



Thomas County Schools  
Dr. Lisa Williams, Superintendent

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# The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development

1631 East Jackson Street  
Thomasville, Georgia 31792  
229-227-3222  
229-227-3223 (Fax)

Todd Creech, Principal



STUDENT & PARENT  
HANDBOOK  
2023-2024

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## LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

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Dear Parents/Students,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development. It is with great excitement that I write this letter of introduction to you as the Principal of The Renaissance Center. I am honored to have the opportunity to lead a school with an extremely dedicated staff, and supportive school community. I feel very fortunate to be part of this school and to support the students and families as we strive to transition each student back to their home school.

On a personal note, my wife and I are both graduates of Thomas County Schools and are both employed by the system. We have three sons that have been in Thomas County Schools since they were 3 years old. We love Thomas County and all that it has to offer. We are proud to be part of the Thomas County School System, one that values high standards by providing rich learning experiences for all students.

As a graduate of the Thomas County School System it gives me great pride to be able to give back to a system that gave so much to me. I view education as a life-long process and try to teach that to every student I come in contact with. Most importantly, I bring a belief that students are at the center of all school-related decisions. Because the relationships between families and school are vital to the success of our students, I encourage you to become involved in every way possible. I look forward to meeting you soon.

Best wishes for a great school year,

*Todd Creech*

Todd Creech  
Principal

## **MISSION/BELIEF STATEMENT – THOMAS COUNTY SCHOOLS**

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Teaching students to gain the skills, knowledge, and positive values that ensure success as productive citizens in an ever-changing world.

In Thomas County We Believe...

1. All students can learn with quality resources in a safe, clean, and supportive environment.
2. A rigorous, relevant, and effective education enables students to reach their potential.
3. Classroom instruction should connect to students' experiences and interests in order to foster and support a diverse learning environment.
4. Positive communication fosters strong relationships among parents, teachers, students, and the community.
5. The effective use of technology is critical to preparing our students for an ever-changing society.
6. Fine Arts, foreign languages, athletics, career and extra-curricular opportunities are essential components of a well-rounded education.
7. Counseling and guidance support are crucial to student development.
8. Students deserve a caring, professional, and dedicated staff.
9. Students need to demonstrate responsibility and respect for the learning process.

## **MISSION STATEMENT – THE RENAISSANCE CENTER**

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Forging citizens of tomorrow from students of today.

## **VISION STATEMENT – THE RENAISSANCE CENTER**

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The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development provides innovative educational excellence and emotional/social support that inspires each student to become a successful citizen.

## **GOALS/OBJECTIVES – THE RENAISSANCE CENTER**

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The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development Program seeks to achieve the following goals:

1. Provide an opportunity for students who are motivated to return to their base school.
2. Enhance social skills that will prepare students for the world of work and life.

The following objectives, relative to student data, will be used as a means of assessing the program:

1. Improve academic performance
2. Improve attendance statistics
3. Decrease the number of disciplinary infractions

## **BELIEF STATEMENT – THE RENAISSANCE CENTER**

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We believe that...

- All students can and will learn.
- Each student is an individual with specific needs.
- Providing a safe educational environment for students and staff is our primary responsibility and, therefore, certain behaviors will never be tolerated at the program site.
- We put into practice a consistent and reliable behavioral program for all students that assists students to make good decisions, to be respectful and safe, and to accept responsibility and accountability for their decisions.
- Building strong and appropriate relationships with students is fundamental to achieving positive behavioral change and educational attainment.

- Through our guidance, students will grow and adapt in order to meet the behavioral standards expected of our society.
- Team involvement and collaboration is a critical component to the success of our program; including parents and students in making decisions relative to their academic and behavioral plans.

## MOTTO

“Being in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing, with the right materials.”

Lamar Matthews

## DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30-7:55	Breakfast
7:55-8:00	Bathroom Break
<b>8:00-8:55</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Period</b>
<b>9:00-9:55</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Period</b>
9:55-10:00	Bathroom Break
<b>10:00-10:55</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Period</b>
<b>11:00-11:55</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Period</b>
11:55-12:35	Lunch/Bathroom Break
<b>12:35-1:30</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Period</b>
<b>1:35-2:30</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Period</b>
2:30	Dismissal
2:45-3:30	Planning

## REFERRALS AND ACCEPTANCE

All students assigned to The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development are recommended from the student’s base school administration, from tribunal rulings or ruling from the Thomas County Board of Education, and must first register in the Thomas County Schools enrollment office. After registering with the enrollment office, an interview with the prospective student and his/her parents is required before beginning the program to discuss the goals and the objectives of the program and any concerns that may need to be addressed. During this interview, all necessary forms and documents should also be signed to officially enroll the student. The handbook has been developed to incorporate rules and guidelines into one manageable unit and to explain the mission of the program. All students are evaluated based on their academic performance, attendance history, and behavioral conduct.

