

# Madison County Board Of Education

## Certified Personnel Handbook: 2022-2023

Updated 07/01/2022

**It is the policy of the Madison County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age religion, creed or disability in educational programs and activities, admission to facilities, or employment practices. (GAAA)**

It is not the intent or purpose of this handbook to answer all the questions that may arise for the educator. It may, however, serve as a guide to the major issues that come into question. It is the responsibility of the educator to become familiar with this handbook and to explore other sources of information when needed. In most instances each school issues a school level handbook. A Madison County Board of Education Policy is available on line at the system web site, [www.madison.k12.ga.us](http://www.madison.k12.ga.us). By going to this site and clicking "Board of Education" and then the "Simbli" link, you will find links to local Board of Education policy and state legislation. In this handbook policy codes (i.e. GAAA for the non-discrimination statement as shown above) are shown for your reference. State laws are referenced by their code (e.g. 20-2-210 for Evaluations). The school system has the right to change policies, practices and benefits. The policies and guidelines in this handbook are references only and do not replace or extend official existing policies.

### MADISON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Madison County Board of Education is composed of five members elected from each of the county's educational districts. The officers of the Madison County Board of Education are a chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. By Georgia law the Superintendent serves as secretary for the Board. Three members constitute a quorum. Madison County Board of Education regular meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month in the Professional Learning Center of the BOE Office. Current members of the Madison County Board of Education are as follows:

|                   |  |                   |   |                   |   |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| <b>District 1</b> | Dr. Robert Hooper,<br>Chair<br>P.O. Box 589<br>Ila, GA 30647<br>(706) 336-8808   | <b>District 2</b> | Ms. Angie McGinnis<br>2810 Macedonia<br>Church Road,<br>Danielsville, GA<br>30633<br>(706) 540-0404 | <b>District 3</b> | Ms. Cindy Nash,<br>Vice Chair<br>1228 Virginia Lane<br>Hull, GA 30646<br>(706) 549-1279 |
| <b>District 4</b> | Mr. Bryon Lee<br>3084 Duffel Martin<br>Road<br>Comer, GA 30629<br>(706) 338-3174 | <b>District 5</b> | Ms. Brenda Moon<br>767 Hardman<br>Morris Road<br>Colbert, GA 30628<br>(706) 224-0670                |                   |   |

## STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The basic premise of the philosophy of the Madison County School System is graduating independent, productive citizens. Each student possesses those qualities and characteristics necessary to become a productive and successful individual. It is the goal of the school to provide each student with the maximum opportunity to realize his/her or their full potential.

A second premise upon which our philosophy is based is the need to relate to the whole student. While academics and intellectual development of the student are our primary concerns, the social and emotional development cannot be ignored. All areas of growth must be stimulated and guided to reach mature levels of development.

It is also the belief of the school system that to reach the highest level of achievement in these areas requires the commitment and close cooperation of the school, the student, the parent and the community. Teachers and administrators, as the immediate representative of the school, have the responsibility of always demonstrating a professional, caring attitude in interactions with the student and the parent.

## INSTRUCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Working with students in Madison County Schools is a privilege. The students we serve deserve the best we have to offer. As a district we must be united in how we serve our students and families. There are instructional expectations that all staff must understand and agree to before they commit to employment in Madison County. Our mission is to **graduate independent, productive citizens**. All expectations are research-based and will support our collective efforts to provide all students the opportunity to achieve their best.

**If you work in the Madison County School System you are expected to:**

- Provide a standards-based classroom environment for all students with clear expectations.
- Implement GSE standards in ELA, Math; Science and Social Studies. Implement Literacy standards in Science, Social Studies and CTAE.
- Communicate and actively use standards for teaching by teachers and learning by students.
- Ensure that students can communicate what they are expected to know, understand, and do. Provide timely feedback to students and communicate with parents regarding what students should know, understand and do.
- Participate in the administration of and review of benchmarks or other common assessments.
- Agree not to reveal the content of benchmark or common assessments to students prior to testing.
- Participate in data team meetings to inform student progress, improve instruction, and help struggling students.
- Participate in the Response to Intervention (RTI) process to serve struggling students.
- Review IEP and 504 plans for students and provide accommodations and/or modifications as indicated.

- Be willing to seek help; we are a community of continuous learners, and the journey is never over.
- Participate fully in the Teacher Keys Evaluation System.
- Participate in the development and monitoring of the annual school improvement plan (i.e., surveys, system and school committees, implementation, and program evaluation).
- Participate in the system's annual strategic planning update, the periodic CASI-SACS review and other initiatives, which help to target the needs of the system so that the school system can better serve schools, students, and families.
- Follow system-developed curriculum maps, pacing guides, and assessment maps.
- Participate in Professional Learning Communities at the school and system level to better understand student learning and achievement.
- Participate in collaborative planning meetings to review and discuss curriculum unit plans prior to and following teaching.
- Participate in and support the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program at the school and system levels.
- Accept responsibility for the system as a whole, understanding that each classroom is part of the school, and the school is part of the system; we are not a system of schools, rather a school system for Madison County students.
- Work collaboratively with parents and guardians of the students we serve; the school-home partnership is critical for student success.

Madison County's Instructional Expectations are considered part of the employee evaluation process which is done each year.

