

Dawson County School System

Student Code of Conduct & Discipline Procedures School Year 2020 – 2021



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School Board Policies Relative to Student Behavior & Safe Schools

District Authority

The Dawson County Board of Education establishes policies to govern the behavior of the Board, its employees, and students. District policies are available for public review at the Board of Education office and on the district web page (Click [HERE](#)).

It is the purpose of the Dawson County Board of Education to operate the school system in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students, staff, and visitors who attend its schools. Students are required to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that facilitates a positive and safe learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school in the district. Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16 Unsafe School Choice Option.

Each school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by the policies, regulations, and rules set forth in this Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures. Student conduct is further governed by the rules contained in each school's Student Handbook.

The Code of Conduct shall be made available electronically to each student at the start of the school year and/or upon enrollment. Printed copies will be made available upon request. Translated copies will be made available to the greatest possible extent. A parent or guardian will be required to sign a statement acknowledging receipt of the Code of Conduct. Additionally, the Code of Conduct will be available in each school and classroom.

The Code of Conduct is enforceable during the following times and locations:

- On the way to/from school, at bus stops, on school buses or other vehicles provided for student transportation by the school district
- At school or on school property at any time
- Off school grounds at any school or school-related activity, function, or event, and while traveling to and from such events

In addition, students may be disciplined for any off-campus behavior which occurs en route to or from school, or which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony or its juvenile equivalent, and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process.

Questions about the Code should be addressed to the school administration. Parents and guardians are encouraged to review the Code with their children and to support its enforcement throughout the community. The Code of Conduct covers all grade levels. Some areas are not relevant for certain age groups.

Authority of the Principal

The principal is the leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. Principals are granted authority to enforce this Code of Conduct. In cases of disruptive, disorderly, or dangerous conduct that may not be covered in this Code, the principal is authorized to undertake corrective measures, which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the students and the school. This is provided that such action does not violate law, a school board policy, or procedure.

Teacher Authority

Each teacher is authorized by law to remove from his or her class a student who repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of other students to learn. This would include incidents where a student's behavior is in violation of the student Code of Conduct and the teacher has previously filed a report with the principal or if the teacher determines that such behavior poses an immediate threat to the safety of that student or to other persons. The superintendent and principal fully support the authority of every teacher to remove a student from the classroom under the conditions and procedures outlined in Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-738).

Parental Involvement

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers, and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contact is extremely valuable. Therefore, each school's administrative staff will provide information to parents and guardians about on-going opportunities to communicate with school personnel.

Parents, guardians, and students are invited to participate in the Code of Conduct revision process by making suggestions for improving the Code through the School and/or District Governance Council. Questions about the Code should be addressed with the principal or an assistant principal. The Code of Conduct specifies, within its standards of behavior, various violations that may result in a school staff member's request for a parent or guardian to come to the school for a conference. Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes that are designed to promote positive choices and behavior. The Dawson County Board of Education, along with O.C.G.A §20-2-735, encourages parents and guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties or underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

Chronically Disruptive

Georgia law, O.C.G.A. §20-2-765, mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify by telephone call and by mail to the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem; invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation; and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Georgia law, O.C.G.A. §20-2-766, states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school following a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call and by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference for the purpose of devising a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law authorizes the Board of Education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent or guardian to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference; order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior; or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine not to exceed \$500 on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

School Investigations

Please note, a parent does not have to be informed of a school investigation when interviewing a student. The State Board of Education has rejected the student's claim that parental notice was required before he/she gave any statement to administrators. *M.S. v Clarke Co Board of Education*, Case No. 2002-25; *A.C. v Henry Co Board of Education*, 2002-26. ("Although parents feel they should be notified so they can be involved in the investigation, or take disciplinary action themselves, or to provide counsel to their children, due process does not require such notice.")

Search

If there is reason to believe that a student is in possession of an item that violates the law or school rules, school officials may search that student and his/her personal property. Student vehicles brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, school desks, and other school or personal property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time and without further notice to students or parents/guardians. Given those conditions, students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, totes/purses, lockers, or any vehicle brought on campus. In addition, school administrators are further authorized to use metal detectors and drug/weapon sniffing dogs at school or at any school function or event.