## FEDERAL/STATE REGULATIONS

### Parents' Right to Know

#### Teacher & Paraprofessional Qualifications

In accordance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, the Thomas County School District will provide, upon request, certain information on the professional qualifications of classroom teachers and paraprofessionals (ESSA Section 1112(e)(1)(A)). Parents may request the following information:

1. Whether the student’s teacher—
  - has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;

- is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and,
- is teaching in the field or discipline of the certification of the teacher.

2. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you desire information concerning the qualifications of your child's teacher(s), please contact the principal at your child's school.

### **Non-Professionally Qualified Teachers**

Each Thomas County School will provide to student's parent or guardian a timely notice that his or her student has been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who has NOT met subject or grade level requirements for professional qualifications (ESSA Section 1112(e)(1)(A)).

### **Student Achievement**

Each Thomas County School will provide to parents information on their child's level of achievement on each of the state academic assessments (ESSA Section 1111(2)(B)(x)).

### **Parent Resources Title I**

The following schools are classified as Title I Schools: Hand-in-Hand Primary, Garrison-Pilcher Elementary, Cross Creek Elementary, Thomas County Middle, The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development, and Bishop Hall Charter School. Each of the previously listed schools qualify as Title I schools based on the number of students meeting federal poverty guidelines. Title I schools are required to use research-based teaching strategies and programs to improve student achievement. Staff must be professionally qualified and must be involved in on-going staff development. School staff studies data gathered from student assessments, parent surveys, and staff surveys to guide the school's Improvement Plan. Title I Family Engagement Plans are distributed electronically to every parent at the beginning of the school year. The plan will also be attached to the school's web page. A parent advisory panel meets twice a year to discuss school accomplishments and areas for improvement. Each Title I school has a parent resource room that houses information pertaining to child health, discipline, development, and other topics relevant to the ages of the students at that school. Additionally, a variety of parent books are available for check-out in the media center. If you need information that we do not have, please ask the media specialist. In most situations, we are able to secure resources for you to check-out. Copies of our Title I Plans are available for parent review in the school office or online via school websites. Please contact your school's Parent Involvement Coordinator if you need assistance.

### **Parent Volunteering**

Parent participation is encouraged at each of our schools (ESSA Section 1116(d)(2)(C)). We encourage parents to participate in their student's school life. An orientation for volunteers is held in the fall of each school year. If you are interested in volunteering in your child's school, please contact the Parent Involvement Coordinator at that school. He or she will be more than happy to schedule times that are convenient for you that will not disrupt class schedules.

### **Parent and Family Engagement**

Each Title I school will have an annual parent workshop to build parent capacity to support their children. Topics may include academic support, homework help, obtaining school information, behavior management, digital citizenship, standardized test data, or college and career planning. We welcome your input for planning and evaluation of these events. We will survey participants at the conclusion of each workshop to evaluate workshop quality, obtain feedback and gather suggestions.

### **Comments and Concerns**

Thomas County Schools has a complaint procedure that is described in detail on our website: [www.tcjackets.net](http://www.tcjackets.net). To access this description, hover over the "Departments" icon, and select the "Federal Programs" link. The complaint procedure is also outlined in our Parent/Student/Teacher Handbooks. In the event that you have a complaint, we wish you to contact the school your child attends and seek assistance from the teacher or administration as an initial point of contact. If you are unable to resolve your concern, you are invited to contact the Superintendent at the Thomas County Board of Education. If you are still unsatisfied, you may contact the Georgia Department of Education via: <http://programcomplaint.doe.k12.ga.us/everestwebportal/webform.asp>.

**Title I School and District Contact information:**

Hand-In-Hand Primary  
Principal, Dee Gaines  
(229) 225-3908

Garrison-Pilcher Elementary  
Principal, Robin Binion  
(229) 225-4387

Cross Creek Elementary  
Principal, Ashley Lane  
(229) 225-3900

Thomas County Middle School  
Principal, Clay Stanaland  
(229) 225-4394

Bishop Hall Charter School  
Principal, Dr. Verna Wiggins  
(229) 225-3197

Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development  
Principal, Todd Creech  
(229) 227-3222

**Questions:**

For additional information, you may contact Dr. Bob Dechman, Assistant Superintendent for Federal Programs by calling (229) 225-4380, or via email at [bdechman@tcjackets.net](mailto:bdechman@tcjackets.net).

