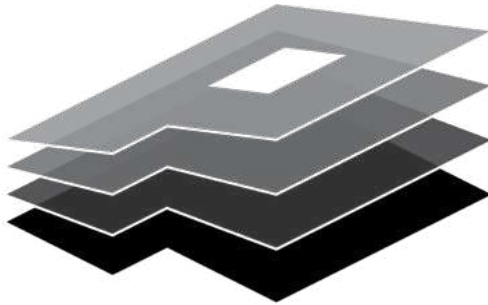




PITT COUNTY

— SCHOOLS —

**THE PARENTS' GUIDE TO
CONDUCT TO SUPPORT SAFE SCHOOLS
& ANNUAL NOTICES**

2024-25

MISSION

Pitt County Schools will lead collaboration between school, home and community to foster student growth and success, both socially and academically, in order to develop productive, global citizens.

VISION

Pitt County Schools will inspire and motivate all learners by providing educational opportunities that engage, empower and elevate students to lead healthy, resourceful and responsible lives.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Pitt County Families,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 academic year. First and foremost thank you for choosing Pitt County Schools! Our goal is to ensure that every student receives educational opportunities that will prepare them for work, college, career, and life. We encourage every student to take advantage of these opportunities. We remain committed to you as we work to fulfill our mission to lead collaboratively and work with parents and our community to foster student growth and success, both socially and academically, in order to develop productive, global citizens.

This book is the Parents' Guide to Standards of Conduct to Support Safe Schools & Annual Notices, which addresses bullying, safety, the Code of Conduct, and other key policies related to maintaining order and safety in our schools as well as providing our annual notices. Its companion is the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement, a reference intended to aid parents in supporting their children's education and extracurricular participation in our schools. Please use these as Guides as resources to assist you as you continue to be involved in your child's education. In order to stay informed about district initiatives and school activities, please visit our website at www.pittschools.org.

It is our honor and privilege to educate your children. I am confident students, parents, teachers, and staff members will work together to make this a successful year.

We Believe,

Dr. Steve M. Lassiter, Jr.
Interim Superintendent

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The *Parents' Guide to Standards of Conduct to Support School Safety & Annual Notices* is a resource for parents, legal guardians, and legal custodians to better understand our school system's practices to maintain an orderly and safe learning environment and rights that parents have with regard to their child's education. The chart below provides a breakdown of questions parents may have and corresponding parts of this guide that address those questions.

If I want to know . . .	I should review . . .	At Page
<i>What do I do if my child reports bullying at school?</i>	Understanding Bullying	5
<i>What can I do to support my child's mental health?</i>	Supporting Your Child's Mental Health	8
<i>How can I support my child to avoid vaping and other forms of substance abuse?</i>	Understanding Vaping & Substance Abuse by Students	9
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Overall, the Guide provides a comprehensive overview to basic practices and rules that support maintaining an orderly and safe learning environment in Pitt County Schools, but it has a few limitations.

- The information in this Guide is not intended to and shall not supersede the policies of the North Carolina State Board of Education or Pitt County Board of Education. If anything in this guide conflicts with these policies, the policies control.
- The Guide is a "living" document and subject to change, without prior notice, if laws or policies change or Pitt County Schools makes modifications to programming. The most current version of the Guide will always be available at www.pittschools.org.
- Going forward in this Guide, the term **parent** is defined to include legal guardians and custodians.

In addition to these limitations, our guide may not answer every question a parent may have. If you are seeking information on what educational services are provided to your child, please review the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement.

If you would like more information on any topic in either of our two Parent Guides, please visit www.pittschools.org for additional information.

UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

Overview

Pitt County Schools acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students. We do not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying in any of our educational activities or programs.

We understand that one of the greatest hurts parents can experience is learning that someone has hurt their child. We also understand that discrimination, harassment, and bullying can cause students to miss key educational opportunities. With the support of parents and students, our goal is to create a school environment where kindness is practiced and everyone is treated with respect.

The goal of this Part of the Guide are to provide a quick references that helps parents:

- Distinguish bullying from other conduct;
- Understand how to report bullying;
- Recognize warning signs that your child may be bullied or engaging in bullying behavior;
- Understand how Pitt County Schools responds to bullying;
- Understand what parents and students can do to prevent bullying behavior; and
- Access additional resources on this topic.

What is bullying?

When reporting an incident to your school's principal or assistant principal, understanding the type of behavior can help with incident response. The chart below is intended to help distinguish bullying from other types of behavior that can cause students to experience hurt.

	Teasing is playful back and forth behavior where students participate equally. No student involved in teasing should experience hurt.
	Conflict arises when students are engaged equally in a disagreement or argument that can be resolved with interventions and supports. Unlike teasing, no one involved in conflict is having fun.
	Mean Moments occur when something is said to a student that is intended to be hurtful. Unlike bullying, the hurtful statement was an isolated event.
	Discrimination is conduct that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on their membership in a socially distinct group or category, such as race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or disability status.
	Harassment is hostile, intimidating, or abusive conduct usually targeted at an individual because of their membership in a socially distinct group or category or another differentiating characteristic (e.g. academic status or physical appearance).
	Bullying is deliberate conduct intended to harm another person or group of persons. It is characterized by repeated unwanted aggressive behavior that typically involves a real or perceived imbalance of power, such as a difference in physical size, strength, social standing, intellectual ability, or authority. It may consist of either physical, verbal, or nonverbal behavior.
	Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs through electronic means, including the Internet, e-mail, text messaging, a personal website, or social media. Pitt County Schools does not digitally monitor students' online activity. However, Pitt County Schools' administrators will investigate reports of cyberbullying if all of the individuals involved are PCS students or staff.

How do I report bullying?

Parents should not attempt to investigate conduct on their own or take the matter into their own hands. Instead, parents and students should report any act that may constitute an incident of discrimination/harassment or bullying to the principal. Reports may be made orally, by the tip line, or in writing. It is recommended that a report be made within 30 days of an alleged incident to ensure that the principal can undertake a thorough investigation.

What are signs my child might be experiencing bullying or engaged in bullying behavior?

Signs a Child May be Bullied	Signs a Child May be Bullying
• Unexplained injuries • Lost or destroyed personal belongings • Frequently complains of illness • Change in appetite • Difficulty sleeping/frequent nightmares • Change in grades/interest in school work/desire to go to school • Sudden loss of friends/avoidance of social situations • Feelings of hopelessness/decreased self esteem • Self-destructive behaviors (e.g. running away from home, self-harm, or talking about suicide)	• Gets into physical or verbal fights • Has friends who bully others • Is increasingly aggressive • Frequently referred to the principal's office • Has unexplained new belongings or extra money • Blames others for their problems • Doesn't accept responsibility for their actions • Is competitive and worries about reputation or popularity

Source stopbullying.gov.

How does Pitt County Schools respond to bullying?

PCS treats all reports of discrimination/harassment and bullying seriously. When a principal receives a report from a parent, the principal or an assistant principal will investigate the report thoroughly.

A report is treated as an allegation of discrimination/harassment and bullying. If the investigator concludes that discrimination/ harassment or bullying has occurred, the principal or assistant principal will impose disciplinary consequences. Even if conduct does not rise to the level of discrimination/harassment or bullying, the school may take additional corrective action (e.g. conflict mediation and/ or imposition of disciplinary consequences for the violation of a different code of conduct violation).

Although disciplinary consequences may be imposed, school staff are generally barred from sharing specific information with anyone other than the student being disciplined and his/her parents.

What can parents & students do to stop bullying in our schools?

While Pitt County Schools does not tolerate discrimination/harassment and bullying, the imposition of disciplinary consequence may not prevent future incidents. Supporting a school environment where kindness is practiced and everyone is treated with respect tends to be the best way to keep schools free from discrimination/harassment and bullying. The chart on the next page highlights some actions that parents and students can take to support a school environment where kindness is practiced and everyone is treated with respect.

	Kindness and respect are learned behaviors that must be taught and practiced daily. As the adults in children's lives, parents and school staff are uniquely positioned to <u>model kind and respectful behavior</u> and give students the tools to <u>show kindness and respect</u>. There are many ways to show kindness and respect, including: • Showing support for others' ideas, goals, or activities • Being outwardly happy or optimistic, especially when we interact with others • Connect with students who may be outside of our regular group of friends • Expressing empathy towards others by listening to them and reflecting back what they share
	When you see someone showing kindness or respect, recognize the person for this behavior. <u>Positive recognition for people who show kindness and respect</u> encourages the kind of behavior we want to see.
	Discussing incidents where they have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied or have engaged in discriminatory, harassing, or bullying behavior is difficult for anyone and especially children. <u>Recognizing the signs that someone is being bullied or engaging in bullying behavior</u> is key to addressing the issue. If you suspect that your child is discriminating against, harassing, or bullying other students, work to address the issue with them. School staff may be able to assist parents with helping to change a student's behavior.
	Students who have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied often feel like they are alone. By <u>reaching out</u> to someone who we suspect is on the receiving end of any of these behaviors, we can counteract some of the hurt and let them know that they are not alone and that they matter.
	Parents can help their children by discussing discrimination/harassment and bullying and building a strong sense of self-esteem that no one can crush or defeat. Parents can also help their children identify friends and school staff who they trust and can confide in if they are worried about being discriminated against, harassed, or bullied. Encourage your child to <u>communicate openly</u> with this network of support at school and with you.
	If you know or strongly suspect that someone is being discriminated against, harassed, or bullied, <u>please speak up</u>. Principals and assistant principals cannot address what they do not know. When making a report to the principal or assistant principal, details are helpful (e.g. who was involved, who may have witnessed the incident, where the incident occurred within the school, when it happened).
	<u>Please, don't bully back.</u> Although it is tempting to respond to unkind behavior with more unkind behavior, we reduce discrimination/harassment and bullying by not bullying back. School discipline is intended to help students who have engaged in harmful behavior learn from their mistakes. They ultimately deserve kindness and respect, too.
	Helping your children understand appropriate social media and internet usage is also key to helping prevent cyberbullying. Setting boundaries on technology may also be helpful. Examples of boundaries including requiring your child to work on a computer, tablet, or Chromebook in a public area of your home where it is visible and can be monitored, friending your children on social media, monitoring your children's social media, email, and text messages, or requiring your children to store their phones in your room at a certain time each night. If your child is a victim of cyberbullying, preserve any messages, emails, or posts on websites, and report the issue to school staff. If the issue is arising with people outside of the school, report the matter to law enforcement.

Additional Resources

Parents interested in learning more about Pitt County Schools' policies related to bullying should review the Code of Conduct, which is included in this Guide starting at page 21 and Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4329/7311. Discrimination and harassment are addressed in Pitt County Board of Education Policies 1710/4020/7230, 1730/4022/7231, 1720/4030/7233, 1725/4035/7234, and 1726/4036/7235. Pitt County Schools has also set up a Bullying Prevention section on its website, which provides access to additional resources about bullying. Please visit <https://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/Page/1519> to access this section of our website.

In addition to school system resources, <https://www.stopbullying.gov/> provides helpful tips and information to address bullying.

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH

Overview

As a school district committed to supporting our students, Pitt County Schools recognizes the importance of addressing mental health issues. Support for students with mental health needs involves a collaborative approach among parents, school staff, students, and mental health professionals.

Parents and students can support mental well-being by recognizing the signs of mental health issues and seeking early interventions and supports to address mental health. Monitoring and setting healthy boundaries for social media use can also support student mental health.

Recognizing the Signs of Mental Health Issues

Differentiating between mental health issues and everyday stressors may be difficult for parents, school staff, and students. **Everyday stressors** can cause temporary changes in a child's behavior. Working to develop and practice coping strategies to address everyday stressors is beneficial child's well-being. Coping strategies to manage stressors might include:

- Deep breathing
- Getting outside
- Doing a preferred activity
- Talking to a trusted adult
- Exercise or movement
- Journaling
- Naming their feelings
- Naming the source of stress

Mental health issues are more persistent and more serious than everyday stressors and may require more focused attention. Warning signs that a student may be suffering from a mental health issue include:

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn or easily irritated for more than two weeks
- Seriously trying to harm or kill themselves, or making plans to do so
- Experiencing sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart or fast breathing
- Getting in many fights or wanting to hurt others
- Showing severe out-of-control behavior that can hurt oneself or others
- Not eating, throwing up, or using laxatives to make themselves lose weight
- Having intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities
- Experiencing extreme difficulty controlling behavior, putting themselves in physical danger or causing problems in school
- Using drugs or alcohol
- Having severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Showing drastic changes in behavior or personality
- A drop in their school performance

Because children often can't understand difficult situations on their own, parents should pay particular attention if they experience:

- Loss of a loved one
- Any major transition—new home, new school, new sibling, divorce or separation, etc.
- Traumatic life experiences, like living through a natural disaster
- Bullying
- Difficulties in school or with classmates

Mental Health Supports for Students Provided by Pitt County Schools

Pitt County Schools provides a number of mental health supports to students. School nurses, psychologists, counselors, and social workers are often the first staff to recognize that a student may be experiencing a mental health concern.

If any of these staff members have a concern that the student is at risk for suicide or self-harm or the issue requires further care and follow-up, parents will be notified and connected with resources.

Pitt County Schools is proud to partner with Integrated Family Services and PRIDE in North Carolina to provide school-based mental health services to students. With the consent of parents, school based mental health may be utilized to support a child experiencing mental health issues. Alternatively, families can seek private providers through their physician or Trillium.

Anytime that you feel that your child is potentially suicidal or may self-harm, contact Mobile Crisis at 1-866-437-1821 or call or text 988 to reach the National Suicide Crisis Lifeline. The National Suicide Crisis Lifeline can also be reached for chat from a web browser <https://988lifeline.org/chat/>.

UNDERSTANDING VAPING & SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY STUDENTS

Overview

The Youth Risk Behaviors Surveillance System and National Youth Tobacco Survey are administered to students across the United States each year to better understand the health-related behaviors of adolescents, identify emerging issues, and evaluate programs that can improve health outcomes. These surveys reveal that vaping and substance abuse are prevalent among children and young adults.

The use of any nicotine-containing product is prohibited by North Carolina law for anyone under the age of 18 and the use or possession of any nicotine containing product, no matter the age of the student, is a violation of the Pitt County Schools' Code of Conduct. While nicotine is often viewed as something new to try and e-cigarettes are seen as less harmful than other tobacco products, vaping and the use of any nicotine-containing product present unique health risks to adolescents. The CDC reports that these risks include but are not limited to the inhalation of vaporized chemicals that can cause cancer, harm to brain development, and the potential for nicotine poisoning and overdose.

Like nicotine, the use of alcohol is prohibited by North Carolina for anyone under the age of 21 and the use or possession of alcohol, no matter the age of the student, is a violation of the Pitt County Schools' Code of Conduct. While nearly twenty percent of youth ages 14 to 15 report having tried alcohol, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism links the use of alcohol among pre-teens and teens to deaths from motor vehicle crashes, drowning, alcohol overdoses, and suicides; emergency room visits; and a higher likelihood of developing alcohol use disorder later in life. Like nicotine, alcohol use prior to the age of 25 also harms brain development.

Finally, it is a violation of state and federal law and the Pitt County Schools' Code of Conduct for any student to possess illegal drugs in any form, prescription drugs without a prescription, and other controlled substances (e.g. THC containing gummies and edibles, CBD containing products, etc.). In addition to harming brain development, drug abuse has been linked to death from overdose and impaired driving, increasing the risk of developing mental health disorders, complicating existing mental health disorders, and negative changes in school performance and daily life.

Recognizing the Signs of Nicotine, Drug, or Alcohol Abuse

It may be difficult to tell if a student is using nicotine, drugs, or alcohol, but there are some key warning signs that may be helpful to parents. Many of these are summarized in the table below.

Physical Signs	• Unusual smells of smoke, alcohol, sweet or fruity scents on breath, body, or clothing • Dehydration, leading to increased thirst and more frequent drinking of water • Vaping and other drug use can dry out nasal passages and eyes, sometimes resulting in nosebleeds or bloodshot eyes • Frequent colds, flu-like symptoms, infections, persistent cough • Difficulty breathing or chest pain • Poor hygiene • Ignoring medical issues or neglecting personal health • Dilated or enlarged pupils • Slurred speech, impaired motor skills, or unsteady movements • Noticeable weight loss or gain
Behavioral Signs	• A sudden decline in grades, frequent absences, or a lack of interest in activities once enjoyed by the student • Apathy, lack of enthusiasm, or a decline in motivation • Changes in social circle to be with peers who vape or use drugs or alcohol • Withdrawing from family interactions to be alone • Secretiveness about activities or whereabouts • Changes in mood, especially increased irritability, depression, persistent sadness, paranoia, or anxiety • Frequent use of mints or gum to mask odors
Environmental Signs	• Unfamiliar objects like USB flash drive-like devices, vape pods, or e-liquids • Unexpected packages in the mail • Pipes, rolling papers, small bottles, strange containers • Unexplained need for money, theft, missing valuables from home

Resources for Parents

While Pitt County Schools does impose discipline and must report the possession or consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs, and controlled substances to law enforcement, we recognize that disciplinary action does not necessarily provide an intervention that stops students from continuing to use alcohol, nicotine, illegal drugs, or other controlled substances.

Drug and Alcohol Cessation Resources: PORT Health is a local clinic offering prevention and substance abuse counseling to adolescents. Your healthcare provider may be able to connect you with additional in-patient and other rehabilitation programs related to substance abuse counseling and cessation.

Nicotine Cessation Resources: Families seeking to help a student cease vaping or the use of other nicotine containing products may wish to utilize a free cessation program, **This is Quitting**, sponsored by the Truth Initiative. The program has helped 750,000 people between the ages of 13 and 24 quit vaping and the initiative may also support cessation of other nicotine containing products. Text DITCHVAPE to 88709 or visit <https://truthinitiative.org/thisisquitting> to access the program. Parents may also wish to consult their healthcare provider for additional resources.

