

# WESTSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Student Handbook 2023-2024



### PRINCIPAL

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## School Specific Information

### Arrival/Dismissal:

#### Arrival:

Westside Middle School opens at 8:30am. Bus and car riders will be allowed into the building at that time. Students will obtain breakfast from the cafeteria if desired and then report directly to their assigned homebase. Students arriving after 9:00am are considered tardy and are required to check-in at the front office in Building A.

#### Dismissal:

Bus and car riders are dismissed at approximately 4:00pm. Walkers will be dismissed when the car rider lane is clear of traffic. Students should not remain on campus after 4:15pm without a specific purpose such as athletics, tutoring, etc. The front office is covered until 4:15pm daily; phone messages are taken from 8:00am until 4:00pm. Students cannot be checked out after 3:45 pm.

*Note: Students arriving before 8:30am and remaining on campus after 4:15pm will not be supervised, unless they are on campus for an athletic/extracurricular event or with a teacher and/or administration.*

**Absences:** Students are expected to attend school on a regular basis. A written note from the parents explaining the reason for any absence must be brought to the homebase teacher upon returning to school. The State Board of Education recognizes absences as excused due to personal illness, illness or death in the immediate family, for religious services, or when weather conditions make it impossible to attend school. A maximum five (5) school days per school year may be excused for students whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard in order for the student to visit with his/her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent or legal guardian's deployment overseas to a combat zone or combat support posting or during the parent or guardian's leave from such deployment.

We will be in contact regarding absences the following ways:

- After 3 Absences-Parents will be contacted by phone
- After 5 Absences-Parents will be contacted by phone and letter
- After 10+ Absences-Parents will be contacted by letter and a parent conference will be held

To facilitate student success, early checkouts are discouraged. Students who are present for at least one-half of the instructional day or three full periods, whichever is greater, shall be counted present for perfect attendance purposes. The accumulation of five (5) or more partial attendance days, in any combination of tardies and early dismissals, within a 9-week grading period shall disqualify a student from perfect attendance recognition. Tardies and early dismissals are both considered partial attendance and shall be treated in a similar manner. A student who has not missed a day of school for any reason earns perfect attendance. Students who do not attend school during a major part of the day may not attend school functions in the afternoon or evening.

**Assignments During Absences:** In the case of extended absences, parents should call and inform the front office staff, and the teachers will gather and provide missed assignments within 24 hours via Microsoft Teams, or with paper copies upon a student's return if requested.

**Check-ins/Check-outs:** Parents or guardians must check students in and out in the front office personally. If there is any change in the custodial status, the school must be notified in writing, and proof is required. For safety reasons, students may not leave the school campus during the school day with any person other than those listed. Proof of identification is required at the time of checkout in order for the school to insure the well-being of each student.

For parents to update any information such as phone numbers, email, health issues, siblings, emergency contact, nicknames they will go to the family update website. Please see the link below. Addresses cannot be updated through his website. Parent/Guardians must contact the individual school(s) and provide a new proof of residency for address change. <https://familyupdate.barrow.k12.ga.us/login>

**Clubs and Organizations:** Clubs and organizations are available at Westside Middle School for student participation. The clubs and organizations that are available are listed below along with the purpose, faculty advisor and a description of past or planned activities. If you **DO NOT WANT** your child to participate in one of these clubs or organizations you must notify the principal in writing by completing the clubs and organizations form signature letter. You may obtain a policy signature letter from the school office, or by clicking [HERE](#). If a club or organization not listed below is started during the school year, students will have to have parental permission prior to participation.

Club or Organization Name	Purpose	Faculty Advisor	Activities
Art Club	Art club provides enrichment opportunities in the visual arts in a relaxed environment. In depth study of different media, with a focus on process and experimentation, gives students a more rich experience in the arts. Both individual growth and collaboration are encouraged.	Troy Authement	Art club activities this year will include painting, mixed media art, printmaking, and sound art.
Beta Club	The purpose of Beta Club is to promote the ideals of academic achievement, character, leadership and service among elementary and secondary school students.	Cody Williams	
Future Farmers of America (FFA)	FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.	Mary Claire Payne	FFA Meetings, career development events, leadership development events, state convention, summer leadership camp
Academic Bowl	Academic Bowl is a quiz show style competition in which students buzz in to answer questions from a variety of academic disciplines, including literature, history, art, science, mathematics, and geography. It showcases the achievements of students and encourages them to learn the skills of sportsmanship and teamwork. It also introduces students to an extracurricular they can continue pursuing through high school and into college.	Jenna Riddle	Practice each week and several NAQT Competitions on some Saturdays throughout the year
Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl	The purpose of the bowl is to encourage the love of reading as well as teach & promote team building skills.	Megan Ryall	The students will read from a list of ten selected books for the reading bowl. The team members will read both independently and with Mrs. Ryall during their lunch time as well as any other agreed upon time. The students will create question/answer lists for the books they read and will share them with Mrs. Ryall. The question/answer database will be used to practice for the reading bowl

			competition. We will attend the bowl in January.
Student Council	To learn key leadership skills that increase communication between students and staff.	Valerie Lancaster	Meetings weekly to learn leadership skills, red ribbon week planning and promotion, Christmas/Valentines grams, teacher appreciation planning and promotion, other activities to be determined by the club members.
Yearbook Club	Our purpose is to provide the school with a yearbook that reflects the events and lives of our students, staff and the events of our school during that given year.	Joanna Moore/Lynn Miller	Students will learn to be photographers, graphic designers, and marketing planners throughout the school year. Activities include: compiling pictures of the people and events of our year, designing yearbook pages, writing articles, editing, and creating marketing materials and events.

**Hospital/Homebound:** Please contact your child’s counselor if your student needs to be out of school for an extended period due to injury or illness. Our counselors are:

- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Bonnie Spencer
- 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Gary Wood

**Makeup Assignments:** Students are expected to make up all classwork missed due to absences. Students must contact the teacher immediately upon their return to school to make arrangements for making up missed work.

**Skipping:** Skipping school or class will result in disciplinary action.

**Tardies:** Students should arrive at school on time. All tardy students must be checked in by an adult in the front office before they report to homebase or any class.

**Dance and Athletic Event Expectations:** Only **current** Westside Middle School students may attend dances. Students who are counted absent from school on the day of a dance or ball game, are in Alternative School, or those suspended in or out of school may not attend on that day. Students may be restricted from the dance or other activities for disciplinary reasons. The school will not provide supervision for students after regular dismissal prior to ballgames.

- Dances are held from 4:30pm-6:00pm. The dress code for after-school dances is the same as for the school day, unless stated otherwise
- Football games begin approximately at 5:30pm and typically end about 7:00pm.
- Basketball games begin at 5:00pm(Girls) and end around 7:0pm.
- Admission costs:
  - ☞ After-school dances: \$5.00
  - ☞ Special events: prices may vary
  - ☞ Athletic Events:
    - Individuals 5 years and younger: Free
    - Individuals 5 years and older: \$5.00
    - Families of 4+: \$20.00
    - BCSS Employees can attend BCSS home games free of charge. Out of county games are subject to charge.
- Concessions will be sold at dances and athletic events.
- Students must have a ride at 6:00pm sharp for dances and no later than 7:00pm for athletic events as chaperones have family obligations and can stay only a limited time after dance/games ends. Those students not picked up at a reasonable time may lose dance/game privileges in the future. Dances and athletic events are optional activities and students, and their families should make transportation arrangements in advance of a dance/game day.
- The BCSS Student Code of Conduct applies to all extra-curricular activities, including dances.

- There is always a law enforcement officer on duty at dances and ball games.