In reference to cell phone searches that are in a school setting, when the initial encounter with the student is based upon reasonable suspicion, the subsequent search of the phone will also be valid and requires no additional justification as long as it is reasonably related to the need of the educator to turn up evidence of the extent to which the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school.

Transfer of Discipline Records

The Dawson County School District will facilitate the transfer of discipline records to any public or private school in which a student is enrolled or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll on a full-time or part-time basis in the school.

Due Process

Process Overview

Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to infringe on any right provided to students pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

Due Process requires, in connection with a suspension of 10 days or more, that the student be given oral or written notice of the charges against them. If the student denies the charges, he/she is given an explanation of the evidence the authorities have and an opportunity to present his/her version. Generally, notice and hearing should precede the student's removal from school, since the hearing may almost immediately follow the misconduct, but if prior notice and hearing are not feasible, as where the student's presence endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, thus justifying immediate removal from school, the necessary notice and hearing should follow as soon as practicable.

Progressive Discipline Procedures

To the extent appropriate to the situation, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official should be in proportion to the severity of the behavior, while taking into consideration the totality of the situation, including the student's age, discipline history, and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to maintain an appropriate learning environment, encourage self-discipline, and to help students substitute behaviors that are consistent with the character traits referenced in state board rule 160-4-2-.33.

When a student's violation of the student Code of Conduct, which repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his or her class, or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn within one school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior, the teacher may file a report with the principal or principal's designee. The report shall not exceed one page and shall describe the behavior. The principal, or principal's designee, shall, within one day of receiving such report, send to the student's parents or guardians a copy of the report, and information regarding how the principal or principal's designee may be contacted.

The principal or the principal's designee shall send written notification to the teacher and to the student's parents or guardians of the student support services being utilized or the disciplinary action taken within one school day and shall make a reasonable attempt to confirm receipt of such written notification by the student's parents or guardians. Written notification shall include information regarding how student's parents or guardians may contact the principal or principal's designee.

The following range of disciplinary actions may be imposed for violations of this Code of Conduct:

- Warning and/or counseling with a school administrator or school counselor
- Loss of privileges
- Time out
- Temporary or permanent removal from class, activity, event, or recess
- Notification of parent/guardian
- Conference with parent/guardian
- Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Saturday school
- Suspension or expulsion from the school bus

- Temporary placement in an alternative education program
- Short-term/Out-of-School Suspension (10 days or less)
- Referral to a tribunal hearing for long-term suspension or expulsion (more than 10 days)
- Referral to law enforcement, district attorney, or juvenile court officials. (Georgia law mandates that certain acts of misconduct be referred to law enforcement, the district attorney, or other public officials. School officials may also report other acts of misconduct as deemed appropriate.)

The maximum punishment that can be imposed by a disciplinary tribunal is permanent expulsion from the school district. However, as in State Board Rule 160-4-8-.15, it is the preferred policy of the board that disruptive students be placed in alternative education settings in lieu of being suspended or expelled.

In the event of a disciplinary tribunal hearing, a parent, guardian, or student may choose not to contest whether the student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be reached, which would include the parent, guardian, or student waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved by a disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy.

Before a student is suspended 10 days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which he/she is charged and allow the student to explain his/her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parent/guardian will be notified, if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence indicates that a law may have been violated or when there is a legal requirement to report the incident.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports/Student Support Processes

The Dawson County Board of Education provides a multi-tiered support framework for identifying and addressing the academic and behavioral needs of students. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of available behavioral support processes to help students resolve such problems. Strategies that may be considered include the following:

- A. Referral to...
 - School Counselor
 - School Social Worker
 - School Nurse
 - Student Support Team
 - Mentoring Program
 - Threat Assessment Team
 - Individual Education Plan Team

- B. Participation in...
 - Peer Mentoring
 - Peer Tutoring
 - Peer Mediation
 - Conflict Resolution
 - Anti-Bullying Program
 - Behavior Specific Support Group or Course
- C. Development and Implementation of an Individualized Chronic Disciplinary and Behavioral Correction Plan

Appeal Process

If a parent believes that his/her child received discipline from an administrator and they are not satisfied with the consequences, the appeal process for a student's discipline is as follows:

- 1st: Contact the school administrator that dealt with the student situation. This is typically the Assistant Principal or the Principal.
- 2nd: Contact the Office of Student Support.
- 3rd: Contact the Office of the School Superintendent.

