

# *Harris County Carver Middle School*



Dear HCCMS Students and Parents:

The Harris County Carver Middle School faculty and staff members welcome you to another exciting school year. Our theme for this year is “**CHANGING YOUR WORLD STARTS WITH YOU!**” With this theme in mind, we will challenge each student to look within themselves and develop a strong sense of positive self-worth and community involvement. The middle school years are an important time to have students reflect on the past and build a future that is positive for themselves and the world around them.

During this year, we encourage you to embrace the changes and growth that happens as our students develop into responsible young adults. By working together, we can make these two years enjoyable and successful. We encourage you to find an extra-curricular activity that is of interest to you and build positive relationships with your peers as well as our faculty and staff members.

Use this handbook as a guide to the rules, policies, and procedures that help to keep our school environment safe and enjoyable for all. In order to maintain a positive and safe atmosphere that promotes learning, there are rules and procedures that each student is expected to follow. It is essential for all students and parents to be aware of the contents of this handbook and follow the outlined procedures.

Your involvement will contribute greatly to academic success. Now, more than ever, it is important for parents to maintain positive communication with their children and teachers on a regular basis. In an effort to support this communication process, lesson plans can be found for each teacher on our website: [www.harris.k12.ga.us/hccms](http://www.harris.k12.ga.us/hccms). Guidance counselors are available to coordinate conferences with the faculty as needed. We also encourage you to monitor academic progress using Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

Our entire faculty/staff is here to help. We look forward to working with you this year. If we can assist you in any way, please let us know.



Sincerely,  
*Ms. Melissa D. Hayes, Ed.S.*  
Principal

<b>2019-2020 Calendar of Events*</b>			
<b>Month</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Time</b>
August	2nd, 5th, & 6th	Teacher In-service (no school for students)	
August	6th	Sneak-A-Peak	3pm-6pm
August	7th	First Day of School for Students	
August	8th	8th Grade Expectations Assembly	8:15am
August	9th	7th Grade Expectations Assembly	8:15am
August	16th	Safety Day	
August	23rd	Fall Picture Day	
August	30th	Early Release Professional Development	
September	2nd	Holiday- Labor Day	
September	6th	College Colors Day/Back to School Tailgate Bash	
September	11th	Progress Reports	
September	20th	Picture Make-up day	
September	24th	Open House	6pm - 7:30
September	27th	Hero Day	
October	1st - 7th	1Nine Weeks Exams	
October	11th	Early Release Professional Development	
October	14th	Holiday- Columbus Day	
October	15th	Report Cards Released	
October	31st	Costume Day	
November	8th	Veteran's Day Breakfast	8:15am
November	11th	Teacher In-service (no school for students)	
November	15th	Progress Reports	
November	15th	iPOD Day	
November	25th-29th	Thanksgiving Break	
December	13th-19th	2Nine Weeks Testing	
December	20th	Teacher In-service (no school for students)	
December	23rd-2nd	Holiday- Christmas Break	
January	3rd	Teacher In-service (no school for students)	
January	6th	7th and 8th Grade Expectations Assembly	
January	8th	Report Cards Released	
January	16th	8th Grade Awards	8:15am
January	17th	7th Grade Awards	8:15am
January	20th	Holiday- MLK Day (no school)	
February	7th	Progress Reports	
February	14th	Teacher In-service (no school for students)	
February	17th	Holiday- President's Day	
March	6th-12th	3Nine Weeks Exams	
March	10th	Creekside Night	6pm
March	13th	Teacher In-service (no school for students)	

March	17th	Report Cards Released	
March	20th	Spring Pictures	
March	27th	Mini-Relay for Life	
March	30th - 31st	Spring Break	
April	1st-3rd	Spring Break	
April - May	6th-8th	Georgia Milestones State Assessment Testing Window	
April	7th - 17th	8th Grade GMAS testing	
April	20 - 24	7th Grade GMAS testing	
April	23rd	Progress Reports	
April /May	29th - 1st	8th Grade Coastal Georgia Trip (tentative)	
May	4th & 5th	7th Grade Reality Check Fair	
May	8th	8th Grade Dance	
May	7th	Creekside Visit Tribes #1 and #2	
May	8th	Creekside Visit Tribes #3 and #4	
May	16th	HCHS Graduation (tentative)	
May	11th -12th	8th Grade End of Year Awards	8:15am
May	13th - 14th	7th Grade End of Year Awards	8:15am
May	21st	Dodgeball Tournament	
May	18th-22nd	4Nine Weeks Exams	
May	22nd	Last Day for Students	
May	25th	Holiday- Memorial Day	
May	26th-27th	Teacher In-service (no students)	
*dates are subject to change			

## *Harris County School District Mission & Vision*

***Mission: Offering an excellent education for every child in Harris County.***

***Vision: One community, committed to educational excellence for every child.***

### **ACCREDITATION**

Harris County-Carver Middle School is accredited as a Middle School by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and by the Georgia State Department of Education.

### **ATTENDANCE**

School attendance is a strong indicator of school success! HCCMS places high importance on student attendance. It is very important that students attend every school day. Students are expected to make every effort to be present at school each day. In middle school, attendance is recorded for each period of the day. Absences, late arrivals and early check outs negatively impact instruction and learning.

- Upon returning to school after any absence, the student must bring a note to their homeroom teacher, signed by a parent or guardian or physician explaining the reason for the absence.
- A student who is absent from school will not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activities for that day.
- Students must sign in by 11:30am to be considered present for the day.
- Excuses more than 3 days old will not be excused.
- The state expectation is **no more than 6 days absent** for the school year. This includes excused and unexcused.
- Students who miss **16** or more days of school may be denied credit for the year. The faculty and administration of HCCMS does not condone absences except for those reasons defined by Board policy. Family vacations and/or trips etc. are not acceptable excused absences from school.
- If a student has an extended illness, the parent should contact the school counselor to arrange make up of missed work.
- If a student is absent due to Out of School Suspension (OSS), work may be provided when suspension is **complete**. The work must be completed and turned in within 3 days of return to school.
- Perfect Attendance is recognized at the end of year Honors Day programs.
- Unannounced prizes or privileges may be available to students with positive or perfect attendance.
- See *Harris County BOE Student Behavior Code and Attendance Protocol* for full policies.

### **Hospital Homebound Services:**

The Harris County School System offers Hospital Homebound Services for students who are too ill or injured to attend school. A student may qualify for regular or intermittent Hospital Homebound Services. Regular Hospital Homebound is where a student will be absent from school for at least 10 days or more consecutively. Intermittent Homebound is where a student has a chronic illness that may require frequent hospitalizations or will be absent throughout the school year because of a chronic illness. A licensed physician or psychologist must provide medical certification verifying the illness or injury. A student does not accumulate any absences while he or she is on Hospital Homebound status. You may contact your school counselor for an application. If you have questions, you may call the School Social Worker at 706-628-4206, Ext. 1220.

### **Truancy**

Truancy is an unexcused absence. An excessive number of unexcused absences will be grounds for legal action in accordance with the attendance laws of Georgia. An excessive number of absences may result in the school requiring a doctor's excuse for every absence. Students with 16 or more days absent from school may be denied credit for the year. (See Board Policy regarding Compulsory Attendance & Absences and Excuses)

### **Unexcused Tardiness to School:**

- 🐾 There will be a tardy record kept for each student.
- 🐾 On the occasion of the third tardy per nine weeks, the grade level counselor will contact the parent.
- 🐾 On the fourth and subsequent offense per nine weeks, the student may be assigned detention.
- 🐾 On the fifth and subsequent tardy per nine weeks, the student may be assigned to ISS.
- 🐾 *A note from doctor, dentist, or court official will be the only acceptable excuse for tardiness.*

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBERS**

If there is a change of address or phone number during the school year, contact the main office in order for all necessary files to be kept up to date. Two proofs of residency are required for any address changes.

### **EARLY ARRIVAL**

Students arriving early are to report to the front lobby for supervision until they are released to homeroom. Students should not arrive on campus before **7:15 AM**.

### **ENROLLMENTS AND WITHDRAWALS**

When a student enters or withdraws from school, a parent is required to come to the school to initiate the procedure. After school starts, no student will be enrolled without withdrawal forms from their previous school. When a student withdraws from HCCMS, no records will be sent until all books are returned and all debts are paid. Any student owing money from the previous year will not be issued books until debts are cleared.

A new Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) will serve as a means of documenting the immunization status for children who will be admitted to any facility or school in Georgia for the first time on or after August 1, 2001. The new Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) will replace the current certificate for school (Form 3032). It may be accepted any time after February 1, 2000. It is not necessary to replace the certificate (Form 3032) for children currently enrolled.

As each child enrolls in school, the certificate will be checked to see whether it is marked "Complete for School Attendance" or has an expiration date noted. If a form has an expiration date, the child must submit a new certificate within 30 days after the expiration date to be excluded from attendance until an updated certificate is submitted. The Certificate must be marked one or the other in order for it to be valid. A "Date of Expiration" must be entered on all certificates issued to children.

1. Under four years of age;
2. Four years of age and older who are in the process of receiving the recommended doses of the required vaccines;
3. Children who have medical exemption for a vaccine that is due to be reviewed.

Dates of immunization are required on all certificates issued to children who are four years of age and older.

### **Immunization Requirement Highlights:**

Georgia's immunization requirements for children attending 7th grade have been revised. Beginning on the 2014-2015 school year, 7th graders will be required to have Tdap and Meningococcal vaccines prior to entering school.