## Dress Code

- Dress code checks will occur during homebase daily. Students found to be in violation of the dress code will be placed in ISS unless the violation can be remedied. Upon a student's third dress code violation, they will receive a day of ISS.
- Dress Code Violation Reporting:
- Homebase teachers will perform dress code checks each morning and students in violation of the dress code will be referred to the administration via a Microsoft form according to grade level; if there is an extreme dress code violation, the front office will be notified.
- Student Dress Code:
  - Any clothing, hairstyle, jewelry, chains, or attire that is distracting or causes a disruption or constitutes a safety issue will not be permitted at school.
  - Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be fingertip length.
  - All shirts, dresses, and blouses must have moderate sleeves.
  - Clothing such as skirts, pants, trousers, etc., must be worn at the waist. Clothing shall not be poorly fitted or oversized or extremely baggy. Clothing that exposes underclothing or impedes walking will not be permitted.
  - Clothing and/or jewelry, which advertises or displays any insignia of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco is not permitted.
  - Clothing and/or jewelry with words or symbols which are offensive, insulting, embarrassing, that expose skin, sexually suggestive, obscene, gang-related, or promote violence, terrorism, or abusive behavior will not be permitted at school.
  - Clothing of any kind that distracts by exposing or accentuating the body, such as jeans with holes that expose skin, see-through garments, halter or tube tops, backless dresses, muscle shirts, bare midriff outfits, or shirts, blouses, etc., that are tied at or may rise above the waist will not be permitted at school.
  - Sunglasses, headphones/earbuds, caps, hats, and other head-coverings such as bandanas and hoods will not be worn inside the school building.
  - Blankets may not be worn by students throughout the school day.
  - Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times during the school day.
  - Pajama-type clothing will not be permitted at school. This includes, but is not limited to: pajama pants, pajama tops, robes, one-piece pajamas, bedroom slippers, etc.

**Dress Code Discretionary Statement:** The Principals/Site Administrators have the authority to interpret the dress code and make a case-by-case determination for appropriateness of dress and appearance, which is or is not covered in these dress code standards. Principals/Site Administrators may make occasional, school-wide exceptions to these standards for such events as "hat days" or "spirit days."

**Cell Phones/Electronic Devices:** Students with cell phones or other electronic devices (such as AirPods, smart watches, MP3s, electronic games, laser pointers, Kindles, tablets, laptops, etc.) out and in use at inappropriate times, or without teacher permission, will be instructed by the teacher to put away the device. Depending on the response of the student to the teacher's request, the teacher may submit a PBIS step and/or notify administration due to insubordination. **Administration** reserves the right to confiscate the device until the end of the school day if deemed appropriate. The device can be returned at the end of the school day, at the discretion of administration.

If Administration determines that a student has used a cell phone inappropriately at school, or at a school-sponsored activity, that student will lose the privilege to have a cell phone at school for a designated period. Please note that we do recognize that many parents wish to have cell phone access to their children during

after school hours or extracurricular activities. In cases in which a student has lost cell phone privileges, the student will be permitted to turn their phone in to the front office daily. If there is a need to contact a student during a family emergency, the front office may be called to gain access to the student.

**An excerpt from Dr. McMichael's Discipline Letter, dated March 21, 2022:**

Invading another person's privacy by use of a cell phone, filming a student having a medical emergency or other students engaged in a fight or act of violence with a cell phone is never an approved use of cell phones at school and distributing any such video of a fight or act of violence will result in suspension with the option to attend the Alternative Education Program for at least a semester as well as the loss of "smart" cell phone (including smart watches) privileges at school for the rest of the student's time in the Barrow County School System. Appropriate legal charges may also may be filed on students who post such videos to social media or otherwise distribute them.

**Eligibility for Athletics & Competitions:** State Board Policy IDE regulates activities that occur during the school year. The year is defined as August 1 through the end of the school year for students. The policy does not cover activities occurring from the end of school until August 1. No pressure can be applied for a student to participate in summer activities as a condition for making a team or program during the school year. Competitive activities include all individual and team sports, cheerleading, and academic teams. They do not include band, field trips, homework, or occasional work required outside the school day for a scheduled class. Students participating in competitive interscholastic activities must have passing grades in at least 5 out of the 6 instructional segments of the semester immediately preceding participation, including summer school, to be eligible. Failure to meet these criteria will result in a period (one semester) of ineligibility following the student's failure to meet eligibility requirements.

- € Students who are ineligible cannot dress out or practice for a competitive interscholastic group or program. We encourage participation in interscholastic activities by both boys and girls. To represent our school and community is not a duty but an honor, and certain policies must be followed by every athlete to have a successful program.
- € To participate a student:
  - Must meet eligibility requirements(Must pass 5 out of 6 classes/Not fail 2 or more classes).
  - Must be an example for everyone and show leadership, a good attitude, and sportsmanship.
  - Must demonstrate appropriate behavior in and out of school to be a part of the team.
  - Must carry school insurance or a policy from home (for athletes).
  - Must have a current physical examination on file on Dragonfly(for athletes).
  - Must attend school before 12:30pm on the day of the activity to participate.
- € Athletic fee per sport:
  - Basketball/Volleyball - \$75
  - Cross Country/Track and Field - \$50
  - Cheerleading (Basketball) - \$25 + Purchase own uniform
- € Athletic Rules and Regulations:
  - € Students who turn 15 years old before May 1 of the preceding school year, are ineligible for participation. A seventh-grade student that turns 14 before May 1 of the preceding school year is ineligible for participation on the seventh-grade team. However, a seventh-grade student that is ineligible age can play on the eighth-grade team; however, they will be ineligible for participation in Middle School during their eighth-grade year.
  - € A student has two semesters per grade level and six semesters in total of eligibility from the date of entry in 6th grade to be eligible for PAC IX competition.
  - € A student is not considered to have entered the 6th grade when middle school level courses are taken if the student is regularly enrolled in a school in a grade below the sixth grade.
  - € The provisions of the two-semester rule can only be waived in the case of an individual student by the PAC IX Executive Committee.
  - € All students must pass five subjects the semester prior to participation to be eligible; however, for schools offering courses with year-long grading, the second semester grade will be the grade given for the entire course and shall include the end-of-course test grade.

- ⊘ A student may play on one team and only one team during participation in that sport, except when that sport is not offered for his or her grade level.
- ⊘ Sixth graders are eligible to participate as players.
  - 6th graders will be allowed to participate in all sports except football. However, the discretion of 6th grade participation will be determined by the Local Board of Education of each participating school.
- ⊘ Each sport from each school must submit their roster at the beginning of the season, and this roster should be the same at that time of that tournament. This should include additions or substitutions made and approved by the league.
- ⊘ Any additions to a roster after the start of a season must be disclosed to the league with explanation and approved by majority vote.

**Emergency Drills:** Fire and/or tornado drills are held on a monthly basis throughout the school year. Safety during a real emergency dictates that students take these drills very seriously. Students must follow their teacher's instructions and move to designated areas as quickly and quietly as possible. These areas and procedures are posted and fully explained to students by their teachers. Students must not talk, run or push. A signal bell will be given for returning to class. Behavior that interferes with the emergency drills will result in disciplinary action being taken.

**Food/Drink/Gum:** Food is not allowed in classrooms unless the classroom teacher has given permission. Only water in clear water bottles will be allowed at school. Gum is NOT allowed.

**Grading System:** Numerical grades are used for all subjects. Comments on conduct may be made in appropriate circumstances. The current grading scale is as follows: A=100-90 B=89-80 C=79-70 F=below 70

### **Gradebook Categories**

#### All MS Courses (except the 4 HS courses)

- Daily Work – 10% (classwork, homework, and other smaller assignments)
- Quizzes – 30% (quizzes and other larger classwork assignments)
- Major Grades – 60% (tests, essays, projects)

#### Honors Physical Science

- Tests: 45%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Labs: 10%
- Classwork/homework: 10%
- Midterm: 5%
- Final Exam: 20%

#### Honors Algebra 1

- Summative (tests) 55%
- Formative (quiz, other) 17%
- Midterm 8%
- EOC 20%

**Head lice:** The Barrow County Board of Education has adopted a procedure regarding head lice. Please visit the link [HERE](#).

**All A Honor Roll:** The honor roll is compiled quarterly. To qualify, a student must have a grade point average of 90 or above in ALL subjects in which he/she is enrolled that quarter.

**A/B Merit Roll:** The merit roll is compiled quarterly. To qualify, a student must have a grade point average of 80 or above in their classes. At least one grade must be 90 or above in order to receive this award.



**Insurance:** School insurance is offered to each student on an optional basis. It covers all school functions and is available in different types of policies. Information is given out by homeroom teachers at the beginning of the school year, and an initial enrollment period is established to ensure that all students receive maximum benefits from coverage. All students participating in athletics must be covered by either a school policy or a policy through the parent/guardian. Students entitled to an insurance claim should contact the school for further information.