Important Terms

The terms used in this Code of Conduct are not intended to be limited to the definition of the same terms as they may be used in criminal and other laws of this state.

Absence – Excused: Any absence from school or class CAUSED BY personal illness; serious illness or death in the immediate family; order of a governmental agency or court of law; celebration of a religious holiday; condition that renders attendance impossible or hazardous to health or safety; registration to vote or voting, not to exceed one day; and service as a page of the General Assembly.

Absence – Unexcused: Any absence from school NOT CAUSED BY personal illness; serious illness or death in the immediate family; order of a governmental agency or court of law; celebration of a religious holiday; conditions that renders attendance impossible or hazardous to health or safety; registration to vote or voting, not to exceed one day; and service as a page of the General Assembly.

Assault: Any verbal or physical threat to the well-being, safety, or dignity of a person, to include any threat or attempt to physically harm another person that reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: Threatening language or attempt to strike someone)

Battery: Intentionally causing physical harm or visible bodily harm to another. (Examples: Blackened eyes, swollen lips or other body parts, substantial bruises to body parts)

Detention: Assignment of a student to a specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official as a disciplinary consequence or to make up work missed. Detention may require the student's attendance before school or after school, on Saturday, or a student holiday. Notice of the detention assignment will be given to the student no later than the day before the assignment to provide the student's parent or guardian an opportunity to make arrangement for transportation.

Expulsion: Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current semester.

Fireworks: The term "fireworks" means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible, audible, or malodorous effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and/or tablets or other devices containing an explosive substance.

Gambling: Engaging in a game or contest in which the outcome is dependent upon chance, even if accompanied by some skill, and in which a participant stands to win or lose something of value.

Gang Member: A person who is part of an association of three or more people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and engages, individually or collectively, in illegal behavior.

Gang Related Activity: Any act or exhibition, individual or collective, which communicates gang allegiance or affiliation; and/or would be a criminal act if committed by an adult and is deemed gang related by the principal. Gang related activity includes but is not limited to hand sign flashing; wearing of clothing articles in a certain way or color scheme typical of that worn by known gang members; jewelry, tattoos, graffiti on personal items; vandalism of public or private property; and acts of intimidation, threat, fighting and other forms of violence.

Georgia Compulsory Attendance: O.C.G.A. §20.2.690.1. Mandatory education for children between ages six and 16 (a) Mandatory attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall be required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma. For additional requirements under O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1, please see local school attendance administrators.

Instigating Rule Violations: A student shall not advise, counsel, urge, encourage, incite, cause or attempt to cause any other person to engage in a prohibited act or violate the school's student handbook, this Code of Conduct, or any Dawson County Board of Education policy.

In-School Suspension (ISS): Temporary removal of a student from the regular classroom(s) **FOR AT LEAST HALF A SCHOOL DAY**. The student remains under the direct supervision of school personnel. Direct supervision means school personnel are physically in the same location as students under their supervision. During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities regardless of location. Suspension days end at midnight.

Out-Of-School Suspension (OSS): Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed 10 days (short-term) or for a period greater than 10 days (long-term, which may be imposed only by a disciplinary tribunal). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school campuses and all school-sponsored activities regardless of location. This includes practices and events. Suspension days end at midnight.

Physical Violence: (1) Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another; or (2) intentionally making physical contact, which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or harms were in defense of himself or herself, as provided by Georgia Law Ref. O.C.G.A. §16-3-21, 20-2-751.6.

Private Property: The Dawson County School District and its schools will not be held accountable for lost or stolen private property, and will not investigate thefts of personal property to the extent that the investigation substantially interferes with the educational mission of the school. Personal items brought to school will be at the owner's risk.

Sexual Conduct and Criminal Penalties: The General Assembly of Georgia requires that this Code of Conduct include language encouraging parents and guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which also includes repeated remarks of a demeaning nature, demeaning jokes, stories, or actions. O.C.G.A. §20-2-735 encourages parents and guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

Threats of Violence: The Dawson County School District will not tolerate threats of violence toward persons or property, whether the threat is made in seriousness or in jest. Any comment, statement, threat, situation, or condition that indicates the possibility of becoming a life-threatening situation is a serious matter and will be investigated and dealt with accordingly.

