



VICKERY CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL

2012-2013
Student Handbook

6240 Post Road
Cumming, Georgia 30040
Phone: (770) 667-2580
Fax: (770) 667-2593
School Hours: 9:00 AM – 4:15 PM
Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Kathy Rohacek, Principal
Van Lewsader, Assistant Principal
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*Our VCMS mission is the
relentless pursuit of the highest
possible achievement for all!*

This agenda is to be used to record standards being taught, assigned tasks, project deadlines, and upcoming events. The agenda can also be used as a hall pass and contains the bar code for checking out materials from the media center. Students are expected to have the agenda everyday in every class. The Student Handbook information found in this agenda is also found on our school website at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/vcms It is important that students and their parents be familiar with the contents of this agenda. If you have any questions, please direct them to the administrators at VCMS. The first copy of this agenda is provided free of charge to all VCMS students by our PTO.

ACADEMIC GRADING SCALE: A: 90-100 B: 80-89 C: 70-79 F: 0-69

GRADING AND REPORTING:

Students in grades six through eight receive grade reports on a quarterly basis throughout the school year. The interim reports are issued at the nine and 27 week points and the report cards are issued at 18 and 36 weeks. The reports include a numerical average for the grading period as well as a formative and summative grade breakdown. The grades are weighted 80% summative and 20% formative to formulate the average. In addition, the reports include a three point rubric defining Work Habits that impact student achievement.

GRADE UPDATES:

SEMESTER 1 WEEK 4 1/2 REPORT:	Sept.7, 2012	SEMESTER 2 WEEK 4 1/2 REPORT:	Feb 7, 2013
SEMESTER 1 WEEK 9 REPORT:	Oct. 17, 2012	SEMESTER 2 WEEK 9 REPORT:	March 20, 2013
SEMESTER 1 WEEK 13 1/2 REPORT:	Nov. 12, 2012	SEMESTER 2 WEEK 13 1/2 REPORT:	April 22, 2013
SEMESTER 1 REPORT CARD:	Jan. 11, 2013	SEMESTER 2 REPORT CARD:	May 31, 2013

On progress report day, parents are asked to review their child's grades on Campus Portal and sign the envelope which their child will bring home. Parents can contact the teacher if their child's progress report envelope is not brought home on the above dates. Parents are highly encouraged to sign up for Campus Portal in order to stay abreast of their child's academic progress on a daily basis. Registration forms for Campus Portal are available on the school system's website or in the VCMS front office.

ACCIDENTS/INJURIES:

We pride ourselves in taking the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of all our students at all times. Any student who is injured during school or at a school event will be assisted by a staff member. The staff member may provide reasonable care as needed or refer your child to the school clinic. Parents will be notified regarding any significant injury. An accident report will be completed by the supervising staff member.

Insurance forms that offer 24-hour or school-day accident coverage for students are available in the main office. The Forsyth County School System cannot reimburse parents for costs incurred due to injuries occurring at school or school sponsored events.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES:

BUS RIDERS: Bus riders arrive at VCMS between 8:30-8:50am and report to the gym. Bus riders will be released to homeroom at 8:45am. Bus riders wanting to purchase a breakfast will be permitted to go to the cafeteria at 8:20. Bus riders who leave the gym for purposes other than eating breakfast will be subject to consequences for being away from their assigned area of supervision.

CAR RIDERS: Parents may drop-off and pick-up their child at the main entrance only. In order to have the most effective procedure, please pull as far forward as possible before stopping and allowing your student to exit or enter the vehicle. Students should not enter or exit vehicles beyond the sidewalk.

No student should be dropped off at school before 7:45 AM. At this time, the doors will be unlocked and supervision provided.

In the afternoon, students may be picked up in the adjacent elementary lot. Please enter and exit this lot via the elementary entrance. Do not enter the bus lane. Thank you for your support and cooperation with these procedures to ensure the safe-keeping of all students.

MORNING RECOVERY: Students attending morning study sessions must have a pass from the teacher, or wait for the teacher to meet them in the cafeteria or gym area. If a student does not have a pass, they will be returned to their assigned area of morning supervision.

ATHLETIC TEAMS:

The following interscholastic team sports are offered for seventh and eighth grade students:

- Football
- Basketball
- Football Cheerleading
- Basketball Cheerleading
- Track
- Golf

In order to try out for and participate in interscholastic activities a current physical examination and insurance waiver

must be on file for each participant. Eligibility is determined by state board policy.

Gender Equity:

State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A. Y 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that Forsyth County Board of Education local school system does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. The sports equity coordinator for this school system is Dr. Candace Norton, Forsyth County Board of Education, 1120 Dahlonge Hwy., Cumming, GA 30040, 770-887-2461. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this school system may be submitted to the sports equity coordinator.

ATTENDANCE:

Regular attendance is essential to success in school. As permitted under the Georgia compulsory education law and Forsyth County Board of Education policy, students may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school that endangers a student's health or the health of others.
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 examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. The observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. A scheduled medical, dental or eye examination of the student.
7. Registering to vote or voting.
8. Visiting with a parent or legal guardian who is in the military service in the armed forces and has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support post. The student may be excused for a maximum of 5 days per school year.

Non-school related activities and vacations are considered unexcused.

- **Students shall be counted present when they are serving as a page in the Georgia General Assembly.**
- **Foster care students are to be counted present at school when attending court proceedings related to the student's foster care**

ABSENCES:

Parents must submit a note or fax or e-mail the attendance office within five (5) school days for a student's absence to be considered excused. The parent/guardian must write the note, fax or e-mail stating the student's name, the date(s) of absence(s), and the reason for the absence. Attendance Fax Number: 770-667-2589 or Attendance e-mail: vcmsattendance@forsyth.k12.ga.us (To ensure accurate communication between home and school about a student's absence from school, it is also recommended that the parent contact the school office by 10:00 a.m. to report the student's absence.) The principal may require students to present appropriate medical or other documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused.

HOSPITAL-HOMEBOUND:

If a student should need to be absent from school for more than 10 consecutive school days because of serious illness or an accident, arrangements may be made to provide instruction at home. In accordance with state rule 160-4-2.31 Hospital/Homebound Services, students with absences due to psychiatric/emotional disorders, as defined in the latest edition of the Diagnostic, and Statistical Manual (DSM), may be eligible for hospital-homebound instruction. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to request homebound instruction as soon as possible. An application for services supported by a doctor's recommendation will be required. The application and supporting documentation are submitted to the Principal of the school.

Consequences:

If a student has excessive absences, early check-outs, and/or late check-ins, the student and/or the parent may be referred to the School Social Worker, Juvenile Court, State Court, and/or Department of Family and Children Services. A parent/guardian who violates the compulsory attendance law shall be

guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, 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 at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school is considered a violation.

Any student who has ten or more school days of unexcused absences in the current academic year or ten or more school days of unexcused absences in the previous academic year will be subject to the rules of O.C.G.A. 40-5-22, school attendance and motor vehicle licenses law. In order to be eligible for a license, a student must satisfy the attendance requirements noted above for a period of one academic year prior to the application for an instruction permit or driver's license. The instruction permit or driver's license will be revoked for a period of one year, if a student has ten or more school days of unexcused absences in an academic year. Charges may also be filed in Juvenile Court on students who do not comply with the compulsory education law.

