

# McIntosh County School System

## Student Handbook

2021-2022



# McIntosh County School System



## Home of the Buccaneers

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Dr. Jim Pulos

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Educational Excellence and Equity for All

### **Vision Statement**

To graduate all students prepared for college and/or careers.

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Inquiries concerning the application of the Perkins Act, Title I, Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504 and ADA to the policies and practices of the Board of Education may be addressed to the McIntosh County Board of Education, 200 Pine Street, Darien, Georgia 31305; to the Regional office for Civil Rights, Atlanta, Georgia 30323; or to the Director, Office for Civil Rights, Education Department, Washington, D.C. 20201.

**Title VI/VII Coordinator is Mrs. Shelly Sheets at: [ssheets@mcintosh.k12.ga.us](mailto:ssheets@mcintosh.k12.ga.us)**

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**Open Records Officer is Mr. Merwan Massa at: [mmassa@mcintosh.k12.ga.us](mailto:mmassa@mcintosh.k12.ga.us)**



# McIntosh County Schools

**Dr. James G. Pulos**  
Superintendent

July 26, 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The start of the new school year is upon us and we are excited to soon see our students return to the hallways and classrooms. This letter will provide some of the important details that parents and students may need to know.

## **COVID Protocol:**

- There remains a lot of discussion in the news about mandated mask wearing. McIntosh County School System will not require that masks are worn on our buses nor in our schools. The wearing of masks will be optional at this time and should be a family decision unless we are mandated by competent authority in the future.
- Personal hygiene is one of the primary means of controlling any disease, so we all must remain vigilant with requiring students to wash their hands frequently, properly cover for coughs and sneezes, not touch their faces, and to avoid shaking hands.
- Social distancing is a great practice every day. We will use the three feet standard as much as practical for all activities and gatherings.
- We will monitor our students and send them to the nurse if they show signs of not feeling well. The nurse will follow normal protocols to determine what actions need to be taken thereafter.
- Our custodians will continue to clean the buildings, and we have asked our staff and faculty to continue to maintain cleanliness within the classrooms during the school day such as wiping down desks and shared equipment.
- Visitors will not be permitted inside the school during the normal operating hours without specific approval and coordination made by the principal.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at strategic locations throughout the buildings.
- One of the biggest factors to address is complacency. We ask that everyone continue to be vigilant in enforcing our protocols and maintaining expectations.

**Open House:** We will hold open house on Thursday, August 5, 2021, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at each school. Some families may not want to enter the schools due to the large crowds, so each teacher will create a short video introduction that will be posted for parents and students to view prior to school starting. All videos will be posted to the district's website by no later than August 5, 2021.

**School Calendar:** Please take a few minutes to review the school calendar that is posted on our district website. We have two additional breaks included this year, and we plan to provide intercession opportunities to help with learning loss recovery. More information will be provided at a later date.



**After School Programs:** We are planning on providing after school programs starting the week after school starts (Monday, August 16, 2021). We will have teachers/staff to provide academic support in literacy and math for our students. Please contact your school's leadership for more details.

**One-to-One Initiative:** All of our students and teachers will have their Chromebooks issued at the beginning of the school year. There is a small cost associated with maintaining the computers. Details will be provided separately.

**Summer Read:** All students were provided with reading assignments for the summer. We provide summer reading assignments in order to reduce the amount of loss that takes place while school is out, and/or to provide additional academic information for specific courses. Please discuss this with your child to make sure the assignments have been completed before the first day of school.

**Student Handbook:** Our student handbook is online and can be located on the district's website. The handbook for the 2021-22 school year will be available starting Friday, August 6, 2021.

#### **Changes at the Schools:**

**Elementary:** We are excited to announce that we will begin offering an introduction to band class in our elementary school this school year. Research has shown that learning to play an instrument at an early age enhances memory and stimulates brain development.

**Middle School:** We will have separate reading classes this year at all grade levels. We anticipate starting construction on a new cafeteria and kitchen. The exterior has been cleaned and a new outdoor classroom has been provided by the Boys & Girls Club.

**High School:** Our high school will start block scheduling this fall. What that basically means is that instead of students taking seven (7) classes all year long, they will take four (4) classes the first semester, and another four (4) classes the second semester. Graduation requirements change for each graduating cohort and have been published already by the school.

**Early Literacy Academy:** Starting this fall, the Boys & Girls Club will offer an after school program for our 3 and 4 year olds from both Head Start and our PK programs that will focus on literacy. As you know, the ability to read is known as "the great equalizer" and many of our students in this community have struggled for years meeting the standards by the end of third grade. Early intervention, coupled with the efforts of our school system, will greatly enhance our ability to make it possible for 100% of our students to read at grade level.

**Test Scores:** Our test scores for last school year will be announced in the next few weeks. Considering that hundreds of students lost valuable academic time due to COVID, we overall maintained about the same level for our test scores for our elementary and middle school students. Our high school scores saw growth across the board. It was very clear, the majority of students who stayed home for virtual saw a decrease in test scores, and those who were face-to-face maintained. The state averages will be released soon and we will provide a comparison thereafter.

**Attendance:** We will have a stronger emphasis on good attendance this year. Schools will follow our new protocol to enforce the law. Students who missed a lot of days saw lower test scores. Attendance has a direct impact on student success.

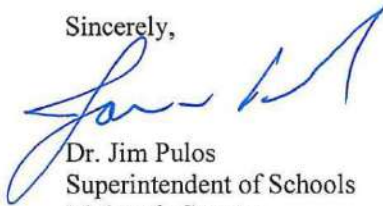
**Orientation:** Our rising 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 9<sup>th</sup> graders will have a great opportunity to get some time to get more comfortable with their transition to the next school level by attending orientation scheduled for Friday, August 6, 2021, from 8:00 to 12:00. Transportation will be provided!

**Bus Routes:** Bus route information can be found online at the district website or you can contact transportation.

**First Day for Students:** Our first official day back to school is Monday, August 9, 2021.

I am personally excited about returning to school, and I look forward to hearing our halls filled again with the voices of our students. We will continue to provide updated information as it comes available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Pulos", is written over the typed name.

Dr. Jim Pulos  
Superintendent of Schools  
McIntosh County

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# IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS



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