### **CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT (GBA)**

All new certified employees must have a Criminal Background Check. Additionally, a complete fingerprint and background check through the GCIC and FBI are required for all new certified employees. In accordance with state law, new hires will be issued a temporary contract, not to exceed 200-days, which may be extended for the entire school term pending results of fingerprinting and background checks.

The following documents must be on file at the Board of Education Office:

- 1) Certified employees are issued an electronic contract, a signed copy of which must be on file in the Superintendent's Office stored electronically.
- 2) A copy of a current Teacher Certificate must be on file in the Superintendent's Office. CERTIFIED PERSONNEL ASSUME ALL CERTIFICATION RESPONSIBILITY.
- 3) A copy of your college transcript may be requested for GAPSC certification.
- 4) Federal and State Tax Forms will be completed at the time of employment.
- 5) If it is your first year in the Madison County School System and you have worked in another school system, you must complete a verification form available at the County Office.
- 6) Criminal Background Check (GAK(1))

1. The CBC consists of two parts, the Criminal History Records Check (CHRI) and fingerprinting. Both must be done in Madison County. This information is not transferable between school system.
  2. It is the responsibility of the employee to promptly report to his supervisor any arrest or charge brought against him during his employment with the school system.
- 7) I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification. The school system participates in E-Verify.
- 8) Drug screening must be completed after the offer of a position and before an employee begins work.

### **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS (OCGA 20-2-211)**

OCGA 20-2-211 requires criminal background checks for all school employees at the time they are hired and periodically thereafter. CBCs must be done in Madison County. This information is not transferable from other systems and agencies. The CBC consists of two parts: 1) Criminal History Record Information, completed at the 911 Office in Danielsville; 2) Forms are to be returned to the Human Resources Office for Processing and 3) fingerprinting, completed in the Human Resources Office located at 800 Madison Street, Danielsville, GA 30633.

### **OFF-DUTY CONDUCT (OCGA 20-2-984.2)**

Employees are expected to comply with all local, state, and federal laws. Except for minor traffic violations (N.B. Driving Under the Influence and Driving While Intoxicated are not considered minor violations.) employees shall report to their immediate supervisor any violation which results in an indictment, arrest, or conviction, including misconduct adjudicated under first offender status. Such report shall be made within five days of the violation. Failure to report shall subject the employee to possible disciplinary action, up to and including possible dismissal.

### **CERTIFICATION**

The State Department of Education, Professional Standards Commission, issues certificates. The employee of any school system must meet the criteria of the State Department before a certificate is issued. Certificates must be renewed each five years. Forms for renewal of certification are available from the Board office or may be downloaded from the Professional Standards Commission website ([www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com)). Application for renewal may be made beginning in October of the year the certificate expires.

Certified employees:

- 1) must have criminal record checks each time the certificate is renewed by the PSC. OCGA 20-2-211 (e);
- 2) an individual who has received two unsatisfactory annual performance evaluations in the previous five-year period shall not be entitled to a renewable certificate prior to demonstrating that such performance deficiency has been satisfactorily addressed. The individual may apply for a nonrenewable certificate. OCGA 20-2-200 (b)(8)

You may contact the Human Resources Director, Dr. Kelly King, at the Board Office for questions relating to certification. Certification questions can also be answered by logging on to the Professional Standards Commission website at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com). The creation of a MyPSC account on this website is highly recommended.

### **CONTRACTS (GBA)**

Professional employee contracts are renewed annually. Upon approval by the BOE the superintendent will instruct that the contracts be issued to all approved personnel. Once these contracts are distributed, each individual has approximately two weeks to return their contract to their principal. The employee has the option to request an extension. The extension must be requested in writing and must be approved by the principal and superintendent. This contract must be dated and signed. Contracts are issued for one year and renewed each year. If not

returning, an employee should return a written declination of the contract. Notice of non-renewal must be given to the employee by May 15.

Contracts may be terminated by mutual agreement of the employee and the system or by dismissal for cause.

A teacher is considered to be a tenured employee upon the reception of a fourth contract. When the employee signs a fourth contract, he is considered to be a tenured employee by the school system. An employee who has received tenure in another Georgia school system may earn tenure in a new system upon accepting a second contract. An employee may not earn tenure in a specific position, but only in employment with the system.

### **TRANSFERS (GBM)**

Contracts of employment are between the individual and the Board of Education. Personnel may be transferred at the discretion of the Superintendent and other administrators to serve the best interest of the students, employee, and school system.

If an employee is interested in transferring to another school or position, they can apply for any position they feel qualified for when they are posted in our jobs vacancy system on the system website. As a professional courtesy, an employee should always make their current supervisor aware of their desire to transfer.

### **RELEASE FROM CONTRACT/RESIGNATIONS (GBO)**

Any certified employee desiring to be released from his or her contract of employment with the Madison County Board of Education during the term of the contract for the current school year or after signing a contract for the subsequent school year should (1) discuss the request with the principal/supervisor and (2) submit a written request to the superintendent and Board of Education through the principal/supervisor to be released from the contract. The position of the administration and the Board of Education is to release a contracted employee only if a suitable replacement can be employed in a timely fashion.