Effective July 1, 2014 children born on or after January 1, 2002 who are attending 7th grade and for new entrants into a Georgia school grades through 12th must have received one dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) vaccine and one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine. "New Entrant" means any child entering any school in Georgia for the first time or entering after having been absent from a Georgia school for more than twelve months or one school year. A child entering any childcare facility or school in Georgia for the first time (at any age up to 19 years) must be age appropriately immunized with all of the required vaccines. (DTP, DtaP, DT, or Td: Hepatitis B; Hib; OPV or IPV; Measles, Mumps and Rubella or MMR; and Varicella). Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine has just been added to the list required for school attendance. Hepatitis B vaccine is now required for a child at the time of entry to school.

Previously it was a requirement for children born on or after January 1, 1992. Two doses of measles-containing vaccine, one dose of mumps vaccine and one dose of rubella vaccine is now required **at the time of entry** to school. Students not in compliance with state vaccination requirements may be subject to withdrawal from school.

## **OUT OF COUNTY STUDENTS**

**Eligibility:** Only those students who reside in Harris County shall be entitled to attend Harris County schools. The Harris County Board of Education, however, will accept and allow students to reside in the State of Georgia outside of Harris County to enroll and attend Harris County schools upon the payment of tuition and compliance with its policy. Out-of-state students shall not be accepted to attend Harris County schools except for children of teachers and employees.

**Application:** An out-of-county application must be completed prior to initial enrollment and must be approved by the school principal before enrollment is permitted. Enrollment is permitted at the beginning of a semester only. No mid-semester enrollments shall be permitted. Approval of this application is based upon the enrollment in the grade at that particular school if space is available. School principals shall refuse admission to students if the class size will be overloaded so as to cause additional employees to be hired; and the admission also will be refused to students who have not paid the tuition due prior to the fifth school day.

School bus transportation from an existing bus stop within Harris County may be provided on a space available basis. Otherwise, the parents of out-of-county students shall be totally responsible for the transportation of the students from the place of residence to the school in which the student is enrolled.

Out-of-county applicants who return for an ensuing school year will be required to fill out a renewal application and pay the tuition as provided for herein. Returning out-of-county students do not have a right to continued enrollment, and are subject to enrollment upon space being available at their grade level.

**Tuition:** The tuition for an out-of-county student attending Harris County School shall be **\$4,400.00** per school year (\$2,200.00 per semester). The tuition shall be reviewed annually and set so as to reflect the average locally financial per student cost for the preceding school year, excluding the local fair share funds required pursuant to O.C.G.A. §20-2-164. This fee is effective at the beginning of the school year and is payable by the semester (50% each) prior to the fifth day of each semester. Checks shall be made payable to the Harris County Board of Education. Principals shall forward all checks with the approved application to the Central Office in a timely fashion. Such checks will be deposited in the general fund of the school system. Refunds of 50% of the amount paid will be given for students who withdraw during the first six weeks of either semester. After six weeks, no tuition refunds will be given upon withdrawal.

**Failure To Pay Tuition:** Any parents of a student residing out-of-county enrolled in the Harris County School System who are eligible to pay tuition shall be responsible to see that tuition is paid. If an out-of-county student is discovered by school officials to be attending Harris County schools without paying tuition, the student will be immediately withdrawn from school. The student shall be eligible for re-enrollment as an out-of-county student only upon the payment of all unpaid tuition plus a premium of fifty percent (50%) of the unpaid tuition. If the unpaid tuition and premium thereon is not paid within five (5) school days after the withdrawal, the student shall not be eligible to attend Harris County schools in the future as a non-resident student. If an out-of-county student is found to have not paid tuition and re-enrolls upon payment of the unpaid tuition and the premium thereon and then is found to not have paid tuition a second time, the student shall be withdrawn and shall not be allowed to return regardless of the circumstances.

**Proof of Residency:** Where the residency of a student is in question the following information shall be considered in determining the residency of a student. Parents are required to furnish the school principal or superintendent all of this available information in a timely fashion upon request.

- 1) Proof of Harris County Homestead Exemption.
- 2) Proof of purchase of Harris County automobile tag(s).
- 3) Proof of voter registration in Harris County.
- 4) Utility bills for one (1) year on both residences where parents own two (2) or claim two (2) separate residences and one (1) being outside Harris County.

**Determination of Residency:** Using the foregoing information, the place of residence of the child will be:

- 1) The bona fide residence of both parents of the child; or if one parent is deceased, the residence of the surviving parent; or if the parents are divorced or living separately, the residence of the parent having actual custody of the child pursuant to an appropriate order of a Superior Court or similar court of another state having jurisdiction of the parties at the time such order is rendered; provided that the provisions of this paragraph shall not apply if the right of a parent or parents to custody and possession of a child has been terminated as authorized by law, by a court, or state agency having jurisdiction. The term parent or parents as used herein means natural parents and shall also include adoptive parents by virtue or legal adoption pursuant to law.
- 2) In the instance of a student who in good faith resides full time in Harris County with another family member other than his parent or parents who is in **loco parentis**, the residence of such family member may be the residence of such student if the Superintendent in each instance shall find and determine (a) that such student does in fact reside full time with such relative and (b) the parents of the child cannot be located or their whereabouts are unknown (c) that such residency is not attempt to circumvent the provisions of this policy. A transfer of guardianship to a Harris County family member shall not be the sole determining factor in deciding whether a student resides with the family member in compliance with this policy.

**Appeals:** Appeals of this issue shall follow the school system Student Complaint Policy. During the appeals process the student shall not remain enrolled at the school he is attending unless he pays the tuition. If as a result of the appeal, it is determined that the student is a resident of Harris County, the tuition will be refunded.

### **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

According to Georgia Law, all students enrolling in Georgia Schools must present an official copy of their social security number. This means that a school official needs to see the social security card or an official document that verifies the number. HCCMS staff will make a copy to place in the student's folder. If a parent objects to a student's social security number from being incorporated into the student's record, the parent must sign a statement (waiver) to that effect.

### **NUTRITION**

#### **BREAKFAST/LUNCH (Prices subject to change)**

Full Price Breakfast: \$1.50      Full Price Lunch: \$3.00      Employee Lunch: \$4.00

Reduced Price Breakfast: \$ .30      Reduced Price Lunch: \$ .40      Visitor Lunch: \$4.50

\*subject to change

Students who choose not to eat a school lunch may bring a lunch from home; however, carbonated drinks, candy, and glass containers are not allowed. Strawberry, chocolate and low fat milk choices are available with school lunches. Soft drinks are not allowed. Please keep this in mind when packing lunches to keep our school in compliance with nutrition program regulations. Students are encouraged to prepay for the week/month. During homeroom students are allowed to go to the cafeteria to prepay. Parents can now pay for nutrition accounts online at <https://www.myschoolbucks.com/index.jsp>.

In an emergency situation students may charge a school lunch. Repayment of the charge is expected the next school day. If a student has 3 charges an alternative lunch will be provided upon request. Meals after mid-April will no longer be available for charges to any account and an alternate lunch will be provided.

Free and reduced applications for meals are sent home on the first day of school. After applications are returned and processed, parents are notified if their child qualifies for free or reduced meals.

### **LUNCHROOM**

1. A well-balanced meal is served for all students each day.
2. All students are required to go to the lunchroom whether they bring lunch or purchase school lunch.
3. Students are asked to leave the cafeteria tables free from food and debris.
4. All food including fruits must be consumed in the lunchroom.
5. No carbonated or energy drinks allowed.

### **Procedures**

1. Students must sit at tables designated by the master lunch schedule.
2. Students may talk quietly and must confine their talking to people at their own table.
3. Students will be allowed to go out of the lunchroom only in an emergency situation after they obtain permission by their teachers or a monitor to leave the lunchroom for any reason.
4. Students need to enter the lunchroom quietly and in an orderly manner.
5. Students must go through their assigned serving line in a single file.
6. Students will leave the lunchroom with their classroom teachers to return to scheduled classes.

## **CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE POLICY**

### **School Rules are as follows:**

1. **RESPECT** yourself, others and school property.
  - a. Offer positive comments only.
  - b. Keep hands and feet to one's self.
2. Dress appropriate for the school setting.
3. Follow directions.
4. Take care of and keep clean the school grounds and property.
5. Walk to the right of the sidewalks and in the hallways.
6. Do not miss a class without written excuse from a parent or teacher.
7. Have a pass when in the hallway during class time.
8. Be in the classroom on time.
8. Return signed papers and report cards in three (3) days.

### **Progressive Discipline Procedures**

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a **progressive discipline** process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them choose appropriate behaviors which are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of this Code of Conduct:

- 🐾 Warning and/or Counseling
- 🐾 Loss of Privileges
- 🐾 Administrative Isolation
- 🐾 Administrative Detention
- 🐾 ISS (In School Suspension)
- 🐾 OSS (Out of School Suspension)
- 🐾 Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- 🐾 Notification of Parents
- 🐾 Parent Conference
- 🐾 Detention
- 🐾 Temporary Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- 🐾 Short-term Suspension
- 🐾 Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- 🐾 Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- 🐾 Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.



The maximum punishment for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Harris County of Education policies. *Major offenses, including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to a school being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8.16 Unsafe School Choice Option.*

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such case, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved also by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy.

Before a student is suspended for ten days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parents shall be notified. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported. There is no appeal process for disciplinary suspensions less than 10 days OSS.