SUPPORTING INTERNET SAFETY

Overview

Pitt County Schools provides annual and ongoing internet safety to all students. Ensuring your child's safety online is crucial in today's digital age. This section provides essential information and resources to help children navigate the internet safely, supporting their academic and social growth.

How can I help my child stay safe online?

Like other areas of safety, open communication and understanding of the issues are crucial to helping children stay safe online. Parents can support their children in staying safe online by:

- Teaching their children about the importance of **not sharing personal information online**, including their full name, address, phone number, birthday, and school name;
- Helping their children **understand what cyberbullying is** and encouraging their children to speak up if they or someone they know is being bullied online;
- Encouraging their children to **communicate openly** about any concerns about their online experiences and **regularly discussing their children's online activities** and experiences to stay informed and address any issues promptly;
- Utilizing child-friendly search engines and web browsers that **filter out inappropriate content**; and
- Teaching children to use **privacy settings on social media and be cautious about what they share**.

In addition to these tips, parents can access resources provided by **Common Sense Media**, which offers age-appropriate advice and educational materials on digital citizenship and internet safety, and the **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** which offers comprehensive resources related to protecting children from online threats. Links to these resources are provided in the table below.

Common Sense Media	https://www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship (age specific lessons) https://www.commonsense.org/education/presentations-for-parents-families (for parents)
FTC	https://consumer.ftc.gov/identity-theft-and-online-security/protecting-kids-online

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL SAFETY

Overview

Pitt County Schools' staff work hard to maintain orderly and safe schools and appreciate the support of parents and students in promoting order and safety. For safety and security, Pitt County Schools cannot share its full critical incident manual but can share key measures taken to promote school safety. These include:

- Secured corridor entry for visitors with Raptor identity checks;
- Internal and external door security;
- At least one school resource officer per school;
- Weapon detection systems in all schools with grades 6-12;
- Lockdown drills, both announced and unannounced, to allow staff and students to practice securing in place in the event of an active shooter or other crisis;
- Threat assessment; and
- An anonymous tip line and open lines of communication.

In addition to these measures, we have caring, student-centered staff who foster positive relationships, work with students to address interpersonal conflict and bullying, and maintain open and strong lines of communication with students and parents. We ask that parents visiting schools during the instructional day help us maintain safe schools by observing proper entry through the secure buzz-in corridors and refrain from tagging into the building. We also ask that parents and students notify the principal of their school of any concerning behavior observed that may imply intent to harm members of our school community, and we deeply appreciate your support in helping maintain orderly and safe schools.

Warning Signs & the Anonymous Tip Line

In 4 out of 5 school shootings, at least one other person had knowledge of the attacker's plan but failed to report it. Parents and students should be aware of signs that a person may take action to self-harm or harm others and report these warning signs to school principals or assistant principals.

The following **10 potential warning signs** were created by Sandy Hook Promise and can signal that a person may be in crisis or need help before they engage self-harm or harm other people.

1. Suddenly withdrawing from friends, family, and activities (including online or via social media)
2. Bullying, especially if targeted towards differences in race, religion, gender or sexual orientation
3. Excessive irritability, lack of patience, or becoming angry quickly
4. Experiencing chronic loneliness or social isolation
5. Expressing persistent thoughts of harming themselves or someone else
6. Making direct threats toward a place, another person, or themselves
7. Bragging about access to guns or weapons
8. Recruiting accomplices or audiences for an attack
9. Directly expressing a threat as a plan
10. Cruelty to animals

If you witness any of these signs in a classmate or another school community member or are aware of an external threat to the school, please report the matter immediately to the school principal or through our anonymous tip line <https://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/Page/5417>. If using the tip line, please make sure that your tip is routed to the correct school and contains sufficient information to be actionable. If you have reason to suspect that a student or someone else poses a threat to a school outside of school hours, please contact local law enforcement immediately.

Understanding Lockdowns

A **lockdown** is a precautionary measure in response to a threat directly to the school or in the surrounding community. Depending on the nature of the threat, the school will either use a **modified lockdown** or a **full lockdown**.

	A modified lockdown is used where there is a threat of violence or serious incident in the surrounding community other than school property that could jeopardize the safety of students or staff (e.g. police searching for a criminal suspect in the area, bank robbery, etc.). <u>The goal of the modified lockdown is to keep the threat out of the school.</u> In the event of a modified lockdown, • Staff and students should get indoors as quickly as possible. • Staff will check that windows and doors are locked and will close blinds. • Visitors will not be permitted to enter the school. • Instruction will continue.
	A full lockdown is used when there is a threat of violence or serious incident within the school that could jeopardize the safety of students or staff (e.g. shooting, a major fight, etc.). <u>The goal of a full lockdown is to keep students out of sight of a potential threat to their safety.</u> In the event of a full lockdown, • Students and staff will move to an area that is out of sight of the classroom doorway and remain silent in their classroom. • Staff will turn off lights and equipment and instruct students to silence phones. • Staff will ensure doors and windows are locked and will not open the door for anyone.
	Pitt County Schools' Security Department performs two lockdown drills per year in every school. One drill is announced and the other drill will be unannounced. Lockdown drills provide an opportunity to review response effectiveness and for staff and students to practice what to do in an active situation.

How will parents know if a school is on lockdown?

If a lockdown is called, school administrators and law enforcement will work together to ensure the safety of everyone on the school campus first. After the situation is stabilized, a phone message and/or written communication will be sent to parents to inform them that the school was placed on lockdown.

What should parents do during a lockdown?

- **Do not come to the school.** If a school is on lockdown, the environment surrounding the school may be unsafe and visitors, including parents, will not be admitted. For your safety, the safety of your child, and the safety of everyone involved, it is best to avoid the school until the lockdown is lifted.
- **Refrain from calling the school.** If a school is on lockdown, school staff will not be able to answer the phone.
- **Refrain from calling or texting your child's phone.** If a school is on lockdown, it best that silence be maintained.
- **Remain calm.** Hearing that your child's school is on lockdown is understandably scary, but it is important to remain calm. Know that police and other emergency services will be on scene quickly to resolve an issue.
- **Bring your ID.** After the all-clear has been given and the lockdown lifted, please be sure to bring identification with you to pick up your child.

MAINTAINING ORDERLY & SAFE SCHOOLS

By understanding and adhering to the rules set by the Pitt County Board of Education and Pitt County Schools, students and parents help school staff support an environment that promotes learning, responsibility, and respect. The next sections highlight rules in several areas:

- Network Use by Students;
- Administrative Procedure Governing Student Device Protection Plan Fee and Use of Loaned Devices (Respect for School System Property);
- Respect for School Property;
- Student Dress and Appearance; and
- Respect on School Transportation.

In addition to these rules, a copy of the Code of Student Conduct is included for review. Parents and students seeking more information on rules governing student behavior should review Pitt County Board of Education Policies 4300-4400 which are available at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=TOC%3a4.

NETWORK/INTERNET USE BY STUDENTS (POLICIES 3220, 3225/4312/7320, 3226/4205, 3227/7322, and 3230/7330)

- A.** Internet access at school is intended to be used for class participation, educational or career-development research, and other access that has been approved by school personnel and does not violate the other provisions of this policy, in accordance with local and state educational objectives. Other uses of school access are to be considered inappropriate and are not allowed.
- B.** Student-created websites relating to the school curriculum must have a faculty member sponsoring them. The faculty member is responsible for monitoring the content of the site and helping the student to update the site regularly. Pitt County Schools is not responsible for any student-created and student-maintained websites that are not related to the classroom curriculum.
- C.** Users are expected to abide by the common rules of Network etiquette, as follows:
 1. Students should use appropriate language and be polite in communications across the PCS network or Internet.
 2. Students should not disrupt or attempt to disrupt the functioning of the PCS network communications or equipment in any manner, nor should they gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to the PCS network or any electronic records maintained by any other organization (i.e. hacking).

3. Students should not reveal last names, ages, telephone numbers or other personal identifying information about themselves or someone else to another person across the Internet or network.
4. Students should not use another person's PCS network password or give their password to another student for that person's use.
5. Students should not access, publish, save, send or display illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, obscene, harmful or profane images or text.
6. Students should not violate copyright laws by copying files, programs or other materials protected by copyright or by failing to give credit to Internet sources used in their research.

D. The following activities and/or materials are specifically not permitted:

1. Using offensive or harassing statements or language including profanity, vulgarity and/or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability and religious or political beliefs.
2. Using threatening or obscene material.
3. Vandalizing or attempting to vandalize hardware or software including the creation or spread of viruses and hacking.
4. Spamming (*i.e.* sending junk mail), political lobbying, advertising or any commercial uses of the network.
5. Wasting limited network resources, including excessive use of the PCS network, downloading files and loading programs or games to the local workstation or the PCS network without the prior approval of a teacher or administrator.
6. Arranging/agreeing online to meet someone in person who is a stranger or non-school district personnel.
7. Demonstrating security problems such as distributing someone else's password, personal information or access to restricted network software to others or failure to notify a teacher and/or staff member when a violation has occurred.
8. Distributing material protected by trade secret.

E. Social Media Use

The board recognizes the importance of incorporating current technology tools, including new methods of electronic communication, into the classroom to enhance student learning. It further recognizes the importance of employees, students, and parents engaging, learning, collaborating and sharing in digital environments as part of 21st Century learning. The board strives to ensure that electronic communication tools incorporated into the school curriculum are used responsibly and safely. As practicable, the board will provide access to secure social media tools and board-approved technologies for use during instructional time and for school-sponsored activities.

F. Personal Computing Devices

1. Use of student-owned personal devices is a site-based decision at the discretion of the site administrator.
2. Student use of personal devices to access the Internet while on Pitt County Schools property must be limited to the Pitt County Schools public wireless network. Use of any other network connection is prohibited.
3. When the site administrator has allowed students to bring personal devices to school, the decision to bring that device remains with the parent/guardian and student. Students will not be required to bring their own personal electronic devices to school to do school work. Pitt County Schools does not accept liability for personal devices damaged or stolen on school property. Any damage or loss will be the responsibility of the owner of the device.

G. General Principles

1. Students and parents should be aware that any files stored in home directories, mobile devices or on the local hard drive(s) and any Internet activity may be screened, supervised or viewed by school and system staff, and parents will be given access to their child's files on request. Students should not expect any privacy in these files.
2. Students must immediately notify a teacher or staff member when they see or receive a message or materials that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable. Failure to notify a teacher immediately will constitute culpability on the student's part for any actions they have taken or take thereafter.

3. Pitt County Schools does not warrant the service it is providing, including delays, loss of data or connections, service interruptions and e-mail deliveries. Pitt County Schools does not control the material available on the Internet, and cannot be responsible for inaccurate data or offensive material encountered on the World Wide Web.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE GOVERNING STUDENT DEVICE PROTECTION PLAN FEE AND USE OF LOANED DEVICES (RESPECT FOR SCHOOL SYSTEM PROPERTY)

Pursuant to Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4600, the Board's approval of the optional K-5 and 6-12 Optional Device Protection Plan Fees, and Policy 4312-3225-7320, the Superintendent hereby adopts the following administrative procedure.

Rules Governing the Loan of Devices to Students

Pitt County Schools ("PCS") will loan a device to students to support both in-person and remote teaching and learning. Loaned Devices are Chromebooks and tablets and no other devices. In addition to a Loaned Device, all students will be loaned a Charger, and some students will be loaned a Case. Loaned Devices, Cases (if applicable) and Chargers provided to students remain the property of PCS and are provided to allow students to access digital tools, communicate with teachers and other learners, build college and career readiness, and receive a personalized educational experience.

A Loaned Device and the data files, email and Internet use of all device users is the property of PCS. No user of a Loaned Device has any right to privacy of any data saved on the device or any PCS network. PCS has the right to access, manage and inspect the content of any Loaned Device at any time and Students shall deliver Loaned Devices to PCS staff upon request. PCS has the right to geolocate Loaned Devices at any time. PCS reserves the right to delete, without notice, any material on Loaned Devices or online. Students do not have any right to retain an ownership interest in any material on Loaned Devices or online. Loaned Devices, Cases (if applicable) and Chargers must be returned immediately as requested by PCS or upon the Student transferring out or un-enrolling from PCS.

Students may be assigned the same Loaned Device for multiple school years and will need to be responsible for their Loaned Devices during that time. Near the conclusion of each academic year, Students will return their Loaned Devices, Cases (if applicable) and Chargers to their schools so that PCS may undertake necessary inventory, upgrades and maintenance over summer break.

PCS has set up each Loaned Device to be CIPA compliant. Students and their Parents/Guardians may not make any digital alterations to Loaned Devices or additions including, but not limited to, attachments, hardware or software.

Access to Loaned Devices and digital resources requires Students to maintain personal responsibility. PCS will not be responsible for any damages suffered by Students or any unauthorized users in connection with the use of Loaned Devices. Student and Student's Parent/Guardian will indemnify and hold harmless PCS and PCS personnel from any and all claims arising from the student's or parent/guardian's use, misuse or possession of the device including, but not limited to, any and all damages whatsoever of any kind or nature.

As a condition of borrowing a Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger from PCS, Student and Student's Parent/Guardian make a commitment to responsibly care for the Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger, and keep the Loaned items in good condition, practice good digital citizenship and make responsible decisions when using the Loaned items.

The use of technology provided by PCS, including Loaned Devices, Cases (if applicable) and Chargers, is a privilege, not a right, and unacceptable use may result in the cancellation of that privilege as well as disciplinary action and legal action.

Students shall:

1. Use technology provided by PCS, including but not limited to Loaned Devices, for educational purposes only and in full compliance with acceptable use as outlined in the PCS Code of Student Conduct and Pitt County Board of Education Policies 3220 ("Technology in the Educational Program") and 3225/4312/7320 ("Technology Responsible Use");

2. Not use Loaned Devices, networks, and digital resources in any manner that violates Pitt County Board of Education Policy 1710/4021/7230 ("Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying") or any other Board of Education Policy, the Code of Student Conduct, any other school rule and all applicable legal requirements;
3. Practice good digital citizenship, make responsible decisions when using Loaned Devices and interact with others in a respectful and courteous manner when using the device;
4. Refrain from sharing a Loaned Device or Charger with another student and from borrowing a Loaned Device or Charger assigned to another student;
5. Not share login information with others or use other people's login information;
6. If taking a Loaned Device home, bring the Loaned Device to school each day fully charged;
7. Report theft, loss or damage of a Loaned Device or Charger to school personnel within 24 hours of the incident;
8. Report the theft of a Loaned Device to law enforcement;
9. Not physically alter a Loaned Device or Charger in any way, including, but not limited to, adding stickers, labels or removal of any district-issued Loaned Case, barcodes, serial numbers or other manufacturer/school labels;
10. Not expose a Loaned Device or Charger to food and drink or other damaging substances;
11. Not digitally alter a Loaned Device by removing, altering, changing or adding software/ apps to the Loaned Device;
12. Return the Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger clean and in good working condition to PCS at the end of the school year, upon withdrawing from PCS, upon request by PCS or if user privileges are revoked;
13. Remain accountable for knowing where Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger are at all times; and
14. Refrain from leaving a Loaned Device unattended outside, in a vehicle or in an unsecured location.

Responsibility for Damage to Loaned Devices, Cases and Chargers

As a condition of obtaining a Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger from PCS, Student and Student's Parent/Guardian assume responsibility for paying for damage to, repair of, and/or replacement of the Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) or Charger. The following charges apply:

Broken/cracked screen: \$100

Charger: \$30

Chromebook case/shell: \$90

Daughterboard: \$80

Headphone jack: \$30

Keyboard: \$150

Out of service device repair/replacement: \$50

Tablet case: \$40

Touchpad: \$80

Defacement (*stickers, labels, writing, etc.*): \$20

Major damage, lost device, theft (*due to negligence*), pest infestation, bodily fluids: full cost of device (\$200 for Chromebooks, \$300 for iPads)

PCS offers an **Optional Device Protection Plan** at the cost of \$20 per year for 6-12 students and \$10 per year for K-5 students. Except as noted below, if the applicable Optional Device Protection Plan Fee is paid, the Student and Student's Parent/Guardian will be charged as follows for damage to, repair of and/or replacement of the Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) or Charger:

1st incident of Damage, Repair or Replacement: Covered by device protection plan (no cost)

2nd incident of Damage, Repair or Replacement: Half the cost of the repair/replacement

3rd incident of Damage, Repair or Replacement and Beyond: Full cost of repair/replacement

The Optional Device Protection Plan does not cover a lost device, theft (due to negligence), pest infestation, damage or destruction caused by bodily fluids or damage from intentional misuse. In the event of damage, loss, or destruction to a Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) or Charger due to the conditions described in the previous sentence, the Student and Student's Parent/Guardian must pay the full cost of repair or replacement, even if the Optional Device Protection Plan Fee was paid. The Optional Device Protection Plan Fee can be paid through School Cash Online, by a check made payable to the school with a notation on the memo that the check covers the Optional Device Protection Plan Fee, or by cash.

Theft of the device or damage to the device must be promptly reported to school personnel within 24 hours of the incident. Theft of the device must be reported to the school and law enforcement. A copy of the police report must be submitted to the school. The Student and Student's Parent/Guardian will assume the full risk of loss of the device due to theft (due to negligence), destruction or damage caused by intentional misuse or failure to take reasonable precautions to secure the device. PCS will cover the cost of the device if the police report shows forced entry into a secured location.

Use of a Loaned Device at School and at Home

K-5 Students: K-5 students who must quarantine for medical reasons or must learn from home due to inclement weather or a remote learning day may take their Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger home for virtual learning during the specified period. The Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger must be returned to the school after the end of the specified period and students will be responsible for any and all damage or destruction incurred during that time as set out in the previous section.

6-12 Students: If the Optional Device Protection Plan Fee is paid and students have no outstanding device charges, 6-12 students may take their Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger home to use for educational purposes only and in full compliance with acceptable use as outlined in the PCS Code of Student Conduct and Pitt County Board of Education Policies 3220.