Any certified employee who plans to leave the system at the end of the contract for the current school term should (1) discuss the decision with the principal/supervisor, and (2) submit a written resignation or declination of offered contract to the superintendent and Board of Education through the principal/supervisor. An employee who fails to submit a resignation for consideration and leaves their position will have a recommendation made to the Professional Standards Commission to revoke his/her teaching certificate in accordance with State Board policies.

The superintendent will make a recommendation concerning requests/resignations to the Board of Education and the employee will be notified in writing concerning the decision of the Board.

### **SALARY (GAK)**

All personnel will be paid monthly. Checks or direct deposit transactions will be issued on the last working day of each month. Checks will be mailed to personnel not on direct deposit during summer months. Employees must complete the proper form, available in your ESS account, and provide account numbers for direct deposit. Salaries are calculated by using the Madison County Certified salary schedule. Salaries are based on years teaching experience and type of certificate held. The salary schedule can be found on our website. **It is especially important that each staff member's correct mailing address be filed in the central office. Any changes should be submitted immediately in your ESS account. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide notification through ESS of any changes of name, address, or withholding tax information.** Notice of change must be submitted before the payroll cutoff date effective that month.

Changes to tax status may be made at any time by completing a G-4 Form (State) or a W-4 Form (Federal) in your ESS account. Forms must be turned in to the payroll clerk by the cutoff date for the change to be reflected on the current month's payroll.

### **DEDUCTIONS (GAL)**

The following deductions are mandatory for the employees specified:

**Social Security** - All employees are required to participate. Required contributions of 7.65% of salary will be deducted monthly. The Madison County Board of Education pays a matching amount for all employees.

**Georgia Teacher Retirement** - All professional personnel, paraprofessionals, clerical staff, nurses, and technology are required to participate in the Georgia Teacher Retirement System. Supervisors may elect to participate in TRS. Employee contributions of 6% of salary will be deducted monthly. The Madison County Board of Education contributes 19.98% of salary to the individual's retirement fund each month.

**State and Federal Taxes** - all employees are subject to state and federal income tax withholding.

### **BENEFITS**

The Madison County Board of Education extends to each employee a variety of benefits. Details of these benefits may be found in your benefit guide at [www.madisoncountybenefits.com](http://www.madisoncountybenefits.com) or on the district website under Staff Resources>Quick Links.

#### **Organization dues:**

Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE)

Georgia Association of Educators (GAE)

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR RETIREMENT**

Teacher retirement information is available upon request through the central office or online at [www.trsga.com](http://www.trsga.com).

**Service Retirement** - Active members may retire and elect to receive monthly retirement benefits after completion of 30 years of creditable service regardless of age, or after completing 10 years of creditable service and attainment of age 60. Effective July 1, 1992, there is a 25-year option available for those who have attained age 55. A member who retires before reaching age 62 or with less than 30 years of service is retiring early. Benefits will vary based on age and years of creditable service.

**Disability Retirement** - An individual is eligible to apply for retirement under the disability provision of the law if he or she has at least 9 1/2 years of creditable service and is permanently disabled.

Additional information is available on the Teacher Retirement System website [www.trsga.com](http://www.trsga.com).

### **CREDIT UNION**

The Georgia United Credit Union is open to all employees, spouses, and immediate family members. Payroll deduction is available for shares and loan payments. Contact Georgia United Credit Union, at 1-888-493-4328, for more information concerning credit union services.

Athens Branch  
190 Gaines School Road  
Athens, GA 30605

## **ATTENDANCE, LEAVE AND ABSENCES (GBRH)**

This system recognizes that the staff of our school system can have a positive impact on student attendance by example. Not only will our good attendance set an example for children, more importantly, the presence of a classroom teacher and other support staff everyday will allow the students to take advantage of all we can offer.

Punctual regular attendance is expected of all employees. Employees are expected to keep accurate time records. Failure to meet this job requirement may result in disciplinary action, ranging from, but not limited to, verbal warning, written reprimand, or dismissal. Those terminated for such cause may not be eligible for the benefits of unemployment insurance. (Paragraph added Sept. 26, 2005)

Sick leave is earned at the rate of 1 ¼ days per month. Should it be necessary to be absent, your supervisor should be notified as soon as possible. Prior to the absence, complete the electronic leave form and forward it to your supervisor for approval. **The supervisor may require a doctor's certificate to substantiate a personal illness claim for sick leave or to substantiate fitness to continue or return to work.**

All ten-month employees may use three days as personal leave. Eleven-month employees may use 3 ½ days as personal leave. Twelve-month employees may use 4 days as personal leave. **The supervisor must approve personal leave in advance.** Personal leave request shall be submitted by the employee in writing to their supervisor for approval or disapproval. These request should be submitted three workdays before the date of the request. Personal days not used are carried forward to the next year as sick leave. Employees may use allotted personal leave days for religious observances of that employee's faith. In the event of a death in the employee's immediate family (spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or any relative living in the employee's household) a maximum of five consecutive leave days may be taken.

All leave is recorded at the individual school and reported to the central office. Employees will have the opportunity to verify leave reports and sign them before they are submitted to the central office for processing. Misrepresentation by an employee as to the purpose or necessity of any leave is a violation of policy and may result in disciplinary action or referral to the Madison County Board of Education and/or the Professional Standards Commission.