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

The following offenses may result in the assignment of In School Suspension (ISS) or Out of School Suspension (OSS) or a combination of the ISS and OSS or a Disciplinary Tribunal which may lead to assignment at the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) for an alternate school setting: *(or other offenses as deemed by admin per JCDA code)*

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ☹ Theft                           | ☹ Drug/Alcohol Possession/Use (Tribunal offense) |
| ☹ Profanity                       | ☹ Sexual Harassment                              |
| ☹ Fighting                        | ☹ Threatening Behavior                           |
| ☹ Chronic Misbehaviors            | ☹ Disruption of Instruction                      |
| ☹ Blatant Disrespect of Authority | ☹ Weapons (Tribunal Offense)                     |
| ☹ Smoking, Tobacco Products       |  |
| ☹ Vandalizing                     |  |

## **BULLYING POLICY**

HCCMS does not tolerate or condone bullying behaviors. Once a student is alleged to be exhibiting these behaviors (comments, and/or threats to include cyber bullying that are considered objectionable, unwelcome, and threatening by another student(s)) or adult in the Harris County School System), they should be reported to the counselor and grade level administrator. The situation is investigated and evaluated. Confirmed incidents of bullying will result in disciplinary action. **Please see the Harris County Board of Education Student Behavior Code and Attendance Protocol.**

## **BUS RULES /BEHAVIOR**

**Riding the bus is a privilege.** Students who ride the bus have responsibilities for the comfort and safety of other students as well as for themselves. It is very important that students conduct themselves in an orderly manner at the bus stop and on the bus. The bus driver has authority over any circumstance arising on the bus.

Suspension of bus privileges will not exceed one school year (180 days); however bus suspensions may include parts of two consecutive school years. For more information on the rules for the bus, please see the Harris County Board of Education Student Behavior Code and Attendance Protocol.

Students should not ride a bus they are not registered to for their official route to and from school. **Guest riders must be preapproved.** Emergency situations should be cleared by parents with Harris County Transportation at least 5 days in advance. Administration must provide dated and signed permission for any student to ride a different bus.

Any change in transportation (change of bus stop on assigned route or riding home with another student/parent by car) must be submitted to grade level administration between 7:30-8:45am.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is the purpose of the Harris School District to operate each school in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with that purpose, the Board of Education has adopted a policy, which requires students to conduct themselves appropriately at all times in order to facilitate a positive learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the district.

The Harris County School District's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is available online at [www.harris.k12.ga.us](http://www.harris.k12.ga.us). Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus, which is felonious, or which may pose a threat to the school's learning environment or the safety of students and employees. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community.

## **Places and Times of Enforcement**

The following rules are designed to protect all members of the educational community in the exercise of their rights and duties. These rules are effective during the following times and in the following places:

1. On the school grounds during and immediately before or immediately after school hours or off school grounds while in route to or from school.
2. On the school grounds at any other time outside of school hours.
3. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event.
4. In route to and from school on a school bus or other school vehicle or while waiting off school grounds for a school bus to transport a student to or from school or a school activity.
5. Off school grounds when the prohibited conduct is directed, because of a school-related connection, against the person, family, property, privacy or tranquility of an employee of the Harris County Board of Education.
6. Apply to conduct by student whether directed to or committed upon another student or a teacher, administrator, or other school personnel or toward persons attending school related functions.

## **DRESS CODE**

The dress code for HCCMS is designed for safety and decorum. Students at Harris County-Carver Middle School are expected to dress in a manner that reflects modesty, neatness and self-respect. Therefore, **EXTREMES IN DRESS OR GROOMING THAT MAY CAUSE A DISTRACTION IN THE CLASSROOM WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AT SCHOOL.** With this in mind, we will try to address all dress code violations during homeroom. As it is with a speeding motorist, not all dress code violations are caught every time. As a staff, we will be as consistent as possible in enforcing the dress code. We ask that parents check what their children are wearing before they leave for school. Students not dressed according to the code will be sent to their grade level office to call home for the parent to bring appropriate clothing. If the parent is unable to bring appropriate clothing or is unable to be reached, the student will spend the remainder of the day in ISS. Students will not remain in the regular classroom environment if they are found in violation of meeting the code.

The administration recognizes the inconvenience involved for parents to bring corrective clothing to school during the day; however this is required for the dress code to be applied and enforced consistently. Students may enjoy current fashion, but the school reserves the right to inform individuals when their attire does not meet the spirit of the dress standards for HCCMS.

- 🐾 It is the responsibility of each **student** to be knowledgeable of and comply with HCCMS dress code policy.
- 🐾 It is the responsibility of the **parent** to ensure that the dress code is observed.
- 🐾 It is the duty of each **teacher** to ensure that the dress code is enforced.
- 🐾 It is the final decision of the **administration** to deem what meets or does not meet dress code.

**STUDENTS SHOULD OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:**

- A. Loose fitting, oversized clothing is not allowed at school. Pant legs must be of equal length and may not touch the floor. Sagging pants are not allowed. Oversized pants that will not stay up at the waist/hips should not be worn to school or to a school function.
- B. Clothes deemed too tight or revealing are prohibited.
- C. Pajamas and swimwear should not be worn to school.
- D. Mesh/see-through clothing should not to be worn at school without dress code appropriate shirts underneath.
- E. Clothing with suggestive lettering, pictures, symbols, and vulgarity, alcohol or drug depictions will not be allowed. Any written lettering, clothing, etc. related to gangs is inappropriate and should not appear on students or notebooks. Clothing depicting extreme political and social viewpoints considered detrimental to school morale are not appropriate for school.
- F. Athletic, **draw string or light weight** shorts are not to be worn during the instructional day. Athletic shorts may only be worn for Physical Education classes or athletic programs as directed.
- G. **NEW:** Students are not allowed to wear pants or shorts with holes, the appearance of holes or excessively frayed areas. If the holes or frayed areas are patched, the patch must be on the **outside** of the garment and must be sewn on or permanently attached.
- H. **NEW:** Shorts/skirts/dresses/jumpers must be at a modest and at an appropriate length closer to the knee than the hip that does not distract from the educational process or activities. Leggings cannot be worn to compensate for skirts that are too short. Dresses, skirts, shorts, rompers, and the slits of skirts/dresses must closer to the knee than the hip, even when leggings are worn. All hemlines of scalloped skirts must conform to the dress code.
- I. Opaque leggings may be worn with tops that cover the hips/buttocks.
- J. Sleeveless shirts cut low under the arms should be worn with a T-shirt underneath.
- K. Shirt hems should be approximately at the hip/pockets.
- L. **NEW:** Sleeveless clothing allowed if at least **2 inches in width**, completely covers the back, and is tight enough that the undergarments do not show. The back, shoulders, and mid-section of the body are to be covered at all times. No racer-back and/or t-back shirts/tops may be worn at school. No low cut tops, spaghetti straps, halter tops, or bralettes are allowed.
- M. Low cut or shirts revealing cleavage are not appropriate for the school day. The back and mid-section of the body are to be covered at all times. Plain white undershirts or T-shirts may not be worn as an outer garment.
- N. Appropriate shoes are to be worn at all times. Shoes may be sandals, dress or athletic. They must be worn as designed with laces tied, fasteners fastened, etc. Heels and soles may not be more than 2 inches high or thick for safety reasons. **Stacks, one band slides, beach-type flip-flops, and house shoes are considered inappropriate at school and are not allowed.** Matching shoes should be worn. Shoes worn to school should match in style and size.
- O. Bandanas of any color are not to be used as accessories unless deemed appropriate by administration for school sanctioned activities.
- P. Hats, athletic headbands, stocking caps, wave caps, hair wraps, and sunglasses are not to be worn at school at any time unless deemed appropriate by administration for school sanctioned activities. Combs, picks, and pencils may not be worn in hair.
- Q. Heavy chains, dog collars, or metal studded bracelets, etc., may not be worn in school. Chains attached to wallets should not be worn.
- R. Body cleanliness is required at all times.
- S. Proper undergarments should be worn at all times. They should not draw attention through clothing.
- T. Pornographic materials and articles are prohibited.
- U. Students should not write on their clothes or bodies.
- V. Gloves will not be worn in the school during the school day.
- W. Blankets should not be brought to school.

X. Bulky outerwear (coats, jackets, sweatshirts, etc.) may not be worn while inside the building.

**APPROPRIATE** (throughout the school day)  
**(LIGHT WEIGHT OUTERWEAR)**

hoodies  
wind suits w/matching jackets  
light weight jackets  
sweaters  
vests

**INAPPROPRIATE** (during the school day)  
**(HEAVY WINTER OUTERWEAR)**

trench coats  
oversized hoodies  
overstuffed fleece jackets  
heavy coats  
quilted jackets  
ski/flight jackets

**Procedures for Dress Code violations:**

Students, who are reported as violating the dress code, will be sent to an administrator to determine if the student is able to correct their clothing. If it is not possible to correct a dress code violation, students may be placed in ISS for the remainder of the school day or contact a parent for alternate clothing. On subsequent occasions students may receive in school or out of school suspension or a combination of both.

**IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

Students assigned to ISS will report to the ISS room. Class work is sent directly to the ISS teacher from each classroom and connection teacher for the duration of the time to be served. The ISS teacher will make sure each student in ISS gets the work assigned to them while they are in ISS, and the ISS teacher will see that all assignments and tests are returned to the classroom or connection teachers who sent the work to ISS. If students assigned to ISS, fail to complete their assigned work, or if behavior is not satisfactory, students may be assigned an additional day of ISS. Continued misbehavior in ISS may result in Out-of-School Suspension (OSS). **If a student assigned to ISS checks out of school before 11:30 p.m., that student may be required to serve another day in ISS. Students assigned to ISS may not participate in extracurricular activities (ex: concerts, field trips, athletic tryouts) the same day.**

**LEAVING CLASS/SCHOOL GROUNDS/OUT OF AREA**

Once students board a bus and/or arrive on campus, they are not to leave the school grounds for any reason without permission from the Principal or Assistant Principal. Leaving school grounds without permission is considered skipping school and warrants an immediate referral. Students should report to assigned classes. Failure to report to class in a timely manner is considered truant/out of area and is subject to disciplinary action that may include suspension. Students should not be outside of their assigned class without a faculty/staff signed, dated and timed pass indicating purpose for being in the hallway.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION DRESS CODE**

The Physical Education dress code for all students is shorts that are at least fingertip length when hands are down by the side or athletic pants. Students are required to change out of the clothes that they wear to school and into different gym clothes. The student will be responsible for purchasing PE shirt from the PE department. See Physical Education syllabus for details. Scholarships/sponsorships may be available by request as needed.