Make-up Work:

It is the student's responsibility to turn in make-up work, when he/she is absent from school. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged first to check ANGEL to access make-up work and then speak to the teacher to get clarification. The student has five (5) school days to make up work. The teacher has the discretion to grant a longer period to make up work if there are extenuating circumstances. Please call the school number (770-667-2580) and follow the prompts to reach a teacher's voice mail. **Assessments or projects that were assigned before the student's absence may be due when the student returns to school.**

Late Check-in or Early Check-out:

"Safe-guarding" every minute of our instructional time is a top priority at VCMS. We do not check out students between 4:05 - 4:15 (dismissal time) unless prior administrative approval is given. Written notice must be presented to an administrator at least one day in advance.

Students who are absent from school for the entire day or the last half of the day may not attend after-school events for that day. This includes practice sessions, games, performances, dances, club meetings, etc.

An unexcused late check-in or early check-out is defined as any time a student arrives late to school or leaves school early for a reason other than those defined by the State Board of Education as an excused absence. A combination of three unexcused late check-ins and/or early check-outs will be considered one unexcused absence. Students who miss more than half of the time in any class will be considered absent for that class period. When possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. **If a student is being checked in or checked out for a doctor's appointment, a parent note, physician's note, or appointment card is required within 5 school days to be considered excused. After the tenth late check-in or early check-out, a physician's note or appointment card is required within 5 school days to be considered excused.**

Check-in: Parents must sign their child in upon late arrival.

Check-out: If it is necessary for a student to check-out early due to illness, the student must be assessed by the school nurse for the absence to be excused. Parents must personally sign out their child.

BUS INFORMATION:

Forsyth County School's Bus Safety Guidelines are included in the **2012-2013 Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures**. All students and parents should read these guidelines so that they are aware of rider expectations. Drivers will enforce the **Three Step Student Behavior Management Plan** to provide a safe ride to and from school for all students. Food, drinks, electronic devices are not permitted on the bus. Activities which distract the bus drivers will not be tolerated and the bus drivers will complete referral forms for students who behave inappropriately on the bus. School administrators will adhere to county policy regarding such behavior. Possible consequences include seating assignments, parent notification, etc. Major or repeated disruptions may involve suspending a student's privilege to ride the bus for a specified number of school days. If this occurs, it will be the parent's responsibility to provide transportation to and from school for the student.

Students are not allowed to ride a bus other than the bus assigned to them by the transportation

department. Please make car transportation arrangements whenever your student(s) needs to be taken to any location other than their regular afternoon bus stop. School administrators will only approve a transportation change in the event of an emergency. Students who board a bus other than their assigned bus or request to get off of the bus at a stop that is not their assigned stop may be returned to school where the parent or designee will pick-up their child. Contact Deanna Bowen, VCMS Field Coordinator, at 770-667-2580 x230323 or dbowen@forsyth.k12.ga.us with any questions regarding routes or minor concerns.

TRANSPORTATION (BOARD POLICY EDC): FCS provides school bus transportation for all eligible FCS students based on the student's residence and school of enrollment, and in compliance with federal, state and/or local laws, rules, regulations and/or procedures. The Transportation Department is authorized to develop a framework and procedures that provide transportation services to eligible FCS students.

The Forsyth County Board of Education encourages supervision appropriate to the age and/or maturity level(s) of students at bus stops by parents or guardians. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to become familiar with Transportation practices and procedures at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/transportation. Questions may be directed to appropriate staff members found at the "Who Should I Call" link on the department web page

CAFETERIA

Automated Meal Account:

Each school has an automated system that is able to track the payment and purchasing activity of each individual student's account. Meals may be pre-paid for the week, month, or even the year. Prepayment is encouraged because it eliminates the daily handling of money for the child, and reduces the time the student must stand in line waiting, providing them more time to enjoy their meal.

Students may purchase meals and extra foods sold through the School Nutrition Program with funds debited from their meal account. **If parents/guardians wish to limit the use of their child's account to meals only, each school year parents/guardians must send a written note to the school's program manager stating that their child will not be allowed to purchase extra items off of their meal account. If this restriction is applied to the account and they select extra items on the line, they will be required to pay cash at the point of sale.**

Parents/guardians or siblings having lunch with a student may not use the student meal account to pay for guest meals.

Pre-payment by Debit or Credit Card via the Internet:

Register at www.myLunchMoney.com to prepay for a child's meals online using Visa or Mastercard. Parents/guardians must use the student identification number, school name, and student's date of birth to register and place money on their child's account. **If the child's student ID is less than six digits, parents must put in a leading zero(s) to make it six digits.** If parents/guardians do not know their child's student ID, contact the school's nutrition manager. To learn more about this visit the food and nutrition at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/nutrition. Prepayments made through myLunchMoney.com may take up to 48 hours to post to the student's meal account at school.

Parents/guardians will be assessed a \$1.95 fee per transaction made through mylunchmoney.com. Prepayments in any amount made online for your child's meals will be assessed a \$1.95 fee per school transaction. If parents/guardians have more than one child at the same school and are making prepayments on each child's account at the same time, only one transaction fee of \$1.95 will be assessed to their debit or credit card. If parents/guardians have children in multiple schools a \$1.95 will be assessed per school site.

Parents/guardians that have used the online prepayment method previously should verify the account information annually. This is particularly important if the student has changed schools. Credit and debit card information should be verified periodically as well.

Meal Charge Policy:

Only students in elementary will be allowed to charge up to the equivalent of five (5) meals. No ala carte purchases may be charged to the student's debit account, except milk/50% juice when a meal is brought from home. A charge notice will be completed and sent home to the parent/guardian through the student. When the manager has sent home the third notification with no success in collection of outstanding charges, the principal or counselor will be asked to intervene to assist with collecting the delinquent payments and assessing if there is a need for free or reduced priced meals.

After the fifth unpaid charge, the manager will offer the student a snack or partial meal such as a sandwich or crackers and milk. If a student continues to come to the cafeteria without a lunch from home or money and the student's account continues to be delinquent, the case will be considered for release to the Department of Family and Children's Services for neglect. Students who have unpaid meal charges will not be allowed to purchase any extra sale food items until the charges have been satisfied.

Returned Check Policy:

The Food and Nutrition Services Program will accept checks for exact payment of meals or prepayments to the student's debit account. The program will not cash personal checks or give change back when a check is received for payment.

FCS uses a check company to collect checks that are returned unpaid. Without further notice, they will attempt to collect on the check electronically if it is returned unpaid by your bank for any reason. If a check is returned unpaid, the face amount and a state-authorized fee will be collected electronically from the parent's account when the money is available. If a parent writes a check to the district, they are consenting to allow the check recovery company to electronically collect the face amount and the fee if the check is returned unpaid by the banking institution to the recovery company. After the Board of Education, or any entity thereof, has received two (2) checks returned by a financial institution due to insufficient funds or closed accounts, all financial transactions thereafter will be on a cash only basis.

Meal Prices:

	Lunch		Breakfast	
	Paid	Reduced	Paid	Reduced
Middle Schools	\$2.25	\$.40	\$1.35	\$.30
Guest	\$3.25		\$2.00	
Extra Milk: \$.60				

The Free and Reduced Priced Meal Program is available to assist families during times of financial hardship. **The School Nutrition Program accepts free and reduced meal applications throughout the school year.** Students approved for free or reduced priced meals may eat **breakfast and lunch** free or at a reduced cost. Parents can rest assured the information supplied on the form is strictly confidential and student identification is protected with the computer software used at the cashier's station.