Whether or not the Optional Device Protection Plan Fee is paid, 6-12 students who must quarantine for medical reasons or must learn from home due to inclement weather or a remote learning day may take their Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger home for virtual learning during the specified period. The Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) and Charger must be returned to the school after the end of the specified period, and students will be responsible for any and all damage or destruction incurred during that time as set out in the previous section.

All Students: All students who take a Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) or Charger home will adhere to the terms of this Administrative Procedure when using the Loaned Device, Case (if applicable) or Charger at home.

Consequences for Failing to Follow Administrative Procedure, PCS Policies, Rules & Guidelines

Students are expected to follow PCS Policies, Rules and Guidelines at all times when using Loaned Devices, the PCS network and PCS digital resources. Unlawful activity will be reported to the appropriate authorities. The consequences for the Student engaging in unacceptable use in violation of this Administrative Procedure and related policies include, but are not limited to: suspension or revocation of PCS network privileges, suspension or revocation of Loaned Devices or Internet access, suspension or expulsion and/or civil and/or criminal action.

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE

The Pitt County Board of Education believes that responsibility for the dress and grooming of a student rests primarily with the student and his or her parents or guardians and that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. As a result, all students are expected to adhere to Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4316 which requires students to dress in a neat manner and conform to standards of good taste and decency in their dress while attending school sponsored classes and activities.

School administrators have final decision-making authority in determining appropriate dress and appearance. Failure to adhere to established dress and appearance codes may result in disciplinary action. However, a student who is not in compliance with the dress code will be given the opportunity within a reasonable period of time to change into acceptable clothing by using available clothes at school or by calling a parent to bring acceptable clothes before receiving a disciplinary consequence.

Policy 4316 may be accessed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&hs=1568441. A summary of dress code requirements follows in the table below:

Minimum Requirements	1. Clothing should be age appropriate, properly fitted, and suitable for the learning environment. 2. Spirit wear, district/county programs/colleges/universities and community organizations clothing items are permissible. 3. Shirts/tops must have sleeves, cover the chest and back from arm to arm. 4. Bottoms (pants, shorts, skirts) must be mid-thigh in length and worn at the waist. 5. When the body is standing straight, clothing must cover the chest, back, torso, stomach, and lower extremities from arm to arm to mid-thigh with no exposed undergarments. 6. Shoes must be worn at all times and must conform to requirements for specific classes. 7. Hoodies and hooded jackets may not have the hood covering the head while in a school building. Continued violation of this requirement may/shall result in not being allowed to wear a hoodie at school.
Additional Requirements	1. Attire, accessories and/or grooming depicting or advocating violence, criminal activity, gang- related activity, use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs, pornography or substance abuse are prohibited. 2. Pajamas, bedroom shoes or slippers shall not be worn, except for school activities approved by the principal. 3. Headgear including hats, hoodies, bandanas, sunglasses, and caps are not allowed unless permitted for religious, medical, or other reason by school administration. 4. With the exception of manufacturer's logos, personal monograms or principal/school approved logos, clothing may not display any insignias, logos, labels, graphics, words or pictures.

The two exceptions to these general rules are (1) accommodations for students involved in special duties, activities, or projects approved by the school (e.g. athletics, P.E. classes, and other activities that require non-conforming dress on a school campus during the school day) and (2) a waiver to the dress code that was granted by the principal or designee to accommodate students with religious or medical needs.

RESPECT ON SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

School buses, activity buses, and other school system provided transportation are an extension of Pitt County Schools. As a result, all school rules and regulations apply when students are utilizing Pitt County Schools' transportation. Failure to comply with these rules and/or interfering with the safe transportation of students could result in consequences as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct, including but not limited to a loss of transportation privileges.

In addition to the Code of Student Conduct, the rules on the next page apply when students utilize transportation provided by Pitt County Schools. For purposes of the rules, the term bus includes all forms of transportation provided by Pitt County Schools, even if the vehicle is not a school bus or an activity bus. Additional rules may apply to charter bus services and other private transportation providers.

Safely Report to Bus Stop	• Walk at all times to a bus stop. • Use sidewalks to access the bus stop if possible. • If sidewalks are not available, walk on the left side of the road or road shoulder facing traffic.
Be on Time	• Bus drivers must stay on schedule and cannot wait for tardy passengers. • Arrive at least 10-15 minutes prior to your assigned bus stop time.
Bus Stop Safety	• Maintain a safe distance from the road while waiting at a bus stop. • Avoid playing near the roadway while waiting at a bus stop. • Pay attention to traffic at all times while waiting at a bus stop. • When the bus arrives, wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before walking to board. • If it is necessary to cross a road to get on the bus from a bus stop, students should not cross until the bus and all traffic have stopped. When crossing the street, walk and try to stay approximately 10 feet in front of the bus to be within the view of the driver.
Entering the Bus	• Enter the bus through the front door. • Take your assigned seat quickly. • Stay seated while the bus is in motion.
Riding the Bus	• Bus windows should remain up/ closed and secured. Do not open a window without the driver's permission. • Keep your head, arms, and feet inside the bus at all times. • Do not throw objects outside of the bus or within the bus. • Do not shout or wave to pedestrians or occupants of other vehicles from bus windows. • Keep the aisle of the bus clear and allow other students to move down the aisle. • Personal belongings (i.e. books, instruments, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc.) should be stored under the seat or in your lap—not in the aisle. • Keep your arms and legs out of the aisle. • Do not eat or drink on the school bus (it can be dangerous). • Do not use or consume tobacco, vapes, nicotine containing products, alcohol, gummies, illegal drugs, unauthorized prescription drugs, or drug paraphernalia on the bus. • Do not use profanity, inappropriate, or indecent language on the bus. • Keep away from the emergency door and emergency window and roof exits unless directed by school personnel to use them. • Do not tamper with or touch fire extinguishers or first aid supplies. • Do not mar or deface the bus, cut or damage seat coverings, or otherwise intentionally damage the bus. Parents are financially responsible for any intentional damage that their children cause to a bus.
Driver Attention	• Talk quietly to students seated near you. Do not yell or shout. • Remain seated while the bus is in motion. • Refrain from talking to the driver (except in an emergency) while the bus is in motion. • Do not engage in horseplay, scuffling, or playing while on the bus. • Maintain complete silence at all railroad crossings.
Bus Assignment	• Passengers shall not ride on a school bus unless assigned to it by the principal or assistant principal.

Arrival at School or School Sponsored Event	• Remain seated until the bus reaches the unloading area, has come to a complete stop, and the driver has opened the front door. • Students toward the front should exit first. • Do not rush to get off the bus, instead walk in a quick and orderly manner to the front. Hold the handrail while walking down the steps to exit the bus. • Do not exit through the emergency door, windows, or exits (except in an emergency). • Be careful not to hit the driver or other students with personal belongings when exiting. • Once off the bus, passengers should move quickly away from the bus and walk their assigned area. Do not loiter or play near a stopped bus.
Entering the Bus After School or a School Sponsored Event	• Obey and follow instructions and procedures from school staff to report to the bus parking area and enter your assigned bus. • After directed to enter the bus by staff, walk promptly to the assigned bus. • Promptly and quietly enter the bus, sit in your assigned seat, and wait any instructions from the driver. • Permission must be granted for a student to ride on any bus other than their assigned bus.
Leaving the Bus After School	• Do not exit the bus at any stop other than your designated stop. Drivers will not permit students to get off the bus at unauthorized stops to make purchases or run errands and will not permit students to get off at any other stop unless specifically instructed to deviate from an assigned stop by a principal. • Remain seated until the bus has completely stopped at your designated stop and wait for the driver to open the door. • Once the door is open, walk in a quick and orderly manner to the front to exit. Hold the handrail while walking down the steps to exit the bus. • Once off the bus, do not attempt to return to the bus without first getting the attention of the driver. • If it is necessary to cross in front of the bus or cross a road after exiting the bus, students should not cross until the all traffic has stopped. When crossing the street, walk and try to stay approximately 10 feet in front of the bus to be within the view of the driver. Do not stop for any reason unless you have informed the driver of your intent. • Once you have exited the bus (and crossed a road if necessary), immediately return to your residence.

Students with disabilities, like all other students, are subject to disciplinary action(s) pursuant to the written rules of state and local education agencies. However, school bus disciplinary or suspension action requires an IEP review when this service is being provided as a related service. A student with a disability may not be subjected to punitive action solely on the basis of the disability.

If the behavior is of danger to the driver and/or students, transportation may be interrupted. Such interruption should result in an emergency IEP meeting to determine the relationship of the behavior causing disciplinary action to the child's disability, and to determine alternative transportation services or methods.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT, PROCEDURE 4300-P-1

I. Introduction

A. Preamble

The mission of Pitt County Schools (PCS) is to lead collaboration between school, home and community to foster student growth and success, both socially and academically, in order to develop productive, global citizens. To help carry out this mission, PCS is committed to disciplinary practices that encourage the development of self-control, personal responsibility and respect for the dignity of all individuals and to maintaining fair, just, and effective discipline in order to establish a safe, positive learning environment where students have the opportunity to receive an appropriate public education. For purposes of this Code, a student is any person attending or enrolled in any of the Pitt County Schools.

In order for fair, just, and effective discipline to be maintained in a safe, positive learning environment, PCS acknowledges that cooperative relationships must be established among students, parents and school personnel. School personnel shall actively seek effective, positive methods and strategies to help each student learn to behave in a manner conducive to effective learning and that respects the rights of others.

Each school principal shall be responsible for systematically identifying potential issues within their respective schools that may contribute to discipline problems and working collaboratively with students, parents, staff, and, when appropriate, community partners to address these issues. For purposes of this Code, **principal** shall mean the principal or his/her designee (e.g. an assistant principal), and **parent** shall mean a student's parent(s), legal custodian(s) or legal guardian(s).

B. Purpose and Overview

The purposes of this Code, are as follows:

- To set forth in one document, rules with respect to the conduct of students in Pitt County Schools, as the Pitt County Board of Education deems proper and necessary for the positive governance and operation of the schools;
- To ensure students and their families are aware of the basic rules governing conduct in all Pitt County Schools and the consequences for violation these rules;
- To ensure students and their families are aware of due process rights available to students; and
- To guide school personnel in the exercise of their legal disciplinary responsibilities.

North Carolina law gives principals the authority to discipline students pursuant to this Code. Principals also have authority to make rules for the governance and operation of their respective schools consistent with this Code. (For example, a principal might have rules related to what portion of their facilities students may access during school hours to ensure that students are not in unsecured areas of the school). Additionally, teachers are authorized to make rules for the governance and operation of their respective classrooms that are consistent with this Code. Parents and students may request a copy of an individual school's rules, if the principal has adopted any, from the principal and a copy of classroom rules, if the teacher has adopted any, from the teacher.

Parents and students should be aware this Code governs disciplinary consequences at the school level and does not prevent or restrict the prosecution of students for violations of state or federal law. Parents and students should also be aware that principals are required by North Carolina law to report certain offenses to law enforcement.

II. When this Code Applies

This Code applies to all students in the following circumstances:

- While in any school building or on any school property before, during, or after school hours;
- While on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity;
- While waiting at any school bus stop;
- During any school-sponsored or extracurricular activity;
- When subject to the authority of school personnel; and/or
- At any place or time when the student's behavior has or is reasonably expected to have a direct or immediate impact on the orderly and efficient operation of the schools or the safety of individuals in the school environment.

III. What Consequences are Imposed for Code of Conduct Violations

A. Alternatives to Out of School Suspension or Expulsion

Pitt County Schools recognizes the effectiveness of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and other progressive, alternative disciplinary measures such as restorative practices that build positive relationships. These interventions can be used as alternatives to out of school suspension or expulsion or in conjunction with out of school suspension or expulsion, and are intended to educate students about the harm caused by their actions, while seeking to reunite them with the school community.

The following list contains some examples of in-school interventions, but is not intended to be an exhaustive list. The availability of specific interventions may vary from school to school:

- Teaching replacement behavior and coping strategies
- Assigning a reflective activity, project or essay related to the misbehavior
- Warning (verbal or written)
- Parental involvement/conferences
- Isolation or time-out for short periods of time with supervision (i.e. CHOICE, bounce, time-out, etc.)
- Conference (any combination of parent/student/school officials/counselors and teacher)
- Individual or small group sessions with the school counselor
- Referral to community based alternative program (e.g., Project Bridges)
- Behavior improvement contracts
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Detention (lunch, before and/or after school)
- Restitution
- Confiscation of unauthorized items
- Mediation/conflict resolution
- Community service on school grounds with supervision (e.g., Project Equal)
- Bus suspension
- In-school suspension (ISS)
- A loss of privileges (e.g. student misconduct at after-school events may lead to additional disciplinary action such as, but not limited to, being banned from extracurricular activities and events for the remainder of the school year)

B. Disciplinary Consequence Levels

Offenses in this Code are leveled to indicate the severity of the violation. The consequence levels described below provide a guide to teachers and administrators in using progressive interventions and responses to address inappropriate student behavior. As school officials are determining the appropriate consequence and intervention to apply when addressing student misbehavior, the following factors should be considered:

- Whether psychological or physical harm was caused to another person and the degree of such harm;
- Whether harm was caused to school property or to the property of another person and the degree of such harm;
- Whether the student expresses remorse for engaging in conduct in violation of this Code;
- The student's age; and/or
- Whether the student has previously engaged in conduct in violation of this Code and been disciplined for the conduct but continues to engage in the same conduct in spite of school interventions.

The following level of consequences and interventions are provided to ensure all students are treated with dignity and respect. School officials will apply appropriate measures to hold students accountable while also restoring safe and respectful behaviors.

S E V E R I T Y I N C R E A S E S ↓	Offense Level		Disciplinary Consequences
	Level 1	Level 1 rule violations are behaviors that do not significantly violate the rights of others and do not appear chronic.	Consequences for a Level 1 rule violation <u>may include but are not limited to one or more in-school interventions that are designed to provide programs and/ or in-school options for students who are at-risk or commit minor infractions on an infrequent basis</u> (e.g. teaching a replacement behavior, assigning a project or essay related to misbehavior, etc.). These in-school interventions allow the student to attend school and not lose instructional time.
	Level 2	Level 2 offenses are behaviors that violate the rights of others or put others at risk of harm.	Consequences for a Level 2 rule violation <u>may include Level 1 consequences increased in intensity or frequency. A Level 2 rule violation may also warrant in-school suspension and/or 1 to 5 days out of school suspension (OSS)</u> . An OSS will only be issued after non-exclusionary discipline alternatives have been carefully considered, tried, and documented to the extent reasonable and feasible. After non-exclusionary discipline alternatives have been exhausted, an OSS will only be issued if it is determined that exclusion through an OSS is necessary to protect the safety of the school community; and the full impact of the decision to exclude a student on both the student and the school community is considered and documented.
	Level 3	Level 3 rule violations are behaviors that significantly violate the rights of others or put others at risk of harm.	<u>Consequences for a Level 3 rule violation may include Level 1 or 2 consequences increased in intensity or frequency. A Level 3 rule violation may also warrant in-school suspension and/or 1 to 7 days out of school suspension (OSS)</u> . Principals may recommend alternative placement or long-term suspension based upon the presence of any aggravating factors. Also, at the discretion of the Principal, criminal charges or a juvenile petition may be pursued.
	Level 4	Level 4 rule violations significantly compromise the safety and welfare of others.	<u>Consequences for Level 4 rule violations warrant 1 to 10 days out of school suspension and may warrant a recommendation for alternative placement and/or long-term suspension. Also, at the discretion of the Principal, charges may be filed.</u> Project FIND should be offered as a consequence ONLY for first time offenders for substance/drug/alcohol possession and/or use.
	Level 5	Level 5 offenses are behaviors that significantly compromise the safety and welfare of others and warrant a recommendation for long-term suspension and/or require a suspension of a specific length under the North Carolina law.	<u>Level 5 rules violations will result in a 10 day out of school suspension and a recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion.</u> However, pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-390.11, students who are fourteen (14) years of age or older who engage in Level 5 rules violations and whose behavior indicates that their continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or school staff may be suspended for 365 days.