Students are expected to dress out and participate daily. Failure to participate will result in a '0' for the student's daily grade. All students will be required to remove jewelry before participating in class. Teachers are not responsible for the security of students' belongings. **Students are encouraged to bring a lock for a dressing room locker.** Locks must be removed at the end of gym class each day. Students will not be allowed to go to their regular lockers during PE. **Light weight gym bags may be used to transport clothes to and from class.**

**STUDENT SUSPENSION/EXPULSION/DUE PROCESS** (Revised 6/12/98)

The board policy defines and provides the requirements for short-term suspension, long-term suspension and expulsion. Also provided for are the hearing procedures for the imposition of disciplinary actions against students that involve short-term or long-term suspension and expulsion.

## **STUDENT INFORMATION**

### **BOOK BAGS**

Book bags will be allowed for the purpose of transferring books to and from school. Book bags and large purses/totes are to remain in lockers while at school and may **not** be carried to classes. *Gym bags may not be carried throughout the day as backpacks.*

### **CLUBS**

Club day is held bi-monthly during the school day. Some clubs meet after school as well. Students have the opportunity to select a club of interest. All students are encouraged to participate in a club to develop rapport with students and staff.

### **DELIVERIES**

Any delivery of flowers or balloons to students is not permitted. Any other items that might disrupt or interrupt classes unnecessarily should not be delivered to students at school. Deliveries cannot be transported by bus due to space constraints.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR/ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES (See Current Athletic Handbook)**

### **Athletic Eligibility**

- 1) The student has not attained his/her 15<sup>th</sup> birthday prior to August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.
- 2) The official transcript is the only means of determining academic eligibility.
  - a. Students must pass 70% of the subjects during the previous semester. **NEW: Students participating in sports that cover two semesters (begins during the first semester and continues into the second semester), must maintain a passing score in 70% of the subjects during the first semester in order to continue participation in that sport.**
  - b. Transfer students must meet the academic eligibility requirements of Harris County Carver Middle School.
- 3) The student is not playing on a school team and some other team during the same period of time.
- 4) A student at Harris County Carver Middle School has three (3) years of eligibility. The student's eligibility period begins the first year a student is enrolled in the sixth grade and terminates at the end of the third year.
- 5) Students assigned to EOC may not participate in HCCMS extracurricular activities/athletics.
- 6) A student who returns from the Educational Opportunity Center and wants to participate in athletics must have passed 4 out of 6 of his/her courses in the previous semester at the EOC.
- 7) Students that participate in the Muscogee County School District Middle School Sports League are restricted to middle school athletic participation only. Students may only participate in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade or junior varsity team if the sport is not offered at the middle school level and/or is not within the same season. Students in middle school that play on a 9<sup>th</sup> grade or junior varsity team may not participate in the middle school league in that particular sport.

Harris County Board of Education shall ensure that no student, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another student, or otherwise be discriminated against in any interscholastic or intramural athletics offered in the school district.

If a student is suspended or is assigned in-school suspension during the time of an extra-curricular activity or athletic contest/ tryouts, he/she will not be allowed to participate. If absent the day of a game or athletic event, or a school-sponsored after school activity, the student may not participate. If a student is absent for more than ½ of the school day, they are considered absent. Non-participation in athletics does not allow one to refuse to participate in regular P.E.

Only students involved in extra-curricular activities are to remain after school. Any student on campus after 3:00 p.m. must report directly to a supervising faculty member. Those students being picked up by parents must wait at the front of the building. Parents should pick up students promptly when after school activities are over. Proper behavior is expected at all times.

### **Transportation for Extra Curricular Events/Games**

**All students who participate in extracurricular events must ride to the event on the bus with the team coach or group sponsor.**

1. Students may be allowed to ride home from off campus extra-curricular/athletic events with a parent or designated adult upon written authorization from the parent/guardian of petitioning student. The request must be turned into the sponsor or coach and approved by an administrator, if at all possible, no later than the morning of the day that the event is to take place. The coach/sponsor will be responsible for collecting the written requests and maintaining a file for one year.
2. Students may be dismissed from the bus at their homes on a direct route from extra-curricular/athletic activities.
3. In emergency situations the coach/sponsor should use professional judgment and discretion. A written report of these emergencies should be made to the principal within five days of the emergency.

### **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

The guidance counselors at Harris County Carver Middle School are trained professionals who are committed to meeting the ever-changing needs of the middle school child. They conduct classroom guidance and small-group activities to teach students the social and academic resource skills they need to become confident and successful learners. They are also available for individual counseling sessions and parent/teacher consultations to help students deal with personal or school-related problems.

The counselors are experienced in helping students recognize their abilities, assess their needs, cope with academic, social, and emotional challenges, and assist students in achieving their potential. The counselors also work with standardized testing, SST/504 plans, orientation, registration, and many other school activities.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are available for students to use during the school year. Lockers are distributed by the homeroom teacher during the first two weeks of school. Cost of the locker is \$7.00 which is an administrative fee to update combinations and replace locks. There are designated times for students to visit their locker. These times are determined by teachers, and students are to follow these designated times. Student may not share lockers. Locker doors should remain closed and secured. Locker use is encouraged. Book bags or large purses/tote bags may not be carried throughout the school day.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Items that are found that do not belong to you should be turned in to a school office. Check grade level offices if an item is lost or misplaced. **All personal items should have first and last name attached.** Label all clothing, book bags, purses, etc. If the items are not claimed within five (5) days they are subject to be donated to charity organizations.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY/MONEY AT SCHOOL**

All items brought to school, of a personal nature, should be clearly marked with the student's name. Cell phones, e-readers, etc. are brought at your own risk. Students should not bring excessive amounts of money to school. Bring only the amount of money needed for a particular day. Keep any valuables with you or secured in your locker at all times. ***Students are encouraged to bring a lock in for the lockers in P.E.*** \*Students assigned to PE class should not leave valuables in the locker room (ex. Wallets, purses, watches, etc.). ***HCCMS is not responsible for lost or misplaced items that are not properly secured with the teacher.***

### **STUDENT PLANNERS/HALL PASS/AGENDAS**

Agendas are issued to students at the beginning of the school year. The agenda is to be used to record homework and any other important information. It is also an excellent communication tool between teachers and parents.

- The agenda serves as a hall pass for the student when it is filled out and signed by a teacher.
- The agenda is not to be altered in any manner, and it is not to be shared with other students.
- Students must have their agenda every day and in every class.
- Should the agenda get lost, stolen, or destroyed, replacement is at the expense of the student.

## **TELEPHONE USAGE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

### **Technology Devices-Acceptable Use (Policy update pending and subject to change\*)**

To maintain our safe and respectful environment, school members agree to use all technology devices; including school-issued computer hardware, software, and Internet access, as well as personal computers and electronic devices, in a safe, respectful and appropriate manner for academic purposes only during any school activities and within the established Acceptable Use Policy of The Harris County Board of Education.

The school and its staff are not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to any electronic devices a student brings to school. Parents realize that any device brought to school is done at the sole responsibility of the student and at their own risk. Parents should be aware of these policies and understand that their child's device may be confiscated by school administration due to policy violation. If a student's device is confiscated, the parent must retrieve it from the school administrator.

During the school day, students may use available technology resources; school electronic equipment or personal electronic devices, ONLY under the direct supervision of their teacher. Students who use technology resources for non-academic purposes without the permission of their teacher will face consequences set by HCCMS policies.

The use of Harris County Middle School's electronic equipment is a privilege, which may be revoked at any time. Abusive or inappropriate behavior will be addressed based on consequences that may include revocation of this privilege. Although it is impossible for HCCMS to make a guarantee of absolute security, we depend on faculty and students to monitor its access and use of all technology devices.

The use of social networking websites, personal student email accounts, instant messaging, texting, web journals, peer-to-peer networks, blogs, and chat rooms must be specifically permitted by a faculty member for academic purposes only. Use of these electronic resources is never permitted on school grounds for non-academic use. This policy applies to all student electronic devices such as smart phones, cell phones, laptops, tablet PC's, eBook readers, etc. that allow personal communication with others while in school.

Additionally, students are not allowed to use any electronic device to transmit or engage in any activities that are in violation of any local, state, or federal law or regulation, including piracy, tracking, extortion, blackmail, unauthorized access to computers on the Internet, or purchase, sale, or distribution of contraband materials. Deleting or tampering with someone else's files, as well as any unauthorized, deliberate action that damages or disrupts school equipment is prohibited.

In all of our relationships, we encourage honesty, civil communication, and respect for others. All school members are expected to act with consideration toward others and to behave in a responsible manner at all times. Bullying behavior through the use of student electronic communication (cyber-bullying), including communications sent from off-campus devices, to or about any member of the school community, maybe treated as if the behavior had occurred at school if it is deemed the instructional school climate is affected and dealt with according to Board Policy. **Please refer to the Harris County Board of Education Student Behavior Code and Attendance Protocol.**

During the academic day, students shall not use personal electronic communication devices of any kind, except Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT), or other reasons which have been approved by the Harris County Board of Education or by permission of a school administrator. The definition for electronic devices includes but is not limited to cell phones, pagers, PDAs and iPods. **Loss or theft of personal electronic devices that are brought to school is the sole responsibility of the student.** Electronic devices should be turned off and not visible. **NEW:** If these devices are turned on or visible, they will be confiscated from the student, turned into the office, returned to the student at the end of the day **for the first 4 violations. After 4 violations, parents may be called to retrieve the device.** Unauthorized phone use (texting, taking pictures, etc.) may result in suspension.

