

School Bus and Bus Stop Conduct

Students are prohibited from acts of physical violence as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4(a), physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior.

Students are prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; pagers; audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus. In addition, students are prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

School Bus Behavior Contract: A meeting of the parents or guardians of the student and appropriate school district officials must be held to form a school bus behavior contract whenever:

- A student is found to have engaged in bullying; or
- A student is found to have engaged in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus.

The School Bus Behavior Contract shall provide for age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Provisions may include, but are not limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus.

These provisions regarding use of a Bus Behavior Contract are not to be construed to limit the instances when other Code of Conduct violations may require use of a student bus behavior contract.

Definition of Terms

Arson: Intentionally starting or attempting to start any fire or combustion.

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

AWOL: Unauthorized absence and/or leave from class, school, activity, or event.

Battery: A beating or other wrongful physical violence or constraint without the person's consent.

Bomb/Explosive: A device containing combustible materials and a fuse.

Bullying – An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is: (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; (2) any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or (3) Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that: (a) Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1; (b) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; (c) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or (d) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Burglary: Unauthorized entry into a school district building (unoccupied) with the intent of committing a felony when the building is closed to the students and the public [See Theft].

Bus Misconduct: Failure to comply with rules of bus safety or Student Conduct Behavior Code.

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

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student: A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur.

Chronic Lack of Supplies: Repeatedly reporting to class without necessary materials such as books, physical education attire, supplies, etc.

Detention: Student attends a work/study session outside of regular school hours. Student makes arrangements for transportation.

Disciplinary Probation: A student found guilty of certain offenses may be placed on probation by the local school and/or the Student Disciplinary Panel. Probation is a trial period during which a student violating school and/or school system rules is subject to further disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Tribunal/Hearing Officer: School officials appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact finder and judge with respect to student disciplinary matters.

Disobedience/Insubordination: Failure of the student to comply with a reasonable direction or instruction by staff.

Disorderly Conduct: Behaving in a violent or seriously inappropriate manner which disrupts the educational process.

Disrespect: Responding in a rude and impertinent manner. No student shall communicate verbally or non-verbally (body language) an attitude of disrespect toward a teacher, staff member, administrator, bus driver, or other adults. Such behavior could be identified by but not limited to: rolling of eyes, heavily sighing, making faces, refusing to answer, turning away when being talked to, mumbling under one's breath, talking back, or using profanity.

Disruption: Behaving in a manner which interferes with educational activities.

Dress Code: The current dress code is explained in the student handbook.

Drug/Alcohol/Chemical Offense: Any controlled substance or alcohol; includes any transfer of a prescription drug or any substance represented or believed to be a drug, regardless of its actual content.

Due Process: A student is afforded oral or written notice of the charges against him/her and is given an opportunity for a review, hearing or other procedural rights in accordance with state and federal laws.

Expulsion: Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school quarter or semester. Such action may be taken only by a disciplinary hearing officer or tribunal.

Extortion: Use of "mild" threats or intimidation to demand money or something of value from another (no weapon).

False Fire Alarm: Reporting a fire to school or fire officials or setting off a fire alarm without a reasonable belief that a fire exists.

Felony: Any offense punishable as a felony under Georgia or federal law.

Fighting: Involves the exchange of mutual physical contact such as pushing, shoving, and hitting, with or without injury. Fighting between students on school campus is dangerous because of the possible injury not only to the participants but also to those in the surrounding area and the individuals who try to stop it. Fighting which is of a severe nature will result in a disciplinary hearing, notification of law enforcement, long term suspension, or expulsion.

Gambling: Playing any game of skill or chance for money or anything of value.

Harassment/Intimidation/Verbal Abuse: Disturbing consistently, by pestering or tormenting in the classroom, on the school bus, or elsewhere on the school site.

Inappropriate Dress: Dressing in a manner that disrupts the teaching and learning of others or in violation of the school's dress code.

Inappropriate Personal Property: Possession of personal property that is prohibited by the school rules, such as food, beverages, and electronic equipment.

In-School Suspension: The student is removed from regular classes for a specified period of time at the local school. Class work assignments are sent to the student by the teachers.