IV. Offenses

Rule Violation	Definition	Maximum Consequence Level
Aggressive Behavior	No student shall intimidate, confront, posture, engage in a verbal confrontation, or behave in such a manner that would threaten physical or mental harm to others.	3
Assault Inflicting Serious Injury (No Weapons Involved)	No student shall assault, or attempt to assault, or behave in a way likely to cause serious physical injury to a student or non-employee.	4 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement.
Assault On or Physical Injury to a School Employee, School Official, or Volunteer	No student shall assault, attempt to assault, or behave in a way likely to cause physical injury to any school employee, school official, independent contractor, or volunteer.	4 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement.
Assault Involving a Weapon	No student shall intentionally threaten or attempt by force or violence to do injury to the person of another that causes reasonable apprehension of immediate bodily harm through the use of one of the following: (1) any gun rifle, pistol or other firearm; (2) BB gun; (3) stun gun; (4) air rifle; (5) air pistol; (6) bowie knife; (7) dirk; (8) dagger; (8) slingshot; (9) leaded cane; (10) switchblade knife; (11) blackjack; (12) metallic knuckles; (13) razors and razor blades; (14) fireworks; OR (15) any sharp-pointed or edged instrument with the exception instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips, and tools used solely for the preparation of food, instruction and maintenance.	5 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement
Assault (Simple on a Student or Any Person Other than School Employee, School Official, or Volunteer)	No student shall assault another student or any person other than a school employee, school official or volunteer or behave in a way likely to cause minor injury to a student or person other than a school employee, school official or volunteer.	3
Bomb Threat or Bomb Hoaxes	No student shall make, aid, and/or abet in making a bomb threat or perpetrating a bomb hoax against school system property by making a false report that a device designed to cause damage or destruction by explosion, blasting or burning is located on school property. No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax. Any student who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to use a bomb, make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax must notify a teacher or the principal immediately	5 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement
Bullying or Harassment	No student shall engage in conduct in violation of Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4329/7311. https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&hs=1568446	3
Classroom Disruption	No student shall instigate, encourage, or engage in behavior that results in a disruption to the classroom environment such that classroom learning is prevented from occurring. Examples of behavior coerced by this offense include but are not limited to talking out of turn in class, moving from the student's assigned seating area or seat without permission, throwing objects, horseplay, teasing, or making rude noises.	2

Cyberbullying and Misuse of Social Media	No student shall engage in bullying that is carried out using electronic communication media, such as words, action, or conduct conveyed through email, instant messages, text messages, tweets, blogs, photo or video sharing, chat rooms, or websites, and may exist in the absence of a power imbalance typical of other forms of bullying. Cyberbullying is specifically defined in Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4329/7311 https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568446 and includes but is not limited to the following conduct: • Building a fake profile or website to intimidate or torment a school community member; • Posting or encouraging others to post on the Internet private, personal, or sexual information pertaining to a school community member; • Posting a real or doctored image of a school community member on the Internet; • Accessing, altering, or erasing any computer network, computer data, computer program, or computer software, including breaking into a password-protected account or stealing or otherwise accessing passwords • Using a computer system for repeated, continuing or sustained electronic communications, including electronic mail or other transmissions, to a school com • Making any statement, whether or true or false, intended to immediately provoke, or that is likely to provoke any third party to stalk or harass a school community member • Copying or disseminating, or causing to be made, an unauthorized copy of any data pertaining to a school community member for the purpose of intimidating or tormenting the school community member • Signing up a school community member for a pornographic internet website • Without consent, signing up a school community member for electronic mailing lists or to receive junk electronic messages and instant messages with the intent to intimidate or torment the school community member	3 Some forms of cyberbullying may also result in criminal charges (e.g. cyberbullying a school employee, stalking, communicating threats, or disclosure of private images). Principals have discretion to refer this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement. N.C.G.S. § 115C-366.4 requires any student who is criminally convicted of cyberbullying a school employee to be transferred to another school.
Communicating Threats	No student shall communicate a threat of violence or physical harm by words or actions towards any principal, teacher or other school employee, student or person on school premises, buses, or any school activity. Furthermore, no student shall make a false threat of harm or violence, even jokingly, which causes or is reasonably likely to cause fear or a disruption of school activities. Additionally, no student should engage in blackmail or attempt to extort money, personal property, or personal services.	3
Damage / Injury to Property	No student shall intentionally damage or attempt to damage property belonging to another person or the school.	2
Discrimination	No student shall engage in conduct that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on their membership in a socially distinct group or category (e.g. race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or disability status). Pitt County Board of Education Policy 1710/4020/7230 provides specific definitions of discrimination that also violate this rule. https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568312	3
Dishonest Acts	No student shall engage in dishonest acts, including but not limited to, cheating (i.e. giving or receiving of any unauthorized assistance on academic work), plagiarism (i.e. copying the language, structure, or idea of another and representing it as one's own work), text messaging information about an exam, taking pictures of exam, forging the signatures of a teacher or parent, or lying to a school official.	1 Academic consequences (e.g. grade reduction) may also be imposed.

Disorderly Conduct	No student shall instigate, encourage or engage in behavior that results in a major disruption to the school environment such that learning or school activities are prevented from occurring. Examples of behavior that are covered by this offense, include but are not limited to, refusing to disperse, creating chaos or inciting a riot.	4
Disrespect/ Insubordination	Students shall comply with the lawful direction or instruction of a staff member, contractor or volunteer. Students shall not walk away from a staff member, contractor or volunteer while being given lawful direction or instruction. Students shall not speak to a school staff member, a contractor or a volunteer in a manner that threatens or compromises the safety of the staff member, contractor, volunteer or school community.	2
Disruption of School	No student shall, by use of passive resistance, noise, threat, fear, intimidation, coercion, force, violence or any other form of conduct intentionally cause the disruption of any lawful function, mission or process of the school to which he/she is assigned, or to any other school in the Pitt County Schools system. The type of conduct prohibited by this rule includes, but is not limited to: • Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof, with the intent to deprive others of its use; • Blocking the entrance or exit of any school building, corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access or egress; • Preventing students from attending a class or school activity; • Blocking normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic on school premises, except under the direction of the principal; or • Preventing or attempting to prevent by physical act or any other method the convening or continued functioning of any school, class, meeting, assembly or other activity on the school premises.	3
Distribution or Sale of Narcotics, Controlled Substances, and/or Chemicals	No student shall distribute, sell or attempt to distribute or sell any illegal or controlled substance. Controlled substances include, but are not limited to, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid and other drugs listed in Schedules I-VI of the North Carolina Controlled Substances Act	5 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement.
False Fire Alarm/ Destruction of Fire Safety Equipment	No student shall give a false fire alarm or damage a fire alarm, fire detection or fire extinguishing system. Activating a fire alarm that creates danger to others or causes unnecessary evacuation is also prohibited.	3
Fighting	The exchange of mutual aggressive physical conduct between students, with or without injury, is prohibited.	3

Gangs and Gang-Related Activities	No student shall commit any act which furthers gangs or gang-related activities. A gang is any ongoing organization, association or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors or symbols. As used herein, the phrase “gang-related” shall mean any conduct engaged in by a student (1) on behalf of an identified gang (2) to perpetuate the existence of any identified gang or (3) to effect the common purpose and design of any identified gang. Conduct prohibited by this policy includes: • Wearing possessing, using, distributing, displaying or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs or other items with the intent to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang; • Communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.), with the intent to convey or promote membership or affiliation in a gang; • Tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property, with symbols or slogans intended to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang; • Requiring payment of protection, insurance or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity; • Inciting other students to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity; • Soliciting others for gang membership; and/or • Committing any other illegal act or other violation of school district policies in connection with gang-related activity. This rule shall be applied in a non-discriminatory manner based on the objective characteristics of the student’s conduct in light of the surrounding circumstances. Clothing and other items described above may be confiscated by the principal.	4 Before being suspended for a first offense of wearing gang-related attire, a student will receive an individualized warning and will be allowed to immediately change or remove the attire that is in violation of this rule. Principals shall also conduct an intervention with the student and student’s parent to discuss the school’s observations and concerns, provide an opportunity to respond, and offer information and other resources. Such intervention may also include the school resource officer and others as appropriate.
Hazing	No student shall engage in hazing, or aiding and abetting in hazing, on and off campus. Hazing is subjecting students to personal indignity as part of an initiation or as a prerequisite for membership into any school group, including groups not formally recognized by the school.	3 If hazing results in physical injury to the student being hazed, a principal has discretion to refer the matter to law enforcement for potential criminal prosecution under N.C.G.S. § 14-53
Horseplay	Encouraging or engaging in any rough forms of play or similar behavior is prohibited.	1
Inappropriate Language	No student shall engage in cursing or use vulgar, profane, or obscene language.	2
Malicious Burning / Arson	No student shall willfully and wantonly set fire to, burn, cause to be burned, procure the burning of or aid or counsel the burning of any school building or other real or personal property owned, leased or used by Pitt County Schools. Additionally, no student shall willfully and wantonly set fire to, burn, cause to be burned, procure the burning of or aid or counsel the burning of any real or personal property belonging to any person affiliated with Pitt County Schools.	5 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement.
Misuse of Technology	No student shall damage or make unauthorized changes to any Pitt County Schools’ computer programs or equipment as outlined in Pitt County Board of Education Policy 3225/4312/7320. https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568380	2

Over-the-Counter Medication	No student shall unlawfully possess, distribute, sell or attempt to distribute or sell any over-the counter medication. The proper use of a drug authorized by written parental permission shall not be considered a violation when the person for whom it is intended takes the drug. Parents of students in elementary and middle schools must turn in medication to the appropriate school personnel for safekeeping and dispensing. High school students may administer their own medication if the proper documentation is placed on file with the school.	3
Possession, Handling, Transmitting, or Use of Weapons (Other than Firearms or Destructive Devices) and/or Dangerous Objects	No student shall possess, handle, transmit, or use any weapon or other dangerous object (not a firearm or destructive device), concealed or open, or that can reasonably be considered or used as a weapon or dangerous object on school property or at any school-sponsored activity on or off school property. - For purposes of this rule, “weapons and dangerous objects” include, but are not limited to, BB guns, paintball guns, stun guns or tasers, air rifles, air pistols, mace/pepper spray, knives, slingshots, leaded canes, blackjacks, metal knuckles, razors and razor blades, icepicks, fireworks, gunpowder, ammunition/ bullets, box cutters or any sharp-pointed or sharp-edged instrument, or any look-a-like weapon. - Exceptions may include, but are not limited to, instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clippers, and tools used under supervision for instruction or for maintenance or the preparation of food. Principals shall have the latitude to make an exception if in the sole discretion of the principal a pocket knife was inadvertently brought to school and not used or displayed by the student.	4 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement.
Possession, Handling, Transmitting, or Using a Firearm or Destructive Device	No student shall possess, handle, transmit or use, whether concealed or open, a firearm, including but not limited to handgun, shotgun, rifle, pistol or starter pistol; or any destructive device designed to destroy or damage property by explosion, blasting or burning, including but not limited to, dynamite cartridges, bombs, grenades and mines on school property, whether operational or not. For purposes of a 365-day suspension, a “firearm” is (1) a weapon, including a starter gun that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, (2) the frame or receiver of any such weapon, or (3) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer. A firearm does not include an inoperable antique firearm, a BB gun, a stun gun, an air rifle, or an air pistol. For purposes of a 365-day suspension, a “destructive device” is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas (1) bomb, (2) grenade, (3) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (4) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (5) mine, or (6) similar device.	5 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement. Unless modified by the superintendent, a 365-day suspension is mandatory if a student brings or possesses a firearm or destructive device on school property or at a school sponsored event.
Possession of Alcohol, Alcoholic Beverages, and/or Pseudo Alcoholic Beverages	No student shall possess, use, or transmit any alcohol, alcoholic beverages (i.e. malt beverages, fortified wine, unfortified wine, spirituous liquor, mixed drinks or beer), or pseudo alcoholic beverages (e.g. non-alcoholic malt beverages).	4 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement.

Possession of Narcotics, Controlled Substances, Chemicals, Counterfeit Drugs, and Drug Paraphernalia	No student shall possess, use, or transmit any narcotics, controlled substances as defined by the North Carolina Controlled Substances Act, chemicals, counterfeit drugs, or drug paraphernalia.	4 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement. Students who violate this rule more than once may be subject to a principal's recommendation of alternative placement or long-term suspension.
Possession of Pornographic, Profane, and/or Violent Material	No student shall have or possess any pornographic or profane material, including but not limited to pictures, magazines, CDs, DVDs, electronic text, electronic images and/or sexually explicit or graphically violent materials (including but not limited to documents or instructions concerning the creation and/or use of weapons). Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message or material they unintentionally access that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.	3
Possession or Use of Nicotine Containing Products and Paraphernalia	No student shall use or possess any form of nicotine, including any tobacco product, electronic cigarette or vaping device and/or any paraphernalia connected to the use of nicotine containing products. Examples of paraphernalia connected to the use of nicotine-containing products include, but is not limited to, lighters, matches, cartridges for electronic cigarettes and vaping devices, and/or components of electronic cigarettes and vaping devices.	2
Prescription Drugs	No student shall possess, sell, transport, or deliver any non-controlled prescription drugs for which the student does not possess a lawful and legitimate prescription. As outlined in Pitt County Board of Education Policy 6125, the proper use of a drug authorized by valid medical prescription shall not be considered a violation when the drug is taken by the person for whom the drug was prescribed. Parents of students in elementary and middle school must turn in such medication to the appropriate school personnel for safekeeping and dispensing. The only exception is for any student authorized to carry rescue medications) such as, but not limited to, asthma inhalers or insulin). High school students may administer their own medication if proper documentation is placed on file with the school, with the exception of Schedule I and II controlled substances (such as, but not limited to, Ritalin, Oxycontin, Percocet, Adderall, Concerta) that must be transported by parents to school personnel for safekeeping and dispensing. https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568493	4 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement. Students who violate this rule more than once may be subject to a principal's recommendation of alternative placement or long-term suspension.
Refusal to Submit to a Search	No student shall refuse to submit to a search by school personnel when reasonable suspicion exists. Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4342 provides additional information. https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=TOC%3a4	4
Sexual Harassment	No student shall engage in conduct prohibited by Pitt County Board of Education Policy 1725/4035/7234. Students who engage in sexual harassment of other students or employees in violation of Policy 1725/4035/7234 are subject to discipline for a level 3 offense, and in certain instances, additional disciplinary action, up to and including long-term suspension and expulsion. https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568314	3-5 Some conduct violating this rule (e.g. rape, sexual assault, or sexual offense) must be reported to law enforcement per N.C.G.S. § 115C-288.

Sexual Misconduct	No student shall engage in conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual misconduct is conduct of a sexual nature that does not rise to the level of sexual harassment as defined in Pitt County Board of Education Policy 1725/4035/7234. Examples of behavior that might constitute sexual misconduct include but are not limited to consensual sexual activities, nonconsensual inappropriate exposure or touching private areas of the body over the clothing provided such nonconsensual behavior is not severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive, and comments of a sexual nature provided such comments are not severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive	3 Some conduct violating this rule (e.g. sexual battery over clothing) must be reported to law enforcement per N.C.G.S. § 115C-288.
School/ Class Attendance	No student shall be tardy to class, skip class/school or leave campus without permission.	1
Student Dress Code Violation	Students shall comply with guidelines for appropriate dress and appearance as outlined in the Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4316. Students new to Pitt County Schools will be given a one-week grace period from enrollment to obtain and wear the proper attire. https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568441	1
Theft/ Attempted Theft/ Possession of Stolen Property	Students shall not steal, attempt to steal or be in possession of property belonging to another person or the school. Examples of attempted theft include, entering without authorization, any locker, book bag, pocketbook or other receptacle containing items of personal property of any other student, school employee or person.	3
Threats, Hoaxes and Other Acts of Terror	No student shall • Make a report that he or she knows or should know is false, that any device, substance or material designed to cause harmful or life threatening illness or injury to another person, is located on school property or at the site of a school activity; • With intent to perpetrate a hoax, conceal, place, disseminate or display on school property or at the site of a school activity any device, machine, instrument, artifact, letter, package, material or substance, so as to cause a reasonable person to believe the same to be a substance or material capable of causing harmful or life-threatening illness or injury to another person; • Threaten to commit an act of terror on school property or at the site of a school activity that is designed to cause, or is likely to cause, serious injury or death to another person, when the threat is intended to cause, or actually causes, a significant disruption to the instructional day or a school-sponsored activity; • Make a report that he or she knows is false, that an act of terror designed to cause, or likely to cause, serious injury or death to another person on school property or at the site of a school-sponsored activity is imminent, when that report is intended to cause, or actually causes, a significant disruption to the instructional day or a school-sponsored activity; or • Aid abet, and/or conspire to commit any of the acts described in the previous bullets.	5
Trespassing	No student shall be on any Pitt County School campus during a suspension period or at other unauthorized time.	3
Unauthorized Use of Electronic or Communication Devices	No student shall have in sight, have turned on, or use any unauthorized personal communication or electronic device on school property during school hours without permission from a school official. These devices include, but are not limited to, cellular/smart phones, tablets, scanners, laser pointers, radios, compact disc cassette players, cameras, handheld video games and video recording devices.	1

Under the Influence (But Not in Possession) of Controlled Substances, Alcoholic Beverages, or Non-Controlled Prescription Drugs	No student shall be under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or non-controlled prescription drug for which the student does not possess a lawful and legitimate prescription.	4 N.C.G.S. § 115C-288 requires principals to report this Code of Conduct violation to law enforcement. Students who violate this rule more than once may be subject to a principal's recommendation of alternative placement or long-term suspension.
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V. How School Staff Impose Discipline

A. General Guidelines for Staff

A school climate conducive to serious study and respect for oneself, other people and property is essential for a school to meet the needs of youth. Principals have the authority and responsibility to take whatever reasonable disciplinary and legal action is necessary to establish and maintain appropriate student behavior in accordance with Board policy.

- Teachers have the responsibility and authority for disciplining students, except in those cases requiring the attention of the principal.
- Principals should review the processes related to the imposition of discipline set forth in Subsections D and E below
- Principals must fully investigate student discipline matters in accordance with Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4340 (https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568451) and consider the mitigating and aggravating factors in determining the disciplinary action warranted. For purposes of this Code, mitigating and aggravating factors include, (a) whether psychological or physical harm was caused to another person and the degree of such harm, (b) whether harm was caused to school property or to the property of another person and the degree of such harm, (c) whether the student expresses remorse for engaging in conduct in violation of this Code, (d) the student's age, (e) whether the student has previously engaged in conduct in violation of this Code and been disciplined for the conduct but continues to engage in the same conduct in spite of school interventions.
- If, in questioning a student, the principal determines that a law enforcement officer should carry out the questioning, the principal shall make a reasonable attempt to notify the parents (except in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect by the parent) to give them an opportunity to be present during questioning.
- In-school disciplinary actions must not unreasonably compromise the educational environment for others.
- Per Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4353 the Board believes that suspension and expulsion may be an appropriate and necessary consequence in certain situations, but the Board also recognizes that excessive use of suspension and expulsion may have a negative impact on academic achievement and graduation rates. Thus, the Board encourages principals and other school administrators to find ways to reduce suspension and expulsion rates in schools.
- Principals may require a student to attend an after school detention program, such as Project Equal, for a stated period of time and purpose, provided the parent or guardian has received at least one day's notice and has assumed responsibility for the transportation home
- The principal may recommend an alternative learning program for a student based on the totality of the circumstances.
- A student may be recommended for suspension from school long-term (more than 10 days) by the principal, in accordance with provisions of law and Board Policy 4353. The superintendent shall review the circumstances for the recommended long-term suspension. Following the review, the superintendent may impose the suspension if it is consistent with board policies and appropriate under the circumstances; may impose another penalty authorized by board policy; or may decline to impose any other penalty.