- A current year 2011-2012 application must be submitted. Prior year application forms are not accepted. The 2011-2012 application is available at each school, in the Registration Office at the Hill Center and on the system's website, www.forsyth.k12.ga.us.
- Completed and signed applications can be sent via one of the following methods:
 - scanned and emailed to aplant@forsyth.k12.ga.us
 - faxed to 770-888-3464
 - sent via US mail to: Food & Nutrition Services, 1140 Dahlonega Hwy, Cumming GA 30040
 - submitted to any school cafeteria.
- Applications will be processed within 10 school days of receipt at the central office. Eligibility for those approved for free or reduced benefits will be effective within an hour of being processed at the central office. Written notification of eligibility/denial will be sent to the household address via US mail the day the application is processed.
- Eligibility for Free or Reduced price meals is **not retroactive**, therefore the parent or guardian is responsible for payment of school meals until the F&R application is approved.

CARE OF PERSONAL ITEMS

As a service, a locker will be provided for each student for a fee of **\$5.00**. All lockers are individually checked prior to the start of each school year and locker combinations are changed annually. Problems with a locker should be reported immediately to the student's teacher who assigned their locker. Abuse of a locker or using other students' lockers can lead to having locker privileges revoked and will require payment for repairs. Student bookbags, school lockers, desks, and other school property shall be subject to inspection and search by school authorities at all times without further notice to students or parents. The Forsyth County School System reserves the right to use "walk-through" and "hand-held" metal detectors and "drug-sniffing" dogs at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours off the school campus. Students are notified that these metal detectors will be used at the discretion of school administrator.

PE lockers are provided in the locker rooms. Students may rent a combination lock each quarter but cannot bring their own lock from home. Students must adhere to the same policies as outlined above. Failure to do so will result in locker privileges being revoked and/or will require payment for lost combination locks and/or repairs.

The school does not assume responsibility for lost personal items. Valuables and large amounts of money

should not be brought to school. In addition, cameras, radios, games, toys, trading/playing cards, electronic devices, skateboards, etc. should not be brought to school unless specifically approved by a teacher for a special event/purpose. Items such as those just listed will be confiscated and kept in the front office. The school assumes no responsibility for the "safe keeping" of confiscated items. Confiscated items will be returned to a parent upon signing the discipline referral. A parent may come to the school any time during normal operating hours (8:00am-5:00pm) to claim any of his/her child's confiscated item(s).

In the event that a parent is unable to visit the school during the regular school day, the item may be claimed by the student on the last two days of the school year. Items not claimed one week after the last day of school will be discarded or donated to a charitable organization. Weapons, tobacco, and other drug products and similar items (or items promoting such products) will not be returned to a parent or student.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS BY PARENTS:

The VCMS staff values the concept of parents as partners in education and understands that each student's education extends beyond the four walls of the class. Parent and community support and assistance are vital in all facets of the school program. It is therefore essential that parents be informed and involved in their child's education.

Parents and community members have opportunities for observing students in the academic and extracurricular setting through a number of established activities and events which showcase our students' academic, athletic, and artistic talents and endeavors. If a parent of a VCMS student or a prospective student wishes to set up a classroom or school visit, then he will be afforded every opportunity to make that visit. The following guidelines shall be used in setting up parent visits.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION BY PARENTS OF A VCMS STUDENT:

The Parent Should:

9. Make the request to the principal at least **1 school day** prior to the requested time.
10. State the purpose of the visit.
11. Sign in at the front office and receive a visitor's badge prior to being escorted to the class.
12. Sign the Confidentiality Agreement.
13. Stay no more than one class period, unless previously authorized by the principal.
14. Refrain from engaging the attention of the teacher or students through conversation or other means.
15. Return to the office for a brief conference with an administrator at the end of the visit.

CLUBS:

Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of clubs that enhance social and emotional development. Such clubs will make announcements about meeting dates and times. VCMS offers clubs such as those listed below:

- | | | | |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| ▶4-H | ▶ Art Club | ▶ Junior Beta Club | ▶ Green Group |
| ▶ Book Club | ▶ Drama Club | ▶ Fiber Arts Club | ▶ Karate Club |
| ▶ Chess Club | ▶ History Club | ▶ FCA | ▶ Y-Club |

CONNECTION CLASSES:

Connection classes are designed to reinforce critical reading, writing, mathematics and thinking skills taught within academic classes, as well as help students develop interpersonal skills and investigate career options. Students are rotated through Connections throughout their middle school years. Band and chorus are optional year long programs. The remaining Connection classes are quarterly classes.

- | | | | | |
|----------|----------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1)Band | 3) Art | 5) Drama | 7) General Music | 9) PE |
| 2)Chorus | 4) Computer Literacy | 6) Technology | 8) Health | 10) Study Skills |

COUNSELING PROGRAMS:

The VCMS counselors assist students in their social, emotional, and academic growth through individual, group, and classroom activities. The guidance curriculum is a planned effort to provide each student with a set of skills and experiences to promote self-understanding, decision-making, problem-solving, communication improvement, and career planning. These programs are developmental, preventative, and proactive. Programs and services may be provided in an individual setting or small groups setting. Topics may include: friendships, problem-solving, class guidance, drug awareness and prevention, grief, divorce, etc. Parents and students are encouraged to schedule appointments. Parents can contact the counseling secretary at extension 230301. Students may complete an appointment slip.

VCMS and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) respects the right to privacy of those with whom they enter counseling relationships. Professional school counselors must keep abreast of and adhere to all laws, policies and ethical standards pertaining to confidentiality. This confidentiality must not be abridged by the counselor except when there is clear and present danger to the student and/or other persons.

COURSE OF STUDY:

Forsyth County Middle Schools and VCMS are dedicated to providing structured middle school programs that embrace current research findings on the middle school child. Each grade level is divided into teams of teachers and students who work together to achieve academic and personal goals. Teachers work together to plan instruction and to solve problems. This enables students to sense consistent expectations and to strive to meet clearly understood standards of achievement.

The daily schedule followed by VCMS students includes five (5) daily, academic classes and two connection classes. Academic classes include mathematics, language arts, science, social studies, and either a foreign language, Math plus, reading, or literacy class. Most 6th grade students have Reading and Spanish on a daily rotating basis. There is also be an advisement time to focus on goal setting, career exploration, test-taking tips, and social skills.

Each teacher and/or team will provide students and parents with information regarding subject area objectives via a course syllabus at the beginning of the year. Students and parents are encouraged to use this information to better understand academic requirements.

DANCES:

At least four dances are anticipated for the upcoming school year. Those dates will be announced as they approach. Dances are held after school from 4:30pm- 6:00pm and students are required to have a signed parent permission slip to attend each dance. A nominal admission is charged for each dance, and refreshments are sold at the concession stand. High expectations are held for appropriate student behavior and dress. Dances are for VCMS students only. Students in ISS or OSS on the day of a dance are not allowed to attend.

DELIVERIES AT SCHOOL:

Students are not allowed to receive deliveries of flowers, balloons, candy or other items while at school. Such deliveries create a disruption to instruction and the learning process. Students will not be allowed to take any delivered items to class or on the bus. Parents will be required to retrieve any delivered items from the front office.