Insubordination and Willful Disobedience: Any student who refuses to identify himself /herself when asked, carry out requests, directives, or instructions of teachers, administrators, staff members, bus drivers or other authorized school representatives will be considered insubordinate or willfully disobedient.

Loitering/Trespassing: Entering any school property or school facility without proper authority (includes student entry during a period of suspension or expulsion).

Long-Term Suspension: The student is suspended out-of-school for more than ten (10) days.

Non-Prescription Drug: Over-the-counter drug not authorized by a registered physician and not prescribed for the student. Student use is prohibited except in accordance with school procedures.

Prescription Drug: Use of a drug (medication) authorized by a registered physician *and* prescribed for the student. Student or parent should inform the school on the use of medically prescribed drug.

Profanity/Vulgarity: Writings, speech, or gestures that convey an offensive, obscene, or sexually suggestive message. No student shall use profane, vulgar or obscene words, gestures or actions at school on school events or functions directed toward faculty of staff members, students, or use non-directly in the presence of any teacher, administrator, employee, or students.

Robbery: Taking property from a person by force or violence, or threat of aggression.

Sexual Assault/Offense: Intentional sexual contact of a harmful or offensive manner.

Sexual Harassment: It is the policy of the Habersham County Board of Education to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the district staff to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students or any school employee through conduct or communications of a sexual nature. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the school staff to a student or when made by any student to another student or to a system employee constitutes sexual harassment.

Short-Term Suspension: The student is suspended out of school up to ten (10) days by the local school administrator. The student may be suspended for an accumulation of offenses, as well as a major offense. Suspended students may make up tests and assignments at the discretion of the school administrator.

Tardiness: Failure to be in assigned place at the assigned time without a valid excuse.

Theft/Larceny: Unlawful taking and carrying away of property belonging to another person (while the building is occupied) with the intent to deprive the lawful owner of its use [See Burglary]. Also a student shall not possess, sell, use, or transmit stolen property. Students who know of thefts and do not report them or who withhold pertinent information concerning thefts are guilty of a major offense.

Tobacco: Students are prohibited from using or possessing tobacco in any form while at school, on school related activities, or on any school bus. Possession of paraphernalia such as lighters, matches, rolling papers, e-Cigarettes, vaping-type items, etc. will result in disciplinary action.

Transmission: The passing of any substance, article, or weapon to another person.

Truancy: The student stays out of school without permission or valid excuse as defined by Georgia law, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1 et seq.

Vandalism/Graffiti: The willful or malicious destruction or defacement of public or private property. No student shall engage in the willful and /or reckless destruction of and/or threat to destroy school property. Student will be held financially responsible for damage or the replacement cost.

Waiver of Disciplinary Tribunal/Hearing: In the event a student or his/her parent does not wish to contest the charge(s) of violation(s) of the discipline rules of the school's code of conduct for which a tribunal has been requested, the student and parent may voluntarily accept the consequences prescribed by the school by signing a Waiver of Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing form. Such waiver shall specify the rule violation, the date and description of the incident, the prescribed consequences, and an agreement to waive the opportunity to participate in a tribunal hearing, present evidence, cross examine witnesses, and be represented by an attorney. The decision to waive the tribunal shall be final and cannot be appealed by the school or family. The waiver must be signed by the student, a parent, a school administrator and a district level administrator from the superintendent's office, who shall act as hearing officer with authority to approve the disciplinary consequences set forth in the waiver.

Weapon: An article or implement that can cause bodily harm. This includes guns, knives, razors, clubs, and nunchahka, or any other object intended to be used to inflict bodily harm, as identified in O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1. A student shall not possess, handle, or transmit a knife, razor, ice pick, explosive, loaded cane, sword cane, machete, pistol, rifle, shotgun, pellet gun, chain or any accessory with a chain attached or any other object that can reasonably be considered a weapon (A) on the school grounds during and immediately before or immediately after school hours; (B) on the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; or, (C) off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event.