- The Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, may expel a student, as provided by state statute, for a violation of the Code of Student Conduct, if the student is fourteen (14) years of age or older and the student's behavior indicates that his/her continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or school staff and the Board determines that there is no appropriate alternative education program. Additionally, the Board may, pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-390.11 and Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4260, expel any student who is a registered sex offender and subject to N.C.G.S. § 14-208.18.
- Principals are to use discretion in disciplining disabled students whose behaviors may be related to their disabilities, especially those with moderate to severe impairments. Refer to Subsections D and E below and the Section 504 Procedures Manual and the Exceptional Children's Program's "Guidelines for the Discipline of Students with Disabilities."
- Principals shall report system-required data on each student suspended or expelled to the superintendent.

B. Mandatory Reportable Offenses

If principals have personal knowledge or actual notice from school personnel that certain acts have occurred on school property, principals are required by state law to immediately report the acts to law enforcement and the superintendent. Reportable acts, are as follows:

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| • Assault resulting in serious personal injury;* | • Possession of a controlled substance in violation of law; |
| • Assault involving use of a weapon;* | • Possession of a firearm; |
| • Assault on school officials, employees, & volunteers; | • Possession of a weapon; |
| • Making bomb threats or engaging in bomb hoaxes; | • Rape;* |
| • Willfully burning a school building; | • Robbery with a dangerous weapon;* |
| • Homicide;* | • Sexual assault (not involving rape or sexual offense);* |
| • Kidnapping; | • Sexual offense;* or |
| • Unlawful, underage sales, purchase, provision, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages; | • Taking indecent liberties with a minor.* |

**Denotes offenses that are used by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in determining whether a school is persistently dangerous.*

C. Investigating Alleged Student Misconduct

1. Principals should refer to **Pitt County Board of Education Policies 4340 and 4341** when investigating alleged student misconduct.
2. Where alleged student misbehavior is appropriately referred to the principal, the principal shall take the following **investigative process**:
 - a. Investigate the facts and circumstances related to the alleged misbehavior;
 - b. Offer the student an opportunity to be heard on the matter; and
 - c. Determine whether a Pitt County Board of Education policy, school standard, school rule, or this Code has been violated.
3. All employees and students, including students alleged to have engaged in misconduct, are expected to **respond fully and truthfully** to any questions or issues raised in the course of the investigation and any related proceedings.
4. If the principal determines that a violation has occurred, the principal **shall impose an appropriate consequence** in accordance with the school's plan for managing student behavior, the Code of Student Conduct, or applicable board policy. The principal has final authority regarding in-school discipline and short-term suspensions. Additional information regarding the imposition of suspensions, including short-term suspensions, and expulsions as disciplinary consequences is discussed in Parts D-E below.
5. Where the school's student behavior management plan contemplates parental involvement in student discipline or requires parental notification, a student is to be suspended (short-term, long-term, or 365-day), a student is to be expelled, or the principal must report the matter to law enforcement, the **principal shall notify the parents**. Additionally, if in questioning a student, the principal determines that a law enforcement officer should carry out the questioning, the principal shall make a reasonable attempt to notify the parents (except in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect by the parent) to give them an opportunity to be present during questioning. All records of parental contact should be maintained in a student's records and retained at least through the end of the school year.

D. Due Process and Student Rights in the Context of Short-Term Out of School Suspensions

1. Principals should refer to **Pitt County Board of Education Policies 4351 and 4352** when contemplating short-term suspension.
2. A **short-term suspension is a disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for up to 10 school days**. A short-term suspension does not include (1) the removal of a student from class by the classroom teacher, the principal, or authorized school personnel for the remainder of the subject period or for less than one-half of the school day, (2) the changing of a student's location to another room or place on the school's premises, or (3) a student's absence under N.C.G.S. § 130A-440 (i.e. for failure to submit a school health assessment within 30 days of entering school). A student who is placed on short-term suspension will not be permitted to be on school property or to take part in any school function during the period of suspension without prior approval from the principal.
3. **When Short-Term Suspension Begins:**
 - a. **Removal During the School Day:** In accordance with Board Policy 4352, the principal may remove from school grounds a student who has been suspended during the school day, under the following circumstances:
 - i. The parent has been notified and is able to make arrangements for the student to leave school or agrees to the student's using public transportation or driving himself or herself home;
 - ii. The parent has been notified and is available to receive the student, and the principal is able to arrange for transportation from the school to the home; or
 - iii. The principal involves law enforcement in the removal of the student from school grounds because such action is necessary to provide a safe, orderly school environment.
 - b. **Suspension to Begin on Subsequent School Day:** If none of the circumstances specified in subsection a) exist, the suspension will begin on the next school day.
4. **Pre-Suspension Rights of the Student:** Except in the circumstances described below, a student must be provided with an opportunity for an informal hearing with the principal before a short-term suspension is imposed. The principal may hold the hearing immediately after giving the student oral or written notice of the charges against him or her. At the informal hearing, the student has the right to be present, to be informed of the charges and the basis for the accusations against him or her, and to make statements in defense or mitigation of these charges. The principal may impose a short-term suspension without first providing the student with an opportunity for a hearing if the presence of the student (1) creates a direct and immediate threat of safety to other students or staff or (2) substantially disrupts or interferes with education of other students or the maintenance of discipline at the school. In such cases, the principal or designee shall give the student notice of the charges and an opportunity for an informal hearing as soon as practicable.
5. **Student Rights During the Suspension:** A student under a short-term suspension must be provided with (1) the opportunity to take textbooks home for the duration of the suspension; (2) upon request, all missed assignments and, to the extent practicable, the materials distributed to students in connection with such assignments, and (3) the opportunity to take any quarterly, semester or grading period examinations during the suspension period.
6. **Notice to Parent(s):** When imposing a short-term suspension, the principal shall provide the student's parent(s) with notice that includes the reason for the suspension and a description of the student's conduct upon which the suspension is based. The principal must give this notice by the end of the workday during which the suspension is imposed when reasonably possible, but in no event, more than two days after the suspension is imposed. If English is the second language of the parent, the notice must be provided in English and in the parent's primary language, when the appropriate foreign language resources are readily available. The initial notice may be by telephone, but it must be followed by timely written notice. The written notice must include all of the information listed above and may be sent by fax, e-mail or any other method reasonably designed to give actual notice. School officials also shall maintain a copy of the written notice in the student's educational record.
7. **No Right of Appeal:** The principal has the authority to determine when a short-term suspension is an appropriate consequence and to impose the suspension, so long as all relevant board policies and procedures are followed. In accordance with N.C.G.S. §§ 115C-390.6(e) and 115C-45(c)(1), a student is not entitled to appeal the principal's decision to impose a short-term suspension to either the superintendent or board unless the decision is appealable on some other basis.

E. Due Process & Student Rights in the Context of Long-Term Suspensions, 365-Day Suspensions, and Expulsion

1. Principals should refer to Pitt County Board of Education Policies 4353 and 4370 when contemplating long-term suspensions, 365-day suspensions, and expulsions.

- a. A **long-term suspension** is the disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for more than 10 school days. Neither (1) a disciplinary reassignment of a student to a full-time educational program that meets the academic requirements of the standard course of study established by the State Board of Education and that provides the student with the opportunity to make timely progress toward graduation and grade promotion nor (2) an absence under G.S. 130A-440 (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school) is a long-term suspension requiring the due process procedures set out below.

Upon the recommendation of the principal, the superintendent may impose a long-term suspension on a student who willfully engages in a serious violation of this Code and the violation either (1) threatens the safety of students, staff, or school visitors or (2) threatens to substantially disrupt the educational environment. The principal may recommend long-term suspension for a minor violation if aggravating circumstances justify treating the student's behavior as a serious violation.

If the offense leading to the long-term suspension occurred before the final quarter of the school year, the exclusion must be no longer than the remainder of the school year in which the offense was committed. If the offense leading to the long-term suspension occurred during the final quarter of the school year, the exclusion may include a period up to the remainder of the school year in which the offense was committed and the first semester of the following school year.

- b. A **365-day suspension** is the disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for 365 calendar days. The superintendent may impose a 365-day suspension only for certain firearm and destructive device violations, as identified in Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4333.
- c. An **expulsion** is the indefinite exclusion of a student from school enrollment for disciplinary purposes. Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, the board may expel a student who is 14 years of age or older for certain types of misbehavior as provided in Pitt County Board of Education Policies 4325, 4330, 4331, and 4333, if the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees. Additionally, a student who is subject to Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4260 may be expelled if the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees. During the expulsion, the student is not entitled to be present on educational property and is not considered a student of the school system.

2. Determination of Appropriate Consequence

- a. **Principal's Recommendation:** The principal may impose a short-term suspension or any other consequence that is consistent with Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4351, the school's plan for management of student behavior, and this Code. If the principal determines that a suspension of more than 10 days (either long-term or 365-day) or an expulsion is an appropriate consequence, the principal shall propose the disciplinary penalty based upon a review of the student's culpability and dangerousness and the harm caused by the student, plus any other mitigating or aggravating factors the principal finds relevant.

Mitigating/ aggravating factors that a principal may consider to a student's culpability	
Culpability of Student	• The student's age; • The student's ability to form the intent to cause the harm that occurred or could have occurred; and • Evidence of the student's intent when engaging in the conduct.
Dangerousness of the Student	• The student's disciplinary or criminal record related to antisocial behavior or drugs and alcohol;

	• Whether a weapon was involved in the incident and, if a weapon was involved, whether the student had the ability to inflict serious injury or death with the weapon; • Evidence of the student's ability to cause the harm that was intended or that occurred; and • Whether the student is subject to Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4260 (Student Sex Offenders).
Harm Caused by the Student	• Someone was directly threatened or property was extorted through the use of some weapon; • Someone was directly harmed, either emotionally or psychologically; • Educational property or others' personal property was damaged; or • Students, school employees or parents were aware of the presence of a weapon or of dangerous behavior on the part of the perpetrator

After considering the above factors, the principal shall make a recommendation to the superintendent, stating the nature of the offense, the substance of the evidence involved and the length of the suspension recommended. The principal also must consider and make a recommendation as to whether any alternative education services, counseling or other programs should be part of the consequence for violating board policy, the Code of Student Conduct, school standards, or school rules.

If the principal recommends a 365-day suspension, he or she must identify the type of firearm or destructive device involved and the evidence substantiating that the student brought it to the school grounds or to a school activity or possessed it on school grounds or at a school activity.

If the principal recommends an expulsion, he or she shall identify the basis for determining that there is clear and convincing evidence that the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees.

b. Notice to the Student's Parent: The principal must provide, to the student's parent, written notice of the recommendation for a long-term suspension, a 365-day suspension or expulsion by the end of the workday during which the long-term suspension or expulsion is recommended when reasonably possible or as soon thereafter as practicable. The notice must contain the following ten elements:

- i. The notice type (i.e. notice of long-term suspension, 365-day suspension or expulsion);*
- ii. A description of the incident and the student's conduct that led to the recommendation;
- iii. The specific provision(s) of the Code of Student Conduct that the student allegedly violated;
- iv. The specific process by which the parent may request a hearing to contest the decision and the deadline for making the request;*
- v. The process by which the hearing will be held, including all due process rights to be accorded the student during the hearing;
- vi. Notice of the right to retain an attorney to represent the student in the hearing process and of the requirement that the principal be advised in advance of the decision to have an attorney present so that the school attorney may be in attendance as well;
- vii. Notice that an advocate, instead of an attorney, may accompany the student to assist in the presentation of the appeal;
- viii. Notice of the right to review and obtain copies of the student's educational records prior to the hearing;
- ix. A reference to Policy 4345, Student Discipline Records, regarding the expungement of disciplinary records; and
- x. The identity and phone number of a school employee whom the parent may call to obtain assistance in receiving a translation of the English language information included in the document.

****The asterisk denotes information that must be provided on the notice in both English and Spanish. Principals should be advised that it may be necessary to provide additional translations if the student's parents speak a language other than English or Spanish.***

c. Superintendent's Decision: Within three days of receiving notice from the principal of the recommendation for long-term suspension, 365-day suspension or expulsion, the student or student's parent may request an administrative hearing. A decision will be rendered before the long-term suspension is imposed.

If the student or parent makes a timely request for a hearing, the superintendent shall confirm that the charges against the student, if substantiated, could warrant the recommended disciplinary action and immediately refer the matter to the hearing officer who shall give the student and parent and the principal reasonable notice of the time and place of the hearing. It is suggested that a hearing be held within five school days of the principal making the recommendation and in no event later than 10 school days.

If neither the student nor the parent appears for a scheduled hearing after being given reasonable notice of the time and place of the hearing, the student and parent are deemed to have waived the right to a hearing.

If the student and parent fail to make a timely request for a hearing or if they waive the right to a hearing by failing to appear for a duly scheduled hearing, the superintendent shall review the circumstances of the recommended long-term suspension. Following this review, the superintendent (1) may impose the long-term or 365-day suspension if it is consistent with board policies and appropriate under the circumstances, (2) may impose another appropriate penalty authorized by board policy, or (3) may decline to impose any penalty.

If the student or parent requests a postponement of the hearing, or if the request for the hearing is untimely, the hearing will be scheduled, but the student does not have the right to return to school pending the hearing.

Any hearing held will follow the procedures outlined in Section A of Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4370. The hearing officer shall determine the relevant facts and credibility of witnesses based on substantial evidence presented at the hearing. The superintendent shall adopt the hearing officer's factual determinations unless they are not supported by substantial evidence in the record and decide whether to uphold, modify or reject the principal's recommendation. The superintendent shall immediately inform the principal of the decision regarding the recommended disciplinary penalty of a long-term or 365-day suspension and any modifications to the penalty recommended by the principal.

The superintendent shall send notice of the decision via certified mail to the student and parent. This notice must include:

- i. The basis of the decision with reference to any policies or rules that the student violated;
- ii. Notice of what information will be included in the student's official record pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-402;
- iii. Notice of the student's right to appeal the decision and the procedures for such appeal;
- iv. If the decision is to suspend the student for 365 days, notice of the student's right to petition the board for readmission under N.C.G.S. § 115C-390.12;
- v. If applicable, notice that the superintendent or designee is recommending to the Board that the student be expelled and any required notifications related to the expulsion if the student did not already receive such notice from the principal;
- vi. If the student is to be suspended, notice of the superintendent or designee's decision on whether to offer alternative education services to the student during the period of suspension, and, as applicable, a description of the services to be offered or the reason justifying the superintendent or designee's decision to deny such services.

Following issuance of the decision, the superintendent shall implement the decision by authorizing the student's return to school upon the completion of any short-term suspension or by imposing the suspension reflected in the decision.

The superintendent shall offer alternative education services to any student who receives a long-term or 365-day suspension unless the superintendent provides a significant or important reason for declining to offer such services. Alternative education services are part-time or full-time programs that provide direct or computer-based instruction to allow the student to progress in one or more core academic courses. Such services may include programs described in Policy 3470/4305 (Alternative Learning Programs/Schools).

The student may appeal, to the board, the superintendent's decision not to provide alternative education services, as permitted by G.S. 115C-45(c)(2). Any appeal to the board must be made in writing within five days of receiving the superintendent's decision. The superintendent shall inform

the board chairperson of the request for an appeal and arrange in a timely manner a hearing before the board. In advance of the hearing, the superintendent shall provide to the student and parent, and to the board, a written explanation for the denial of services along with any documents or other information supporting the decision. The hearing will be conducted pursuant to Policy 2500. The board will provide to the student and parent, and to the superintendent, written notice of its decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal.

If the superintendent determines that expulsion is appropriate, the superintendent shall submit to the board a recommendation and the basis for the recommendation along with any proposal for alternative education services.

d. Hearings Before the Board

- i. Long-Term or 365-Day Suspensions: A student or his or her parent may appeal an imposed long-term or 365-day suspension. The student or parent must appeal to the board in writing within three days of receiving the superintendent's decision. The superintendent shall inform the board chairperson of the request for an appeal and shall arrange a hearing before the board within 10 days of the request. The suspension need not be postponed pending the outcome of the appeal. The hearing will be conducted pursuant to Section B of Policy 4370, Student Discipline Hearing Procedures. The board will provide to the student and parent and to the superintendent written notice of its decision not more than 30 calendar days after receiving the appeal.
- ii. Expulsions: The student or parent may request a hearing within five days of receiving notice of the superintendent's recommendation that the student be expelled. The hearing will be scheduled with the board within 10 days of the superintendent's receipt of the hearing request. The superintendent shall notify the student and parent of the date, time and place of the hearing. Any appeal of a long-term or 365-day suspension will be addressed in the same hearing. The hearing will be conducted pursuant to Section B of Policy 4370.

If a hearing is not requested by the student or parent, the superintendent shall submit written evidence to support his or her recommendation to the board. The board may elect to request a hearing or to request additional records and documents.

When the board decides to expel a student, the board will document the basis for its determination that there is clear and convincing evidence that the student's behavior indicates that the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees. The board also will consider and make a written determination of whether alternative education services are to be provided to the expelled student. Regardless of whether the school system provides alternative education services, the board expects school system administrators to work with other agencies to help the student and parent identify other types of services that may be of assistance to the student.

- iii. The board will send via certified mail to the student's parent a copy of the decision, notification of what information will be included in the student's official record, the procedure for expungement of this information under N.C.G.S. § 115C-402, and notice of the right to petition for readmission pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-390.12.

3. Educational Services for Students with Disabilities During Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day Suspension or Expulsion: Students with disabilities recognized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act will receive educational services during periods of suspension or expulsion to the extent required by Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities and state and federal law.

4. Long-Term Suspensions or Expulsions and School Records

- a. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-402(b), any student who has been suspended for a period of more than ten (10) days or has been expelled following the procedures set forth above, shall have notice of said suspension or expulsion and the conduct for which the action was taken placed upon his or her school record.
- b. Said notice shall be removed from the record of the student if (a) the student or parent requests the removal, (b) the student either graduates from high school or is not expelled or suspended again for a period of two years after his or her return to school, (c) the superintendent or superintendent's designee determines that maintenance of the record is no longer needed to maintain safe and

orderly schools, and (d) the superintendent or superintendent's designee determines that maintenance of the record is no longer needed to adequately serve the child.