Tribunal: A due process disciplinary hearing before a three-person tribunal to hear charges made against a student in any grade K-12 who is alleged to have violated the Code of Conduct. Disciplinary tribunal hearings are held following any instance of an alleged violation of the student Code of Conduct if the principal recommends a suspension or expulsion of a student longer than 10 days or following an alleged assault or battery upon any school system employee, if that employee requests a hearing. The objective of the hearing is to determine if the student did or did not violate the Code of Conduct, and if so, to determine appropriate disciplinary action.

Tribunal Waiver Agreement: An agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of an actual hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. If the tribunal accepts the agreement as its decision, the agreement becomes a disciplinary order of the school system.

Truant: Any student subject to the state compulsory attendance law, who during the school calendar year accumulates more than 5 days of unexcused absences. School days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy. Note: Cases of truancy and excessive excused absenteeism will be handled in accordance with the protocol that was developed by the county-wide Student Attendance Protocol Committee.

Violation of Responsible Use Guidelines:

Violation of the Responsible Use Guidelines for computer hardware, software, network and Internet access, to include any unauthorized entry into a computer network secured site. The act of entering or attempting to enter a computer network secured site (hacking) is a very serious offense that warrants a very serious consequence that may include permanent expulsion from the school system and confiscation of technology being used inappropriately if an incident occurs. Access is a privilege, not a right, and all students are expected to treat this learning tool with respect.

Weapons: Any object that is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well-being. Weapons may include but are not limited to:

1. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. §16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.

2. Any hazardous object, as stated in O.C.G.A. §20-2-751, which includes “any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade or two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser as defined in subsection (a) of Code section 16-11-106. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.”

Students who possess any weapon in section 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. The superintendent shall have the authority to, either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing, reduce the mandated one-year expulsion under circumstances where the one-year expulsion appears excessive to the superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate consequences. Finally, in any tribunal decision appealed to the Board of Education, the Board may reduce the mandated consequences, but shall consider whether the superintendent and/or tribunal considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction.

Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in section 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the school Code of Conduct.

No handcuffs are allowed on campus, or other school property, other than those held by law enforcement.

School Related Georgia Laws

Bullying

Conduct such as habitually cruel behavior meant to intimidate or hurt another person physically or emotionally, which may be construed as bullying is prohibited in all grade levels. Board policy JCDAAG states that upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal that a student in grades 6 – 12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative education program. Bullying typically includes a desire to hurt, hurtful action, power imbalance, an unjust use of power, an evident enjoyment by the aggressor, sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim, and repetition.

Legal Definition O.C.G.A. §20-2-751.4: “As used in this Code section, the term ‘bullying’ means an act that is:

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

The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system. The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students’ or school personnel’s person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose. For purposes of this Code Section, electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.”

Compulsory Attendance

O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1 requires any person in this state who has control of a child between the ages of 6 and 16 to enroll and send that child to school, including public, private, and home schooling. If a parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the child *causes* the child's absence, then that person, and not the child, is in violation of this statute. Such a violation is a misdemeanor and carries a penalty of up to \$100 fine and up to 30 days in jail for each violation. The law specifies that *each day's absence* constitutes a separate offense. Violators will be prosecuted.

For the purposes of this notice, the term "parent" includes any adult who has charge and control over the child, including a biological, adoptive, foster, stepparent, guardian, or any other person who has primary responsibility for the child's welfare. In this regard, two parents residing in the same household with the child are equally responsible for the child's attendance at school. Older children share the responsibility for their school attendance with supervising adults and are subject to adjudication in Dawson County Juvenile Court as an unruly child for violation of this statute. A complaint will be filed in the Juvenile Court of Dawson County against a child aged 10 to 15 who is habitually and without justification truant from school. For the purposes of determining the pursuit of court complaints, truancy is defined as five or more days of unexcused absence from school. Please note that parents may themselves choose to file truancy complaints prior to any complaint made by the school system. If a student is 16 or older, any complaints regarding truancy must be filed by the parents.

A child may be placed on probation for truancy by the Juvenile Court Judge upon admission or determination of guilt (adjudication) to a truancy charge. This probation may last for up to two years and may include specific conditions, including, but not limited to, a curfew, community service, participation in a truancy reduction program or counseling, and/or monetary fines. The District Attorney and/or the Department of Juvenile Justice may also request a protective order to ensure that the parent(s) actively assist in the child's compliance with conditions of probation, including attendance in school. Further unexcused absences from school by the youth may result in immediate sanction by the Department of Juvenile Justice, including a possible violation of probation, which may result in more severe penalties, up to and including detention. If you have any questions regarding the information included in this document, please contact the Principal of your child's school or the School Social Worker.