DISCIPLINE:

Our goal at VCMS is educating children. This includes developing students into self-disciplined individuals. When children make mistakes and are not self-disciplined, school officials will investigate the incident and provide appropriate consequences to the involved students. The Forsyth County 2012-2013 Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures brochure outlines expected student behavior and consequences for noncompliance. Every student receives a copy of this brochure at the beginning of the year and, along with the parent, will be required to sign a form confirming that they received this document. Parents and students should be familiar with this document and retain it for future reference. This Code of Conduct applies to any school event, including those off-campus as well as some non-school related activities in which students may choose to engage. It is extremely important that students read, understand, and comply with the guidelines set forth in the Code of Conduct.

Forsyth County Code of Conduct policies and procedures developed during the course of this school year supersede the applicable portions of this student handbook. Such information will be given to each child as it is available.

In addition to the *Code of Conduct*, students shall adhere to school and classroom expectations, guidelines, and procedures. In a simplistic overview, students should be respectful, on-time, prepared, and use time wisely. Students are expected to be their best and do their best. As needed, teachers will implement a pyramid of interventions that includes: warning, parent contact, silent lunch, or teacher detention. If student is referred to an administrator, dispositions will be entered into the students discipline file and may include administrative detention, ISS, OSS, parent conference to initiate and monitor a chronic discipline plan, and tribunal.

In compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act, the Forsyth County School System will facilitate the transfer of discipline records to any public or private school in which a student is enrolled or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll on a full- or part-time basis in the school.

POSSESSION OF A WEAPON: It shall be unlawful for any person to carry or possess or have under such person's control while within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school any weapon or explosive compound, other than fireworks (O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1). Board policy and state law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-751.1) require that any student determined to have brought a weapon to school will be expelled from school for a minimum of one calendar year, subject to modification on a case-by-case basis as required or authorized by state and federal law.

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT REPORTING:

FCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability or gender in employment decisions or educational programs and activities, including its athletic programs. Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent or other individual who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district based upon any of the factors listed above should promptly report the same to the principal of the school or the appropriate coordinator as listed below, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor. Equity coordinators for the school system are:

Title VI

Todd Shirley (Students)
Candace Norton (Personnel)

Title IX

Todd Shirley (Students)
Candace Norton (Personnel)

ADA and 504

Sarah Taylor (Students);
Candace Norton (Personnel)

Gender Equity

Candace Norton (Students)

Community Based Work Programs: Genise Tworek

Equity coordinators may be contacted at the Forsyth County Board of Education and Professional Development Center, 1120 Dahlonega Highway, Cumming, Georgia 30040, 770.887.2461. Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. A copy of the discriminatory complaints procedure under Forsyth County School District Policy GAAA/JAA (Equal Opportunity/Discriminatory Complaints) or under Policy IDFA (Gender Equity in Sports) is located in the school district policy manual that is available at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/boe > policies and procedures.

EQUITY:

FCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sex in any of its employment practices, educational programs, child feeding program or any other service or activity. It is the policy of the Forsyth County Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations. Any student, employee, applicant for employment or other person alleging a violation shall promptly notify the principal or the designated school system coordinator.

DRESS CODE:

Part of a student's experience at VCMS is to learn those behaviors that will ensure a successful future. In fact, learning to dress appropriately for school is part of learning work-readiness skills. Dress that may be acceptable outside of the school day may be inappropriate in a learning environment. Clothes that fit in the fall may not fit appropriately in the spring because students go through periodic growth spurts. Students are expected to show proper attention to personal cleanliness and neatness, and maintain appropriate standards in dress and appearance.

See the 2012-2013 Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures for Forsyth County's dress code policy. Common violations include holes above the knee of pants and clothes exposing excessive skin. The school administration is authorized to determine what constitutes inappropriate dress for the school setting. Questions about the dress code should be addressed with the administration. Penalties may include warning, parent contact, securing appropriate clothing, detention, ISS, OSS, or tribunal.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION:

In the event of a crisis situation that requires the evacuation of the school campus, students and staff will be transported to a safe, secured site. As soon as the safety and security of students is assured and checkout preparations are confirmed, parents will be notified as described in the *School Closings, Early Dismissal, Delayed Openings, and Emergency Notifications Section*, about family reunification procedures.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO LIFE THREATENING ASTHMA OR ALLERGIC REACTIONS:

Emergency Response to Life Threatening Asthma or Allergic Reactions:

FCS partners with District II Public Health to implement a program for the emergency response to life threatening asthma or systemic allergic reactions (anaphylaxis). School staff members are trained to assess the clinical signs, call 911 and administer the medications (benadryl, epinephrine injection or nebulized bronchodilator). The student must be transported to the nearest emergency room for evaluation and treatment.

EVACUATION, LOCKDOWN, AND TORNADO DRILLS:

Plans are in place and practiced throughout the school year to ensure the safety of all students and other building occupants should a fire, weather related or other emergency arise. In the event of a crisis situation that requires the evacuation of the school campus, students and staff will be transported to a safe, secured site. As soon as the safety and security of students is assured, traffic control is established and checkout preparations are made, parents will be notified about family reunification procedures.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Extracurricular activities are defined as any school-sponsored program for which some or all of the activities occur outside the regular school day. Examples include all individual and team sports, cheerleading, clubs, academic bowls, and fund raising activities. This definition does not include field trips, homework, or occasional work required outside the school day for a scheduled class. Extracurricular eligibility is determined by state board policy and applies to competitive school activities that occur after school hours. In order to compete, a student must have passed a minimum of 5 of 7 subjects during the previous semester. Ineligible students cannot try out for a team even if the team will not be in operation until the next school year. **Students who have ISS or OSS may not participate in extracurricular activities on the days of the suspension.**

FALSE PUBLIC ALARMS:

Bomb and other terroristic threats, fire alarms and prank 911 calls will not be tolerated. Consequences will include a parent conference, immediate suspension, referral to law enforcement, and referral to a disciplinary tribunal hearing. If found guilty by a tribunal, the student is also subject to expulsion, long term suspension and restitution. The tribunal will impose restitution for all expenses incurred for lost instructional time and the restoration of the instructional process. Restitution may include but will not be limited to costs for: salaries, transportation, food and water, care for the handicapped, phone and other communication, laboratory work and any other legitimate expense incurred in the restoration of the normal educational operation of the school and the school system.

FIELD TRIPS:

VCMS students are provided with opportunities to attend interesting educational events and functions. Traditionally, all three grade levels make arrangements to take A field trip during the year to enhance and enrich student learning. Students will receive information regarding the cost for each of these trips and tentative dates. Refunds are not given due to Code of Conduct infractions. When possible, refunds will be given to students with excused absences. No student will be denied an opportunity to participate in a field trip because of financial hardship. Priority is given to students in the free/reduced lunch program. Parents must notify their child's teachers or a counselor of the necessity for financial aid.

GANG RELATED ACTIVITY:

Gang related activity will not be tolerated in FCS. Students engaging in gang related activities will be subject to disciplinary action as defined in the Forsyth County Board of Education Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures. See the definitions of *Gang Member* and *Gang Related Activity* below.