**NEW:** Wearing earbuds/headphones during class is not allowed unless permission is given by the teacher. **Earbuds/headphones should not be worn or be visible in the hallway during the**

**hours of 7:30am and 2:55pm, to include class change as this may be a safety hazard in the event of an emergency.**

### **SCHOOL PHONE USE**

School phones are for school business and emergency use only. Students are not allowed to call home for assignments, PE clothes, etc. Urgent messages by parents can be left with a school secretary and will be delivered to students, if necessary. **Phone messages must be received no later than 2:20 p.m.**

### **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

Having carefully weighed and balanced the rights of privacy of student and staff against the District's duty to maintain order and discipline, the Board of Education has authorized the use of video camera surveillance in its transportation vehicles and on school grounds. The use of video recordings from surveillance equipment shall be subject to the other policies of the District including policies concerning the confidentiality of student and personnel records. Video surveillance shall only be used to promote the order, safety, and security of students, staff and property.

To provide a safe environment closed-circuit video cameras may be used on campus. Video may be reviewed by administration for safety infractions randomly on a need or random basis. If the video footage identifies individuals and/or groups committing some major rule or safety infraction that has been otherwise unreported, the administration may use professional judgment and discretion in determining appropriate consequences.

### **WATER BOTTLES AND OTHER DRINKS**

Water bottles and other drinks are not allowed in classrooms. Medical exceptions (to include the proper hydration of athletes) can be made by the administration only.

### **MEDIA CENTER**

The HCCMS Media Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:50a.m. until dismissal. Books may be checked out for a definite period of time with fees charged for lost or damaged books. Students who owe media fees may continue to have **access** to the media center materials but will **not** be allowed to check out additional materials. Three times a year report cards will be held until students clear up their library medic transactions, that is, until overdue materials are returned and/or the fines paid. Late charges are \$.05 (five cents) per each school day. The last day of circulation during the school year is two weeks before the last day of school. No books/materials may be checked out over summer vacation. Students are encouraged to visit the public library and continue reading during the summer months. The lists emphasize a variety of books to encourage the joy of reading and life-long learning. See the HCCMS Media Center website for more information.

If you lose or damage media center books, you must pay the replacement cost. The same policy applies to any other media center materials checked out which are lost.

## **STUDENT HEALTH/SAFETY**

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

In the event of an emergency evacuation of the school building, students will follow the direction given by their teachers. Students will leave their classroom in an orderly fashion and move quickly to their designated areas under the supervision of their teachers.

### **SAFETY DRILLS**

The school will conduct several fire, dangerous intruder, tornado and other safety drills during the school year. Students should assume that there is the possibility of danger whenever directions are issued. Students should remain calm and follow the directions of their teacher to ensure the safety of everyone in the school.

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**



Students with food allergies must have written documentation from their physician in order to omit a food item from their lunch tray. Documentation must be in the student's permanent folder. Students who are not drinking milk with their meal due to a documented allergy may bring a school appropriate beverage from home, or in some cases a juice can be provided. These students and those who bring a lunch from home may bring what they are going to drink in a thermos or unbreakable container.

\*\*Breakable containers and soft drinks in their original containers are not allowed.

## **HEAD LICE**

Definition: Infestation of the hair, with adult lice, larvae, or nits (eggs).

Etiology

1. *Pediculus humanus capitus* – the head louse.
2. Head lice in school-aged children and pubic lice infestations in adolescents and young adults occur in epidemic proportions in the United States and other countries. Head lice occur in all socio-economic groups.
3. Under optimum conditions, the eggs of lice hatch in a week, and sexual maturity is reached approximately two (2) weeks. The female louse lays 5-10 eggs a day and has a life span of approximately 30 days.
4. Transmission occurs by direct contact with infested individuals or indirectly by contact with their personal belongings, combs, brushes, headgear and clothing.

## **Subjective**

Intense itching of the scalp, skin or trunk which may lead to complications such as impetigo, furuncles, and enlarged cervical lymph nodes.

Due to the impossible and very probable epidemic infestation of pediculosis in the school environment the Board of Education deems it necessary to immediately isolate someone exhibiting pediculosis. The student with pediculosis will be advised to see his/her physician or public health nurse for treatment.

## **Contact**

The school principal is the contact for each school for questions regarding the presence of head lice at school.

## **Notice**

When a case of head lice is discovered in a particular classroom a letter will be sent home to the child's parents outlining the procedures to be followed.

If the student has a second infestation, the parents must present a certificate of treatment from the Health Department, a physician, or a Harris County School Nurse before the student can be readmitted to school. Another letter will be sent home to all other members of the class advising the parents that a case of head lice was discovered in the classroom.

## **HEALTH RECORDS**

All health records of the student, including immunization records, will be kept in the student's permanent folder in the main office. Law requires the immunization certificate issued by the Georgia Department of Human Resources for all students. Updated immunizations are required for students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Failure to comply with state requirements may result in withdrawal from enrollment.

## **INSURANCE**

The Harris County Board of Education makes available an insurance program for students at a minimal cost. Primary insurance is provided through a school authorized insurance company for students who would like the coverage. The two choices of this insurance are:

1. School day coverage – from the time the bus picks you up until you arrive at home.
2. 24 hour coverage – 12 months.

Cheerleaders, football, basketball, soccer, track, and volleyball and other sport athletes must provide signed evidence that they are covered by adequate insurance or parent/guardian must sign a waiver stating they are solely responsible for any costs.

## **MEDICATION INFORMATION**

If a student must receive medicine at school, certain procedures will be followed. ***Before any medication can be administered, the proper form must be completed.*** These forms are located in the administrator's offices, on the website and the back to school packet of forms.

### **Oral Medication in Schools**

If exceptional circumstances exist wherein a child is required to take prescription medication during school hours and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the principal or his designee may administer medication in compliance with the following regulations:

1. Written instructions signed by the parent shall always be required and shall include:
  - a. students' name
  - b. name of medication
  - c. time medication is to be administered
  - d. required dosage
  - e. list of possible side effects of medication
  - f. termination date for administering the medication, and
  - g. other information which may be requested of the parent by the principal or the principal's designee.
2. The principal or his/her designee shall:
  - a. inform appropriate school personnel to the use of medication
  - b. keep a written record of the administering of medication
  - c. keep the medication in a locked cabinet or drawer at all times when not being administered; and
  - d. return any unused medication directly to the parent.
3. The parent(s) of the student must assume responsibility for informing the principal's designee of any change in the child's health or change in medication.
4. The school district retains the right and discretion to reject requests for the administering of medication for any good and sufficient cause.
5. No medication shall be administered at school unless a current Medical Authorization and Release form has been completed and signed by the student's parent or guardian.
6. The principal or his/her designee shall follow the instructions provided on the Medical Authorization and Release form, a copy of which is (JGCD-E) incorporated by reference to this policy.
7. A copy of this policy will be provided to parent(s) upon their request.

### **Students With Asthma**

If a student has been diagnosed with asthma and has been prescribed asthma medication, the student may self-administer the prescription asthma medication if all of the provisions listed below are met:

1. Completion of the Medical Authorization and Release Form;
2. Completion of the Physician's Student Statement Form which includes:
  - a. name and purpose of medication
  - b. the prescribed dosage
  - c. the time(s) or special circumstances for administration of the medication
  - d. written authorization from the parent(s) or guardian(s) for the school to seek emergency medical treatment for the student when necessary and appropriate.

### **Over the Counter Medication**

Students cannot be in possession of over the counter medication. **ALL** medication **MUST** be administered through the nurse's office. Students in possession of over the counter medications at school will face disciplinary consequences. A signed permission form must be on file in the nurse's office giving permission for the student to take **any** over the counter medication.

Students should register required medication with the clinic. Students possessing over the counter or prescription medication may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **VISITORS**

Any visitor to the school or school grounds must report to the main entrance area as they enter the building for a visitor's pass which should be worn at all times during the visit. Identification and purpose of visit may be required.

Visitors should leave the school grounds after completing their visit. Parents are encouraged to call the cafeteria in advance to reserve a tray if they wish to join their child for lunch. Students may not have unauthorized visitors in class.

## CURRICULUM/ASSESSMENT

### CURRICULUM

Course offerings include academic core subjects and Connections classes. Academics are taught by a team of teachers and include language arts/reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. Academic classes are 60 minutes and Connection classes are 50 minutes.

Connection courses last nine (9) weeks and or up to a full year (band, chorus adv. art and adv. drama.). They introduce students to a variety of topics and other interests. Connection courses include art, band, chorus, keyboarding, drama, math skills, career explorations, study skills, technology and various other courses. During the school year, students are required to take one nine weeks course in health and one semester of physical education per Harris County Board of Education policy.

**Connection Classes, except Band and Chorus, are NOT assigned by request. Classes are assigned as available. Band and Chorus are yearlong classes students may opt into at the beginning of the school year.**

### ELT

ELT stands for Extended Learning Time. This is the extra time added to the school day for Middle Schools as required by the state of Georgia to provide enrichment and remediation as needed during the course of the academic school day. Students may receive enrichment/remedial reading, SRA reading, writing or math skills instruction depending on their test scores and/or teacher recommendation. A student's ELT teacher or class may be re-assigned if necessary, depending on his/her needs.

### FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an educational opportunity for students to experience activities outside of the classroom and away from campus. They are arranged by team teachers and developed around the grade level curriculum. Permission slips are required to be signed by a parent or guardian. If the trip requires a fee, it is the responsibility of the parents to cover their child's expense or seek a scholarship/sponsorship.