**Locker/Valuables:** Placing name labels on personal articles and wearing apparel is helpful. The borrowing/loaning of personal possessions is discouraged. Lost articles, including textbooks, are placed in the lost and found area. *Students are discouraged from bringing large sums of money or valuable items to school; if they choose to, they claim responsibility for those items and the school is not responsible if items are lost or stolen - this includes cell phones, smart watches, headphones/earbuds, etc.* Lockers are provided for the safekeeping of personal property. A combination lock or a lock with a key may be placed on lockers (**provided the homebase teacher has the combination and/or key**). Lockers are the property of the school and may be checked by school administrators on a random basis throughout the year without prior notice. All property of students brought to school is subject to search without prior notice.

**Lost and Found:** A designated area is located in the building where students can inquire about missing articles or turn in items found. Items not picked up at the end of each nine weeks will be donated to a charitable organization.

**MTSS:** This incorporates Response to Intervention (RTI) and Student Support Teams (SST). These services are provided to students who are experiencing challenges in their academic classes.

**Parent Volunteers:** There are a number of opportunities for which parents can volunteer at Westside Middle School. Volunteers should contact an administrator, PTO officer, or the Partners In Education Coordinator at the school.

**Barrow County School System began conducting background checks on all volunteers during the 2020-2021 school year.** This requirement was rolled out in phases. Phase 1, began on August 1, 2019, requires all volunteers who interact with students off campus at overnight events to have a FBI Fingerprint Background Check completed. The Safety and Security Office will conduct the appropriate check and maintain a list of approved volunteers. Only approved volunteers may be utilized in our schools. Volunteers must submit to a new background check annually.

This new procedure is being implemented for the safety of our students. Currently, this directive only applies to volunteers who interact with students off campus at overnight events, with or without other adults at all times present. Later this year, we will also be implementing Georgia Criminal Information Center (GCIC) Background checks on other volunteers. More information on this process and implementation dates will be forthcoming.

Volunteers must be provided mandated reporter training as well. This is accomplished by the following process:

1. School will provide the volunteer with the document Mandated Reporter Information and Resources 2019. The volunteer **MUST** review the one page Information and Resources document before they can be around students in BCSS schools. (\*In addition to generic information on responsibilities the document contains a link that has further resources and a video they can view on the subject. This is not required.)
2. Afterwards, they must sign the acknowledgement form (attached as a PDF) that they have reviewed and understood their obligations in this matter. The school will then keep a copy of the signed document on file for the entire school year. Just as with staff this is an annual training so they would need to review the one pager and sign each year.

**Physical Education:** All students are expected to dress appropriately for participation in P.E. To be excused from P.E., a written note from the parent will be required if a student cannot participate with the class. Illnesses or injury requiring that a student be excused from P.E. for a period exceeding three days will require a written doctor's excuse.

**Professional Staff:** The principal is responsible for supervising and evaluating the total program for the school, assumes responsibility for pupil welfare during school hours and promotes desirable relationships within the school among parents, teachers, students, and other members of the community. The assistant principal works directly with the principal and also with the teachers, parents, and students regarding student attendance, behavior, instruction, and discipline. The primary role of the counselor is to help students and parents with problems that might occur. The media specialist is trained to assist teachers, students, and parents in obtaining necessary materials for research, special projects, or leisure-time reading. Classroom teachers are qualified personnel specifically trained to meet the needs of middle school students. They are professionals who work in team situations to provide an effective educational program for students. The School Resource Officer bridges the gap between youth and law enforcement as he/she serves to improve the safe atmosphere of the school, conducts classroom activities on a wide range of topics, and assists with security of the campus during school and extracurricular activities.

**Promotion Guidelines:** Students must pass at least three out of the four core content classes (Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science). The grades for each Connections course taken during the school year will be averaged to determine the connection grade for purposes of promotion and retention. In cases where promotion is questionable, we attempt to notify parents several months in advance, and a cooperative effort is made by all involved personnel to ensure the student's successful completion of the grade.

**Property:** Westside Middle School is a well-equipped building of which each student can be proud. Students are urged to take pride in the appearance of their school, the building, furniture, buses and surroundings. The physical condition of a school usually reflects the types of students and teachers who work there. Students will be required to pay for any damage they cause to school property.

**Registration:** Registration is completed virtually via this website:  
<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/departments/student-registration/index>

**Report Cards:** At the end of each nine-week grading period, report cards will be available via Infinite Campus: Parent Portal to all students, as well as sent home to families on paper. These indicate numerical grades earned in each subject area and also provide attendance data and behavioral comments.

**Restitution:** A student may be required to pay for or restore any damages caused by his or her actions.

**Progress Reports:** Progress reports will be available via Infinite Campus Parent Portal approximately midway through the quarter, as well as sent home to families on paper. Progress reports are intended to be an estimate of progress-to-date and are not intended to be an accurate reflection of the students' final quarterly average.

**School Closing:** In case of extreme weather conditions or other emergency changes in the daily schedule made after school hours, listen to radio stations in Athens, Gainesville, and Winder. Refer to the BCSS website for a detailed listing of radio and TV stations.

**Sensitive Issues Policy (IFAA-R):** Occasionally students will encounter controversial or sensitive topics through materials read, class discussion, or assignments. Educational curriculum cannot always avoid controversial issues in our society. A duty charged by the school system is to prepare learners to acquire the insights and the skills necessary to make important personal and political decisions. Teachers shall be knowledgeable of controversial issues occurring in curriculum and thus be prepared to present a balanced perspective that addresses multiple views. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss and review the

curriculum and materials for this course with the parents. Parents shall have opportunities to select alternate assignments should they believe the material in questions is inappropriate for their child.

**Student Calendar:** The 2023-2024 student calendar can be accessed on the Barrow County website here: <http://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/calendars.html>

**Telephone Calls:** Students are not allowed to use any school phone except in an emergency. Parents and teachers should stress to students the importance of being responsible and coming to school prepared with materials, supplies, and items of personal need. Students should not use class time to make calls of a personal nature. Phone calls from the office phones should be limited to students who are sick and have a legitimate emergency. No student may use the phone without written permission from the teacher. Students needing to use the phone should go to the front office in Building A. Students will sign a phone log each time a call is made. We do not call students out of class to receive calls except in the cases of extreme emergencies.

**Transportation:** School Buses - Students may be denied bus privileges when behavior is inappropriate. Students must bring a note from home if they intend to change their means of transportation or the place they are to be dropped off after school. (A school employee must approve these notes, and students will be issued a bus pass prior to the end of the school day from the front office.) Private Cars - Students who are transported in cars should be dropped off in front of the school in the designated area. Automobiles must not use the bus loading area. Students are not allowed to drive private cars to Westside Middle School. For more information on bus discipline and procedures, click [HERE](#).

### **Vaping/Vaping Apparatus**

Vaping or the possession of any sort of vaping apparatus is not allowed on any BCSS property or vehicle. Consequences related to student possession of any sort of empty vaping apparatus or accessory are:

- 1st Offense, 2 days out of school suspension
- 2nd Offense, 3 days out of school suspension
- 3rd Offense, suspension with the option to attend the Alternative Education Program for at least a semester.

Other increased consequences may also be applied depending on what is actually being smoked or stored in the vape or pen (i.e. tobacco, marijuana, etc.) and/or whether the student used the vaping apparatus at school or any school activity or is under the influence of any unauthorized substance at school.

**Vending Machines:** Vending machines are off limits until after lunch and then only with a pass from a teacher.

**Visitors:** All parents and visitors must first check in at the main office in Building A to be issued a visitor's pass before going to other parts of the building. In the interest of safety, please be advised that any visitor not complying with check-in procedures is subject to possible criminal charges.

**Withdrawals:** Parents or guardians of students who are planning to withdraw during the school year should contact our registrar to complete the withdrawal process prior to the move.



## **Barrow County School System Information**

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Barrow County Student Code of Conduct is based on the philosophy that discipline is a tool that is used to teach students to become responsible for their own behavior. Since our students live in a society in which citizens are expected to obey laws and abide by commonly accepted standards of behavior, we must teach them to be self-disciplined. This Student Code of Conduct is built upon those commonly accepted standards of behavior sometimes called character traits. These character traits include: citizenship, cheerfulness, cleanliness, compassion, cooperation, courage, courtesy, creativity, diligence, fairness, generosity, honesty, kindness, loyalty, patience, patriotism, perseverance, punctuality, respect for others, respect for the creator, respect for the environment, sportsmanship, school pride, self-respect, self-control, tolerance, and virtue.