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA) (GBRIG)**

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Eligibility: | <i>To be eligible for FMLA Leave a MCBOE employee must –</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. have worked for the employer for at least 12 months</li><li>2. have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 months prior to the FMLA leave</li></ol>  |
| Entitlement: | <i>12 workweeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for 1 or more of the following reasons:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. birth of a child and to care for a newborn child, or placement of child for adoption of foster care and to care for the newly placed child;</li><li>2. your own serious health condition;</li><li>3. care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, parent – but not parent "in-law") with a serious health condition;</li><li>4. qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that your spouse, son or daughter, or parent is on active duty or call to active duty status in</li></ol> |

- support of a contingency operation as a member of the National Guard or Reserves; or
5. you are the spouse, son or daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness sustained in the line of duty on active duty. (Military caregiver leave is available for a total of 26 weeks in a 12 month period for all types of FMLA leave.)

Spouses employed by the same employer may be limited to a combined total of 12 workweeks of family leave. Leave time is deducted from earned leave.

Job Restoration: When returning from leave the employee must be restored to his/her previous job or an "equivalent" job (in regard to pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions).

Employee Notice: *Employees may be required to provide:*

1. 30 days advance notice if foreseeable;
2. notice "as soon as practicable" (usually 1-2 business days) when not foreseeable;
3. sufficient information for the employer to see the need for leave meets FMLA leave requirements;
4. if prior notice not given, timely (within 1-2 business days) notice that leave was used as FMLA leave and necessary information.

## **WORKER'S COMPENSATION AND ON-THE-JOB INJURIES**

You must follow correct procedures when reporting a work-related accident or injury. The most important thing to remember is to report the injury to your Principal/Supervisor AND school nurse immediately. If able, you must complete the proper Workers' Compensation forms immediately, before you leave the premises. The Official Notice regarding Workers' Compensation and information regarding your rights and responsibilities in the event of injury are posted in your building. It is important to read and follow these to ensure receiving benefits.

It is the policy of Madison County Board of Education to provide a safe and healthful workplace for all of our employees and to observe all applicable safety and health regulations. The Board and our employees have and will continue to maintain a safety and health program in which all employees follow safe work practices, are able to recognize unsafe conditions, and timely hazards control is achieved. Safety and health is a necessary part of each employee's job and active participation and adherence to this program is a condition of employment at our Board.

No employee is required to work at a job which is not safe. It is our goal to completely eliminate accidents and injuries at our workplace. Because of the many different potentially hazardous conditions associated with our industry, we must all maintain a constant safety and health awareness to achieve this goal.

Employees who fail to observe proper safety procedures or fail to promptly report potential hazards may be subject to disciplinary action, ranging from verbal warning to written reprimands to more serious action, including possible dismissal for repeated or serious violations. All dismissals would adhere to the guidelines of the Fair Dismissal Act (20-2-940) or other State and Federal requirements.

## **II. CLASSROOM AND BUILDING**

### **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

The system's chain of command is designed to promote the over-all effectiveness of school programs. If there is a question or problem to be resolved, staff at the school level shall follow the



chain of command established by their principal. The principal is directly responsible to the superintendent. System-wide personnel shall follow the chain of command established by their immediate supervisors.

### **SCHOOL DAY**

The school day for certified personnel is 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., unless otherwise adjusted for specific duties and/or responsibilities. These hours constitute an eight-hour day and a forty-hour week. Employees are to sign in and sign out daily to provide accurate records of service and leave.

### **LEAVING CAMPUS**

Employees will not leave the school campus during the workday without first making arrangements with the principal/supervisor or designee for the absence.

### **DRESS CODE (GBRL)**

Educators are professionals and are expected to dress as professionals. Faculty and staff should be properly and appropriately dressed while in school as well as during the performance of their duties in school sponsored activities. Proper and appropriate dress is based on community standards. Principals and other supervisors may formulate and enforce such reasonable rules as necessary to carry out this policy.

### **Dress Code**

As role models for the students in Madison County schools, all employees are expected to dress in a professional manner. In an effort to be reasonable and consistent in these expectations, committees of teaching staff and administrators were consulted in developing the following guidelines for instructional and support staff.

Items representative of those that would not be considered acceptable:

- Faded soiled or torn clothes of any description
- Blue denim jeans or shorts
- Tank tops
- Dresses or tops with spaghetti straps
- V Shaped Flip Flops that are shower or beach shoes
- Garments shorter than 2 inches above the top of the knee
- Garments that are too tight
- Garments that expose any part of the midriff
- Leggings/Jeggings, unless covered by a garment not shorter than 2 inches above the top of the knee
- Sweat suit, jogging/wind suits
- Sweatshirts and t-shirts that are not school, instructional or seasonal in nature
- Extremely low-cut dresses, blouses, and pants
- Overalls
- Backless blouses and dresses
- Blouses or dresses with plunging necklines and/or backs
- Shorts, except field day and select field trips (at principal's discretion)

The principal may be given discretion to make adaptations to the dress code in the following cases: caregivers, exceptional education teacher with certain caseloads and students, physical education teachers, teachers in special laboratory situations, field trips, field days, etc.

Physical education teachers are permitted to wear shorts and wind suits and **t-shirts that are school and instructionally related**. Lab coats and scrubs are encouraged for caregiver situations.

Additionally, principals have the discretion to designate "School Spirit Days" where one or more of the "requirements" may be waived. This does not mean that every Friday is automatically "Dress Down Day" and that all guidelines will be eliminated.