Asbestos Management Plan Notification

The Habersham County School System AHERA Management Plan is available for public inspection upon request at the School System Board of Education. This notification is provided to fulfill the requirement of

section 763.93(4) of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, 40 CFR Part 763, October 30, 1987. Interested parents, teachers, employees or other persons are invited to review the plan, which includes the following items:

1. Location, amounts and types of asbestos containing materials.
2. Response actions to the asbestos containing materials.
3. Plans for reinspection, and periodic surveillance
4. Public notification procedures

Please direct any questions to Angela Robinson at Habersham County Schools, 132 Stanford Mill Road, Clarkesville, Georgia 30523, Phone 706-754-2118.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (the "Act"), you have a right to:

1. Inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the education records of a student who is your child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen (18) or older, or those who are emancipated, your own education records. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Personnel Director (or in the absence of same the School Superintendent) a written request identifying the record (s) they wish to inspect. The Personnel Director (or in the absence of same the School Superintendent) will make arrangements for access and provide notice of such arrangements.
2. Request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. To request the school district to amend a record, parents or eligible students should write the school principal, specify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district decides not to amend the record, it will notify the parents or eligible students of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided with the notification of the right to a hearing.
3. Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education record, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure with consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the district as a administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a person with who the district has contracted to perform a specific task (such as attorney, auditor, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school district forwards educational records without prior consent to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. The Habersham County School District has designated the following information as directory information:
 - a) Student's name, address and telephone number;
 - b) Student's date, and place of birth;
 - c) Student's participation in official school clubs and sports;
 - d) Weight and height of student if he/she is a member of an athletic team;
 - e) Dates of attendance at the Habersham County School System;
 - f) Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in Habersham County School System;
 - g) Photograph; and
 - h) Grade level.

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. You have the right to refuse to allow all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to be disclosed to the public upon request. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the principal of the school of which the student is enrolled in writing within ten (10) days of the beginning of the year or enrollment in the school.

5. File with the United States Department of Education a complaint under 20 C.F.R. 99.64 concerning the alleged failure by the Habersham County Board of Education to comply with the requirements of the Act or the regulations promulgated there under. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20202-8520.
6. You are also notified that from time to time students may be photographed, videotaped, or interviewed by the news media at school or some school activity or event; unless you, as a parent/guardian object in writing to your student being photographed, videotaped or interviewed to the principal of the school where you student is enrolled.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232h; 34 CFR Part 98) applies to programs that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). PPRA is intended to protect the rights of parents and students in two ways:

1. It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors make instructional materials available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with an ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and
2. It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors obtain written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
 - a) Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
 - b) Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and his/her family;
 - c) Sex behavior and attitudes;
 - d) Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
 - e) Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 - f) Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers; or
 - g) Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).
 - h) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent.

Parents will be notified of the opportunity to opt their student out of (1) participation in any survey related to the above areas; (2) the collection of personal information for marketing purposes; or, (3) administrator of any invasive physical exams or screenings required as a condition of attendance before such activities are performed.

Parents or students who believe their rights under PPRA may have been violated may file a complaint with ED by writing the Family Policy Compliance Office. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of PPRA occurred.

For additional information or technical assistance, you may call (202) 260-3887 (voice). Individuals who use TDD may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

Parents' Right to Know

At *Habersham County Schools*, we are very proud of our teachers and feel they are ready for the school year and are prepared to give your child a high-quality education. As a Title I school, we must meet federal regulations related to teacher qualifications as defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA of 1965). These regulations allow you to learn more about your child's teachers' training and credentials. We are happy to provide this information to you. At any time, you may ask:

- Whether the teacher met state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subject he/she is teaching,
- Whether the teacher received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived, and
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher holds, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

You may also ask whether your child receives help from a paraprofessional. If your child receives this assistance, we can provide you with information about the paraprofessional's qualifications.

Our staff is committed to helping your child develop the academic knowledge and critical thinking he/she needs to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are highly skilled.

If you have any questions about your child's assignment to a teacher or paraprofessional, please contact *Your school principal* or contact Rhonda Andrews, Title I Director at 706-754-2118, ext. 104 or email her at randrews@habersham.k12.ga.us.

Habersham County School System
DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY
Revised March 4, 2014

The Habersham County School System recognizes that family involvement is crucial if our students are to achieve high academic standards and to succeed in school and life. It shall be the intent of all parent involvement activities in Habersham County School System to encourage and support the efforts of home, school, and community in improving the educational opportunities for all children.

Title I, Part A provides federal dollars to help supplement educational opportunities for children who live in high poverty areas and are most at risk of failing to meet the state's challenging content and performance standards.