\*Assignment to ISS/OSS may result in disqualification from the **8th grade Coastal Georgia Trip**. Non-refundable trip deposits will be forfeited if students break published behavior code requirements after the final deadline for refunds.

### GRADING SYSTEM

The following is the grading scale used by Harris County Schools:

90 – 100 = A      80 – 89 = B      70 – 79 = C      69 – Below = F

**Incomplete:** Students receiving an incomplete on their report card must make up the work within fourteen (14) calendar days after the close of each semester.

### HONORS PROGRAMS

Harris County Carver Middle School is committed to recognizing students who excel in all areas including academics and extracurricular activities.

**NEW:** Teams celebrate student success at Awards Days to recognize Scholar or Honor Roll students during the **first semester and at the end of the year.**

**Scholar:** All A's (90-100) in every subject (no Bs, Cs or Fs)

**Honor:** All A's and B's in every subject (not all Bs, no Cs or Fs)

Any student who meets the Scholar or Honor Roll criteria for the first, second, and third nine week periods will be honored at an Honors Day Program at the end of the year.

Teacher sponsored or coached extracurricular, athletic and fine arts programs may hold awards programs for achievements. Students enrolled for less than twenty days will not receive a progress report/report card.

### **NEW: Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) (formally RTI)**

The MTSS team is an interdisciplinary group of professionals, which may include teachers, administrators, counselors, special education teachers, and/or school psychologist. MTSS is a part of all Harris County schools and its purpose is to help students who are experiencing academic, behavioral, or emotional difficulties in school. The team meets to identify, plan, evaluate, and recommend alternative instructional strategies in an attempt to provide the most effective learning experience for each child. The team may evaluate the student's academic records, conduct observations, and administer standardized achievement or ability tests if needed. Parents will be notified in writing that their child has been referred to the MTSS team. They will be invited to attend all MTSS meetings concerning their child, and parental permission must be granted before any testing is done.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS and REPORT CARDS**

A progress report is sent home with the student at the midpoint of each nine weeks. Report cards are issued each nine weeks. The school will publish the dates for progress report and report card issue. A student must be enrolled for a period of at least 20 school days within a grading period in order to receive a report. Parents are encouraged to enroll in Parent Portal for immediate information regarding student performance and/or attendance.

### **PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS**

Students in grades seventh and eighth must pass Language Arts/Reading and Math **AND** three out of the four remaining subjects (Language Arts/English, Science, Social Studies and Health) in order to be promoted to the next grade. Students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade will also be required to pass the Reading and Math portions of the GA Milestones in order to be promoted to high school. Students who are absent from school 16 or more days may be retained in his/her present grade. If a student meets all Board approved promotion criteria and exceeds the maximum allowed absences from school due to hardship and/or extenuating circumstances, an appeal may be filed. (Please see Board Policies: IHE and JBD. All Harris County BOE policies are available on-line at [www.harris.k12.ga.us](http://www.harris.k12.ga.us) or in the Media Center at the school.)

### **SEX EDUCATION**

HCCMS teaches abstinence. As required by state law, any parent or legal guardian of a child to whom Sex Education Instruction is taught shall have the right to elect, in writing, that their child is not to receive such course of study. Parents may review the sex education and AIDS prevention instructional objectives before making this decision. These materials are kept in the media center. Students who, due to written request by parent or guardian, do not participate in these classes will be given alternative assignments to complete in the school's media center.

### **SYLLABUS**

Each teacher will prepare a syllabus for each class providing long and short-range goals and objectives. The methods of grading, the frequency of homework with its purposes, the weight of tests, and projects to be done will be addressed in each syllabus. The syllabus for each class will be given to students during the first week of school or the 1<sup>st</sup> week of a new Connection class.

### **TESTING**

All standardized testing, both group and individual, is coordinated through the guidance office. A copy of each student's test results will be sent home. The counselors are available to answer any questions regarding standardized tests.

Nine weeks testing schedules are published via morning announcements, school website, marquee and emails. Two tests are administered per day for 4 consecutive days.

***Nine Week Exam Exemption Incentive:*** Students meeting the criteria listed below will be eligible to exempt nine weeks exams in up to four academic core classes: Social Studies, Math, Language Arts and Science. Exam exemption means a student will NOT be required to take the final exam for a qualifying class, and the exam grade will not count against the student as they are exempt. During exam days, daily attendance to school is still required.

Exams are given over a 4 day period. Students will still have academic work in the remaining classes each day. The criteria for exemption is per class, per nine week period, and is as follows:

1. A class average of 88 and perfect attendance prior to the end of the 9 weeks or
2. A class average of 93 and 1 absence prior to the end of the 9 weeks
3. No major discipline resulting in ISS/OSS for the nine week period.

### **TESTING SECURITY PLAN**

District and School Test Security Plans may be accessed through the school and district web site. If students or parents have questions or concerns regarding the security of testing, please contact the school testing coordinator.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are issued to the students at the beginning of the school year. Fines will be charged for any book that shows unnecessary wear or for books that are lost. Students may be required to cover the books 5 DAYS AFTER ISSUE to protect them. Upon receiving a book, students should make a list of all damages that are visible so that they will not be charged for existing damages.

**Students will be charged a fee of \$5.00 for minor damage and \$10.00 for major damage to textbooks. Students will be charged the full cost of those textbooks that are lost or damaged beyond repair.**

### **PARENT PORTAL**

Parent Portal is a convenient home-to-school collaboration tool which allows parents to enhance their involvement by keeping track of their children's progress-online-via an easy to use Web site customized for your school. Parents can register for the Parent Portal after contacting the school data clerk, in the main office, 706-628-4951.

### **PARENT NOTIFICATIONS**

In accordance with the Elementary Secondary Education Assistance Act of 1965 (ESEA), parents have the right to know the following:

- Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals  
One hundred percent (100%) of the teachers and paraprofessionals employed by the Harris County School District meet the standards to be highly qualified.
- Status for Meeting State Standards  
This academic school year, no schools in the Harris County School District were identified as Alert, Focus, or Priority. This means that all Harris County Schools met the State of Georgia standards for academic progress.
- Training and Credentials of Teachers and Paraprofessionals  
Parents have the right to know the following regarding training and credentials of their child's teacher:
  - 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 conditional 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) If your child receives assistance from a paraprofessional, you have the right to know the paraprofessional's qualifications.

If you have questions or concerns about the parental rights outlined in this handbook, please contact the school's principal.

### **PARTNERS IN EDUCATION**

Harris County Carver Middle School works hand-in-hand with its partners to: provide for enriching experiences for students, improve academic performance, grow career opportunities and provide for faculty development. If your business would like to become a Partner in Education, please call the Principal.

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

**Georgia H.B. 1187 – THE A+ REFORM ACT OF 2000 mandates the establishment of School Councils in Georgia public schools. The stated purpose for the creation of School Councils is to significantly impact the improvement of student achievement. Each local School Council will be charged with the role to provide**

**advice and recommendations, and to assist and represent the community of parents and businesses. School Councils at each school will also have the opportunity to influence and promote community support and involvement.**

Members will be comprised of two teachers employed at the school, two local business members, and two parents who *must have a student(s) enrolled in the school.*

Council meetings shall be called and conducted in accordance with law. A secretary shall be selected and written minutes produced. Copies of the minutes shall be forwarded to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will make them available to the Harris County Board of Education.

## **STUDENT PORTAL**

Student Portal is a convenient collaboration tool which allows students to enhance their involvement by keeping track of their progress-online-via an easy to use Web site customized for your school. Students can register for the Parent Portal after contacting the school registrar in the main office.

## **POLICIES**

***Policy information included in this handbook is based on Harris County Board Policy at the time this book was printed and is provided as information only. Official Board Policy is published on the District website at [www.harris.k12.ga.us](http://www.harris.k12.ga.us), and may be found by clicking on School Board at the top of the district web page, then School Board Home Page, then Policy. You may also click on the Search function at the top of School Board Home Page and search policies by key word.***

### **Attendance**

*\*See Harris County BOE Student Behavior Code and Attendance Protocol for full policies. The procedures for addressing student attendance are as follows:*

- a. Students with more than 5 days of unexcused absence will be considered truant.
- b. Three days total unexcused absences for year: the attendance clerk will send a letter to the student's parents informing them of the student's attendance status.
- c. Five days total absences for year: the attendance clerk will send a letter to the student's parents informing them to address attendance concerns.
- d. Ten days absent for year: the attendance clerk will send a letter to the student's parents informing them of the student's attendance status.
- e. Sixteen days absent for year: the attendance clerk will send a letter to the parents informing them of possible retention and loss of credit due to excessive absences. Parents are also informed of the appeals process.
- f. During post-planning, the grade level counselor may compile the documentation of the student's attendance history. This documentation includes:
  - a) Attendance history as documented on Infinite Campus
  - b) Excuses from the homeroom teacher
  - c) Report card for the school year
  - d) Additional information pertinent to the student's history. This can include Student Support team information, documentation of medical illness, referral to school social worker, anecdotal records from teacher, counselor and/or assistant principal.
- g. The grade level counselor may hold an attendance appeals hearing with one or more of the core academic teachers. The committee may make a decision for retention based on the documentation. The decision will be reviewed with the assistant principal and principal for final determination.
- h. The grade level counselor will finalize the student's report card to address the committee's decision.
- i. Documentation of the appeals hearing will be kept for one academic year after the date of the hearing.

## TITLE IX: NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

Title IX is a federal law which protects students and employees from sex discrimination. Its regulations apply to all educational programs, preschool through graduate school, which receives federal aid. Any school system that receives federal money, services or property must comply with Title IX.