In addition to those definitions, from time to time new types of gang communication methods or activities may be invented. In that event, the Principal is authorized to further define and prohibit those newly developed activities. Gang Member is defined as: A person who is part of an association of three or more people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and engage, individually or collectively in illegal behavior. Gang Related Activity is defined as: Any act or exhibition, individual or collective, which (1) communicates gang allegiance or affiliation; and / or (2) would be a criminal act if committed by an adult; and (3) is deemed to be gang related by the Principal. Gang related activity includes but is not limited to: communication of gang affiliation through hand sign flashing, wearing of clothing articles in a certain way or color scheme; jewelry, tattoos, gang symbols or graffiti on personal items; vandalism of public or private property, and acts of intimidation, threat, fighting and other forms of violence.

HEALTH EDUCATION:

Sex/AIDS education lessons are included as part of the health curriculum for grades 6-8. FCS currently uses the *Choosing the Best* program for sex/AIDS education lessons. *Choosing the Best* is an abstinence based program that is correlated with the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum. The units of study include: the risks of STDs and HIV/AIDS; teen pregnancy; pressures to be sexually active; sex, love and healthy choices; avoiding unhealthy relationships; and setting boundaries. Health teachers may include human growth and development content within the sex/AIDS education lessons. Parents/guardians may schedule an appointment to review the sex/AIDS education curriculum resources used at their child's school by contacting the lead health teacher of the school. If a parent/guardian does not wish for his/her child to participate in this portion of the course, notification must be made in writing to the health teacher prior to the beginning of the unit. Alternative assignments will be given and assessed for those students opting out of sex/AIDS education lessons.

Fitness Assessment:

As a result of Georgia House Bill 229 (also known as the S.H.A.P.E. Act) starting in February 2012, students in grades 1-12 will participate in a state-wide fitness assessment. Middle school students enrolled in physical education classes will have height/weight measured and they will participate in four fitness assessments. At the end of the school year, parents of students assessed on the fitness tests will receive a formal report of their child's fitness assessment performance. The areas of health related fitness include: cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility and body composition. The following FITNESSGRAM tests will be used to measure the various areas of health-related fitness: 1) *PACER or 1 mile run* (Cardiovascular); 2) *Push-Up* (Upper Body Strength); 3) *Curl-Up* (Abdominal Strength); 4) *Back-Saver Sit and Reach* (Flexibility); 5) *Body Mass Index* (Body Composition).

INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES:

VCMS students are encouraged to participate in numerous interscholastic activities which challenge them academically and allow them to display their talents. These activities might include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Band Concerts and Festivals
- ▶ Chorus Concerts and Festivals
- ▶ Art/Essay/Poster Contests
- ▶ Geography Bee
- ▶ Spelling Bee
- ▶ Oratorical Contest
- ▶ Science Fair
- ▶ Social Science Fair

INTRAMURALS:

All VCMS students may participate in intramurals throughout the year with most activities being offered in the morning before school. This program is an extension of the physical education program and may involve competition among classmates for both boys and girls. This program is designed to increase participation of all students in recreational games and sports activities. Activities may include basketball, flag football, volleyball, softball, soccer, snowboarding/skiing, and agility training. All students are eligible for participation upon returning a signed permission slip.

LOST AND FOUND:

Students who find lost or misplaced personal articles are asked to take them to a nearby teacher or the front office. Library books should be turned in at the Media Center. Found textbooks should be given to the appropriate teacher. Items remaining in "lost and found" will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of each quarter. Again, it is stressed that students should not bring valuables to school and that each child accept the responsibility for the safekeeping of his/her possessions

MEDIA CENTER PROCEDURES

1. Students must bring their agenda, with teacher pass and have a purpose for coming to the Media Center.
2. Students may check out a maximum of two books at a time by using bar code on back of this agenda. If a child loses a book or damages it, he/she must pay for it before checking out another book in its place.
3. Students must have a current AUP (ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY) Form documented on Infinite Campus. This form states that the student is aware of and will follow internet usage guidelines.
4. Student must have an internet pass from this teacher. The pass must state the database and/or previewed websites to be used.

MLA RESEARCH FORMAT:

<u>BOOK -ONE AUTHOR:</u>	Last Name, First Name. <u>Title</u> . City Published: Publisher, Year. Smith, John. <u>Cars and Trucks</u>. Atlanta: New Home Press, 2005.
<u>BOOK-TWO OR MORE AUTHORS:</u>	Last name, First Name, and First name Last Name. <u>Title</u> . City Published: Publisher, Year. Time, Justin and Phil Good. <u>Cars and Trucks</u>. Atlanta: New Home Press, 2005.
<u>BOOK- NO AUTHOR:</u>	<u>Title</u> . City Published: Publisher, Year. <u>Cars and Trucks</u>. Atlanta: New Home Press, 2005.
<u>ENCYCLOPEDIA OR OTHER REFERENCE:</u>	Last Name, First Name. "Topic." <u>Title of Book</u> . Year Edition. Grades, Macon. "Climate of Japan." <u>World Book</u>. 2005.
<u>WEBSITE:</u>	Page Name. Date of Posting. Name of Institution/Organization. Date of Access <electronic address>. BBQ Recipes. 2006. All Recipes. 1/26/2006. <u>http:barbeque.allrecipes.com/></u>.

APA RESEARCH FORMAT:

BOOK:

Last Name, First initial. (Date Published). *Title of Book*. City Published: Publisher.

Smith, J. (2005) *Cars and Trucks*. Atlanta: New Home Press.

BOOK OR ARTICLE– NO AUTHOR:

Title of Book (Edition). (Date Published). City and State: Publisher.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (10th ed.). (1993). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.

Encyclopedia Entry:

Last name, First Initial. (Date Published). Topic. *Encyclopedia* (Vol. number, pp). City Published: Publisher.

Berg, B. G. (1993) *Relativity*. World Book (Vol. 26, pp 501-508). New York: World Book.

WEBSITE:

(Date of Publication). *Title of Article*. Retrieved month date, year , from Http://Web address.

(2006).Scotland.Retrieved 1,2006, from <http://www.scotland.uk.com>.

MEDICATIONS/ CLINIC:

VCMS has a nurse on campus from **9:00am –4:00pm** each day. Students must have a pass from a teacher to visit the clinic. All visits are documented. The nurse will contact parent if the situation is serious in nature or if the student frequently visits clinic for insignificant reasons.

All medications (prescription and nonprescription) must be brought to school by the parent/ guardian. No student will be allowed to bring medications to school. Students may not have medication in their possession, except with a physician's order for emergency situations only. Medications brought in bags or other unmarked containers will not be given. Prescription medication must be in the pharmacy container labeled with the child's name, date, name of medication, name of prescribing physician, time(s) the medication is to be given and name of pharmacy filling the prescription. Please ask the pharmacist to provide two labeled prescription bottles so that parents/guardians have one bottle at home and one at school. Do not send medication to the school that needs to be given only once daily or two/three times a day unless the physician specifically states a time during the school day for the medication to be given. If medication can be given at home, please do so.

Parents/guardians must provide specific instructions (including drugs and related equipment) to the nurse. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of any changes in pertinent data. A "Request for Administration of Medication" form must be completed by the parent/guardian. **New medications will not be given unless a new form is completed.** The bottom portion of the form is to be completed by the physician for **ANY** long-term medication (more than two weeks.) The term "physician" is used as defined in Article 2 of the Medical Practice Act of Georgia. The form may be brought to the school by the parent or faxed by the parent or physician. Due to the risk of Reye's Syndrome in children under the age of 18, the school will require a physician's signature in order to give any aspirin-containing medications including Aspirin, Pepto-Bismol, and Excedrin. Due to the risk of choking, students may not bring cough drops. All medications, herbals, and supplements must be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and appear in the U.S. Pharmacopeia.