Occasionally, other situations may arise that, in the judgment of the principal, are in appropriate. The principal's judgment will prevail.

When the principal determines that any manner of dress is unbecoming, that principal will meet with the employee and explain that his or her dress does not meet guidelines and should be corrected immediately. Failure of the employee to heed the warning and abide by the guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

Principals at the middle and high school can be more restrictive, if needed.

### **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

We use the Frontline/AESOP Substitute Calling System to find substitutes for certified staff. Procedures for contacting a substitute teacher vary at the individual schools. The employee should become aware of the procedures determined at their school.

The teacher is responsible for leaving sufficient lesson plans for the substitute to use with all classes.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

In compliance with the law of the state of Georgia (20-2-310 c.1), all students will be afforded the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States each day. This opportunity will be given at the beginning of each day. Standing with the right hand over the heart, all students repeat together:

**"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. "**

### **MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION**

Each morning students will be afforded a moment of silence to reflect upon the anticipated activities of the day. (20-2-1050)

### **SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS (JGFB)**

Students assigned to a teacher must be supervised at all times by the teacher. In an emergency, the teacher in charge must see that arrangements are made for supervision. This is applicable while in class or at school approved activities.

No student is to be released from school to accompany any person not properly authorized to accept responsibility for the student. No teacher has the authority to release the student from school to run errands, to eat lunch off campus, or for any other reason. If an entire class is taken to meet in an area other than the normally assigned classroom (not including the media center or labs), the office should be notified.

**Classroom Management** - Teachers are encouraged to be assertive, pro-active managers who:

- 1) Develop reasonable classroom rules and implement them in a consistent manner.
- 2) Deal with students as individuals.
- 3) Believe in positive as well as negative consequences.
- 4) Conference regularly with students and parents concerning student behavior.
- 5) Check with school personnel and records to see if there is needed information about students to help with classroom management.
- 6) Follow the PBIS guidelines in your school

If after consistently implementing the above, there are students who disrupt the learning environment; the teacher should refer the students to the office. The school administration will make appropriate decisions and will notify the referring teacher. Additionally, Board policy JCDA outlines timelines and procedures for dealing with students who repeatedly and substantially interfere with instruction. Consistent with the directions of state law 20-2-738 and Board policy [JDF](#), teacher may remove disruptive students from their classrooms. Pending action by the administrator and/or a placement committee the student may be appropriately disciplined and returned to the class or removed from the class.

Teacher Authority – The Madison County Board of Education recognizes the importance of discipline in the classroom to create an effective learning environment. The authority of the teacher to remove disruptive students from the classroom is recognized in board policy and state statute 20-2-738.

**Student Disciplinary Tribunal** - The Madison County Board of Education authorizes the establishment of disciplinary tribunals to hear cases for which long-term suspension or expulsion may result for students.

**Threats of Violence and Bullying** – Being cognizant of the violence that has been all too common on school campuses in recent years, employees are encouraged to be aware of any behavior by students that might indicate the potential for violence. In particular, teachers should be aware of bullying which is defined as:

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

Any suspicion of possession of weapons or drug possession by a student should be immediately reported to an administrator for appropriate action.

**CONFIDENTIALITY (JR)**

As professionals, educators are aware of the legal requirements of confidentiality imposed on them in their positions. Because of the "need to know" certain information to adequately complete their duties, they may have access to various data, such as special education records, free-reduced price lunch lists, discipline records, etc. It is imperative that educators meet their legal, ethical, and moral responsibilities in handling these materials and information both at school and in the community.

School employees are to abide by state and federal regulations concerning student records to ensure student record confidentiality.

**Directory Record Information** - A parent has the right to object to publication of general interest directory information concerning their student by contacting the principal within ten days of enrolling the student. *Before releasing any student directory information*, administrators and teachers should determine if the parents have objected to release of information. The Madison County School District has designated the following information as directory information:

- 1) Student's name, address and telephone number;
- 2) Student's date and place of birth;
- 3) Student's participation of official school clubs and sports;
- 4) Weight and height of student if the student is a member of an athletic team;
- 5) Dates of attendance at the School System schools; and
- 6) Awards received during the time enrolled in Madison County School System.

**Academic Record Information** - Academic record information shall be such information as attendance records, standardized test results, records, or awards, etc. Only information that is based on objective, factual data of observations or student performance is maintained in student records. Records of a student are available to the student's parent or legal guardian. The rights accorded to parents shall be transferred to students attaining 18 years of age without affecting parental access to a dependent child's record. Access to student records in the absence of written parental consent shall be restricted to professional personnel in the normal function of the school or as approved by the superintendent, except for the following:

- 1) In the event that part or all of a student's records must be made available in compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, advance notice of such compliance shall be given to parents, guardians and students.
- 2) In the event of an emergency, appropriate persons shall be given access to student's records if knowledge of information therein is necessary to protect the health and safety of a student or other persons.
- 3) In questions of inaccuracy, misleading information, or information in violation of the privacy or rights of a student, the parent or eligible student shall be provided an opportunity for correction or deletion of said material in the student's records. The student's principal should be contacted concerning procedures for requesting these changes.
- 4) If a student seeks to enroll in another school outside the system, the student's records shall be sent within 15 days to the new school upon official request from that school.