Harris County-Carver Middle School will comply with the Title IX rules and regulations implemented in the Education Amendment of 1972. HCCMS will not discriminate on the basis of age, national origin, race, religion, sex or handicap in educational programs or activities which it operates or in employment or personnel.

Inquiries concerning the application of the Title IX or 504 may be referred to the HCBOE Personnel Office, 504 Director, P. O. Box 388, Hamilton, GA 31811. The Directors may be reached by phone at (706) 628-4206.

Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may also be made to the following address: Title 504 Director, Office of Civil Rights, U. S. Department of Education, 101 Marietta Tower, Atlanta, GA 30323.

It is HCCMS' desire that the grievance procedure provide for prompt and equitable adjustment of differences at the lowest possible administrative level, and that each employee and student be assured opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of complaints and concerns without fear of reprisal as a result of having presented a grievance for review.

Policies outlining the procedures for filing complaints or grievances from employees or from students are contained in the Board Policy Manual located in the Media Center and in the office of this principal. The description codes for the policies dealing with complaints and grievances are GAE (for employees) and TCE (for students). These are available in the media center.

## Equity

TITLE 20. EDUCATION  
CHAPTER 2. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
ARTICLE 6. QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION  
PART 14. OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS  
O.C.G.A. § 20-2-315 (2009)

§ 20-2-315. Gender discrimination prohibited; authorized separate gender teams; equal athletic opportunity; physical education classes; employee designated to monitor compliance; grievance procedures; reporting requirements

(a) No student shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another student, or otherwise be discriminated against in any interscholastic or intramural athletics offered by a local school system, and no local school system shall provide any such athletics separately on such basis.

(b) Notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section, a local school system may operate or sponsor separate teams for members of each gender where selection for such teams is based upon competitive skill or the activity involved is a contact sport. However, where a local school system operates or sponsors a team in a particular sport for members of one gender but operates or sponsors no such team for members of the other gender, and athletic opportunities for members of that gender in that particular sport have previously been limited, members of the excluded gender must be allowed to try out for the team offered unless the sport involved is a contact sport. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the authority of a local school system to operate or sponsor a single team for a contact sport that includes members of both genders. As used in this subsection, the term "contact sport" includes boxing, wrestling, rugby, ice hockey, football, basketball, and any other sport the purpose or major activity of which involves bodily contact.

(c) A local school system which operates or sponsors interscholastic or intramural athletics shall undertake all reasonable efforts to provide equal athletic opportunity for members of both genders. In determining whether equal opportunities are available the following factors shall be considered:

- (1) Whether the selection of sports and levels of competition effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of members of both genders;
- (2) The provision of equipment and supplies;
- (3) Scheduling of games and practice time;
- (4) Travel allowance;
- (5) Opportunity to receive coaching and academic tutoring;
- (6) Assignment and compensation of coaches and tutors;

(7) Provision of locker rooms and practice and competitive facilities;  
(8) Provision of medical and training facilities and services; and  
(9) Publicity. Unequal aggregate expenditures for members of each gender or unequal expenditures for male and female teams if a local school system operates or sponsors separate teams will not constitute noncompliance with this subsection, but the failure to provide essential funds for the basic operations of teams for one gender may be considered in assessing equality of opportunity for members of each gender. Nothing in Code Section 20-2-411 shall be construed to limit the authority of a local school system to expend school tax funds as authorized by Article VIII, Section VI, Paragraph I(b) of the Constitution in order to comply with the requirements of this Code section.

(d) A local school system may provide separate toilet, locker room, and shower facilities on the basis of gender, but such facilities shall be comparable to such facilities provided for students of the other gender.

(e) This Code section does not prohibit the grouping of students in physical education classes by gender.

(f)(1) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (3) of this subsection, if a local school system sponsors an athletic activity or sport at a particular school that is similar to a sport for which an institution in the University System of Georgia offers an athletic scholarship, it must sponsor the athletic activity or sport for which a scholarship is offered at that school. This paragraph does not affect academic requirements for participation nor prevent the local school system from sponsoring activities in addition to those for which scholarships are provided.

(2) Two athletic activities or sports that are similar may be offered simultaneously.

(3) If a local school system demonstrates by a bona fide survey of eligible students at the school, which is approved by the Department of Education for compliance with generally accepted opinion survey principles regarding neutral wording and other matters, that there is insufficient interest among students at the school to field a team described in paragraph (1) of this subsection, then the local school system shall not be required to sponsor such athletic activity or sport at that school. The exemption provided for by this paragraph shall be valid for 24 months following the date when the most recent bona fide student survey demonstrating a lack of student interest was completed, unless a new bona fide student survey is conducted within the 24 month period that demonstrates sufficient interest to field a team. If such a new bona fide student survey demonstrates such sufficient interest, then the local school system must comply with paragraph (1) of this subsection during the local school system's next fiscal year and until such time as a new bona fide student survey demonstrates insufficient interest to field a team described in paragraph (1) of this subsection. A local school system shall conduct the bona fide student survey described in this paragraph regarding interest in a team described in paragraph (1) of this subsection upon the request of nine students at the school, but no more frequently than once every 12 months.

(4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to preclude the application of generally applicable policies or rules regarding the cancellation of an athletic activity or sport due to lack of student participation in scheduled practices or contests.

(g) Each local school system shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under this Code section, including the investigation of any complaint communicated to such local school system alleging its noncompliance with this Code section. The employee designated under this subsection may be the same person required to be designated under 34 C.F.R. Section 106.8. The local school system annually shall notify all its students of the name, office address, and office telephone number of the employee or employees appointed pursuant to this subsection. Such notification may be included in a student **handbook** distributed pursuant to Code Section 20-2-736.

Compliance Officer; Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

Stacey Carlisle  
132 Barnes Mill Rd.  
Hamilton, GA 31811  
706-628-4206 ext. 1217

(h) Each local school system shall adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of written student complaints, including complaints brought by a parent or guardian on behalf of his or her minor child who is a student, alleging any action which would be a violation of this Code section. Such procedures shall require that:

(1) The employee designated under subsection (g) of this Code section shall render his or her decision in writing no later than 30 days after receipt of the complaint, and such decision shall set forth the essential facts and rationale for the decision;

(2) A copy of such decision shall be provided to the complainant within five days of the date of the decision; and

(3) A complainant shall have a right to appeal such decision to the local board within 35 days of the date of the



decision.

(i)(1) A complainant may appeal a decision of a local board that is rendered under subsection (h) of this Code section in accordance with the procedures specified in Code Section 20-2-1160. If the State Board of Education determines that a local school system has failed to comply with this Code section, then the state board shall provide the local school system with opportunities to prepare a corrective plan. If the state board determines that a corrective plan of the local school system adequately plans and provides for future compliance with this Code section, then the state board shall approve the plan and direct the local school system to implement such plan.

(2) If, upon a complaint filed pursuant to subsection (h) of this Code section after one year following the date of a state board order directing implementation of a corrective plan pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection but within four years of the date of such order, the state board determines that the local school system which was subject to such order has willfully failed to comply with this Code section, the state board may, after consideration of the local school system's efforts to implement the corrective plan approved in the earlier proceeding and of any other corrective plan that may be submitted by the local school system, transmit a certification of such determination to the Department of Community Affairs. If the state board's determination of noncompliance is later reversed or vacated upon appeal, the state board shall immediately notify the Department of Community Affairs of such action.

(3) If, upon a complaint filed pursuant to subsection (h) of this Code section after one year following the date of a state board certification to the Department of Community Affairs pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection but within four years of the date of such order, the state board determines that the local school system which was subject to such order has willfully failed to comply with this Code section, the state board may, after consideration of the local school system's efforts to implement a corrective plan approved in an earlier proceeding and of any other corrective plan that may be submitted by the local school system, order that a team or teams within the local school system or school within the local school system shall not participate in interscholastic postseason athletic contests and that participation in violation of such an order may result in withholding of state funds allotted pursuant to Code Section 20-2-186. An order of the state board barring participation in interscholastic postseason athletic contests shall be made and announced before the beginning of a school year.

(4) If, upon a complaint filed pursuant to subsection (h) of this Code section after one year following the date of a state board order prohibiting participation in interscholastic postseason athletic contests pursuant to paragraph (3) of this subsection but within four years of the date of such order, the state board determines that the local school system which was subject to such order has willfully failed to comply with this Code section, the state board may, after consideration of the local school system's efforts to implement a corrective plan approved in an earlier proceeding and of any other corrective plan that may be submitted by the local school system, withhold state funds that are allotted pursuant to Code Section 20-2-186 in an amount that the state board determines is sufficient to secure the local school system's compliance with this Code section. In the event that state funds are withheld pursuant to this paragraph, such funds shall later be allotted to the local school system at such time as the state board determines that the local school system is in compliance with this Code section.

(j) No later than October 1, 2003, and every year thereafter, the Department of Education shall submit a report to the General Assembly regarding the compliance of local school systems with the requirements of this Code section. Such report shall include information regarding expenditures and participation rates for each gender and such other information as the state board and department deem relevant. Each report shall cover the time period beginning on July 1 of the previous year and ending on June 30 of the year in which the report is due.