Infectious Disease:

A child is not to return to school until fever, diarrhea and/or vomiting has stopped **for a full 24 hours**, without the aid of medication. Prescribed antibiotic medications for infectious diseases are to be given for 24 hours prior to return.

NCLB PARENT NOTICE OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS:

In compliance with the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind* statute, FCS informs parents/guardians that they may request information about the professional qualifications of their student's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- 1) Whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2) Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- 3) The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- 4) Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If parents/guardians wish to request information concerning their child's teacher's qualification, contact the Human Resources Department at 770.887.2461 [Section 1111(h)(6)]

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES:

Parent-Teacher-Student conferences are highly encouraged. Consistent, positive contact between the home and school helps to create a climate of trust and enhances student opportunities for academic and personal success. Fall and spring early-release days facilitate the opportunity for large numbers of conferences. If desired, a parent may contact a teacher or team to request a phone conference or personal conference at a mutually agreed upon time throughout the year.

PROMOTION-RETENTION:

County promotion standards require students to pass four out of five academic classes, including foreign language or literacy class. Connections classes are also considered in promotion/retention reviews. The state of Georgia also requires 8th grade students to pass the CRCT math and reading sections for promotion to high school. Eighth grade students not passing the CRCT math and reading sections will be recommended for summer school and required to pass the CRCT retest. If student does not meet standards on CRCT retest, a committee composed of the student's teacher(s), a counselor, and an administrator will meet and determine the most appropriate grade placement for each retention candidate.

REGOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:

Students are recognized throughout the year through various programs such as:

- All A's
- Monthly Attendance Recognition
- Rising Star
- Viper VIPs
- End of Year Honors Night

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS AND ADDRESS CHANGES:

Proof of residence is required when a student initially enrolls in a school, when entering grades K, 6 and 9, and whenever indication of a change of residence occurs. Change of Address forms are available at the school or at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/registration .

In the event of an address change, the Registration Center staff, principal or principal's designee shall accept the following records as proof of residency:

1. A current utility bill (gas, electric, water, telephone, or cable) *and* a current and valid lease or rental agreement signed by the owner of the residence. Records must include the name and address of the parent/guardian.

OR

2. A current utility bill (gas, electric, water, telephone, or cable) *and* one of the following documents establishing home ownership – deed, closing statement, mortgage statement, or property tax statement. Records must include the name and address of the parent/guardian.

OR

3. A Forsyth County Schools Affidavit of Residency, if a parent/guardian is unable to provide the records listed above. The notarized affidavit shall be completed and signed by the parent/guardian, as well as the legal owner or landlord of the property where the student and parent/guardian reside. The affidavit will be in effect until the parent/guardian provides proof of residence as required by the Forsyth County Board of Education.

A school system representative may visit the address given by any parent/guardian to verify residency.

A family that rents a home in Forsyth County, while owning a home in another county or in a different school attendance zone within Forsyth County solely for the purpose of proving residence for their children to attend school in Forsyth County will be considered in violation of this policy. Students who are illegally enrolled shall be immediately withdrawn. Violations of this policy may be pursued in court.

In cases of separation or divorce, the student will be deemed a resident of the parent/guardian who is indicated in legal agreement or the court's final decree to have physical custody. In cases of joint physical custody by parents, the student will be deemed to be a resident with the parent/guardian with whom the student resides overnight during the majority of the school week.

SCHOOL CLOSING /EARLY DISMISSAL/ DELAYED OPENING:

Parents are requested to make arrangements in advance for taking care of their children when schools are closed for emergency reasons. The plans should include arrangements for school closings; delayed openings and early dismissals. The school system may notify parents and guardians three ways:

1. School system website (www.forsyth.k12.ga.us)
2. Automated voice service at (770) 887-2461
3. Local and metro radio and television stations

School Closing Information: School closings will be announced as described above before 5:30 a.m. For info on closing/delaying school, see the school system website www.forsyth.k12.ga.us

Delayed Opening Information: Delayed openings will be announced as described above before 6:00 a.m. All school and school system operations will be delayed two hours. Busses will run two hours later. School schedules will be altered at the discretion of the principal. Breakfast will not be served. Lunch will be served at or about the regular time. Dismissal will be at the regular time.

Early Dismissal Information: Early dismissals will be announced as described above. In the event of inclement weather, notification will be as soon as the decision is made. In the event of a school crisis, parents will be notified after the safety and security of students is assured.

SCHOOL SAFETY:

Campus Crime Stoppers: Students are encouraged to report information about weapons, drugs, threats of violence or other dangerous or harmful situations to the principal, an assistant principal, a teacher or another trusted adult. Anonymous TIPS can also be reported to FCS' Crime Stoppers by one of three ways.

1. ANONYMOUS TEXT message to "crimes" (274637) and begin your message with "FCSS."
2. ANONYMOUS Web tip at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/crime
3. Call the ANONYMOUS tip line at 770-205-4625

Anonymous reports can also be made by calling the State of Georgia School Safety Hotline Number, 1-877-SAY-STOP (1-877-729-7867). Callers will not be asked to reveal their identity.

STUDENT SEARCHES:

Student cars brought on campus, student book bags, and school lockers, desks and other school property shall be subject to inspection and search by school authorities at all times without further notice to students or parents. FCS reserves the right to use "walk-through" and "hand-held" metal detectors and "drug or weapon sniffing" dogs at school and during any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus. Students are notified that these metal detectors will be used at the discretion of administrators.

STAYING AFTER SCHOOL:

Students are not allowed to stay on campus after school hours unless they have permission from a VCMS teacher, coach, or administrator, or are staying for a school-sponsored event.

Students remaining at school are the direct responsibility of the teacher, coach, or administrator granting permission to stay after school. Students should also be aware that proper behavior is expected in order to retain the privilege of attending after-school events. If student behavior warrants removal from the event, no refund will be provided.

To retain social and other after-school privileges, students must be picked up promptly. This includes school-sponsored activities such as competitive athletic and scholastic events, practices, club activities, dances, etc. Repeated failure to be picked up on time may result in the loss of after school activities. Similar action will be taken for students who choose to remain on campus but are not attending a specific event.

Students who serve ISS, OSS or are absent are not allowed to attend after-school activities on that day.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES:

A teacher, principal, counselor or parent/guardian may recommend students for referral to special services. Initial evaluation for special education services are administered only with parental permission. After the evaluation is completed, a staff meeting (including parents/guardians, teachers, counselor, administrator and the school psychologist) will determine the student's eligibility; and if appropriate, placement for special education services will be made.

Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/ or students with the following rights:

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Revised by GaDOE 2-13-12

Section 504 Procedural Safeguards

1. Overview: 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 the written Request for Hearing.

2. Hearing Request: The Request for the Hearing must include the following:

- a. The name of the student.
- b. The address of the residence of the student.
- c. The name of the school the student is attending.
- d. The decision that is the subject of the hearing.
- e. The requested reasons for review.
- f. The proposed remedy sought by the grievant.
- g. The name and contact information of the grievant.

Within 10 business days from receiving the grievant's Request for Hearing, the Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request for Hearing does not contain the necessary information noted above, the Section 504 Coordinator will inform the grievant of the specific information needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will be stayed until the Request for Hearing contains the necessary information noted above.