- c. Notwithstanding number two above, a superintendent or superintendent's designee may remove notice of suspension or expulsion from a student's official record without a request from the student or parent if all the other above criteria are met.

5. Requests for Readmission of Students Suspended for 365-Days or Expelled

- a. **Requests by Students Suspended for 365 Days:** A student who is serving a 365-day suspension may submit a request to the superintendent for readmission any time after the 180th calendar day of his or her suspension. Upon receipt of the request, the superintendent or designee shall offer the student an opportunity for an in-person meeting to be held within five days. The student may provide documents in support of the request, such as signed statements from individuals knowledgeable about the student or documents verifying that the student is participating in or has completed counseling or rehabilitation programs. If the student demonstrates to the satisfaction of the superintendent or designee that the student's presence in school no longer constitutes a threat to the safety of other students or employees, the superintendent must readmit the student.

Within 30 days of the student's request, the superintendent or designee shall provide written notice of his or her decision to the student, the student's parents, and the board. If the superintendent or designee decides to readmit the student, the notice will include the date of readmission, the school or program to which the student will be assigned, and any reasonable restrictions placed on the readmission. If the superintendent or designee rejects the request for readmission, the notice will advise the parents of the right to appeal the decision to the board. Any appeal to the board must be made in writing within five days of receipt of the superintendent or designee's decision. The superintendent or designee shall inform the board chairperson of the request for an appeal and arrange in a timely manner a hearing before the board.

The hearing will be conducted in accordance with Policy 2500, Hearings Before the Board. The board will provide to the student, the student's parent, and the superintendent or designee written notice of its decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal of the superintendent or designee's decision. If the request for readmission is denied, no subsequent requests from that student will be considered during that 365-day suspension.

- b. **Requests by Expelled Students:** A student who has been expelled may submit a request to the board for readmission any time after 180 calendar days from the start date of the student's expulsion. The board chairperson immediately will forward the request to the superintendent, who shall arrange in a timely manner a hearing before the board. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with Policy 2500. After considering the student's request and the superintendent or designee's recommendation regarding readmission, if the board determines that the student has satisfactorily demonstrated that his or her presence in school no longer constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees, the board will readmit the student. The board will notify the student, the student's parents, and the superintendent in writing of its decision within 30 days of the submission of the request for readmission.

If the board decides to readmit the student, the notice will include the date of readmission, the school or program to which the student will be assigned, and any reasonable restrictions placed on the readmission. If the student was expelled as a result of assaulting or injuring a teacher, the student will not be returned to that teacher's classroom following readmission without the teacher's consent.

If the expelled student's request for readmission is denied, the board will not consider a subsequent request for readmission of that student until six months after the submission of the previous request.

F. Disciplinary Policies Pertaining to Suspension for Students who have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans

1. Definitions

Child With a Disability	Unless otherwise stated, a child with a disability as used in this section refers to both a child identified as disabled in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education
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	Act (IDEA) and a child found eligible for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).
Suspension	Suspension refers to out-of-school suspension. However, if a child with a disability serving an in-school suspension fails to receive the special education and related services as indicated in the child's IEP or 504 Plan during the term of in-school suspension, the in-school suspension shall be treated as an out-of-school suspension for purposes of this policy.

2. **Out of School Suspensions Up to Ten (10) Days in a School Year (Short-Term Suspensions):** A child with a disability may be subject to out-of-school suspension for up to 10 cumulative school days in a school year, and the same disciplinary rules and procedures shall be followed as for non-disabled children. There is no requirement that the team (IEP OR 504) conduct a manifestation determination review (MDR) at this time, nor is there a requirement that the child receive any educational services beyond what the district may choose to offer to non-disabled students.
3. **Out-of-School Suspensions Greater than Ten (10) Cumulative School Days in a School Year, Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions:** If a child with a disability is subject to a series of short-term suspensions that exceeds ten (10) cumulative school days, is recommended for alternative placement, long-term suspension, or is recommended for expulsion, the school shall immediately, if possible, but not later than 10 school days after the decision to take such disciplinary action, require the IEP team to meet to complete a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR).
 - a. If manifestation is not found, the child may be suspended pursuant to the same disciplinary rules and procedures followed for non-disabled children. The IEP team must determine what would be the appropriate services for the child to receive during the term of his suspension, in order to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the annual goals in the child's IEP. The IEP team must also determine what would be the appropriate services for the child in the event there is a subsequent disciplinary reassignment by the Superintendent or designee. These services must enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the annual goals of the child's IEP.
 - b. If manifestation is found, the child's placement is not to be changed and the child must return to his or her current placement immediately. The child shall not be "administratively reassigned" to an alternative school if a manifestation has been determined to exist. In addition, when manifestation is found, the IEP team must ensure a Functional Behavioral Assessment is completed (if one has not already been completed during the current school year) and develop a Behavior Intervention Plan; if there is an existing Behavior Intervention Plan, the team may elect to review and revise that Plan in lieu of developing a new one, if appropriate.
 - c. Regardless of the team's decision regarding manifestation, the district must offer educational services to any child with a disability under the IDEA who has been subject to out-of-school suspensions beyond ten (10) cumulative days in the school year. These services shall be designed to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the annual goals of the child's IEP. If these services are offered prior to the manifestation determination meeting described above, the IEP team at the MDR meeting shall review, as appropriate, the services offered and determine if any additional services are warranted.
4. **Special Circumstances for Interim 45-Day Placement for Violation of the Code of Conduct Involving Weapons, Drugs, or Serious Bodily Injury:** In special circumstances, a student with a disability under the IDEA may be removed from his or her current placement and assigned to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days for Code of Conduct violations involving a weapon, drugs, or serious bodily injury. A manifestation determination review must be held but the student can be removed for up to 45 days in an IAES. See criteria below for legal definitions of the special circumstances.
 - a. **Criteria for IAES Eligibility:** The Principal, with prior approval from the Director of the Exceptional Children's Department, shall make the determination as to whether to implement an Interim Alternative Educational Placement (IAES), and shall determine the length of removal to the IAES, provided it does not exceed forty-five school days. Such a placement may be implemented only in the following circumstances:

- i. The student carries or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of Pitt County Schools. For purposes of this provision only, a weapon is defined as “a device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such a term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2.5 inches in length.”
 - ii. The student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises or at a school function under the jurisdiction of PCS.
 - iii. The student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises or at a school function under the jurisdiction of PCS. For purposes of this provision only, serious bodily injury is an injury that involves a substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; a protracted and obvious disfigurement; or a protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty.
 - b. **Emergency 45-Day Interim Alternative Placement of Dangerous Student:** In an emergency situation, where maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, the school district may seek a judicial order from a court or hearing officer for a change in the child's placement to an appropriate IAES for not more than 45 days, as provided by law.
- 5. Parental Notice of Rights:** In all actions involving suspension for more than 10 days of a child identified and served under the IDEA, the school shall notify the child's parent/guardian, not later than the day on which the decision to take disciplinary action is made, of the disciplinary action and of all due process rights available to the parent/guardian pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-109.1-109.9 and 20 U.S.C. § 1415.
- In all actions involving suspension for more than 10 days of a child identified and served under Section 504, the parent/guardian shall have available all the rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The parent/guardian shall be notified of the action and of their rights as soon as practicable under the circumstances.
- 6. Consideration of Student Records by Decision-Maker:** Whenever the school initiates disciplinary procedures applicable to a child with a disability, it shall provide a copy of the child's special education and disciplinary records for consideration by the individual(s) making the final determination regarding the disciplinary action.
- 7. Students Not Yet Determined Eligible for Special Education:** If a child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education services under the IDEA commits a violation of school rules that would result in suspension or expulsion from school, the school may not exclude the child from school to the same extent that it would exclude a nondisabled child for the same offense, if the school had knowledge that the child was disabled before the violation occurred. A school is deemed to have knowledge of a child's disability if:
- a. The parent/guardian has expressed a concern in writing to school officials that the child is in need of special education;
 - b. The parent/guardian has requested an evaluation to consider eligibility for special education;
 - c. The child's teacher or other school staff have expressed concern about a pattern of behavior by the student to the EC Director or other supervisory personnel; or
 - d. Prior to the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action, the behavior and performance of the child clearly and convincingly established the need for special education. Prior disciplinary infractions alone do not constitute clear and convincing evidence.

ANNUAL NOTICES

Overview

Pitt County Schools' provides certain notices to parents and students on an annual basis to inform and advise you of your rights in certain areas. A summary of the notices provided in this part is provided below.

- Parents' Bill of Rights
- Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment & N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.70
- Non-Discrimination: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex: Title IX
- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) & Child Find
- Section 504 Plans
- Student Restraint/ Seclusion/ Isolation
- Student & Parent Grievance Procedures
- McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- Title I Schools
- Free or Reduced School Lunch
- Equal Access to Facilities
- Use of Pesticides
- Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)
- Information Regarding Advanced Courses
- School Health Education Program
- Student Testing Information
- School Bullying/ Cyberbullying Policies
- Student Discipline Policies
- Student Wellness Policy
- Students with Diabetes
- Students with Asthma or Severe Allergies
- Notice of Health Care Services Offered in Schools
- Notice of N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.60
- Influenza, HPV, Meningococcal Meningitis, Cervical Cancer, Cervical Dysplasia, & Available Vaccines
- North Carolina Safe Surrender Law
- School Annual Report Card Grade
- Local Education Agency Report Card
- Moment of Silence Policy
- Notice of Health Care Services Offered in Schools
- Notice of N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.60

Parents' Bill of Rights

In compliance with Section 115C-76.35 of the North Carolina General Statutes, Pitt County Schools provides a list of parents' rights with respect to their children. For purposes of this notice, parent includes any person who has legal custody of a student, including a natural parent, adoptive parent, or legal guardian. The rights described below reflect long-standing Pitt County Board of Education policies and practices. The information provided below each right connects to Pitt County Board of Education policies or clarifies how parents may enforce their rights.

1. Parents have the legal right to consent or withhold consent for participation in reproductive health and safety education programs, consistent with the requirements of Section 81.30 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 3540 requires staff to comply with Section 115C-81.30 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Each year before students participate in reproductive health and safety education or in other separate instruction on the prevention of STDs, including HIV/AIDS, or the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, school staff will notify parents of the opportunity to review the materials and objectives that will be used in instruction. A copy of all objectives and materials will be available for review in the media center of each school where these subjects will be taught. School staff must inform any resource speakers of the school system's reproductive health and safety education guidelines, and speakers must adhere to those guidelines.

School staff shall also notify parents of the right to withhold or withdraw consent for their child's participation in all reproductive health and safety education instruction or in specific topics such as STDs, the effectiveness and safety of contraceptive methods, awareness of sexual assault and sexual abuse, and sex trafficking prevention and awareness. Parents may also withhold consent to student participation in other separate instruction on the prevention of STDs, including HIV/AIDS, or the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Any parent wishing to withhold consent must do so in writing to the principal.

Policy 3540 is accessible at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568401.

2. Parents have the right to seek a medical or religious exemption from immunization requirements, consistent with the requirements of Sections 156 and 157 of Chapter 130A of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4110 and the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement provide information on how parents may request exemption from the immunization requirements on medical or religious grounds. Immunization requirements for entry to public school are set by the State of North Carolina and not by the Pitt County Board of Education.

State law requires medical or religious exemptions from state immunization requirements to be documented. Medical exemptions can only be obtained from a physician licensed to practice in North Carolina and are only accepted if presented on North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Form 3987. A parent may present a written statement of their bona fide religious beliefs upon which they oppose any required immunization. Written statements asserting a bona fide religious exemption to examinations should also include the name and date of birth of the child for whom the exemption is sought. While Pitt County Schools will honor religious exemption requests, requests based on personal beliefs will not be granted.

Policy 4110 is accessible at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568414.

3. Parents have the right to review statewide standardized assessment results as part of the State report card.

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 1320/3560 requires school system officials to disseminate to all parents, schools, and the public, a school system report card. This information is displayed on each school's website and on the website for Pitt County Schools. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction provides a state report card annually which shares information about standardized assessment results.

State information can be accessed at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/accountability-and-testing>. Policy 1320/3560 can be accessed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568304.

4. Parents have the right to request an evaluation of their child for an academically or intellectually gifted program, or for identification as a child with a disability as provided in Article 9 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Pitt County Board of Education Policies 1730/4022/7231 and 3520 address services for students with disabilities. The AIG Plan approved by the Pitt County Board of Education addresses evaluation of students for academically or intellectually gifted programs. Pitt County Schools welcomes parents' requests for evaluations of their children.

More information on these topics is also available in the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement. Policy 1730/4022/7231 can be accessed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568316. Policy 3520 can be accessed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568399.

5. Parents have the right to inspect and purchase public school unit textbooks and other supplementary instructional materials, as provided in Article 8, Part 3 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 3210 addresses inspection of instructional materials by parents. Although not directly addressed in Board Policy, the Pitt County Board of Education complies with Section 115C-102 of the North Carolina General Statutes. By law, any parent "may purchase any instructional material needed for any child in the public schools of the State from the board of education of the local school administrative unit in which the child is enrolled or, in the case of basic textbooks, from the State Board of Education."

Policy 3210 can be accessed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568378.

6. Parents have the right to access information relating to the unit's policies for promotion or retention, including high school graduation requirements.

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 3420 and the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement address promotion and retention. Pitt County Board of Education Policy 3460 and the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement address graduation requirements for high school seniors.

Policy 3420 can be accessed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568390. Policy 3460 can be accessed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568395.

7. Parents have the right to receive student report cards on a regular basis that clearly depict and grade the student's academic performance in each class or course, the student's conduct, and the student's attendance.

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 3400 and the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement address the evaluation of student progress and report cards. The Traditional School Calendar lists dates that report cards will be distributed. For the 2024-2025 school year, the charts below indicate the dates on which report cards will be distributed

Grades 6-8 (Nine Week) Marking Periods		
WEEK	END DATE	REPORT CARD ISSUED
1st 9 Weeks	October 29, 2024	November 6, 2024
2nd 9 Weeks	January 17, 2025	January 29, 2025
3rd 9 Weeks	April 2, 2025	April 9, 2025
4th 9 Weeks	June 10, 2025	Mailed Home

Grades 9-12 (Six Week) Marking Periods		
WEEK	END DATE	REPORT CARD ISSUED
1st 6 Weeks	October 4, 2024	October 14, 2024
2nd 6 Weeks	November 19, 2024	December 2, 2024
3rd 6 Weeks	January 17, 2025	January 27, 2025
4th 6 Weeks	March 4, 2025	March 10, 2025
5th 6 Weeks	April 24, 2025	May 5, 2025
6th 6 Weeks	June 10, 2025	Mailed Home

Policy 3400 may be accessed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568387.

8. Parents have the right to access information relating to the State public education system, State standards, report card requirements, attendance requirements, and textbook requirements.

Information regarding the State public education system, State standards, report card requirements, attendance requirements, and textbook requirements may be accessed through websites for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/>) and the State Board of Education (<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/about-dpi/state-board-education>).

9. Parents have the right to participate in parent-teacher organizations.

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 5010 provides information on parent organizations. Participation in parent organizations is voluntary. However, all parents are encouraged to participate. Policy 5010 may be reviewed at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568467.

10. Parents have the right to opt in to certain data collection for their child, as provided in Article 7B, Part 5 and Article 29 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes. Stated another way, parents have the right for students to participate in protected student information surveys only with parental consent, as provided in Article 7B, Part 5 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4720 provides that the school system must obtain the prior written consent of a parent before a student is required to participate in a survey that reveals information concerning the following "protected topics":

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Sex behavior and attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;

- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

Parents may access Policy 4720 at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568464. The Youth Risk Behaviors Surveillance System ("YRBSS") is a "protected topic" survey that is administered to students in grades 9-12. The National Youth Tobacco Survey ("NYTS") is a "protected topic" survey that is administered to students in grades 6-12. Both the YRBSS and NYTS are specifically exempted from the state law opt-in consent requirement. Before the administration of these surveys to students, parents will be given notice and the opportunity to opt their child out of participating.

11. Parents have the right to review all available records of materials their child has borrowed from a school library.

The Pitt County Board of Education supports parents' rights to review available records of material their children have borrowed from a school library. The system utilized for library book checkout is Destiny, and any materials checked out to a student can be found under the Destiny Discover login. To access Destiny,

- Go to www.pittschools.org. Click the "Select a School" drop down menu in the top left corner of the homepage. Choose your child's school from the list of schools.
- Once on your school's website, go to "Our Resources" (on the top ribbon of each school's homepage).
- Select "Media Center" from the "Our Resources" drop down menu.
- On the "Media Center" webpage, click on "Destiny Catalog."
- On the "Destiny Catalog" page, choose "Login" (top right corner of the "Destiny Catalog" page).
- In the new window the patron should log in using their PCS network login (which is the same as how they log into their Chromebook).
- A student's user name is typically the first 6 letters of last name and first initial (example: LastnaF, or DoeJ). Students who do not remember their passwords can ask their teachers. After entering the username and password, click the login button.
- Once logged in, the top menu bar has options for "Home," "My Stuff," "Collections," and "More."
- Click "My Stuff" and select "Checkouts" to review the list of materials checked out by the student.
- Use the search bar in the top right corner to search book titles in the school's collection.
- For additional questions or concerns, parents may contact their school's media coordinator.

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), a federal law, gives parents and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are

- **The right to inspect and review your child's education records within forty-five (45) days of the day the school receives a request for access.** You should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) you wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify you of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- **The right to request an amendment of your child's education records that you believe are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.** You should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record you want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify you of the decision and advise you of your right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to you when you are notified of the right to a hearing.
- **The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information (PII) contained in your child's education records.** FERPA requires that the school obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of any such information with certain exceptions. For a complete list of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without parental consent, see 34 CFR § 99.37. Some disclosures without consent include disclosures to
 - **School officials**¹ who need the records in order to fulfill a professional responsibility to the school district.
 - Officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer
 - Authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction;
 - Agencies or institutions providing financial aid to which the student has applied or from which the student will receive financial aid, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid;
 - State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released;
 - Organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction;
 - Accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions
 - Parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes;
 - Appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency;
 - Agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement;
 - The Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs.