In order to educate students to become productive citizens as adults, we must create a safe, non-threatening and orderly school environment that enables teachers to teach and students to learn. We expect students to “behave themselves in such a way so as to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and others, respect each other and school district employees, obey student behavior policies adopted by the local board of education, and obey student behavior rules established by individual schools (O.C.G.A. 20-2-735).” This Code of Conduct establishes expectations for the maintenance of a positive learning environment at school. Major offenses, including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses, may lead to a school being labeled as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16 Unsafe School Choice Option.

The Student Code of Conduct is effective during the following times and in the following places:

1. At school or on school property at any time;
2. Off the school grounds at any school-related or school-sponsored activity, function or event and while traveling to and from such events;
3. On vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system and school bus stops where groups of students gather for the purpose of getting on or off the school bus.
4. Off school property provided a student’s behavior poses a threat to the safety of students, staff or visitors at school or has the potential to disrupt the safe and orderly operation of a school.

[Read the Student Code of Conduct here.](#) You may also request a copy of the Student of Conduct from your child’s school.

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Parent’s Right to Request Educator’s Qualifications**

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the Barrow County School System would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student’s teacher(s) and/or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student’s teacher(s) –
  - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
  - is teaching under an emergency or provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and

- is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact your child's principal or Meggan McNally, Barrow County School System Director of Planning and Personnel at 770-867-4527.

### **Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the education records of a student who is your child, or in the case of a student who is 18 or older, your own education records.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure they are not inaccurate misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district decides not to amend the record, it will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information from the student's educational records with certain exceptions. One exception that permits disclosure of personally identifiable information without consent is to school officials with a legitimate educational interest. A school official may be a person employed by the school district, a person or company that the school system has contracted to perform a specific task, or other party to which the school system has outsourced services. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.
4. In accordance with OCGA §20-2-667 section(g)(1), the Barrow County procedures and process for handling parent complaints in regards to possible violations of rights under federal and state privacy and security laws:
  - a. Barrow County School System will provide the Parent/Eligible Student Complaint form to the Complainant within 3 business days of receiving the request. The complaint form will also be made available on the local school system's website.
  - b. Complaint forms should be sent to to FERPA Compliance Officer at the Barrow County Central Offices at 179 West Athens Street, Winder, GA.
  - c. A written response will be provided to Complainant within 10 business days of receipt of complaint.
  - d. The Complainant may file an appeal with the local school superintendent within 10 business days of receiving written response from local school system.
  - e. Parents or eligible student may file an appeal for a final decision to Barrow County Board of Education within 10 business days of receipt of written response from local school system.
  - f. The Barrow County Board of Education will render a decision within 10 business days of receiving an appeal.
5. The Barrow County Schools, in Board Policy JR Student Records, designates the following information as directory information:
  - Student's name;
  - Student's grade level;
  - Student's photograph;
  - Student's participation in officially recognized clubs and sports;
  - Weight and height of student if he/she is a member of an athletic team;
  - Dates of attendance while enrolled in Barrow County Schools; and
  - Degrees, honors, and awards received during the time enrolled in Barrow County Schools

Barrow County Schools may disclose designated "directory information" without written consent. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Barrow County Schools to include this information in school publications. Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this directory information may be disclosed to the public. Any school district receiving ESEA funds must, upon request of military or higher education institutions, provide access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone

listings. School districts must provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to postsecondary educational institutions or prospective employers. You have the right to refuse to allow all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to be disclosed to the public upon request. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the principal of the school at which your student is enrolled prior to a directory information request being made to the school or school system.

### **Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The following guidelines will be followed conducting research-involving students:

1. No individual, including teachers, administrators, other school district employees and college students, shall gather any data or otherwise conduct research on Barrow County students for his or her own personal use, including use for college classes, dissertations, theses or similar purposes, without receiving approval in advance from the Superintendent or his or her designee.
2. Without the prior written consent of the parent or the student, if he or she is an emancipated minor no student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
  - a. political affiliations;
  - b. mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his family;
  - c. sex behavior and attitudes;
  - d. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
  - e. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom the student has close family relationships;
  - f. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
  - g. income other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.
3. In order to comply with federal requirements for school systems receiving Title IV funds to collect data on the incidence and prevalence of illegal drug use and violence among youth in school districts, students will be surveyed using the needs assessment survey provided by the Georgia Department of Education. All students in the surveyed grades will be surveyed unless parents complete the Passive Permission form indicating that they do not want their student to participate. Parents will be notified prior to the survey administration and will be given an opportunity to review the survey instrument.

In addition, the Superintendent or his or her designee must approve the use of any such survey, analysis or evaluation before the consent of the parent or student is sought.

### **School Attendance & Georgia's Compulsory Education Law**

School attendance is a high priority in the Barrow County School System. Regular attendance is vital to each student's academic progress and the development of positive habits for his/her adult life. Georgia Law O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1 mandates school attendance for students between the ages of 6 and 16. This law also applies to younger children once they enter school. According to O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1 parents are responsible for enrolling and sending their children to school and the school staff is responsible for enforcing this law. Any student who has more than five unexcused absences in a school year is truant. School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Failure to comply with Georgia's Compulsory Education Law (O.C.G.A 20-2-690.1) may result in consequences for both students and parent/guardians. Consequences for students include, but are not limited to, detention, Saturday school, and referral to juvenile justice for truancy. Consequences for parents/guardians include a fine of not less than \$25.00 and not more than \$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties at the discretion of the court for each absence. Parents may also be charged with deprivation for failure to comply with this law.

Student absences may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness and when attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others.
2. A serious illness or death in the immediate family necessitates absences from school.
3. Absences mandated by other governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, or court ordered.
4. Observing a religious holiday that necessitates an absence from school.
5. Conditions that render attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety.
6. Registering to vote or voting, for a period not to exceed one day.
7. A maximum of five (5) school days per school year may be excused for students whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard in order for the student to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment overseas to a combat zone or combat support posting or during the parent's or guardian's leave from such a deployment. (Note: Students serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly and students participating in an activity or program sponsored by 4-H shall be counted present on the days missed for these purposes. A foster care student who attends court proceedings relating to the student's foster care shall be credited as present by the school and shall not be counted absent, either excused or unexcused, for any day, portion of a day, or days missed from school. In addition, students who are present for at least one-half of the instructional day or three full periods, whichever is greater, shall be counted present for perfect attendance purposes.)

Excuses for absences should be furnished to the school by the student's parent no later than 5 school days after the student returns to school and should state the reason for the absence. Five absences per semester may be excused with a parent note. After that, a doctor's note can be required. Excuses for tardies and early dismissals should be furnished upon check-in or check-out. All Excuses will be evaluated by the principal or designee to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused consistent with Barrow County Absences and Excuses Policy JBD.

Under certain circumstances, school personnel may require proper medical documentation to code an absence as excused.

Full-day school attendance is very important to student success. Students who arrive late or leave early miss important segments of classroom instruction.

### **Prohibition Against Bullying**

The Barrow County School District prohibits conduct which may be construed as bullying. Bullying may be defined as an act which occurs 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, that is:

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

Possible disciplinary actions include warning/counseling, notification of parents, parental conference, detention, in-school suspension, short-term suspension, referral to a hearing officer, and referral to law

enforcement officials. Upon finding that a middle or high school student has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to the alternative school.

## **Internet Safety**

The Barrow County Board of Education believes the use of technology supports curricular and administrative objectives and has the potential to promote 21st Century skills such as creativity, collaboration, and communication. Technology can significantly enhance both the teaching and learning process and help prepare students for their roles in a technical society. This technology includes computer hardware, software, local and wide area networks, on-premise and distance learning, and access to the Internet, the use of which is to be encouraged within guidelines that protect students and the rights of others.