*Students should **not** to be allowed to record grades, test scores, or other student information about other students.*

#### **EVALUATIONS (OCGA 20-2-210; GBI-R)**

State guidelines require that all school personnel be evaluated annually. The superintendent is evaluated by the Board of Education. He, in turn, evaluates administrative personnel. Building level administrators evaluate the employees in their buildings. The majority of certified staff at evaluated using the state adopted TKEs and LKEs program with an annual orientation.

Because of the proximity of our evaluations to the time to recommend personnel, it is easy to assume that the evaluation is solely for the purpose of determining if an employee will be recommended for a position for the next school year. This assumption would be a major misconception. The main purpose for the evaluation should be to identify strengths and weaknesses in an educator and thereby serve as a guide in efforts to enhance those strengths and remedy those weaknesses. In this latter respect, the motivation of the employee to change takes on the same vital role as the motivation of a student to learn. Given that the best motivation is "self motivation", each teacher should be directly involved in his/her assessment. To this end, the following procedures are suggested.

1. Become aware of the areas in which you will be evaluated. Information regarding the instrument under which you will be evaluated will be reviewed annually and additional information is available through your supervisor.
2. Objectively evaluate your own performance using the appropriate self-assessment form.
3. Request a pre-observation conference with the administrator if you have concerns about the evaluation.
4. Take advantage of the opportunity you will be given to discuss the evaluation.

You will be notified of changes or additions to the evaluation process during an orientation or up-date training session during pre-planning and as needed thereafter.  
Teacher Evaluation Appeals GBIA.

#### **USE OF TECHNOLOGY (IFBG)**

All certified employees are expected to develop skills using computers and other technology and to implement these in their assigned areas of responsibility. All Employees should become familiar with the policies of the Madison County Board of Education in the use of the network. The use of the network by system personnel are governed by these policies and require all personnel, as well as students and parents, to sign and maintain on file an "Network User Agreement." Employees should be familiar with and follow all Data Privacy policies and procedures. Failure to comply with these technology oriented policies will result in cancellation of the privilege and/or other possible action depending on the severity of the misuse.

#### **LESSON PLANS, GRADE BOOKS AND RECORD KEEPING**

Teachers are expected to maintain lesson plans as directed at their assigned schools, including "emergency" lesson plans for use in the case of an unexpected absence of the teacher. Accurate up-to-date records are also a responsibility of the educator. These records include, but are not limited to, academic records (i.e. grade books, permanent records, test data, evaluation materials), financial records (i.e. fund raiser money, club or activity money, etc.) or other records as assigned by the principal or supervisor.

#### **INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OTHER EARLY DISMISSAL**

In the event of inclement weather or other events necessitating early dismissal or closing of schools public notice will be made via the following radio and television stations: WNGC 106.1 FM, WGMG 102.1 FM, WPUP 103.7 FM, and WSB Channel 2. There are also system and school telephone trees and automatic alerts from the computer.

#### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES PLANS**

The school system and each school maintain an "Emergency Procedure Plan" designed to address emergency situations. It is the responsibility of each employee to be familiar with the procedures outlined in this plan. In addition, regular drills for fire, tornado and/or other emergency are held at each school as required.

#### **REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE, STUDENT WELFARE AND STUDENT INJURIES**

You are required by state law to report any suspicion of abuse and neglect of children to the Principal. The Madison County Board of Education policy concerning Child Abuse follows. The

Madison County Child Abuse Protocol (JGI) requires that a teacher inform the Principal immediately if there is suspected sexual, physical, or emotional abuse, or neglect of nutritional needs, lack of supervision, or extreme educational neglect. A copy of this protocol is on file in the Principal's office and is available upon request. Be ever mindful of this legal mandate and professional obligation. Information regarding signs of abuse is being provided to all staff members. A mandatory reporter's involvement ends when a staff member makes the report to the Principal. Do not discuss a referral with anyone, including persons purporting to be caseworkers, without administrative approval. All reports of suspected child abuse and neglect should be made in good faith. This reporting is legal under section 99.31 (a)(5) and 9.36 of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Any employee receiving reports by a student, a student's family member or student's friend of sexual misconduct by an educator towards a student must make an immediate oral report to their principal or supervisor (unless that person is the subject of the report, in which case the employee reports to the superintendent or superintendent's designee) and a written report should follow within 24 hours (20-2-751.7).

With the exception of very minor cuts and bruises, if a student is injured while under your supervision, you must promptly provide or seek medical attention, through your school nurse or emergency medical personnel. Serious injuries, suspected broken bones, blows to the head, or serious sprains should be reported immediately so that decisions on medical care can be made in a timely manner. Accident Reports must ALWAYS be completed by the school nurse and turned in to the principal or his/her designee before the end of the school day in which the injury occurred, or the day on which you are made aware of the injury.