Additionally, Pitt County Schools may release records without consent to **comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.**

¹ A school official is (i) a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, certified staff member, or support staff member, (ii) a school board member; (iii) a contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other party who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records and is subject to FERPA requirements governing the use and re-disclosure of PII from education records, including but not limited to, an attorney, auditor, cloud storage provider, consultant, expert witness, hearing officer, law enforcement unit, investigator, insurer/insurance company adjuster, investigator, or any other claims representative, medical providers or consultants, or counselors/therapists; and (iv) a person serving on a committee appointed by the school board or by the administration of the school district, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or other review committee.

- **Pitt County Schools may also disclose directory information about your child without consent unless a parent or eligible student gives notice to their school in writing that they do not want such information disclosed.** Pitt County Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Student's Name | • Degrees, honors & awards received |
| • Address | • Date & Place of Birth |
| • Telephone Listing | • Electronic Mail (Email) Address |
| • Photograph | • Participation in officially recognized activities & sports |
| • Major field of study | • Weight & height of members of athletic teams |
| • Grade level | • Dates of attendance |
| • Most recent educational agency/institution attended | • Enrollment status |

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications such as yearbooks, web pages, honor roll or other recognition lists, graduation programs, and sports activity sheets, which may include the weight and height of team members. Directory information may also be disclosed to outside organizations without your prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

- **Under federal law, we are required to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education, upon their request, with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of high school students** unless the student or parent has advised the school that they do not want such information disclosed without their prior written consent.
- **If you are a parent or eligible student and do not want Pitt County Schools to disclose (1) some or all of the directory information listed above to all or certain recipients without your prior written consent or (2) do not want Pitt County Schools to disclose a student name, address, and telephone number to military recruiters, you must notify the principal of the student's school in writing within fifteen school days of the start of the school year (or by the fifteenth school day after enrollment if a student enters after the start of the academic year).** Parents with children in more than one school must notify the principal of each school that their children attend. A written opt-out notification is perpetual and can only be rescinded in writing. An opt-out may be given in the form of (1) a letter to the principal or (2) on the PowerSchool Parent Portal.
- Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to you, 34 CFR § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. **Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.**
- **The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures of the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.** The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is the Student Privacy Policy Office; U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) & N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.70

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents and students 18 years of age or older or emancipated students ("eligible students") certain rights regarding schools conducting surveys, collecting and using information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. In conjunction with Section 115C-76.70 of the North Carolina General Statutes, these rights include, but are not limited to:

- Parents and eligible students must give written consent before students are required to submit to a protected information survey that seeks information on one or more of the following topics:
 - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent(s);
 - Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 - Sexual behavior or attitudes;
 - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior;
 - Critical appraisals of others with whom students have close family relationships;
 - Legally recognized privileged relationships such as lawyers, doctors, ministers;
 - Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent(s); or
 - Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

The Youth Risk Behaviors Surveillance System ("YRBSS") is a "protected topic" survey that is administered to students in grades 9-12. The National Youth Tobacco Survey ("NYTS") is a "protected topic" survey that is administered to students in grades 6-12. Both the YRBSS and NYTS are specifically exempted from the state law opt-in consent

requirement. Before the administration of these surveys to students, parents will be given notice and the opportunity to opt their child out of participating, which is consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, PPRA.

- In addition to the YRBS and NYTS, parents and eligible students have the right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt out of any of the following:
 - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school district, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 - Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)
- Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect, upon request and prior to the administration or use, of:
 - Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
 - Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 - Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.
 - Parents and eligible students will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. A list of a specific activities and surveys covered include (1) collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution and (2) any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening described previously.

For more information, please see Pitt County Board of Education Policy 4720. In addition to this annual notice and the notices described above, Pitt County Schools will notify parents if any substantive changes are made to Policy 4720. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Student Privacy Policy Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.

Non-Discrimination: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

It is the policy of Pitt County Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, genetic information or veteran's status in its educational programs, activities, admissions, or employment policies. For inquiries or complaints or to request a copy of Pitt County Schools' policies and procedures in any of these areas, please contact:

504 Coordinator

Sara English
Interim Executive Director of Student Services
1717 West Fifth Street
Greenville, NC 27834
252-830-4238

ADA Coordinator & Age Discrimination Coordinator

Dr. Delilah Jackson
Interim Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
1717 West Fifth Street
Greenville, NC 27834
252-830-4261

Coordinator for All Other Nondiscrimination Laws

Emma Hodson
School Board Attorney
1717 West Fifth Street
Greenville, NC 27834
252-830-4227

Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex: Title IX

The school system does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities and is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and federal regulations to not discriminate in such a manner. This requirement extends to admission and employment. The board will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of sex, including any form of sexual harassment as that term is defined under Title IX, in any program or activity of the school

system. The Pitt County Board of Education has designated the following Title IX coordinators to coordinate its efforts to comply with its responsibilities under Title IX and its implementing regulations:

Title IX Coordinator for Student Matters

Sara English
Interim Executive Director of Student Services
1717 West Fifth Street
Greenville, NC 27834
252-830-4238

Title IX Coordinator for Employee Matters

Dr. Delilah Jackson
Interim Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
1717 West Fifth Street
Greenville, NC 27834
252-830-4261

Inquiries about the application of Title IX and its implementing federal regulations may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education. The contact information for the Office for Civil Rights with jurisdiction over North Carolina is: 4000 Maryland Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: 202-453-6020. Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov.

For more information about the Title IX policies and grievance procedures, please see Pitt County Board of Education Policies 1720/4030/7233, 1725/4035/7234 and 1726/4036/7235.

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) & Child Find

Pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Pitt County Schools must provide special education services to all children residing in our district between the ages of three (3) and twenty-one (21) who have been diagnosed with or are suspected of having mental, physical, or emotional disabilities and who are unable to benefit from regular education without special education and/or related services.

Pitt County Schools welcomes all students and is committed to providing specially designed instruction and/or related services with fidelity and evidenced-based practices to students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. If your child has or is suspected of having a disability, please contact

Dawn Hester
Exceptional Children's Program Director
1717 W Fifth Street
Greenville, NC 27834
252-695-7989
hesterd@pitt.k12.nc.us

The following links provide important information regarding the procedural safeguards available to ensure a free and appropriate public education and local resources for Pitt County Schools.

Parent Rights Handbook	https://www.dpi.nc.gov/parent-rights-handbook/download?attachment (English) https://www.dpi.nc.gov/parent-rights-handbook-spanish/download?attachment (Spanish)
IDEA Dispute Resolution	https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/exceptional-children/parent-resources#DisputeResolution-2877
Special Education Surrogate Parents	https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/exceptional-children/federal-regulations-state-policies#SpecialEducationSurrogateParents-2834
Project Child Find	https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/exceptional-children/federal-regulations-state-policies#ProjectChildFind-2832
PCS Exceptional Children's Department	https://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/Page/111
Pitt County Board of Education Policy 3520	https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568399

Section 504 Plans

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibit discrimination against any individual on the basis of a disability. A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Any student in Pitt County Schools who has a disability; has a record of a disability; or is regarded as having a disability may qualify for a 504 Plan which provides accommodations and/or modifications to allow a student to have equal access to the educational environment. Parents who are interested in having their child evaluated for a 504 plan should set up an appointment with the Section 504 contact at their child's school. Parents may also review information about 504 Plans at <https://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/Page/338>.

The Section 504 Coordinator for Pitt County Schools is Sara English, Interim Executive Director of Student Services, who can be contacted by phone at (252) 830-4238 or by email at engliss1@pitt.k12.nc.us.

Student Restraint/Seclusion/Isolation

The Pitt County Board of Education has adopted Policy 4302-P, as required by Section 115C-391.1 of the North Carolina General Statutes. Consistent with state law, copies of Policy 4302-P and Section 115C-391.1 of the North Carolina General Statutes are provided as part of Pitt County Schools' Annual Notices.

Policy 4302-P

The following rules will govern the use of seclusion and restraint by school personnel. As used in this procedure, "school personnel" means employees of the board and any persons working on school grounds or at a school function under a contract or written agreement with the public school system or for another agency to provide educational or related services to students.

A. Physical Restraint

Physical restraint means the use of physical force to restrict the free movement of all or a part of a student's body. Physical restraint will be considered to be a reasonable use of force when used in the following circumstances:

1. as reasonably needed to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the person or within the control of a student;
2. as reasonably needed to maintain order or to prevent or break up a fight;
3. as reasonably needed for self-defense;
4. as reasonably needed to ensure the safety of any student, employee, volunteer, or other person present;
5. as reasonably needed to teach a skill, to calm or comfort a student, or to prevent self-injurious behavior;
6. as reasonably needed to escort a student safely from one area to another;
7. if used as provided for in an IEP, Section 504, or behavior intervention plan; or
8. as reasonably needed to prevent imminent destruction to school or another person's property.

Except as set forth above, physical restraint of students will not be considered a reasonable use of force, and its use is prohibited. In addition, physical restraint will not be considered a reasonable use of force when used solely as a disciplinary consequence.

B. Mechanical Restraint

Mechanical restraint means the use of any device or material attached or adjacent to a student's body that restricts freedom of movement or normal access to any portion of the student's body and that the student cannot easily remove. Mechanical restraint of a student by school personnel is permissible only in the following circumstances:

1. when properly used as an assistive technology device included in the student's IEP, Section 504, or behavior intervention plan or as otherwise prescribed by a medical or related service provider;
2. when using seat belts or other safety restraints to secure a student during transportation;
3. as reasonably needed to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the person or within the control of a student;
4. as reasonably needed for self-defense;
5. as reasonably needed to ensure the safety of any student, employee, volunteer, or other person.

Except as set forth above, mechanical restraint, including the tying down, taping, or strapping down of a student, will not be considered to be a reasonable use of force, and its use is prohibited.

C. Seclusion

Seclusion means the confinement of a student alone in an enclosed space from which the student is (a) physically prevented from leaving or (b) incapable of leaving due to physical or intellectual capacity. Seclusion of a student by school personnel may be used in the following circumstances:

1. as reasonably needed to respond to a person in control of a weapon or other dangerous object;
2. as reasonably needed to maintain order or prevent or break up a fight;
3. as reasonably needed for self-defense;
4. as reasonably needed when a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent physical harm to self or others or imminent substantial destruction of school or another person's property; or
5. when used as specified in the student's IEP, Section 504, or behavior intervention plan; and
 - a. the student is constantly monitored by an adult in close proximity who is able to see and hear the student at all times;
 - b. the student is released from seclusion upon cessation of the behaviors that led to the seclusion or as otherwise specified in the student's IEP, Section 504, or behavior intervention plan;
 - c. the confining space has been approved for such use by the local education agency;
 - d. the space is appropriately lighted, ventilated, and heated or cooled; and
 - e. the space is free from objects that unreasonably expose the student or others to harm.

Except as set forth above, the use of seclusion is not considered to be reasonable force, and its use is prohibited. In addition, seclusion will not be considered a reasonable use of force when used solely as a disciplinary consequence.

D. Isolation

Isolation means a behavior management technique in which a student is placed alone in an enclosed space from which the student is not prevented from leaving. Isolation is permitted as a behavior management technique provided that:

1. the isolation space is appropriately lighted, ventilated and heated or cooled;
2. the duration of the isolation is reasonable in light of the purpose for the isolation;
3. the student is reasonably monitored; and
4. the isolation space is free from objects that unreasonably expose the student or others to harm.

E. Time-Out

Time-out means a behavior management technique in which a student is separated from other students for a limited period of time in a monitored setting. Teachers are authorized to use time-out to regulate behavior within their classrooms.

F. Aversive Procedures

Aversive procedure means a systematic physical or sensory intervention program for modifying the behavior of a student with a disability that causes or reasonably may be expected to cause one or more of the following:

1. significant physical harm, such as tissue damage, physical illness, or death;
2. serious and foreseeable long-term psychological impairment;
3. obvious repulsion on the part of observers who cannot reconcile such extreme procedures with acceptable standard practice, for example:
 - a. electric shock applied to the body;
 - b. extremely loud auditory stimuli;
 - c. forcible introduction of foul substances to the mouth, eyes, ears, nose, or skin;
 - d. placement in a tub of cold water or shower;
 - e. slapping, pinching, hitting, or pulling hair;
 - f. blindfolding or other forms of visual blocking;
 - g. unreasonable withholding of meals
 - h. eating one's own vomit; or
 - i. denial of reasonable access to toileting facilities.

The use of aversive procedures in public schools is prohibited.

G. Notice, Reporting, and Documentation

1. School staff will promptly notify the principal or designee of any of the following:
 - a. any use of aversive procedures;
 - b. any prohibited use of mechanical restraint;
 - c. any use of physical restraint resulting in observable physical injury to a student;
 - d. any prohibited use of seclusion; or
 - e. any seclusion exceeding 10 minutes or beyond the amount of time specified on a student's behavior intervention plan.
2. Notice to Parents

When a principal or designee has personal or actual knowledge of any of the events listed above, he or she shall promptly notify the student's parent or guardian and shall provide the name of the school employee whom the parent or guardian may contact regarding the incident.
3. Written Report to Parents

Within a reasonable period of time not to exceed 30 days after the incident, the principal or designee shall also provide the parent or guardian with a written incident report. This report must include the following:

 - a. the date, time of day, location, duration, and description of the incident and interventions;
 - b. the events or events that led up to the incident;
 - c. the nature and extent of any injury to the student; and
 - d. the name of a school employee the parent or guardian can contact regarding the incident.
4. Reporting to State Board

The board will maintain a record of incidents reported under the procedure described above and will provide this information annually to the State Board of Education
5. Non-Retaliation for Reporting

An employee making a report alleging a prohibited use of physical or mechanical restraint, seclusion, or aversive procedure will NOT be discharged, threatened, or retaliated against through compensation, terms, conditions, location, or privilege of employment by any local board of education or any employee unless the employee knew or should have known that the report was false

Section 115C-391.1 of the North Carolina General Statutes

- (a) It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to:
 - (1) Promote safety and prevent harm to all students, staff, and visitors in the public schools.
 - (2) Treat all public school students with dignity and respect in the delivery of discipline, use of physical restraints or seclusion, and use of reasonable force as permitted by law.
 - (3) Provide school staff with clear guidelines about what constitutes use of reasonable force permissible in North Carolina public schools.
 - (4) Improve student achievement, attendance, promotion, and graduation rates by employing positive behavioral interventions to address student behavior in a positive and safe manner.
 - (5) Promote retention of valuable teachers and other school personnel by providing appropriate training in prescribed procedures, which address student behavior in a positive and safe manner.
- (b) The following definitions apply in this section:
 - (1) "Assistive technology device" means any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capacities of a child with a disability.
 - (2) "Aversive procedure" means a systematic physical or sensory intervention program for modifying the behavior of a student with a disability which causes or reasonably may be expected to cause one or more of the following:
 - a. Significant physical harm, such as tissue damage, physical illness, or death.
 - b. Serious, foreseeable long term psychological impairment.
 - c. Obvious repulsion on the part of observers who cannot reconcile extreme procedures with acceptable, standard practice, for example: electric shock applied to the body; extremely loud auditory stimuli; forcible introduction of foul substances to the mouth, eyes, ears, nose, or skin; placement in a tub of cold water or shower; slapping, pinching, hitting, or pulling hair; blindfolding or other forms of visual blocking; unreasonable withholding of meals; eating one's own vomit; or denial of reasonable access to toileting facilities.
 - (3) "Behavioral intervention" means the implementation of strategies to address behavior that is dangerous, disruptive, or otherwise impedes the learning of a student or others.

- (4) "IEP" means a student's Individualized Education Plan.
- (5) "Isolation" means a behavior management technique in which a student is placed alone in an enclosed space from which the student is prevented from leaving.
- (6) "Law enforcement officer" means a sworn law enforcement officer with the power to arrest.
- (7) "Mechanical restraint" means the use of any device or material attached or adjacent to a student's body that restricts freedom of movement or normal access to any portion of the student's body and that the student cannot easily remove.
- (8) "Physical restraint" means the use of physical force to restrict the free movement of all or a portion of a student's body.
- (9) "School personnel" means:
 - a. Employees of a local board of education.
 - b. Any person working on school grounds or at a school function under a contract or written agreement with the public school system to provide educational or related services to students.
 - c. Any person working on school grounds or at a school function for another agency providing educational or related services to students.
- (10) "Seclusion" means the confinement of a student alone in an enclosed space from which the student is:
 - a. Physically prevented from leaving by locking hardware or other means.
 - b. Not capable of leaving due to physical or intellectual incapacity.
- (11) "Time out" means a behavior management technique in which a student is separated from other students for a limited period of time in a monitored setting.

(c) Physical Restraint:

- (1) Physical restraint of students by school personnel shall be considered a reasonable use of force when used in the following circumstances:
 - a. As reasonably needed to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous objects on a person or within the control of a Person.
 - b. As reasonably needed to maintain order or prevent or break up a fight.
 - c. As reasonably needed for self-defense.
 - d. As reasonably needed to ensure the safety of any student, school employee, volunteer, or other person present, to teach a skill, to calm or comfort a student, or to prevent self-injurious behavior.
 - e. As reasonably needed to escort a student safely from one area to another.
 - f. If used as provided for in a student's IEP or Section 504 plan or behavior intervention plan.
 - g. As reasonably needed to prevent imminent destruction to school or another person's property.
- (2) Except as set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, physical restraint of students shall not be considered a reasonable use of force, and its use is prohibited.
- (3) Physical restraint shall not be considered a reasonable use of force when used solely as a disciplinary consequence.
- (4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the use of force by law enforcement officers in the lawful exercise of their law enforcement duties.