Habersham County School System is committed to establishing partnerships with parents and community members, and encourages their participation in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the Title I Parent Involvement Policy and Plan and activities as stipulated under section 1112, section 1116 and section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This policy/plan explains the expectations for parent involvement at the district and school level. Parent input from the review meetings and annual parent surveys, as well as discussions during the meetings of the District Title I Parent Advisory Committee, is used to revise this plan.

Our district Title I program will provide assistance and support necessary for schools in planning, developing, and implementing parent involvement programs and activities, and will include the following support:

PART I
GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Habersham County Schools agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). These programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this districtwide parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.

- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

- (A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;*
- (B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;*
- (C) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;*
- (D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.*

PART II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY/PLAN

1. Habersham County Schools will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district-wide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:
 1. *Invite all parents to attend a meeting to review the District Parent Involvement Plan/Policy on an annual basis. All parents are notified. School level administrators personally contact parents to encourage attendance at this meeting.*
 2. *An annual parent survey will be conducted at the district level.*
 3. *Comments and suggestions from parents will be collected via email, phone and a comment box on the district website.*
 4. *The Title I Director, Rhonda Andrews, is available via email at randrews@habersham.k12.ga.us or telephone 706-754-2118, ext. 104 and may be contacted regarding school or district needs or activities.*
2. Habersham County Schools will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:
 1. *Title I District personnel will assist and provide support to each Title I school as needed. The Title I Director, Tony Reabold, is available via email at treabold@habershamschools.com or telephone 706-754-2118, and may be contacted regarding school or district needs or activities.*
 2. *Each Title I school surveys its parents, at least annually, to evaluate the effectiveness of its parent involvement program. Schools will provide opportunities for parents to evaluate each parent involvement activity by providing a "Ticket Out The Door" opportunity at each parent meeting.*
 3. *Each school's Title I parent committee meets annually to review and/or revise the School Parent Involvement Policy, the Parent Involvement Plan, and the School-Parent Compact and the Title I Schoolwide or Targeted Assistance Plan.*

3. Habersham County Schools will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:
 1. *The district will provide support to Title I Schools in the evaluation of parental involvement programs by assisting with the administering of surveys, by meeting on a regular basis with Title I administrators, by assisting with the development of parent involvement programs.*
 2. *Parent surveys will be conducted at the school and district level to allow parents the opportunity to evaluate and give feedback on the effectiveness of individual programs and to identify barriers to parental participation.*
 3. *All Title I meetings and parent involvement activities are documented with a printed agenda, signed attendance sheets, and multiple forms of advertisement.*

4. Habersham County Schools will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: Head Start, Even Start, Parents As Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-operated preschool programs by:
 1. *Encourage and coordinate collaboration of parent involvement programs and activities with Title I, Head Start, Georgia Pre-K, Early Intervention Program (EIP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Migrant, and Parent Teacher Associations/Organizations along with local community agencies and organizations including Partners in Education and various businesses.*
 2. *The Title I Director and School Parent Involvement Coordinators will work outside agencies to provide quality early childhood experiences for the children and families in the community. Partnerships currently include Parents as Teachers, Georgia Pre-K programs, Head Start and Volunteers For Literacy.*

5. Habersham County Schools will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.
 1. *All parents of students attending Title I Schools are invited to participate in the review process. Parent input from review meetings and annual parent surveys, as well as input from the District Parent Advisory Committee, is used to revise this plan. The process for future review of this policy/plan is:*
 - *Meetings of the District Parent Advisory Committee*
 - *Annual Parent Survey which is mailed in March via the OneCall Now electronic email system, posted on the district website and discussed at the District Parent Involvement meeting.*
 - *Comments and suggestions from parents received throughout the year are used to plan for workshops and support.*
 2. *District Parent Involvement Policy/Plan is translated into Spanish. A translator is present during the meeting to review the District Parent Involvement Policy/Plan.*

1. Habersham County Schools will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph --

- the State’s academic content standards,
- the State’s student academic achievement standards,
- the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Part A,
- how to monitor their child’s progress, and
- how to work with educators:

1. Habersham County School System supports parents in their role as their child’s first teacher. This is supported by:

➤ **Providing meetings and trainings to assist parents in the understanding of:**