#### **Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct** O.C.G.A. [20-2-751.7](#)

Any student (*or parent or friend of a student*) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other school employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. *If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral report should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee, i.e. the Human Resources Office.*

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

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

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

"Sexual misconduct" includes behavior by an educator that is directed at a student and intended to sexually arouse or titillate the educator or the child. Educator sexual misconduct may include, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

1. Made sexual comments, jokes, or gestures.

2. Showed or displayed sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, or messages.
3. Wrote sexual messages/graffiti on notes or the internet.
4. Spread sexual rumors (e.g. said a student was gay or lesbian).
5. Spied on students as they dressed, showered or used the restroom at school.
6. Flashed or “moonied” students.
7. Touched, excessively hugged, or grabbed students in a sexual way.
8. Forced student to kiss him/her or do something else of a sexual nature.
9. Talked or asked about a student’s developing body, sexuality, dating habits, etc.
10. Talked repeatedly about sexual activities or sexual fantasies.
11. Made fun of body parts.
12. Called students sexual names.

### **COPYRIGHT LAWS (IFBD)**

Educators are expected to abide by applicable copyright laws for all print, audio-visual, computer and other media. More detailed and specific guidelines and regulations are available from media specialist in the schools.

### **STAFF DEVELOPMENT (GAD)**

The Board of Education has developed and implemented a comprehensive staff development plan. In-service education is an important aspect of the teacher’s professional experience. Other forms of professional development may include, but is not limited to professional learning communities, college study, workshops, and professional meetings. All staff development activities must be approved by the principal and system Staff Development Coordinator, Ms. Meghann Farmer.

### **RESA INFORMATION STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

The [Northeast Georgia RESA](#) unit in Winterville serves Madison County. They provide professional assistance and materials to teachers for their professional growth. Anyone wanting further information about services or staff development classes should contact RESA at the following address:

Northeast Georgia RESA  
375 Winter Street  
Winterville, GA 30683  
706-742-8292

Materials are available for checkout from the Materials Center at RESA. Teachers may visit the center themselves or see a media specialist for a list of materials available.

## **III. ADDITIONAL POLICY**

### **CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS**

The Professional Standards Commission has developed a Code of Ethics for Educators in our state. All employees of the Madison Country Board of Education are expected to be familiar with and comply with the guidelines of this code. The code may be found at the Professional Standards Website, [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com).

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (GANA)**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of protecting the health and welfare of students and employees from the spread of communicable diseases (such as COVID-19). Additionally, annual training in communicable diseases and safety procedures is offered to personnel.

There shall be no discrimination in employment based on having an HIV infection, AIDS, or other diseases. All persons shall treat information concerning such illness as highly confidential.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS AND/OR EMPLOYEES**

Policy relating to SEXUAL HARASSMENT may be found in its entirety at [JCAC](#). and [GAEB](#).

**COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

Policy relating to COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES may be found in its entirety at [GAE \(2\)](#).

**DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

Policy relating to DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE may be found in its entirety at [GAMA](#).

**TOBACCO**

The Board of Education policy prohibits the use of any form of tobacco in all school district buildings, buses, work areas and campuses. This policy is applied at all hours and to all persons on school district properties.

**IV. MISCELLANEOUS****PARTNERS IN EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The "Partners in Education" program is dedicated to the improvement of Georgia's public schools through the formation and expansion of partnerships with business, industry, civic, and governmental organizations and individual volunteers. On February 12, 1991 Madison County Middle School joined with four area businesses and organizations to become Partners in Education. Since that time, our partnerships have grown with other businesses, and every school in the county has developed partnerships with businesses in Madison County as well as surrounding areas.

Partners are typically viewed as programs that involve at least two key partners: the school system and the business community. Their purpose is to provide resources to schools or school systems for educational activities. Successful partnerships provide benefits for all partners. They promote better education, develop a better-trained work force, and strengthen the economic system. They also bring about improved communication and understanding between the schools and their communities.

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

As professionals educators are encouraged to join professional organizations. GAE and PAGE are the most active in our system. Both organizations provide insurance against legal action and legal advice when needed. Payroll deductions are available, as well as other forms of payment. School representatives can provide additional information or you may wish to contact the main offices listed below:

Georgia Association of Educators  
100 Crescent Centre Pkwy #500  
Tucker, GA 30084  
678-837-1100

Professional Association of Georgia Educators  
P.O. Box 942270  
Atlanta, GA 31141  
1-800-334-6861

Numerous other professional organizations are active in education in our state and nationwide. Many of these associations work to serve specific areas of education that may be of interest to you.

**CELL PHONE POLICY**



Faculty and Staff should refrain from the use of cell phones during instructional time or any time during the school day in which they are charged with the supervision of students. Cell phones should be turned off during these times. School Faculty and Staff should advise family and friends that emergency calls should go through the office. If an important call is expected (illness, etc.) the office should be notified and will relay any information as quickly as possible. Principals or department directors may give permission for an employee to keep their cell phone on during times when the employee is facing a crisis or emergency situation.

### **INFORMATION DISSEMINATION**

Information school system employees have based on their positions many times is confidential. There are laws dictating what student information can be disseminated on a “need to know” basis. Madison County Schools believes, not only student information, but all information should be disseminated on a “need to know” basis. Even though some information is available via an open records request, it should not be shared without the following of open records request procedures. Information should only be shared with other employees when needed and should never be shared with people outside the school system

### **SOCIAL MEDIA FUNDRAISING**

There are now several websites and social media areas where educators can earn items, money or points for items they need for their school or classrooms. We encourage any teacher interested in doing this type of fundraising to explore the idea. Prior to starting any fundraising, it should be discussed and approved by your principal. It is strongly suggested that approval be received in writing. This can be as simple as an email to the principal explaining the fundraiser with a response showing approval.