(d) Mechanical Restraint:

- (1) Mechanical restraint of students by school personnel is permissible only in the following circumstances:
 - a. When properly used as an assistive technology device included in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan or behavior intervention plan or as otherwise prescribed for the student by a medical or related service provider.
 - b. When using seat belts or other safety restraints to secure students during transportation.
 - c. As reasonably needed to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous objects on a person or within the control of a Person.
 - d. As reasonably needed for self-defense.
 - e. As reasonably needed to ensure the safety of any student, school employee, volunteer, or other person present.
- (2) Except as set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, mechanical restraint, including the tying, taping, or strapping down of a student, shall not be considered a reasonable use of force, and its use is prohibited.
- (3) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the use of mechanical restraint devices such as handcuffs by law enforcement officers in the lawful exercise of their law enforcement duties.

(e) Seclusion

- (1) Seclusion of students by school personnel may be used in the following circumstances:
 - a. As reasonably needed to respond to a person in control of a weapon or other dangerous object.
 - b. As reasonably needed to maintain order or prevent or break up a fight.
 - c. As reasonably needed for self-defense.

- d. As reasonably needed when a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent physical harm to self or others or imminent substantial destruction of school or another person's property.
- e. When used as specified in the student's IEP, Section 504 plan, or behavior intervention plan; and
 - 1. The student is monitored while in seclusion by an adult in close proximity who is able to see and hear the student at all times.
 - 2. The student is released from seclusion upon cessation of the behaviors that led to the seclusion or as otherwise specified in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan.
 - 3. The space in which the student is confined has been approved for such use by the local education agency.
 - 4. The space is appropriately lighted.
 - 5. The space is appropriately ventilated and heated or cooled.
 - 6. The space is free of objects that unreasonably expose the student or others to harm.
- (2) Except as set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the use of seclusion is not considered reasonable force, and its use is not permitted.
- (3) Seclusion shall not be considered a reasonable use of force when used solely as a disciplinary consequence.
- (4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the use of seclusion by law enforcement officers in the lawful exercise of their law enforcement duties.
- (f) Isolation— Isolation is permitted as a behavior management technique provided that:
 - (1) The space used for isolation is appropriately lighted, ventilated, and heated or cooled.
 - (2) The duration of the isolation is reasonable in light of the purpose of the isolation.
 - (3) The student is reasonably monitored while in isolation.
 - (4) The isolation space is free of objects that unreasonably expose the student or others to harm.
- (g) Time-out— Nothing in this section is intended to prohibit or regulate the use of time out as defined in this section.
- (h) Aversive Procedures — The use of aversive procedures as defined in this section is prohibited in public schools.
- (i) Nothing in this section modifies the rights of school personnel to use reasonable force as permitted under G.S. 115C 390.3 or modifies the rules and procedures governing discipline under G.S. 115C 390.1 through G.S. 115C-390.12.
- (j) Notice, Reporting and Documentation.
 - (1) Notice of Procedures – Each local board of education shall provide to school personnel and parents or guardians at the beginning of each school year copies of this section and all local board policies developed to implement this section.
 - (2) Notice of specified incidents:
 - a. School personnel shall promptly notify the principal or principal's designee of:
 - 1. Any use of aversive procedures.
 - 2. Any prohibited use of mechanical restraint.
 - 3. Any use of physical restraint resulting in observable physical injury to a student.
 - 4. Any prohibited use of seclusion or seclusion that exceeds ten minutes or the amount of time specified on a student's behavior intervention plan.
 - b. When a principal or principal's designee has personal knowledge or actual notice of any of the events described in this subdivision, the principal or principal's designee shall promptly notify the student's parent or guardian and will provide the name of a school employee the parent or guardian can contact regarding the incident.
 - (3) As used in subdivision (2) of this subsection, "promptly notify" means by the end of the workday during which the incident occurred when reasonably possible, but no event later than the end of the following workday.
 - (4) The parent or guardian of the student shall be provided with a written incident report for any incident reported under this section within a reasonable period of time, but in no event later than 30 days after the incident. The written incident report shall include:
 - a. The date, time of day, location, duration, and description of the incident and interventions.
 - b. The events or events that led up to the incident.
 - c. The nature and extent of any injury to the student.
 - d. The name of a school employee the parent or guardian can contact regarding the incident.
 - (5) No local board of education or employee of a local board of education shall discharge, threaten, or otherwise retaliate against another employee of the board regarding that employee's compensation, terms, conditions, location, or privileges of employment because the employee makes a report alleging a prohibited use of physical restraint, mechanical restraint, aversive procedure, or seclusion, unless the employee knew or should have known that the report was false.

- (k) Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private cause of action against any local board of education, its agents or employees, or any institutions of higher education or their agents or employees or to create a criminal offense.

Student & Parent Grievance Procedures

The Pitt County Board of Education strives to resolve the concerns and complaints of students and parents whenever possible and has provided opportunities for students and parents to express their concerns through processes established by Board Policies. Pitt County Board of Education Policy 1742/5060 identifies the different processes. When a grievance is not covered by a specific process described in Policy 1742/506, parents and students should utilize the general grievance procedure outlined in Policy 1740/4010.

McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the North Carolina State Plan for Educating Homeless Children, the Pitt County Board of Education has directed school staff to make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children and youth of school age located within the county, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate barriers to their receiving an education that may exist in school system policies or practices. Homeless students include children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or a youth who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian (e.g. a student in foster care). For information concerning the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness, please consult Board Policy 4125 and/or contact:

Kim Anderson
Lead School Social Worker
1058 Moye Boulevard
Greenville, NC 27835
252-830-3578

Title I Schools

The following schools in this District receive federal funding through Title I: Ayden Elementary School, Ayden Middle School, Belvoir Elementary School, Bethel School, C.M. Eppes Middle School, Creekside Elementary School, Eastern Elementary School, E.B. Aycock Middle School, Elmhurst Elementary School, Falkland Elementary School, Farmville Middle School, Grifton School, G.R. Whitfield School, H.B. Sugg/Sam D. Bundy Elementary Schools, Lakeforest Elementary School, Northwest Elementary School, Pictolus Global School, Ridgewood Elementary School, South Greenville Elementary School, Stokes School, W.H. Robinson Elementary School, Wahl Coates Elementary School of the Arts, and Wellcome Middle School. Title I funds are used to provide supplemental instruction to students who are in need of assistance in the area of reading and, on occasion, in the area of mathematics. Our goal is to provide early intervention to struggling learners.

Federal guidelines require that school districts provide a process by which parents may request the qualifications of their child's teacher, if their child's school receives funding through Title I. As a parent of a student in a Title I school, you have the right to request and obtain the following information:

- Whether the student's teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether the student's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- Whether the teacher is teaching in a field or discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition, if a child is assigned to or taught by a teacher who is not "highly qualified" for four or more consecutive weeks, the parents must receive a timely notice. Requests for information about a teacher's qualifications may be directed to Pitt County Schools' Department of Human Resources (252-830-4242).

Free or Reduced School Lunch

The Pitt County Board of Education has elected to use local funds to provide reimbursable meals to students at D.H. Conley High School. However, to minimize the impact on local funding, families experiencing financial hardship at D.H. Conley who qualify for free or reduced lunch will be asked to submit the free or reduced lunch form. The form may be accessed at <https://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/Page/4680>, and paper copies are also provided at the school.

Parents will be notified if their children qualify for free or reduced meal prices. All information is strictly confidential. For more information on participation in the Free or Reduced School Lunch program or questions about breakfast and summer lunch programs, please contact Pitt County Schools School Nutrition Department (252-830-4226) and please review Pitt County Board of Education Policy 6225 (https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568499).

Equal Access to Facilities

Pitt County Board of Education Policy 5030 directs Pitt County Schools to provide equal access to its facilities. Policy 5030 is available at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568476.

Use of Pesticides

Section 115C-47(47) of the North Carolina General Statutes gives parents the right to request notification of any non-exempt use of pesticides on school grounds. Please consult Pitt County Board of Education Policy 9205 for additional information (https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568618). Parents who wish to receive notification of non-exempt pesticide use or a pre-notice list of chemicals used on school grounds, should notify the principal of their student's school.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) as part of the Toxic Substance Control Act. AHERA requires schools to "ensure that workers and building occupants, or their legal guardians, are informed at least once each school year about inspections, response actions and post-response action activities, including periodic re-inspection and surveillance activities that are planned or in progress as well as the availability of the AHERA Management Plan[s] for public review." 40 CFR Section 763.84(c).

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral and has been used in building materials for many years. Unless it is disturbed or damaged, it poses no health risk. As required by AHERA, Pitt County Schools facilities have been inspected to identify the type, quantity and location of asbestos containing materials (ACM), if any, in each facility. Whether or not a facility contains ACM, an AHERA Management Plan has been developed for each Pitt County Schools facility.

Each facility's AHERA Management plan contains documents of the initial AHERA inspection, 6-month periodic surveillances, triennial re-inspection reports, employee training, and operations and maintenance procedures. If you have questions regarding an AHERA Management plan or would like to access a copy of a plan, you may contact Mike Whitford, Safety Coordinator, at (252) 753-2313. Copies of AHERA Management plans are also available online at <https://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/Page/253>.

Information Regarding Advanced Courses

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-174.26(d), schools must provide information to students and parents on available opportunities and the enrollment process for students to take advanced courses. Information regarding rigorous academic opportunities is provided in the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement.

School Health Education Program

Beginning in 7th grade, the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for health and physical education classes includes curricula related to prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS); avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy; and reproductive health and safety education. Pitt County Schools' policy requires that this instruction follow the state-mandated curriculum. Pursuant to Section 115C-81.30 of the North Carolina General Statutes, parents may review materials that will be used to provide this instruction in the school's Media Center. We also encourage you to talk with your child about the topics covered.

If you do not want your child to participate in this instruction, you have the right to opt-out your child's participation in curricula related to: (a) prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS); (b) avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy; or (c) reproductive health and safety education. You should notify your principal in writing of your decision. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your principal or your child's health and physical education teacher.

Student Testing Information

For information concerning the dates of system-wide and state-mandated tests that students will be required to take during the school year, how results from the test will be used and whether each test is required by the State Board of Education or the local Board of Education, please visit <https://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/Page/7193>. Information on testing is also provided in the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement.

School Bullying/ Cyberbullying Policies

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-407.16(d), school principals shall provide the local board of education's policy prohibiting bullying and harassing behavior, including cyber-bullying, to staff, students and parents. A copy of these policies is available at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568446 and information regarding these policies was shared previously in this Guide. Hard copies of the policies are available from the school principal upon request.

Student Discipline Policies

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-390.2(i), schools must make available all policies, rules and regulations regarding student discipline. For the Board's policies and regulations regarding student discipline, consult the Board's online policy manual at https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=TOC%3a4 or this Guide.

Student Wellness Policy

For information concerning the District's student wellness policy, please see Pitt County Board of Education Policy 6140 (https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568495). Additional information on student wellness practices is provided in the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement.

Students with Diabetes

Section 115C-375.3 of the North Carolina General Statutes requires that schools develop and implement individual care plans for students with diabetes upon parent/guardian request. Additional information is available at your school or from the school nurse.

Students with Asthma or Severe Allergies

Section 115C-375.2 of the North Carolina General Statutes allows for possession and self-administration of medication for students with asthma (inhalers) or students with severe allergies who are subject to anaphylactic reactions (epinephrine), if parents provide the required written information to the school. Additional information is available at your school or from the school nurse.

Notice of Health Care Services Offered in Schools

The School Health Services Part of the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement provides notice of the healthcare services offered in Pitt County Schools and the means by which parents can consent to the services provided.

Notice of N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.60

Pursuant to Pitt County Board of Education Policy 1310/ 4002 and Part 4 of Article 7B of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes, a parent should submit a concern in writing to the principal of their child's school about a school or school system procedure or practice related to any of the following:

- Annual notices related to school health services (which are provided in the Parents' Guide to Student Achievement);
- Annual notices to exercise their parental rights pursuant to Section 115C-76.60 of the North Carolina General Statutes (which is provided here);
- Notices related to the administration of a student well-being questionnaire or health screening form to students in grades K-3, a change in services or monitoring related to his or her child's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for that child, or changes in the name or pronoun used for a student in school records or by school personnel;

- Training provided by Pitt County Schools in the area of student services training being out of alignment with student services guidelines, standards, and frameworks established by the Department of Public Instruction; or
- Instruction on gender identity, sexual activity, or sexuality being included in the curriculum provided in grades kindergarten through fourth grade.

Regarding the final bullet point, parents should be aware that instruction on gender identity, sexual activity, or sexuality is not part of the curriculum provided to students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade, and it would violate Board policy and Pitt County Schools' operating practices and administrative procedures for this instruction of this nature to be given to students in elementary school. For purposes of the final bullet, curriculum includes the standard course of study and support materials, locally developed curriculum, supplemental instruction, and textbooks and other supplementary materials, but does not include responses to student-initiated questions.

After receiving a written concern from a parent, the principal shall schedule and hold a meeting with the parent within five days after the concern was submitted. The principal shall conduct any necessary investigation. If possible, the principal should resolve the concern within seven days after the concern was submitted. If the principal cannot resolve the concern within seven days, the principal shall immediately notify the superintendent or designee. The superintendent or designee shall assist, as needed, in resolving the concern.

If the concern has not been resolved within 15 days after the parent initially submitted the concern, the superintendent or designee shall schedule a board hearing to be conducted pursuant to Pitt County Board of Education Policy 2500 to occur within the next 15 days. If the concern is not resolved 30 days after the parent initially submitted the concern, the board will provide a statement of the reasons for not resolving the concern. If the concern is not resolved within 30 days of initial submission, the parent has the right to pursue additional remedies as provided in Section 115C-76.60(b).

Influenza, HPV, Meningococcal Meningitis, Cervical Cancer, Cervical Dysplasia, & Available Vaccines

Sections 115C-375.4 and 115C-47(51) of the North Carolina General Statutes mandate that schools provide parents with information about **meningitis, influenza, HPV, cervical cancer, cervical dysplasia, and vaccines that can help prevent these conditions** at the beginning of every school year.

Influenza, commonly called “the flu,” is a respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses and can be easily spread to others. Symptoms of the flu include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Other symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea are much more common among children than adults.

There is a vaccine that prevents the flu. It is recommended because the flu can lead to other serious illnesses and even death in young children, older adults, and vulnerable people of all ages. The ideal time to obtain a flu shot is in the fall. Good health habits such as frequent hand washing, avoiding close contact with people who are sick, and covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing may also help prevent the spread of illnesses like the flu.

Meningococcal Meningitis is a form of bacterial meningitis that is a rare, but potentially fatal infection that can cause severe swelling of the fluid around the brain and spinal cord. The disease is spread from person to person through the air or by contact with saliva, usually through close, personal contact with an infected person. Symptoms progress rapidly and may resemble flu. Those can include fever, headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting, confusion, sleepiness, and sensitivity to light. Some people may also develop a rash, mainly on their arms and legs.

A safe and effective vaccine is available to protect against four of the five most common types of meningitis. Studies have shown that certain college students are especially at risk and that a high percentage of cases in college students can be prevented with the vaccination. Presently, state law requires students entering seventh grade or who have reached the age of 12, whichever is sooner, to be vaccinated for meningococcal meningitis. Additionally, state law requires students entering twelfth grade or who have reached the age of 17, whichever is sooner, to receive a booster dose of the meningococcal meningitis vaccine. See pages X-X of this Guide for more information on this vaccination requirement.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a common virus that is spread to another person by skin-to-skin contact in the genital area. Many people get HPV and do not have symptoms but can spread the virus to others. HPV is most common in young women and men who are in their late teens and early 20's. Some types of HPV can infect a woman's cervix and can cause cervical dysplasia which leads to cancer over time if not treated.

The only sure protection against HPV infection is lifelong abstinence or a monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner. However, a new vaccine can now protect females and males (ages 9 to 26) from four major types of HPV, which can lead to cervical cancer and genital warts. The vaccine is given as a series of three shots over six months and is recommended for all 11- and 12-year-old girls and boys and all males and females 13-26 years of age who did not receive it when they were younger.

Information on **Cervical Cancer and Cervical Dysplasia** and their vaccines can be found at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac. Those without internet access may contact a school nurse or the Pitt County Health Department for more information.

If parents wish to obtain additional information about any of these conditions or the vaccinations that help prevent them, please consult your family physician or the Pitt County Department of Public Health for additional. Other resources include:

www.immunize.nc.gov – Immunization Branch, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services

www.cdc.gov/flu – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Flu Home Page

www.cdc.gov/DiseasesConditions/ – CDC (Disease Information)

www.immunizationinfo.net – National Network for Immunization Information

North Carolina Safe Surrender Law

Section 115C-47(52) of the North Carolina General Statutes requires that students in grades 9-12 receive information annually on the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person in accordance with Section 7B-500 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Safe Haven Law: A parent of a newborn baby, up to 7 days old, can leave their unharmed baby with anyone on duty at a hospital, health department, or community health clinic under North Carolina's Safe Haven Law. The parent can also leave the baby with an on-duty law enforcement officer (sheriff or police), social services worker or certified EMS worker (fire station or emergency services station). The baby will get needed medical care and be placed for adoption. The parent can remain anonymous (does not have to give name or other information). The purpose of the law is to save babies and protect parents who do not know how to cope with a new baby.

School Annual Report Card Grade

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-47(58), parents will be notified of the most recent grade of the school their children are attending, as issued by the State Board of Education, if the school received a grade of "D" or "F".

Local Education Agency Report Card

A copy of the Local Agency Report Card required by Section 6311(h)(1) and (2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is available at <https://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/Page/352>.

Moment of Silence Policy

Through its Policy 3330, the Pitt County Board of Education has directed that a moment of silence be observed at the beginning of each day in all schools in the system in order to foster an environment conducive to learning. Policy 3330 can be accessed online (https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=pitt_co#&&hs=1568386) or by requesting a copy from your child's school.