## **Using District Provided Technology**

We live in a global and digital world changed by technology and new ideas about how we communicate with one another and exchange information. As a result, students must develop the research, information fluency, critical reasoning, and technology skills that will allow them to be successful, safe, and ethical in this digital world. For this reason, students are provided computer access privileges at school, occasional use of district provided technology outside of school, as well as access to the Internet, email, digital communication and collaboration tools, online learning spaces, and electronic educational resources. In addition to these resources, tools, and equipment, which are essential to teaching and learning, the Barrow County School System also fully supports responsible, learning-centered use of personal devices to provide as many pathways to understanding as possible for our students.

Guidelines for responsible use of these tools, personally-owned devices and the protection measures in place:

- BCSS Student Responsible Use of Technology Resources outlined in the tab below
- BCSS BYOT Regulation and Student Agreement

Students are expected to follow all classroom/school rules online and while distance-learning just as they do in class and will be held accountable for misconduct, which includes violations of the district's Internet Acceptable Use Policy and its established guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct.

Parents are always encouraged to review the online activities of their children. Parents are also encouraged to speak with teachers when questions or concerns arise about the use of web-based tools in the classroom.

Standard applications and accounts that are configured for student use include (but are not limited to):

Microsoft 365 for Education: The district also offers students and staff access to Microsoft's Office 365 platform. Office 365 is a cloud based, digital collaboration suite that provides students and staff access to the online version of the Microsoft Office Suite of tools, including Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. Using their Office 365 account, Students will have the ability to create, share, and collaborate on content across the full suite of Microsoft applications on virtually any device. Students can also use their Office 365 account to download and install the full versions of the latest Office suite on up to 5 PCs/Macs and 5 mobile devices per user, and can continue using it as long as they are a student in the Barrow County School district.

The district will create and manage all user accounts and will also control access to applications and permissions based on grade level organizations.

In addition to providing students with the full Office Suite, all student's Office 365 accounts will also provide access to Microsoft's Minecraft Education Edition Platform. Minecraft Education Edition is a dedicated version of Minecraft that has been designed specifically for use in education. The educational version of Minecraft provides students and teachers with a secured and controlled environment that can be used to build real world collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills in a variety of different subjects including Chemistry/Science, History, and Computer Science/Programming.



Please note that Office 365 Educational accounts are covered by more restrictive privacy practices than consumer or Enterprise Office 365 accounts including restrictions on advertising as well as the use and collection of student data for data mining purposes.

Web 2.0 Tools for Educational Use: These are web-based tools that are considered an extension of the class and may require students to have a unique account created for them to access and save content. Products students create using these tools may also be published for a global audience. Under the supervision of a classroom teacher, students may engage in some of the following types of activities:

- Compiling research
- Online classroom discussions
- Teacher-led video conferences
- Multi-media projects
- Video production
- Research reporting
- Individual / collaborative projects
- Reading/ writing / peer review

BYOT (Bring Your Own Technology) Program: This program permits students to bring their technology devices to school for academic use at the discretion of teachers and staff, using Internet access provided by the district and filtered in compliance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Parents and students who participate in this program are bound by rules and conditions found in the BYOT regulation (IFBG-R3).

Online Curriculum Systems: Most of the curriculum adopted in the district is accompanied by or depends on access to an online system where content and assessments are stored. Many of these systems require students to have a unique account created for them which allows them to access supplemental video content, take quizzes, and strengthen their understanding about the ideas in a content area. For district-wide curriculum, the district creates and manages these accounts. In these cases, the terms of use and privacy policies are reviewed thoroughly before providing any student account data to the vendor.

## **Internet Safety**

Due to the complex nature of these systems and the magnitude of information available via the Internet, the Barrow County Board of Education believes guidelines regarding acceptable use are warranted to serve the educational needs of students.

It shall be the policy of the Barrow County Board of Education that the school system shall have in continuous operation, with respect to any computers or mobile devices having access to the Internet via the Barrow County School System (BCSS) network or any district provided Windows or Chromebook device for distance learning use:

1. A qualifying “technology protection measure,” as that term is defined in Section 1703(b)(1) of the Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2000; and
2. Procedures or guidelines developed by the superintendent, administrators and/or other appropriate personnel:
  - a. Which provide for monitoring the online activities of users; and
  - b. The use of technology protection measure to protect against access to visual depictions that are:
    - obscene, as the term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
    - child pornography, as the term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
    - harmful to minors, as those terms are defined in Section 1703(b)(1) and (2) of the Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2000.
3. Such procedures or guidelines shall be designed to:
  - Provide for monitoring the online activities of users to prevent, to the extent practicable, access to inappropriate matter on the Internet and the World Wide Web;

- Prevent unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking,” and other unauthorized activities by users online;
- Prevent the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding students;
- Restrict minors’ access to materials “harmful to minors,” as that term is defined in Section 1703(b)(2) of the Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2000;
- Educate users about their safety and security when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication (including instant messaging);
- Educate users about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms; and
- Educate minors about cyberbullying awareness and response as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act.

**Technology Use**

The district’s technology resources are provided for educational purposes that promote and are consistent with the instructional goals of the Barrow County School System. Use of district provided computers, mobile devices, and network resources outside the scope of this educational purpose is strictly prohibited.

Students and employees accessing district network services or Internet through any device, or accessing any school computer, or participating in distance learning, shall comply with the district’s Internet and technology acceptable use guidelines. User privacy is limited with regard to the use of the system provided accounts and network and technology resources. The district reserves the right to monitor, access, and disclose the contents of any user’s files, activities, or communications, including content sent/received through secure connections.

It must also be understood that the Internet is a global, fluid community, which remains largely unregulated. While it is an extremely valuable tool for educational research, there are sections that are not commensurate with community, school, or family standards. It is the belief of the Board that the Internet’s advantages far outweigh its disadvantages. The Barrow County Board of Education will, through its administrative staff, provide an Internet screening system, which blocks access to a large percentage of inappropriate content. It should not be assumed, however, that users are completely prevented from accessing inappropriate materials or from sending or receiving objectionable communications.

Additionally, access to network services, the Internet, and computer resources is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, users violating the Barrow County Board of Education’s Internet safety and technology acceptable use policy shall be subject to revocation of these privileges and potential disciplinary action.

**Student Responsible Use of Technology Resources**

The Barrow County School System (BCSS) supports and encourages the use of technology resources to enhance and facilitate learning and expects responsible and respectful behavior from technology users. Technology use (whether personal or school owned) is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a loss of those privileges as well as other disciplinary actions outlined in the student code of conduct.

This regulation was established by the Barrow County School System’s Internet safety and Acceptable Use policy (IFBG) and outlines guidelines and procedures defining responsible use of district-owned technology, and personally owned technology connected to district resources, network resources, Office 365, and Web 2.0 / social networking tools (for education) by its students.

Respect and Protect Yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will take responsibility for my actions when posting/viewing information and images online.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will not reveal personal information such as my age, address or phone number, or those of other individual(s) with any online service or person.</li> <li>• I will only use accounts created for my use.</li> <li>• I will not share passwords for accounts created for my use.</li> <li>• I will remember that anything I say online is public and usually permanent.</li> <li>• I will follow school and BCSS policies, regulations and behavior standards.</li> </ul>
Respect and Protect Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will not use technologies to degrade or defame others.</li> <li>• I will obtain permission of the individual(s) involved and a school staff member before photographing, videoing, publishing, sending or displaying their image or likeness.</li> <li>• I will obtain permission from individual(s) when sharing commonly created electronic data.</li> <li>• I will not share or forward inappropriate materials or communications.</li> <li>• I will always act with integrity and respect.</li> </ul>
Respect and Protect Intellectual Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will have an understanding of the rules and laws applying to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ copyright</li> <li>○ intellectual property</li> <li>○ fair use</li> </ul> </li> <li>• I will ask permission before I post/publish content and media created by others.</li> <li>• I will use correct citation when I use content and media created by others in my own work.</li> <li>• I will only download, save or use either full or portions of any music, movies, images, or other digital content in accordance with copyright laws.</li> </ul>
Respect and Protect Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will take full responsibility for, and respectfully use, any school district provided technology resources.</li> <li>• I will report abuse of technology to a staff member.</li> <li>• I will report any material that may be deemed inappropriate to a staff member.</li> <li>• I will report security or network problems to a staff member.</li> </ul>
Student Use of Personal Technology Devices	All of the above guidelines apply to the use of any personal electronic devices brought to school for learning purposes, in addition to those outlined in the Barrow County School System Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) Regulation. Students and parents must agree to the guidelines in the BYOT regulation prior to their use in school.
Student Use of Web 2.0/Social Networking Tools for Education, and Office 365	Students are expected to follow all classroom/school rules online just as they do in class and will be held accountable for misconduct, which includes violations of the district's Internet Acceptable Use Policy and its established guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct. Parents are always encouraged to review the online activities of their children. Parents are also encouraged to speak with teachers when questions or concerns arise about the use of technology-based tools in the classroom.