Disrupting Public School

It shall be unlawful for any person to disrupt or interfere with the operation of any public school, public school bus, or public-school bus stop as designated by local school boards of education. Any person violating this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. Ref. O.C.G.A. §20-2-1181

Driver's License

Effective July 1, 2015, schools will certify that a student is enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school to be eligible for a driver's license or learner's permit. The Certificate of Enrollment form will replace the Certificate of Attendance and the Certificate of Eligibility for Restoration of Driving Privileges forms.

Drug Use

"It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance or marijuana in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, secondary school, or school board used for elementary or secondary education. Any person who violates or conspires to violate...this Code section shall be guilty of a felony..." (O.C.G.A. §16-13-32.4)

Loitering in School Safety Zone

It is unlawful for any person to remain upon the premises or within the school safety zone of any public school when that person does not have a legitimate need or cause to be present. The principal has the authority to exercise control over the buildings and grounds to prohibit any person who does not have a legitimate need or cause to be present thereon from loitering on the premises. The principal shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency to prohibit loitering. If a person refuses to remove himself from the premises if requested to do so by the principal or designee, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. (O.C.G.A. §20-2-1180)

Non-Student Conduct on School Premises and Buses

"Any parent, guardian, or person other than a student at the public school in question who has been advised that minor children are present and who continues to upbraid, insult or abuse any public school teacher, public school administrator, or public school bus driver in the presence and hearing of a pupil while on the premises of any public school or public school bus may be ordered by any of the above-designated personnel to leave the school premises or school bus, and upon failure to do so such person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof ,shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$500." (O.C.G.A. §20-2-1182)

Required Reporting

Any teacher or other person employed at any public or private elementary or secondary school who has reasonable cause to believe that a student at that school has committed upon school property or at any school function any act prohibited by law relative to aggravated assault if a firearm is involved; aggravated battery; sexual offenses; carrying deadly weapons at public gatherings; carrying a weapon on school property, at school functions or in a school safety zone; or possession and other activities regarding marijuana and controlled substances, shall immediately

report the act and the name of the student to the principal or his/her designee. Any principal who receives a report or has knowledge of any acts prohibited by these laws and has reasonable cause to believe the validity of the act(s) shall immediately notify the appropriate school system superintendent and law enforcement if a student possesses a firearm, incendiary device, or other dangerous weapon; or if the student is involved in an assault using a hazardous object. (O.C.G.A. §20-2-1184)

Weapon Possession

Possession of deadly weapons on school property is punishable by law. "...it shall be unlawful for any person to carry or to possess or have under such person's control while within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school any weapon or explosive compound...Any person who violates this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, by imprisonment for not less than two nor more than ten years, or both...As used in this code section..." "Weapon means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, churiken, or fighting chain, or any disc. Of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind, and any stun gun or taser..." (O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1)

School Buses

Message to Parents and Students

Riding the school bus is a privilege granted to students as a service of the Dawson County School System. To help us protect them, students are expected to follow the rules set forth in the Code of Conduct and this special School Bus Code of Conduct while walking to/from the school bus stop, waiting at the school bus stop, and riding on the school bus. Students are expected to be safe, orderly, and respectful at all times. Failures to act accordingly may result in suspension or expulsion from the bus. Concerns or issues pertaining to transportation service should be addressed according to the district's operational procedures found on the website.

Driver Authority

The school bus driver is authorized to give directions, assign seats, and to prohibit any item from the bus that may threaten the safety or welfare of any person. The driver's actions are subject to review by the Director of Transportation.

Should a violation of the Code of Conduct occur on the bus, the bus driver will report the specific problem(s) in writing to the principal or principal's designee. Within one day of receipt of the discipline report, the administrator will investigate the problem and issue consequences, if appropriate. A copy of the referral form will be forwarded to the parent, the bus driver, and the Transportation Department.

Violations and Possible Consequences

Violations of the Code of Conduct may include consequences such as assigned seating, parental conferencing, a behavior contract, and suspension from riding the bus for an extended period of time. Students who are suspended from the bus are suspended from all buses. Any unserved suspension days will carry over into the next school year.