### **FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

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

- 1) Inspect and review the education records of a student who is your child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen years of age (18) or older, your own education records. Educational records maintained for your child are:

<u>Type of Record(s)</u>	<u>Location(s)</u>	<u>Contact Person(s)</u>
Special Education (Back-up File)	HC Board Office	Special Education Director
Special Education Due Process File	HC Board Office	School Building Principal
Cumulative File	School	School Building Principal
Regular Education File	School	School Building Principal

- 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;
- 3) Consent to disclosures or personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act authorizes disclosure without consent;

- 4) File with the United States Department of Education a complaint under 20 C.F.R. 99.64, concerning the alleged failures by the Harris County Board of Education to comply with the requirements of the Act or the regulations promulgated hereunder; and
- 5) Obtain a copy of the policy which the board of Education has adopted regarding access to student records. Copies of this policy may be obtained by contacting the central office of the Board of Education at P.O. Box 388, Hamilton, Georgia 31811 or on-line. ([www.harris.k12.ga.us](http://www.harris.k12.ga.us))

## **TITLE I**

We have been notified that our school **may** qualify to receive federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – previously reauthorized as No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, during a particular school year. **If** we qualify, our school becomes eligible for the following: **Schoolwide Title I Program**. Under this program, schools may consolidate and use funds under Title I, together with other federal, state, and local funds, in order to upgrade the entire educational program in schools in which not less than 40% of the children enrolled are from low-income families.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION – IDEA**

The Special Education Program is designed to meet the needs of individual students with special needs. Referrals to special agencies concerning physical, academic, emotional needs can be handled through the Student Support Team. The SEP is also designed to meet the needs of the academically advanced student (The Gifted Program). The purpose of Child Find is to identify, locate, and evaluate children and youth, birth to age 21, who are suspected of, or have a disability or developmental delay. Harris County Schools serves children ages 3 through 21 with identified special education needs. Please contact the Office of Federal Programs if you have any questions or if you know of a child with a disability at (706) 628-4206.

## **504 Procedural Rights and Safeguards**

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.

## **GIFTED EDUCATION**

### **Gifted Program**

The Harris County Board of Education recognizes the need to provide gifted education services for students who have the potential for exceptional academic achievement in grades K-12.

A gifted student is one who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual, and/or creative ability(ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and /or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities.

The Harris County Board of Education provides a differentiated curriculum for gifted students which consist of courses of study in which the content, teaching strategies and expectations of student mastery have been adjusted to be appropriate for gifted students. Elementary gifted students are provided differentiated instruction in a resource classroom one day per week through integrated-curriculum units that are developed around topics of high interest. Common Core Georgia Performance Standards/Georgia Performance Standards are addressed through student tasks and activities that are specifically designed to meet the needs and academic level of each gifted learner. The needs of the middle school gifted students are met through differentiated instruction and curriculum in content classes using either the Advanced Content or the Cluster Model. The identified needs of gifted high school students are met through being served in one or more of the following: advanced content class, Advanced Placement (College Board AP), gifted internship placement, and/or dual enrollment in a post-secondary institution.

A student may be referred for consideration for gifted educational services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. Students who score at specified levels established by the Harris County Board of Education on a norm referenced test shall be automatically referred for determination of eligibility for gifted services (IDDD.1).

The Georgia Board of Education has set two (2) standards of eligibility (GA SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38).

- A student may qualify by meeting mental ability (composite) and achievement criteria.
- A student may also qualify by meeting three (3) of the four (4) criteria: mental ability (component), achievement, creativity and motivation.

Parents and guardians will be notified and afforded an opportunity for a conference to discuss student eligibility requirements. Any test score approved by Harris County Schools used to establish eligibility shall be applicable for two (2) calendar years.

Any student who has met the state eligibility criteria for gifted education services in another Georgia public school system shall be considered eligible to receive gifted education services by Harris County Schools. A student transferring from a Georgia public school system to Harris County Schools shall meet the criteria for continuation of gifted services established by the Harris County Board of Education. Gifted eligibility established in another state shall not be recognized by Harris County Schools.

Students must meet specific criteria established by the board of education to continue to receive gifted services. By not meeting the continuation criteria, students may be placed on probation and removed from the program.

Written consent for testing shall be obtained from parents or guardians of students being considered for gifted education services. Parents or guardians also must provide written consent before students determined to be eligible for gifted education services can receive these services.

## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

The Harris County Board of Education realizes that there may be conditions in the school system that need improvement and that student should have some means to effectively express their concerns, which will be considered and handled with fairness. Students' complaints shall be resolved through orderly processes and at the lowest possible level. However, the board shall provide channels for eventual hearing should circumstance dictate.

### **METHOD OF COMPLAINTS**

Complaints shall be approached in the following manner:

- A. The opportunity shall be provided to any student or his/her parents to discuss with his/her teacher a decision or situation which he/she considers unjust or unfair;
- B. If the matter remains unresolved, the student or his/her parents, or the teacher, may bring the matter to the principal's attention for her consideration;
- C. If the matter remains unresolved, it may be brought to the Superintendent or a designee for his consideration;
- D. Complaints that remain unresolved following any action by the Superintendent may be referred in writing to the Board. The Board's decision, if it chooses to make one, shall be final.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

#### **A. General**

This procedure is established in order to provide a formal method for the resolution of any complaint concerning the treatment of students by system personnel who are alleged to violate either system policy or student legal rights. These formal procedures should not be used unless informal conferences with the appropriate teacher(s) and principal do not resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Any student or the parents of such student may bring a complaint, whose rights under any system policy or applicable law have allegedly been violated. However, when a complaint is brought by a minor student, the parent(s) or guardian(s) must be a party to the proceedings.

Complaints should be settled as close as possible to their point of origin. It is important that complaints be settled quickly. The number of days specified on each level should be considered a maximum, but may be extended by mutual agreement. Student suspension and expulsion shall be addressed under policy JC as outlined and not as a part of this process.

All hearings should be as informal as possible, but must be conducted in accordance with due process. A complainant may be represented by counsel and shall be allowed to introduce all relevant evidence and to cross-examine adverse witnesses. A complainant who chooses to be represented by counsel must give sufficient advance notice to enable the school system to likewise be represented. All decisions shall be in writing, shall be confined to matters brought forth in the hearing, and shall state the facts and reasoning upon which they are based. If mutual agreement cannot be reached, the complainant shall be given reasonable notice of the time and place for the hearing. All such hearings shall be private unless the complainant declares the subject matter to be public and the Board chooses not to go into executive session. The system's Title IX Coordinator shall be consulted whenever sex discrimination is alleged in a formal complaint.

#### **B. Level One – Principal**

Complainants who cannot resolve a matter informally may submit a complaint in writing to the principal of the school in which the complaint arose. All complaints must be submitted within ten school days after the date on which the action complained of has occurred. It must clearly state the system policies or student legal rights, which are alleged to have been violated.

A hearing may not be necessary at this level because the principal may have become aware of all pertinent information through previous informal conferences. However, a hearing will be held at the request of either the principal or the complainant. Such hearing shall be held within five school days after the complaint is submitted unless a later date is mutually agreeable.

The principal shall render a decision within three school days after submission of the complaint or holding of a hearing as appropriate. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision or if no decision is given within the allotted time, the complaint may be taken to level two provided that notice of appeal is made within five school days.

#### **C. Level Two – Superintendent**

Complaints may be initiated at this level by the filing of timely notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five school days. Such notice must be in writing and accompanied by copies of the original complaint and the decision if any, made at level one.

If the notice of appeal contains a request for a hearing, or the Superintendent believes one to be necessary, a hearing shall be held within ten school days of such notice unless a later date is agreeable to both parties. The Superintendent shall render a decision within five school days of the notice of appeal or hearing as appropriate. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision or if no decision is given within the allotted time, the complaint may be taken to level three provided that notice of appeal is made within ten school days.

#### **D. Level Three – Board of Education**

The complainant may request a hearing before the Board by submitting timely notice of appeal with the Superintendent within ten school days. Such notice shall be accompanied by a copy of the original grievance and the decisions, if any, made at Levels One and Two. In addition, such notice shall contain a statement of reasons why such decisions are unacceptable. If the Board chooses not to hear the appeal, the complainant will be so notified.

If the Board chooses to hear the appeal the complainant will be given reasonable notice of the time and place of the hearing. The Board will render a written decision within reasonable time after such hearing.

#### **E. Miscellaneous**

This complaint procedure may be used for students under the gender discrimination provisions to Title IX, 20 USCA 1681 et seq., in accordance with the regulations, 34 CFR 106.8 (b).

This complaint procedure may be used for students and parents in compliance with Steward B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 (P. O. 100-77), and Harris County board policy JBCD.2.

Any complaints regarding grades and changes thereof shall be handled and processed under Policy IHAAA, Grade Changing.

## **Students Reporting Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct**

Students wishing to report instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by teachers, administrators or other school employees towards a student shall do so utilizing the process listed below established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and implemented by the Harris County Board of Education. This shall not prohibit students from reporting the incident to law enforcement authorities. **Students are prohibited by Georgia law and Harris County Board of Education policy from falsifying, misrepresenting, or erroneously reporting incidents of alleged inappropriate behavior by school personnel and may be disciplined for doing so.**

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

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

(c) Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney. Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

## **Bullying**

TITLE 20. EDUCATION  
CHAPTER 2. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
ARTICLE 16. STUDENTS  
PART 2. DISCIPLINE  
SUBPART 2. PUBLIC SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNALS

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4 (2009)

§ 20-2-751.4. Policies prohibiting bullying; assignment to alternative school; notice

(a) As used in this Code section, the term "bullying" means:

(1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or

(2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm.

(b) Each local board of education shall adopt policies, applicable to students in grades six through 12, that prohibit bullying of a student by another student and shall require such prohibition to be included in the student code of conduct for middle and high schools in that school system. Local board policies shall require that, upon a finding that a student has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, such student shall be assigned to an alternative school. Each local board of education shall ensure that students and parents of students are notified of the prohibition against bullying, and the penalties for violating the prohibition, by posting such information at each middle and high school and by including such information in student and parent handbooks.

(c) Any school system which is not in compliance with the requirements of this Code section shall be ineligible to receive state funding pursuant to Code Sections 20-2-161 and 20-2-260.*O.C.G.A.*