## **Non-Discrimination Notices**

### **BARROW COUNTY SCHOOLS GENDER EQUITY IN SPORTS**

State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A.-20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that Barrow County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this school system may be submitted to Dr. Al Darby at 179 W. Athens St. Winder, Georgia 30680 - 770-867-4527.

### **TITLE VI AND TITLE IX NOTIFICATION**

The Barrow County School District does not discriminate in its education and employment programs on the basis of religion, age, race, color, national origin, gender, marital or parental status, and disability. This district complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX education amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Perkins CTE Act of 2006. Inquiries may be made to the respective coordinator regarding Title VI (Amy Wadley), Title IX (Dr. Al Darby) and the Perkins Act (Dr. Jennifer Wood) or Dr. Christina Lowe regarding 504 and ADA at: Barrow County Schools, 179 West Athens St. Winder, GA 30680, 770-867-4527.

### **SECTION 504 INFORMATIONAL NOTICE**

Section 504 is an Act that prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who: Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working); Has a record of such impairment; Is regarded as having such an impairment. In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Barrow County School System recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system. Any student or parent/guardian may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under 504. See parental rights of students and parents under 504. Our Section 504 Compliance Coordinator for the Barrow County School System is Dr. Christina Lowe.

## **REPORTING & COMPLAINTS**

### **Complaint Procedures**

#### **A. Grounds for a Complaint**

Any individual, organization, or agency (“complainant”) may file a complaint with the Barrow County School System (BCSS) if that individual, organization, or agency believes and alleges that BCSS is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

#### **B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed**

- Title I, Part A: Disadvantaged Children, Academic Achievement Awards, Schoolwide Programs
- Title I, Part C: Migrant Education Program
- Title II, Part A: Teacher and Leader Effectiveness
- Title III, Part A: English to Speakers of Other Languages
- Title VII, Part B: The McKinney-Vento Homeless Act

#### **C. Complaints Originating at the Local Level**

As part of its Assurances within the ESEA program grant applications and pursuant to Section 9306 within the Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), an LEA accepting federal funds must have local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore, a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education until every effort has been made to resolve through local written complaint procedures. If the complainant has tried to file a complaint with the Barrow County School System to no avail, the complainant must provide the Georgia Department of Education written proof of their attempt to resolve the issue with the Barrow County School System.

#### **D. Filing a Complaint**

A complaint must be made in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

- A statement that the Barrow County School System has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program.
- The date on which the violation occurred.
- The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation).
- A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information.
- Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency.
- Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant’s position.
- The address of the complainant.

The complaint must be addressed to: Amy Wright, Federal Programs Director, Barrow County School System, 179 W. Athens Street, Winder, GA 30680.

Once the complaint is received by the BCSS, it will be copied and forwarded to the Federal Programs Director.

#### **E. Investigation of Complaint**

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, the Barrow County School System will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

- The date the Barrow County School System received the complaint.
- How the complainant may provide additional information.
- A statement of the ways in which the Barrow County School System may investigate or address the complaint.

- Any other pertinent information.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, BCSS will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information to complete the investigation and issue a Letter of Findings. If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, a timeline for corrective action will be included. The sixty (60) day timeline may be extended if exceptional circumstances occur. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant, as well as the other parties involved.

#### F. Right of Appeal

If an individual, organization, or agency is aggrieved by the final decision of the Barrow County School System, that individual, organization, or agency has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. For complaints filed pursuant to Section 9503 (20 U.S.C. 7883, complaint process for participation of private school children), a complainant may appeal to the Georgia Department of Education no later than thirty (30) days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Barrow County School System's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

### **Student Complaints and Grievances**

The Barrow County School System is committed to providing an environment free of sexual harassment and all forms of harassment and discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, or disability. If a student believes he or she is being mistreated on account of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or disability, the student may utilize the three-step procedure outlined below.

Step I: If a student has a complaint of discrimination or unfair treatment, he or she should report concerns to the Level One Administrator as described in Board Policy GAE, section 2) principal, the local school's Title IX coordinator, teachers, counselors, or other school administrators. If a student is not satisfied that a complaint presented to a member of the school staff has been resolved satisfactorily, the student or his or her parent may request a meeting with the principal, following which, the principal will inform the parent in writing of his or her decision on the complaint.

Step II: If, after meeting with the school principal, the student is not satisfied with the principal's decision, a written appeal may be submitted to the Superintendent's Office within 10 working days of the receipt of the principal's decision. The appeal must give specific reasons for reconsideration, state precisely the reasons for dissatisfaction with the principal's decision, and be limited to the matter under review. The complaint shall include: Mailing address of the complainant, intent of the complainant, reference or description of the statute, policy, rule, contract provision or regulation that is alleged to have been violated, misinterpreted or misapplied, and a brief statement of the facts.

Step III: For assistance with the student complaint or grievance process, you may contact the district Equity Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator Barrow County Schools, 179 West Athens St. Winder, GA 30680, 770-867-4527. \*Retaliation on account of filing a complaint at any level is strictly prohibited.

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

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

## **MEDIA**

### **Media & Internet Publication Release Notice**

The Barrow County School System and any of its schools may develop, participate in, or be the subject of media-based presentations and events that highlight various educational activities that take place during the course of the school year and/or during school system sponsored summer activities. Those presentations may include but are not limited to:

1. First Name and/or photograph of your child and/or their work
2. Slide/tape presentation of your child and/or their work
3. Video of your child and/or their work
4. Computer generated presentations, which may incorporate photographs and video of your child and/or their work.

These media-based presentations may be used in, but are not limited to, the following activities or publication platforms:

1. Faculty professional learning
2. Classroom activities/projects
3. Parent programs
4. Media festivals and/or competitions (local, state and international)
5. Public relations/radio broadcasts /podcasts/newsletters/newspapers
6. TV presentations
7. Barrow County School System Internet web pages
8. School, teacher, and/or classroom project-based web pages
9. Social media including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram

### **News Media Release Notice**

Your student may also be photographed, videotaped or interviewed by the news media at school or some school activity or event. As a parent/guardian, if you do not want your child videotaped, photographed, or any of your child's creations, such as writing, artwork or multimedia to be used or publicly published with limited identifying information for any of the outlined purposes above, whether by the Barrow County School System or by the news media, you may object in writing. If you wish to exercise this right, objections should be sent to the principal of the school where your student is enrolled in writing within 10 days from the date of enrollment.

## **PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES & ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS)**

PBIS is an evidence-based, data-driven framework proven to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase a school's sense of safety and support improved academic outcomes. More than 16,000 U.S. schools are implementing PBIS. The premise of PBIS is that continual teaching, combined with acknowledgement or feedback of positive student behavior will reduce unnecessary discipline and promote a climate of greater productivity, safety and learning.

All Barrow County Schools participate in PBIS.

### **SCOPE Program for Gifted Students**

Barrow County School District endorses the philosophy that education is a means by which each individual has the opportunity to reach his or her fullest potential. Students in grades K-12 who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual, academic, and/or creative abilities may be nominated for evaluation to determine eligibility to participate in the Program for Gifted Students. Referrals for consideration may be made by teachers, parents or guardians, counselors, administrators, peers, self, and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities.

The State Board of Education determines eligibility criteria for placement in the program. For a summary of those criteria or for further information about Barrow County's Program for Gifted Students, please contact the Gifted Program teacher at your child's school.

### **Clubs & Organizations**

Clubs and organizations are available at each school for student participation. The clubs and organizations that are available are listed on each school's website along with the purpose, faculty advisor and a description of past or planned activities. If you DO NOT WANT your child to participate in one of these clubs or organizations you must notify the principal in writing by completing the clubs and organizations form signature letter. You may obtain a policy signature letter from the school office. If a club or organization is not listed and is started during the school year, students will have to have parental permission prior to participation.