State Reportable Discipline Incidents

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Alcohol (01)	Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, distribution, possession (actual or attempted), use, or under the influence of beverages or substances represented as alcohol	Unintentional possession of alcohol	Under the influence of alcohol without possession	Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, distribution, possession (actual or attempted), use, or under the influence of beverages or substances represented as alcohol.
Arson (02)	Unlawful and intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary devices (NOTE: Possession of fireworks or incendiary devices must be reported as <i>Possession of Unapproved Items</i> . USE of such items should be reported as Arson.)	N/A	Attempt to commit arson or use of matches, lighters or incendiary devices at school; includes but not limited to the use of fireworks	Intentional damage as a result of arson-related activity or the use of an incendiary device
Battery (03)	Intentional touching or striking of another person to intentionally cause bodily harm (Note: The difference between battery & fighting is that fighting involves mutual participation.)	Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in no bodily injuries	Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in mild or moderate bodily injuries	Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack on school personnel
Breaking & Entering – Burglary (04)	Unlawful or unauthorized forceful entry into a school building or vehicle (with or without intent to commit theft)	N/A	N/A	See definition column

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Computer Trespass (05)	Use of a school computer for anything other than instructional purposes or unauthorized use of a computer or computer network with the intention of deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging, or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program(s), or data	N/A	Unauthorized use of school computer for anything other than instructional purposes	Unauthorized use of a computer or computer network with the intention of deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging, obtaining confidential information or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program(s), or data; includes disclosure of a number, code, password, or other means of access to school computers or the school system computer network without proper authorization
Disorderly Conduct (06)	Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff or others (includes disruptive behavior on school buses)	Creating or contributing to a moderate disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment but does not pose a threat to the health or safety of others	Creating or contributing to a severe disturbance that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school environment but does not pose a threat to the health or safety of others; may represent a repeat action	Creating or contributing to a severe disturbance that substantially disrupts the school environment or poses a threat to the health and safety of others (May be used for chronically disruptive)
Inciting	Inciting, advising, or counseling others to engage in prohibited acts	Unintentional possession of prescribed or over-the-counter medication. Does not include the possession of narcotics or any illegal drugs	Any medication prescribed to a student or purchased over-the-counter and not brought to the office upon arrival to school	Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics
Drugs, Except Alcohol and Tobacco (07)	Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any illegal or controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics; or any medication prescribed to a student or purchased over-the-counter and not brought to the office upon arrival to school			

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fighting (08)	Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender and intent to harm (NOTE: Students who plead self-defense are responsible for proving they fought in self-defense.)	A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in no bodily injuries	A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in mild or moderate bodily injuries (Ex. Mild or moderate injuries including, but not limited to scratches, bloody noses, bruises, black eyes, and other marks on the body)	A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in severe bodily injuries (Ex. Repeated physical confrontations resulting in severe injuries that require medical attention)
Homicide (09)	Killing of one human being by another	N/A	N/A	Killing of a human being
Kidnapping (10)	The unlawful and forceful abduction, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will	N/A	N/A	See definition column
Larceny/Theft (11)	The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity (e.g., school) without threat, violence or bodily harm (NOTE: Theft <\$25 is not state reportable.)	The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value between \$25 and \$100	The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value between \$100 and \$250	The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a value exceeding \$250
Motor Vehicle Theft (12)	Theft or attempted theft of any motor vehicle	N/A	N/A	See definition column
Robbery (13)	The taking of, or attempting to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear	N/A	Robbery without the use of a weapon	Robbery with the use of a weapon