3. Mediation: The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues detailed by the grievant in his or her Request for Hearing. Mediation is voluntary and both the grievant and school system must agree to participate. The grievant may terminate the mediation at any time. If the mediation is terminated without an agreement, the school system will follow the procedures for conducting an impartial hearing without an additional Request for Hearing.

4. Hearing Procedures:

- a. The Section 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official who will conduct a hearing within 45 calendar days from the receipt of the grievant's Request for Hearing unless agreed to otherwise by the grievant or a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
- b. Upon a showing of good cause by the grievant or school system, the impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may grant a continuance and set a new hearing date. The request for a continuance must be in writing and copied to the other party.
- c. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.
- d. The grievant will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel at his or her own expense at the hearing and participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If the grievant is to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, he or she must inform the Section 504 Coordinator of that fact in writing at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify the Section 504 Coordinator in writing of representation by legal counsel shall constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.
- e. The grievant will have the burden of proving any claims he or she may assert. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the recipient to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A recipient shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the recipient unless it is demonstrated by the recipient that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R. §104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.
- f. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.
- g. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence based on its reliability and probative value.
- h. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
- i. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.

j. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.

k. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the recipient. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the recipient.

l. Unless otherwise required by law, the impartial review official shall uphold the action of school system unless the grievant can prove that a preponderance of the evidence supports his or her claim.

m. Failure of the grievant to appear at a scheduled hearing unless prior notification of absence was provided and approved by the impartial review official or just cause is shown shall constitute a waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the impartial review official.

5. Decision: The impartial review official shall issue a written determination within 20 calendar days of the date the hearing concluded. The determination of the impartial review official shall not include any monetary damages or the award of any attorney's fees.

6. Review: If not satisfied with the decision of the impartial review official, any party may pursue any right of review, appeal, cause of action or claim available to them under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

Georgia Special Needs Scholarship:

Parents/guardians of students who receive special education services in FCS have the option to exercise public and private school choice. Under a State law passed by the Georgia State Legislature in 2007, parents/guardians of students who receive special education may choose to transfer their child to another public school or private school in Georgia. Parents/guardians must be current residents of Georgia and have been residents for one year.

Special Needs Public School Choice Options:

A parent/guardian can request a transfer to another public school within their school system as long as there is available space at that school and the school has a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program (IEP). If the parent/guardian chooses this option, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the school.

The parent/guardian may request a transfer to a school in another school system if there is available space and the system and school have a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program. If a school system accepts the child, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the school in that system.

The parent/guardian may also request a transfer to one of the State schools for the deaf and /or blind operated by the State Board of Education. Acceptance into a State school will depend on whether or not that setting is appropriate for the student's needs. If the parent/guardian chooses this option, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the State school. Please contact the Georgia Department of Education for more information about transferring to a State school.

Special Needs Private School Choice Option:

Parents/guardians interested in transferring their child to a private school in Georgia may be able to take advantage of a Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. These scholarships provide funding that can be used to offset tuition costs at participating private schools in the State of Georgia. For more information on the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship and the parent application process, visit the Georgia Department of Education's website at <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/default.aspx>

TEENAGE AND ADULT DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY ACT:

This law mandates the school system to report non-compliant students **14-17 years old** for the purpose of denying or suspending the driver's license. A non-compliant student is defined as one who has:

1. Dropped out of school without graduating and has remained out of school for ten consecutive days;
2. Ten or more school days of unexcused absences in the current or previous academic year; or
3. Been found in violation by a hearing officer, panel or tribunal of one of the following offenses, has received a change in placement for committing one of the following offenses, or has waived his or her right to a hearing and pleaded guilty to one of the following offenses:
 - a. Threatening, striking, or causing bodily harm to a teacher or other school personnel;
 - b. Possession (internal or external) or sale of drugs or alcohol on school property; or
 - c. Possession or use of a weapon on school property (For the purpose of reporting non-compliance under this Act only, the term "weapon" shall be defined in accordance with O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1 but shall not include any part of an archeological or cultural exhibit brought to school in connection with a school project),
 - d. Any sexual offense (including sexual touching) prohibited under O.C.G.A. Chapter 6 of Title 16; or
 - e. Causing substantial physical or visible bodily harm to or seriously disfiguring another person, including another student.

TELEPHONE USE:

Phone calls by students from the office will only be made in the case of an emergency. Likewise, phone calls from a child's parent to make special arrangements will only be approved by administration in the case of an emergency. Failure to make prior arrangements to stay after school or bring necessary materials to school does not constitute an emergency.

The school nurse will notify a parent/ guardian, or allow the student to call from the front office if illness warrants such a call.

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be in OFF mode and kept out of sight during the school day and while riding the bus unless permission has been granted by a teacher or administrator. Confiscated items will only be returned to parents. Consequences include warning, detention, ISS, OSS, and tribunal.

TEST DATES: ITBS, WRITING ASSESSMENT, CRCT:

CogAT	6th Grade only	September 10-11, 2012
MGWA (Middle Grades Writing Assessment)	7 th & 8 th Grades	January 23, 2013
CRCT (Criterion Referenced Competency Test)	6th-7th-8th	April 10 – 18, 2013
EOCT	8 th Accelerated Math only	May 6, 2013
	All 8 th Grade Science students	May 13 &14, 2013
NAEP (Nat'l Assessment of Educational Progress)	8th Grade only	TBA

TEXTBOOKS:

The Forsyth County School System supplies textbooks required for instruction free of charge. However, this is a loan. Students are expected to return texts in reasonable condition, or they will be charged a lost or damage fee. Payment for lost or damaged books is the responsibility of the student and his/her parent or guardian. The cost for each textbook is stated in each class syllabus and cost ranges from \$40-\$60 per textbook.

VISITORS:

For students' safety, all visitors must report to the school office and sign in upon arrival to campus. Badges will be issued to visitors and must be worn while on campus. Students are not allowed to bring visiting friends or relatives to school with them during a regular school day. Please see page 5 for more information about classroom and school visits by parents.

WITHDRAWALS:

Withdrawal of a student is conducted by the counseling office. The parent/guardian who enrolled the student is expected to accompany the student to withdraw. Any fees owed are expected to be paid at this time. Copies of any requested grading or testing information that is needed for registration at the new school will be provided at this time.

To be in compliance with No Child Left Behind Act, the FCSS will facilitate the transfer of discipline records to any public school or private school in which a student is enrolled or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll on a full or part-time basis in the school.

NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND ELIGIBLE STUDENT OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) AND THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA):

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (the “Act”), parents/guardians have a right to:

4. Inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the education records of a student who is their child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older, or those who are emancipated, their own education records. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to their principal a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and provide notice of such arrangements.
5. 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, parent/guardian 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 parent/guardian 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.
6. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure without 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 an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a member of the school board; a person with whom 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.
7. File with the United States Department of Education a complaint under 20 S.F.R. 99.64 concerning the alleged failures by the Forsyth 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, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

FERPA Directory Information Notice:

FCS has designated the following information as directory information:

4. Student’s name, address and telephone number;
5. Student’s date and place of birth;
6. Student’s participation in official school clubs and sports;
7. Weight and height of student if he/she is a member of an athletic team;
8. Dates of attendance at FCS; and
9. Awards received during the time enrolled in FCS.