**Asbestos Management Plan**

A written Asbestos Management Plan is available that documents inspection and surveillance activities, known and presumed asbestos containing materials in the building, records of asbestos-related building material disturbances and response activities, and post-response documentation. The Asbestos Management Plan is located in the main school office and at the Thomas County Board of Education and is available for review by parents, legal guardians, teachers and other school personnel, representatives of EPA, representatives of the State, and the public. The designated person for the Thomas County School System's AHERA program is Dr. Jim Rehberg, and he can be contacted by telephone at 229-584-9164, or via email at [jrehberg@tcjackets.net](mailto:jrehberg@tcjackets.net).

**THOMAS COUNTY SCHOOL TRAINING AND MONITORING PROCEDURES AND ASSESSMENTS**

All faculty members involved with the administration or supervision of testing participate in training sessions to orient them to their duties and responsibilities concerning testing. The system test coordinator provides orientation and training to each school test coordinator in August. Following this training, each school test coordinator conducts the initial training session for the school faculty. Test examiners and test proctors receive copies of their roles which delineate the "must do" activities and "must not do" activities. Signed copies of this information are collected and sent in after school officials train all staff.

The system test coordinator provides a detailed orientation and training session prior to each standardized test administration. School test coordinators are prompted to review state training webinar sessions as appropriate. Sign in sheets and agendas serve as documentation of system training sessions for each testing program. Sessions specify district requirements for security and timelines for return of materials. School test coordinators are responsible for conducting training sessions with their staff members prior to the administration of any standardized test. Content of this training will specify state regulations for test administration as well as school procedures and daily schedules for the duration of the testing window.

School test coordinators will document staff participation in school-based training sessions prior to the test administration period. School test coordinators stay in contact with the system test coordinator on an as needed basis throughout the test administration period. School test coordinators are responsible for reporting irregularities promptly.

The system test coordinator will make periodic site visits to observe testing conditions, routines and processes. The system test coordinator will report any observations to the principal and or the Superintendent in order to ensure corrective actions are implemented.

**FRAUD AND ETHICS POLICY**

To ensure the reporting of suspicion of fraudulent activity, the Thomas County School Superintendent and Board of Education ensure employees, clients and providers confidential channels to report suspicious activities.

- **Fraud:** A false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, that is used for the purpose of misappropriating property and/or monetary funds from federal grants or other sources.

The Thomas County School District thoroughly and expeditiously investigates any reported cases of suspected fraud to determine if disciplinary, financial recovery and/or criminal action should be taken.

All reports of suspected fraud must be handled under strict confidentiality. Only those directly involved in the investigation should be given information. Informants may remain anonymous but should be encouraged to cooperate with the investigators and should provide as much detail and evidence of the alleged fraudulent act as possible.

Procedures and Responsibilities:

1. Anyone suspecting fraud concerning federal or other programs should report their concerns to the Superintendent at 229-225-4380. In the event the allegation of fraud involves the Superintendent, an employee may report his or her suspicions directly to the chairman of the Thomas County Board of Education. Contact information for the Thomas County Board Chairman may be found on the school system's website.
2. Any employee of the Thomas County Board of Education (temporary staff, full-time staff and/or contractors) who receives a report of suspected fraudulent activity must report this information within the next business day to the Superintendent or chairman of the Thomas County Board of Education at 229-225-4380. Employees have the responsibility to report suspected fraud. All reports can be made in confidence.
3. The Thomas County School District shall conduct investigations of employees, providers, contractors, or vendors as necessary.
4. If necessary, employees will be contacted for additional information.
5. Periodic communication through meetings should emphasize the responsibilities and channels to report suspected fraud.

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS POLICY**

To the extent practical and as required by federal law through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the Thomas County School System will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, programs for students with limited English proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including children who experience one or more of the following characteristics:

1. sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of adequate accommodations;
3. living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. abandoned in hospitals;
5. living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
6. living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations, or similar settings;
7. migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples;
8. unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Homeless children and unaccompanied youth will be identified through three main sources:

1. School personnel will be trained to inquire about homelessness upon enrollment and withdrawal of students. School personnel will notify the homeless liaison of any students determined to be homeless.
2. School staff will be trained on the identification of children in class who may be experiencing homelessness and appropriate procedures to follow.
3. Partnerships will be created between community agencies and the school system to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness. Outreach material will be provided to partner agencies by the homeless liaison to provide public notice of the rights of homeless students.



Each homeless student has the right to remain at his or her school of origin, to the extent feasible, or to attend school in the attendance area in which he or she is currently residing. Students identified as homeless have the right to immediate enrollment in school.

Homeless students are also entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If transportation is requested by the parent/guardian, the school shall notify the district liaison.

If a dispute arises over any issue related to the rights of any homeless student, then the student shall be immediately enrolled and provided all services until the dispute is resolved in accordance with federal law. The school must provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and inform him/her of his/her right to appeal with the district homeless liaison. The liaison shall ensure enrollment and appropriate services until the dispute is resolved. All records of disputes shall be kept. The state level appeals process will also be provided following the district level appeal.