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Sexual Battery (14)	Intentionally making physical contact with the intimate parts of the body of another person without the consent of that person	N/A	N/A	See definition column
Sexual Harassment (15)	Non-physical and unwelcome sexual advances, lewd gestures or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature; requests for sexual favors; gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment	Comments that perpetuate gender stereotypes or suggestive jokes that are not directed towards specific individuals	Comments that perpetuate gender stereotypes, suggestive jokes or lewd gestures that are directed towards specific individuals or group of individuals	Physical or non-physical sexual advances; requests for sexual favors Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on sexual harassment ≥ 3 times during the same school year
Sex Offenses (16)	Unlawful sexual behavior, sexual contact without force or threat of force, or possession of sexually explicit images; can be consensual	Inappropriate sexually-based physical contact including but not limited to public groping, inappropriate bodily contact, or any other sexual contact not covered in levels 2 or 3	Inappropriate sexually-based behavior including but not limited to sexting, lewd behavior, possession of pornographic materials; simulated sex acts	Engaging in sexual activities on school grounds or during school activities
Threat/Intimidation (17) Assault	Any threat through written or verbal language or act which creates a fear of harm and/or conveys a serious expression of intent to harm or violence without displaying a weapon and without subjecting the victim to actual physical attack The use or threatened use of force or violence to coerce or intimidate	N/A	Physical, verbal, or electronic threat which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack	School-wide physical, verbal or electronic threat, which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Tobacco (18)	Possession, use, distribution, or sale of tobacco products on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, and on transportation to and from school	Unintentional possession of tobacco products	Use of or knowledgeable possession of tobacco products	Distribution and/or selling of tobacco products
Trespassing (19)	Entering or remaining on a public, school campus or school board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry	N/A	See definition column	See definition + Refusing to leave school grounds after a request from school personnel has been made
Vandalism (20)	The willful and/or malicious act committed during or after school hours that marks, destroys, damages, alters, or defaces school, public, or private property without consent	N/A	Participating in the minor destruction, damage or defacement of school property or private property without permission	Participating in the willful/malicious destruction, damage or defacement of school property or private property without permission
Weapons – Knife (22)	The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife	Unintentional possession of a knife or knife-like item without intent to harm or intimidate	Intentional possession of a knife or knife-like item without intent to harm or intimidate	Intentional possession, use or intention to use a knife or knife-like item with the intent to harm or intimidate
Weapons – Other (23)	The possession, use, or intention to use any instrument or object that is used or intended to be used in a manner that may inflict bodily harm (does not include knives or firearms)	N/A	Unintentional possession of a weapon, other than a knife or firearm, or simile of a weapon that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm	Intentional possession and/or use of any weapon, other than a knife or firearm, in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>Other Incident for a State-Reported Discipline Action (24)</p>	<p>Any other discipline incident for which a student is administered a consequence of detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, expelled, suspended for riding the bus, assigned to an alternative school, referred to a court or juvenile system authorities, or removed from class at the teacher request (pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-738)</p>	<p>See definition column</p>	<p>Used for students who display a pattern of violating local school policies not listed among the state incident types</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Off-Campus</p>	<p>Off-campus behavior which could result in criminal charges with a felony and makes continued presence at school a potential danger to persons, property at school, or disrupts the educational process</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a handgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear</p>
<p>Weapons – Handgun (25)</p>	<p>Possession of a firearm that has a short stock and is designed to be held and fired by the use of a single hand; and any combination of parts from which a firearm described above can be assembled (pursuant to Gun-Free Schools Act-Public Law 107-110, Section 4141) (NOTE: Does not apply to toy, cap, bb, or pellet guns)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a handgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear</p>

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>Weapons – Rifle/Shotgun (26)</p>	<p>The term <i>rifle</i> means a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire only a single projectile through a rifled bore for each single pull of the trigger. The term <i>shotgun</i> a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire through a smooth bore either a number of ball shot or a single projectile for each single pull of the trigger. (pursuant to Gun-Free Schools Act-Public Law 107-110, Section 4141)</p>	N/A	N/A	<p>Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a rifle or shotgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm</p>
<p>Serious Bodily Injury (27)</p>	<p>The term <i>serious bodily injury</i> means bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.</p>	N/A	N/A	<p>Infliction of <i>bodily harm</i> that dismembers, disfigures, causes permanent loss of a limb or function of an organ and causes substantial risk of death</p>

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>Other Firearms (28)</p>	<p>Firearms other than handguns, rifles, or shotguns as defined in 18 USC 921. Includes any weapon (including starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive; the frame or receiver of any weapon described above; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device, which includes any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas (i.e. bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge more than 4 ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge or more than ¼ ounce, mine, or similar device); any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of any explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than ½ inch in diameter; any combination or parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>See definition column</p>
<p>Bullying (29)</p>	<p>Behavior, which may include written, verbal, physical acts, or through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology occurring on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to have the effect of substantially interfering with the education of students, threatening the educational environment, or causing substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm</p>	<p>First Offense of bullying as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4</p>	<p>Second Offense of bullying as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4</p>	<p>Repeated acts as defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4, occurring on school property or school possession that is a willful attempt or threat to inflict injury, or apparent means to do so, any display of force that puts victim at fear of harm, any written, verbal or physical act that threatens, harasses, or intimidates; causes another person physical harm; interferes with the education of students; so severe and pervasive intimidated or threatens educational environment</p>