Unless a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. In addition, two federal laws require school systems receiving federal financial assistance to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the name, address, and telephone numbers unless parents/guardians have advised the school system that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent. Parents/guardians have the right to refuse to allow the above information to be designated as directory information and to refuse to allow it to be disclosed to the public upon request without your prior written consent. If parents/guardians wish to exercise this right (Opt-Out), they must notify the principal of the school, in writing, within 10 days of the first day of school or of their enrollment date.

Parents/guardians are also notified that from time to time students may be photographed, video taped, or interviewed by the news media at school or some school activity or event; unless a parent/guardian objects in writing to their student being photographed video taped or interviewed, to the principal of the school where their student is enrolled. Parents/guardians must notify the principal of their objection by the date specified above. The principal will take reasonable steps to control the media's access to students. However, parent/guardian submission of a written objection does not constitute a guarantee that their student will not be interviewed in circumstances which are not within the knowledge or control of the principal.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) Notice:

No student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program), without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student.

A parent/guardian of a student may, upon request, inspect any survey created by a third party containing one or more of the items listed as (1) through (8) above before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student and may choose to opt the student out of participation in the survey. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for: (1) granting a request by a parent/guardian for reasonable access to such survey within a reasonable period of time after the request is received, and (2) making arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of the administration or distribution of a survey to a student containing one or more of the items listed as (1) through (8). The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A parent/guardian of a student may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for granting a request by a parent/guardian parent for reasonable access to instructional material within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the administration of physical examinations or screenings that the school may administer to students. This notice shall offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to opt the student out of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is (1) required as a condition of attendance; (2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and (3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students.

The parent/guardian parent of a student shall be notified prior to the commencement of activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information (or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose). Such notice shall offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to inspect, upon request, any

instrument used in the collection of such information before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student and to opt the student out of such activities. The Superintendent shall develop procedures that: (1) make arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of such collection, disclosure, or use, and (2) grant a request by a parent/guardian for reasonable access to such instrument within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

NCLB PARENT NOTICE OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS:

In compliance with the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind* statute, FCS informs parents/guardians that they may request information about the professional qualifications of their student's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- 5) Whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 6) Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- 7) The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- 8) Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If parents/guardians wish to request information concerning their child's teacher's qualification, contact the Human Resources Department at 770.887.2461 [Section 1111(h)(6)]

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS:

A parent can request a transfer to another public school within their school system as long as there is available space at that school and the school has a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program. If the parent chooses this option, then the parent shall be responsible for transportation to the school.

The parent may request a transfer to a school in another school system if there is available space and the system and school have a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program. A school system accepts the child, then the parent shall be responsible for transportation to the school in that system.

The parent may also request a transfer to one of the state schools for the deaf and /or blind operated by the State Board of Education. Acceptance into a state school will depend if that setting is appropriated for the student's needs. If the parent chooses this option, then the parent shall be responsible for transportation to the state school. Please contact the Georgia Department of Education for more information about transferring to a State School.

If you are interested in transferring your child to a private school in Georgia, you may be able to take advantage of a Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. These scholarships provide funding that can be used to offset tuition costs at participating private schools in the state of Georgia. For more information on Georgia Special Needs Scholarship and the parent application process, please visit the Georgia Department of Education's website at <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/sb10.aspx>

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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) years of age or older, or those who are emancipated, your own education records. Parents or eligible students should submit to your principal a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal 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 disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure without 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 an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a member of the school board; a person with whom 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. File with the United States Department of Education a complaint under 20 S.F.R. 99.64 concerning the alleged failures by the Forsyth County Board of Education to comply with the requirements of the Act or the regulations promulgated thereunder. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND NETWORK RESOURCES **(GUIDELINES):**

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

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

Students are only allowed to utilize the computers and network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their teacher. Students are not permitted to explore the configuration of the computer, operating system or network, run programs not on the menu, or attempt to do anything they are not specifically authorized to do.

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

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

Safety Issues:

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

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

- A. Accessing, sending, creating or posting materials or communications that are damaging to another person's reputation; abusive; obscene; sexually oriented; threatening or demeaning to another person; contrary to the school's policy on harassment; harassing or illegal.

- B. Using the network for financial gain or advertising.
- C. Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without their consent.
- D. Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages.
- E. Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other system users.
- F. Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bankcard or checking account information.
- G. Using the school's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music or images, or violation of copyright laws.
- H. Downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware or any other unauthorized program on any school's computer or computer system.
- I. Purposely bringing on premises or infecting any school computer or network with a program designed to damage, alter, destroy or provide access to unauthorized data or information.
- J. Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person.
- K. Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account.
- L. Using the school's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended.
- M. Using the school's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with a teacher's directions and generally accepted network etiquette.
- N. Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software.
- O. Attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any network or computer component.
- P. Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by their teacher or inconsistent with school policy.
- Q. Providing another student with user account information or passwords.
- R. Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which are not school system property or in the district's technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel. Students are permitted to connect to the district network via the secure wireless connection provided by the school system, but all access must be in accordance with this Acceptable Use Policy. Students are NOT permitted to use their own computing devices to access the Internet via personal Wi-Fi accounts or by any manner other than connecting through the secure wireless connection provided by the school system.
- S. Bringing on premises any computer, disk or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data.
- T. Downloading or accessing via e-mail or file sharing, any software or programs not specifically authorized by Technology personnel.
- U. Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies.
- V. Possessing or accessing information on school property related to "Hacking", or altering, or bypassing network security or policies.
- W. Participating on message boards without teacher direction, or in live chat using but not limited to AIM, Yahoo, or MSN Messenger.
- X. Students should follow the guidelines below when performing Internet searches at school.

Middle: Students in grades 6-8 may only perform unsupervised Internet searches using a student safe search engine (such as netTrekker). A search using any other search engine must be conducted with teacher supervision.

*This is a **copy** of the Student User Agreement for Internet Access. The actual form was included in each student's Information Packet received at Open House or upon entering school.

Internet access is not provided until the signed form is returned to the school administration.

Internet Access Agreement



The classroom computers for Forsyth County Schools are connected to a school-wide network that is linked to the Internet. I understand that a variety of inappropriate and offensive materials are available over the Internet and that it may be possible for my child to access those materials if he/she chooses to act irresponsibly. The school system will be able to block access to a large percentage of the inappropriate sites using an Internet screen system called WebSENSE. However, it is impossible to block access to all objectionable material. If a student decides to intentionally circumvent the Internet screening system, they may be able to access sites that contain inappropriate materials. Parents, therefore, must participate in the decision whether to allow their children access to the Internet and must communicate their personal expectations about the appropriate use of Internet resources to their children.

Access Agreement

I understand that Internet access from our school system is designed for educational purposes and that the school system will discourage and attempt to block access to objectionable material and communications that are intended to exploit, harass or abuse individuals. I understand that any conduct by my child that is in conflict with the appropriate use of the Internet may result in loss of Internet access privileges and/or disciplinary action.

Parent/Guardian: (Check one of the following)

- I have read and fully understand the contents of the appropriate use of the Internet by students. I have explained these rules to my child and request that he/she be allowed to use the school's Internet link for educational purposes.
- I do not wish for my child to have Internet access. It is my understanding that they will be given an alternative instructional activity.

Student's Name (print) _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

Student:

I understand and will abide by the appropriate use policy for the school system's Internet link. I understand that any violation of the policy may result in loss of Internet access privileges and/or disciplinary action.

Student's Name (print) _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____

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