### **PTO/PTA, Booster Clubs, Support Organizations & Fundraising**

Booster clubs are an important part of the athletic and extracurricular program in the Barrow County School System. Booster clubs play an important role in supporting, encouraging, and in advancing these programs. The following rules and regulations are basic and broad guidelines for the establishment and operation of all booster clubs that support our schools in Barrow County.

- The principal of each individual school must approve all booster clubs, and questions about individual booster clubs will be addressed to the principal of each school.
- Booster clubs exist only to support the school and its program.
- Volunteer organizations must register with the appropriate school annually in August by submitting a registration form, a copy of the organization's by-laws, annual membership-approved budget, and a listing of their officers and board members. Written by-laws shall state a clearly defined purpose and list the objectives of the organization.
- Each booster club will have in its constitution procedures for an annual financial report.
- The Superintendent and principal have the right and the authority to audit booster club financial records.
- Each booster club will develop an annual budget with input from the coach or sponsor, and submit it to the principal for approval prior to the start of the season. A final annual financial report will be submitted to the principal at the conclusion of the season.
- The booster clubs will provide a written copy of their treasurer's report to each member present at each meeting.



- Coaches or sponsors of each individual activity will attend booster club meetings.
- All fundraisers and projects conducted by a booster club must have prior written approval of the principal or his/her designee. Booster clubs must follow all Barrow County School System guidelines and policies pertaining to fundraising activities and facilities usage.
- The Georgia Sales and Use Tax Regulations Prohibit Booster Clubs Access to the School's Sales Tax Exemption Form.
- Booster clubs must abide by all guidelines, rules, policies, and regulations set forth by Barrow County Board of Education (Policy LEB, LEB-R, & JK), State Board of Education, Georgia High School Association and all local, state, and federal laws.
- All gifts or donations given to the school by the booster club will be accepted by the principal with a signed statement indicating that they will become the property of the school.
- The Superintendent and principal have the discretion to disband or dissolve any booster club, if he/she determines the guidelines above are not being followed.
- If the booster club is dissolved for any reason all associated funds immediately are to be transferred to the school.

### **PLAY Student Library Card Program**

PINES Library Access for Youth (PLAY) is brought to you through a collaboration between the Barrow County School System, Georgia Library PINES, and your public libraries in Auburn, Statham and Winder.

Barrow County School System student ID numbers will now act as a library card number for your public library! The public library provides free access to books and online resources to help your child succeed in school, as well as fun resources that help develop a lifelong love of reading.

With the PLAY Library Card, your student can search the library catalog of over 11 million items for books, DVD's, audiobooks, and other materials, request items from over 300 PINES libraries across Georgia, and have items free delivery to your local library. Students can check out free downloadable ebooks and audiobooks for all ages, and much more.

This is an "opt-out" benefit. Your child's Student ID number will act as a library card number ***unless you choose to opt-out of the program.*** The opt-out window will be 10 days from the first day of school or from the date of enrollment. Visit this website to opt-out.

The Piedmont Regional Library System (PRLS) is a designated school official for the purpose of information sharing under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). BCSS will share the following information with PRLS specifically for use with the PLAY program: student id number, first and last name, birth date, school, grade address, phone number, and parent email address. BCSS retains control of this information at all times during this agreement and the information may not be shared with another party.

To learn more, visit our website at [www.barrow.k12.ga.us/community/play-library-card](http://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/community/play-library-card).

## **SERVICES AND RESOURCES**

### **Transportation – Bus Discipline**

Students who ride the school bus may do so as long as they display safe and reasonable behavior. Choosing not to follow the bus behavior guidelines may result in suspension or loss of bus service. The bus driver is responsible for the safety and well-being of the students on the bus. The transportation department and school administrator will determine consequences of misbehavior and the reinstatement of bus service for the offending students should a suspension become necessary. A suspension applies to all buses unless otherwise designated by school officials. The responsibility for student supervision by the school shall begin when the student boards the bus in the morning and is retained until the child leaves the bus at the end of the day. Riding the school bus is a privilege not a right, and may be revoked for distracting the driver and discipline infractions.

### **I. PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY**

Parents and guardians will be responsible for ensuring their child follows all rules and guidelines outlined by this notice, transportation department, and administrator. If the student violates the behavior and safety guidelines resulting in a bus suspension, the parent will provide transportation for their child. Students will be picked up and dropped off at their designated stop. Exceptions will require a written request from the parent as outlined below. In an emergency a phone call by the parent to the principal and subsequent written approval from the principal to the bus driver will be acceptable.

### **II. TRANSPORTING OF SCHOOL RELATED/NON-RELATED ITEMS**

No animals or any items that may be deemed objectionable in nature will be transported on any bus. If necessary, the bus driver may confiscate these items and turn them in to the school administrator. Any item that may be considered a weapon (per Ga. Law) or dangerous to others in any way will not be allowed on the bus. (This may include sports equipment, laser pointers, toys, etc.) Band instruments that will be allowed on the bus are those that are small enough to be held in the student's lap. Instruments may not be in the aisle or take the space of a student if that space is needed to sit down. Damage to personal items is not covered by the school bus insurance coverage.

The school bus ride is an extension of the school day and as such, is subject to all school policies and procedures. Bus Conduct Reports will be recorded in accordance with all other school record keeping procedure.

### **III. BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES**

Warnings and Referrals will be submitted by the bus driver to the student with approval of the transportation department and or school administrator. Warnings and Referrals will be issued for the following and any other applicable events.

- **DISTRACTING THE DRIVER**
- Continuously out of seat
- Not properly seated/laying down etc.
- Arms/Head/Items out window
- Cussing/Students/Driver
- Talking back/Disrespect to driver
- Throwing trash/Spitting on floor
- Wearing earbuds/loading/unloading
- Unsafe actions/loading/unloading
- Loud Noises/Talking
- Playing loud music
- Dress code violation
- Eating on the bus

- Continuously Late to stop
- Possession of Tobacco/Vape/etc.
- Making noises/Talking at railroad
- Throwing items out bus window
- Distraction by electronic device
- Body spray/Fragrances
- Harassing/Picking on students
- Vandalism/Damage to seat cover
- Vandalism/Writing on seat
- Verbally Harassing other students
- Hitting/Spitting on other students
- Destruction of property
- Stealing
- Not obeying driver hand signal
- Riding bus while suspended
- Inappropriate gestures/Material
- Fighting

As previously stated, the school bus ride is an extension of the school day and is subject to all school policies and procedures. Riding the school bus is a privilege (not a right) for students as long as they display safe and reasonable behavior. Riding privileges may be revoked for safety and discipline infractions at which time parents must provide transportation for their child.

### **Student Bus Transportation Changes Protocol**

Note: This protocol is for short-term (daily) changes only. For any long-term change in transportation, please use the appropriate Transportation Change Form available in your school's front office.

Student must have a written note from a parent or guardian that is dated and signed referencing that particular day or days affected. This will apply even if the parent makes the request in person at the school.

In the event of a change in transportation, school office personnel will:

- Have appropriate school administrator (or designee) sign the note.
- Make a copy of the note with both signatures.
- Send the original note with the student or the student's teacher to be given to the appropriate bus driver – this will be the student's pass to get on the bus.
- File the copy of the note in a specified place in the front office where it can be easily accessed in case of emergency.

Bus drivers will not allow a student to exit the school bus at a place that is not the student's normal stop unless the written note signed by both the parent/guardian and the school administrator (or designee) is in his or her possession.

No bus transportation changes will be accepted over the telephone.

Changes may be accepted via fax or email attachment if parent/guardian picture ID is included with the request, at the school administration's discretion. Change requests must be received by the front office staff prior to noon on the day of the change.

Note: There are now set bus stops along all the bus routes and BCSS buses cannot stop at each individual house.

### **Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility**

Georgia's Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act (TAADRA) of 1997, requires that local school systems certify that a student is enrolled and not under expulsion in order for the student to be eligible to have a Georgia learner's permit or driver's license. Certificates of Enrollment can be obtained from your child's school during the school year and prior to summer vacation.