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Other – Attendance Related (30)	Repeated or excessive unexcused absences or tardiness; including failure to report to class, skipping class, leaving school without authorization, or failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions	See definition column	N/A	N/A
Other – Dress Code Violation (31)	Violation of school dress code that includes standards for appropriate school attire	Non-invasive and non-suggestive clothing, jewelry, book bags or other articles of personal appearance	Invasive or suggestive clothing, jewelry, book bags or other articles of personal appearance	Violation of school dress code \geq 3 times during the same school year
Academic Dishonesty (32)	Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assignments or exams	Intentional receiving or providing of unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assessments, and assignments	Intentional plagiarism or cheating on a minor classroom assignment or project	Intentional plagiarism or cheating on a major exam, statewide assessment or project or the falsification of school records (including forgery)
Other – Student Incivility (33)	Insubordination or disrespect to staff members or other students or persons attending schoolwide functions; includes but is not limited to refusal to follow school staff members instructions, use of vulgar or inappropriate language, and misrepresentation of the truth Falsifying, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teachers, administrator, or other school employee toward a student. Such false reporting may be punishable by law.	Failure to comply with instructions or the inadvertent use of inappropriate language	Blatant insubordination or the use of inappropriate language directed towards school staff or peers; intentional misrepresentation of the truth	Blatant and repeated insubordination or intentional misrepresentation of the truth
False Reporting				

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Other – Possession of Unapproved Items (34)	The use or possession of any unauthorized item disruptive to the school environment	The possession of any unauthorized item (Does not include fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous)	The use of any unauthorized item (i.e. toys, mobile devices, or gadgets) (Does not include fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous)	The use or possession of unauthorized items including but not limited to toy guns or other items that can be construed as dangerous or harmful to the learning environment (Includes the possession of matches, lighters, incendiary devices or fireworks). May be used for repeated offenses of possession of unapproved items
Gang-Related (35)	Any group of three or more students with a common name or common identifying signs, symbols, tattoos, graffiti, or attire which engage in criminal gang activity (O.C.G.A. § 16-15-3)	N/A	Wearing or possessing gang-related apparel; communicating either verbally or non-verbally to convey membership or affiliation with a gang	The solicitation of others for gang-membership, the defacing of school or personal property with gang-related symbols or slogans, threatening or intimidating on behalf of a gang, the requirement or payment for protection or insurance through a gang. May be used for repeated offenses related to gang activity.
Repeated Offenses (36) Chronically Disruptive O.C.G.A. § 20-2-765.766	A collection of offenses not previously assigned a state reportable action that occurs on a single or across multiple school days that leads to a state reportable disciplinary action. A pattern of intentionally, willfully, persistently, violating the Code of Conduct or exhibiting behaviors, which interfere with the learning process of other students and which are likely to recur.	Collection of minor incidents (Note: Follow procedures as outlined in § 20-2-765,766)	Collection of moderate incidents (Note: Follow procedures as outlined in § 20-2-765,766)	Collection of severe incidents (Note: Follow procedures as outlined in § 20-2-765,766)

Incident	Definition	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Other Non-Disciplinary Incident (40)	Physical Restraint (NOTE: This incident is typically used when a student is physically restrained by an adult.)	See definition column	See definition column	See definition column
Electronic Smoking Device (42)	Any device used to deliver nicotine or any other substance intended for human consumption that may be used by a person to simulate smoking through inhalation of vapor or aerosol from the device Such devices include those manufactured, distributed, marketed or sold as an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, electronic hookah, vape pen, electronic nicotine delivery system or any cartridge or other component of the device or related product	Unintentional possession of an electronic smoking device	Use or knowledgeable possession of an electronic smoking device	The distribution and/or selling of electronic smoking devices. A repeat of offenses \geq 3 times during the same school year.
Violence Against a Teacher (44)	Intentional physical attack against a teacher with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack against a teacher (NOTE: Violence against other school personnel should be reported as Battery (03)-Level 3.)	N/A	N/A	See definition column