Any money received should go directly to the school and be kept in a line-item for the teacher doing the fund raiser. Any item received, belongs to the school and should be inventoried following the same procedures as if it was purchased with system funds. These items become the property of the school and not the employee.

### **FIELD TRIP REQUESTS**

Student Field Trips must be approved prior to them being taken. The school must approve it first. A trip request should be done in the Travel Tracker software for approval by the central office as well as to have transportation needs assigned as described in the request.

If it is an overnight trip, an overnight trip form must be completed and forwarded to the superintendent. All school sponsored overnight trips must have prior approval of the Board of Education.

Each school has a different internal process for handling field trips, travel tracker routing and overnight field trips. It is the employee’s responsibility to understand the process they are to use in their school for prior approval.

### **FINANCIAL PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

Madison County Schools has a Financial Manual documenting the processes and procedures all employees should use for budgeting, purchasing, payments, financial reporting and any area of money management. These financial processes and procedures should be used for all local, state and federal funds unless otherwise noted in the manual. Employees should be familiar with and follow these processes and procedures at all times.

A current copy of the manual can be found on the system website under the Business Operations area or in their school bookkeeper’s office.

## **DRUG FREE WORKPLACE (Added Jan. 4, 2010)**

### **Drug Test Procedures:**

All testing will be done at Piedmont Occupational Medicine, 485 Hwy. 29 N, Athens, GA 30601. The Madison County School System assumes responsibility for the cost of the testing. Piedmont Occupational Medicine will bill the system. Results of the test will be submitted to the Human Resources Office and filed in a manner to assure confidentiality.

### **New Hires:**

All employees beginning work after January 4, 2010 must comply with the BOE Policy [GAMA](#) and [GCRA \(1\)](#) and complete a drug test prior to beginning their employment. New employees should get the appropriate form from the Human Resources Office at the BOE Business Offices, 800 Madison Street, Danielsville, GA. Testing is done at Piedmont Occupational Medicine, 485 Hwy. 29 N, Athens, GA 30601.

An applicant who tests positive for an illegal drug or illegal controlled substance will not be employed and will not be considered for subsequent employment for a period of six months. Any applicant who refuses the test will not be employed and will not be considered for subsequent employment for a period of six months.

### **Reasonable Suspicion/Fitness for Duty:**

All employees shall be subject to reasonable suspicion testing.

Testing will be required when a supervisor reasonably suspects an employee is impaired or unfit for duty due to illegal drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol. Testing based on a reasonable belief an employee is using or has used drugs or alcohol in violation of the policy may be drawn from specific objective and documented facts and reasonable inferences drawn from those facts and may be based upon, among other things:

- a) Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of possession, transfer or use of such drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol, or the physical symptoms of being impaired or unfit for duty due to any of same;
- b) Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior while at work including, but not limited to: slurred speech, staggered gait, flushed face, dilated or pinpoint pupils, deterioration of work performance including absenteeism and tardiness; or a report of alcohol or drug use during assigned working hours provided by reliable and credible sources and independently corroborated.

An employee who is tested will be suspended with pay pending the test outcome. If the test is negative, the employee will be allowed to return to work.

Any employee who refuses to consent to submit to a drug and alcohol test as required herein, or who fails to appear for the required test, or who fails to cooperate with a District investigation into possible violations of this policy, or who otherwise fails to cooperate to fulfill the requirements of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If a specimen is confirmed positive for drugs or a test reveals a blood alcohol level of .04 or higher, the employee will be informed of the results by the employee's supervisor. Any employee who has tested positive for drugs or alcohol shall be immediately suspended with pay pending final disciplinary action. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be determined by the superintendent in compliance with local, state and federal policy and statute.

**Post-Accident:**

All employees who are involved in a work-related incident which results in a personal injury requiring medical attention or property damage exceeding \$500 may be tested promptly for drug and alcohol use in accordance with District policies, at the discretion of the Superintendent. Any employee involved in a motor vehicle accident while driving a District vehicle shall be tested for drugs and alcohol if the accident results in personal injury requiring medical attention or property damage exceeding \$500, or if there is reason to believe the employee was at fault in the accident (said reason including but not limited to issuance of a traffic citation, eyewitness testimony, or a history of prior accidents). This section shall also apply to any employee involved in a motor vehicle accident while driving a private vehicle on District business.

An employee who is tested will be suspended with pay pending the test outcome. If the test is negative, the employee will be allowed to return to work.

Any employee who refuses to consent to submit to a drug and alcohol test as required herein, or who fails to appear for the required test, or who fails to cooperate with a District investigation into possible violations of this policy, or who otherwise fails to cooperate to fulfill the requirements of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If a specimen is confirmed positive for drugs or a test reveals a blood alcohol level of .04 or higher, the employee will be informed of the results by the employee's supervisor. Any employee who has tested positive for drugs or alcohol shall be immediately suspended with pay pending final disciplinary action. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be determined by the superintendent in compliance with local, state and federal policy and statute.

**Confidentiality:**

All information from an employee's or job applicant's drug and alcohol test shall be confidential and only available to those who have a valid need to know. Disclosure of test results to any other person, agency, or organization shall be prohibited unless written authorization is obtained from the employee or job applicant.