### **School Nutrition**

It is our privilege to provide low cost nutritious breakfast and lunch meals to all students and staff of the Barrow County Schools. Nutrition is a very important part of the education process since a hungry child cannot learn. Barrow County School Nutrition meals adhere to the USDA dietary guidelines and requirements. Our menus offered are analyzed to reduce calories from fat while ensuring proper amounts of nutrients and total calorie intake for different age groups. Monthly menus are available on all Barrow County School websites and through <https://schools.mealviewer.com/district/BarrowCounty>.

Children with health issues or allergies (including lactose intolerance) must have a letter signed by a physician stating such on file with the cafeteria manager. These letters must be updated annually.

### **MEAL ACCOUNTS:**

Each cafeteria has a computer program for tracking meals and payments. ALL Barrow County School students are assigned computer identification (ID) number, which serves as their meal account number. ALL students are encouraged to learn their account number to use at the cashier station at the end of the meal line.

Prepayment for school meals enables the meal line to move more quickly. At all school levels, prepayment may be made weekly or monthly in envelopes provided by the school. The student's name and account number must be listed on the envelope in order to credit the proper account. Money not used can be refunded at the end of the school year or carried over to the next school year even if they will attend a higher level Barrow County School. Parents should call the school nutrition manager's office at the individual school if they have questions about the child's account during the year.

Families with more than one student at the same school should send the cash or check SEPARATELY for each student. Checks are to be made out to SNP with the student's name and account number on the check. Returned Checks are collected through Envision Payment Solutions. Other purchases from the school office or classroom must NOT be included with meal payments.

For your convenience, we offer online prepayments. You may access this service at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) and put money on your child's account.

### **SCHOOL BREAKFASTS:**

Breakfast is served at no cost to all Barrow County students.

### **SCHOOL LUNCHES:**

The Board believes that school lunches should be maintained at a reasonable price and, accordingly, shall use State allocated food services funds to supplement federal funds as a means of keeping sale prices within reach of paying children.

### **CAFETERIA CHARGES:**

School lunch meals should be paid for in advance or at time of purchase.

Payments may be made with cash or check at the register. Secure online payments may be made with a debit or credit card with an online meal pay service found at a link on the School Food Nutrition Website.

A copy of the charge policy shall be sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year. The charge policy shall also be included in handbooks and/or online portals.

Parents/guardians are responsible for communicating with their children and/or the school nutrition manager or cashier about their child's account or meal charges. Minor students are not the responsible party.

Barrow County Schools does not allow school lunch charges except in unusual circumstances.

- Elementary and middle school students will only be allowed to charge up to five (5) meals if parents/guardians do not properly provide payment as outlined above. Students are not allowed to charge A la Carte items or extra food items in the cafeteria.
- High school students and adults are not allowed to charge any meals.
- All charges must be paid as soon as possible. Students with a negative balance are not allowed to purchase A la Carte items or extra food items in the cafeteria.
- A charge notice will be sent home with the elementary or middle school student each time a meal is charged; if a third notice is sent without outstanding charges being paid, the principal or social worker will be asked to intervene in the collection of the delinquent payments and access the need for free or reduced-priced meals. If a fifth notice is sent without outstanding charges being paid, the parent/guardian's account will be submitted to the Barrow County School Nutrition office for further collection efforts which may include remanding them to an outside collection agency.
- An automated phone call will also be sent to parents/guardians daily regarding charge notices.
- A charge notice will be sent to parents weekly via the following method – email, text, phone call, or letter.
- If a parent/guardian has exceeded the five (5) meal charge limit and send their child to school without lunch money an alternative meal for lunch consisting of a sandwich, fruit or vegetable, and milk may be offered to the student until such time as the parent/guardian has paid the outstanding debt.

Barrow County does not take away student trays.

Report cards will not be distributed until outstanding balances are paid. All charges must be paid by the end of the school year. Parents may designate that their children can NEVER charge meals, and BCSS will record those requests in the students' files.

### **FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH:**

Students automatically qualify for free school meals if they receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and may qualify for free meals if they receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Families may also qualify for free or reduced price meals based on family income.

Families must re-apply each school year for free and reduced price meal benefits. Applications are available at each school, on the Barrow County Schools website, and online. All information provided is confidential. ALL household members including all children must be listed. School locations are required for all school age children. Please make certain that your application reaches the school nutrition manager at one of the schools your children attend. Applications will be completed at the time of registration at the Barrow County Professional Development Center. Parents may also fill out the free and reduced meal application online: [www.myschoolapps.com](http://www.myschoolapps.com).

Parents who apply for free and reduced-price meal assistance are responsible for payment of all school meals and accumulated charges until approval is granted. Federal guidelines allow maximum of 10 days to approve a new application. No child is allowed a free or reduced-price meal without a current, approved application on file. Parents will receive a notification letter of a student's eligibility showing the effective date. If a notification letter is not received within ten days after application, please call the BCSS school nutrition office at 770-867-4527.

### **23-24 MEAL PRICES**

Breakfast - no charge  
Regular Price Lunch \$2.25

Reduced Price Lunch \$.40  
Extra Milk & \$.50

## **Medical Procedures**

The health, welfare and safety of your child are of utmost importance. At times, it may be necessary for your child to take medication. The school nurse or principal's designee shall be permitted to assist students in taking medication during the school day only if it is not possible for the parent, guardian, child's physician, or some other adult authorized by the parent or guardian to administer the medication. In the event a student must take medicine during school hours, the guidelines set forth below shall direct the proper handling of all medications at school:

- All medicines, prescription or otherwise, brought to school shall be carried to the school office immediately upon arrival at school and must be accompanied by written permission from the parent/guardian stating what the medication is, why the student is required to take it during the school day, the number of pills in the bottle, the dosage to be taken by the student and at what times. The parent/guardian should also state any potential adverse reaction the student may experience. Any student not complying with this policy and possessing any medication on the school campus shall be subject to discipline as set forth in the Student Code of Conduct.
- Any medication brought to school must be contained in its original container with the nature of the medication and instructions for use clearly indicated. All prescription medication must be contained in the original prescription-labeled container with the student's name, date, name of the prescribing physician, name of the medication, instructions for administering the medication and the name of the pharmacy filling the prescription stated on the label.
- The parent or guardian shall authorize the school nurse or principal's designee to speak or correspond directly with the child's physician in the event the nurse or designee deems it appropriate or necessary. In an emergency situation, the school nurse or principal's designee may call for emergency medical services (911). The parent will be notified of the emergency and their child's condition as soon as possible.
- Written parental permission must be given on at least a yearly basis or when changes in medication occur. Parents must immediately notify the school of any changes in medication. No medication shall be given contrary to label instructions, regardless of parent permission, without specific written instructions from the child's physician.
- Medications that are out-of-date or discontinued will be available for parent/ guardian to pick-up. Medications not picked up within one week of expiration or by the end of the school year will be properly disposed of in the presence of a witness.
- Other than topical first aid ointments, no medicine shall be bought or supplied by the school or any employee. The school nurse or principal's designee may use first aid topical ointments, approved by the school nurse, for first aid purposes such as insect bites, abrasions, poison ivy etc., unless a parent/guardian requests in writing that first aid topical ointments not be administered.
- Nurses or other school employees are authorized to administer auto-injectable epinephrine, if available, to a student who is having an actual or perceived anaphylactic adverse (allergic) reaction, regardless of whether the student has a prescription for epinephrine. Any school employee who in good faith administers or chooses not to administer auto-injectable epinephrine to a student in such circumstances shall be immune from civil liability.
- The major responsibility for a student taking medication at school rests with the student's parents. Barrow County Schools will not be responsible if a student misses a dose of medication.
- If a student requires frequent doses of over counter medication, a doctor's order may be required.

For Additional Information see Board Policy – Medication – Board Policy JCGD.

## **Annual AHERA/ASBESTOS Notification**

Annual Ahera\Asbestos Notification Requirements to: Parent/Legal Guardians/Teachers  
Employees/Organizations

- Asbestos Annual Letter

## **RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR PARENTS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

The Barrow County Board of Education welcomes community input when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of our educational programs or to equip the schools to do their tasks more efficiently. The Board has confidence in the professional staff and desires to support their actions. This regulation does not supersede any employee's or citizen's right to contact Board members directly. However, whenever a concern is expressed directly to the Board as a whole or to a Board member as an individual, it will be referred to the administration for study and resolution.