- **Georgia Performance Standards**
- **Student Growth Model**
- **State Assessment Data**
- **System Benchmarking**
- **Reading, writing and math skills and strategies**
- **Parent Access to PowerSchool**

2. Orientation to Title I meetings are held annually at each school to inform parent about:

- **The guidelines, purpose and goals of the Title I program**
- **Parent’s rights under Title I Part A regarding teacher certification and degrees and qualifications of paraprofessionals instructing students**
- **District Parent Involvement Policy/Plan**
- **School-Parent Compact, School Parent Involvement Policy and Plan**
- **Title I Complaint Procedure**

B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children’s academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

1. Providing parents with additional learning opportunities which promote:

- **Oral and written English literacy**
- **Methods for monitoring their children’s progress**
- **How to work with educators**
- **Workshops to assist parents as they work with their children – such as, CRCT informational workshop, Reading Nights, Math and Science Hands-On Workshops**

C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

- **encouraging and supporting parents to more fully participate in the education of their children,**
- **working with all state and local agencies**
- **encouraging schools to send parents to conferences that emphasize parental involvement and/or,**
- **providing professional development for the Title I Director, Principals and Parent Liaisons on working with parents.**
- **conducting conferences that offer tools to parents that will lead to student success.**

D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

- **Encourage and coordinate collaboration of parent involvement programs and activities with Title I, Head Start, Georgia Pre-K, Early Intervention Program (EIP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Special Education Prep**

Program and Preschool Program, Title I-C Migrant preschool program, and Parent Teacher Associations/Organizations along with local community agencies and organizations including Partners in Education and various businesses. The Title I Director also serves as Pre-K Director for six system Pre-K classrooms.

- *The Title I Director and School Parent Involvement Coordinators will work outside agencies to provide quality early childhood experiences for the children and families in the community. Partnerships currently include Parents as Teachers, Georgia Pre-K programs, Head Start and Volunteers For Literacy.*
 - *Schools will host meetings with kindergarten teachers and teachers from private/public preschool programs in the community.*
- E. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent- programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:
- *All communications will be in easy to understand language. Written translations in Spanish will be provided through school or district personnel. Translations for other languages may be provided upon request if at all possible.*
 - *Habersham County School System will maintain communication with parents via multiple media sources:*
 - *HCSS and local school websites*
 - *Local media – The Northeast Georgian, WCON, WCHM*
 - *Parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops,*
 - *District and School Newsletters, emails, signs, posters, school level signs*
 - *OneCall Email/Telephone calling system*
- F. Provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.
- *Each school will submit to the district any parent comments if the schoolwide plan under section (1114)(b)(2) is not satisfactory to parents of participating children. Submission of comments will be made to the Title I Director, and the parent will be notified by the district for a conference.*
 - *Each school will provide parents with an opportunity to express concerns, ask questions, or voice complaints by following the steps outlined in the school-level Complaint/Concern/Question procedure and to receive timely responses from school staff members.*

**Habersham County Middle Schools
Parent/Student/School Compact**

Our success depends on a committed partnership between school and home.

AS A PARENT, I WILL

- See that my child is punctual and attends school regularly
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain discipline
- Establish a time for homework and review it regularly
- Provide a quiet, well lit place for study
- Encourage my child's efforts and be available for questions
- Stay aware of what my child is learning
- Read with my child and let my child see me read
- Participate in parent-teacher conferences

AS A STUDENT, I WILL

- Attend school regularly
- Come to school each day with pencils, paper, and other needed materials
- Complete and return homework assignments
- Observe regular study hours
- Make time at home for daily reading
- Follow the HCMS Discipline Policy

AS A TEACHER, I WILL

- Provide meaningful work and assignments for students
- Provide assistance to parents as needed so they can help their child
- Encourage parents and students by providing frequent student progress information
- Provide opportunities for parent-teacher conferences
- Participate in ongoing professional development

AS A SCHOOL, WE WILL

- Provide frequent student progress information
- Provide an environment that encourages communication between teachers, parents, and students
- Provide a safe, caring environment for children

Parent signature _____ Date _____

Student signature _____ Date _____

Teacher signature _____ Date _____

Principal's signature _____ Date _____