Homeless students shall be provided comparable services to other students including the following: transportation, Title I, education services where they meet eligibility criteria, vocational and technical education program, gifted and talented program, and school nutrition. Upon being identified as homeless, students automatically qualify for free school meals. Title I services should also be made available to all homeless students regardless of the school of enrollment's Title I status.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youth and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. The district's liaison will also review and seek revisions to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

For any concerns regarding the rights of homeless students, please contact Homeless Liaison at 225-4380.

### **THOMAS COUNTY SCHOOLS BOARD POLICIES**

Notification of Provisions of Georgia's "Compulsory Student Attendance Law" (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1)

Georgia law requires children between the ages of 6 and 16 to be enrolled in and attend school. However, if a child is under 6 and has attended more than 20 days in a public school, he/she is subject to the compulsory attendance law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-150(C)).

A student is considered truant if he/she misses more than five unexcused absences during the school year. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1, a parent/guardian shall be held responsible for the child's failure to report to school. Potential consequences for parents and/or students include: a referral to the District Attorney's office, misdemeanor charges with a fine of not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00 for each offense, imprisonment for up to 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction may be imposed. Each day's unexcused absence from school, after the initial five unexcused days, shall constitute a separate offense.

### **ABSENCES AND EXCUSES POLICY**

Definitions:

1. **Tuant:** Any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences. Note: School days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.
2. **Student Attendance Protocol:** Procedures to be used in identifying, reporting, investigating and prosecuting cases of alleged violations of O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1, relating to mandatory school attendance and appropriately addressing the issue with parents and guardians. The protocol shall also include recommendations for policies relating to tardiness.
3. **Student Attendance Committee:** A committee established by the chief judge of the superior court of each county for the purpose of ensuring compulsory school attendance, to reduce the number of unexcused absences from school, and to increase the percentage of students present to take tests which are required to be administered under the laws of this state.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Students may be temporarily excused from school:

1. who are personally ill and attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others;
2. when in their immediate family there is a serious illness or death, which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;
3. on special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith;
4. when mandated by order of governmental agencies (pre-induction physical examination for services in armed forces or court order);
5. when prevented from such attendance due to conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety;
6. in military families whose parents are currently serving or previously served on active duty in the U. S. armed forces or in the Reserves or National Guard on extended active duty “**may** be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five days per school year, not to exceed two school years, for the day or days missed from school to attend military affairs sponsored events, provided the student provides documentation prior to absence; or
7. other circumstances recognized as unavoidable by the Superintendent.

When a child is absent from school, the parent will furnish the school a written excuse within three school days of the absence. The school will require students to present appropriate medical documentation for absences due to illness upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence after accepting a parent excuse five times within a semester. With proper verification, a student may be eligible for hospital/homebound instruction as outlined in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-31.

Students who miss an excessive amount of class time (as defined by school rules) may be required to participate in make-up activities as described by the individual schools. The principals shall work with the Superintendent to develop rules for implementing this policy.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

The Thomas County School System will notify the parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the student when such student has five unexcused absences. The notice shall outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence shall constitute a separate offense. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian or other person who has charge of the student, the school system shall send written notice via first class mail.

The Thomas County School System will provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in public school a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance. By September 1, of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the school system, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1, shall sign a statement indicating receipt of written statement of possible consequences for noncompliance to the local policy.

### **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

The following provisions apply to consecutive and non-consecutive absences during one academic year.

1. After Three Unexcused Absences: The attendance office or the principal's designee will contact the parent/guardian by telephone, letter, email, parental conference, or any other means of communication deemed necessary. All contacts made will be documented.
2. After Five Unexcused Absences: The attendance office or principal's designee will notify the parent/guardian by mail, and by any other means of communication deemed necessary. The mailed letter and/or contact will serve as the required notification that outlines the penalty and consequences of the student's unexcused absences and that each subsequent absence shall constitute a separate offense. All contacts made will be documented.
3. After Seven Unexcused Absences: The attendance office or principal's designee will notify the parent/guardian by mail, and by any other means of communication deemed necessary.

4. After Seven Unexcused Absences: The counselor/parent coordinator will meet or make contact with the parent/guardian and the student. The parent/guardian and student will be informed of the consequences of excessive unexcused absences. Strategies will be discussed to help improve the student's attendance. An attendance plan and contract will be signed and implemented. The counselor/parent coordinator will continue to monitor the student's attendance. The parent/guardian and student will be contacted for noncompliance of the plan and contract. All contacts made will be documented.
5. After Ten Unexcused Absences: A mandatory attendance meeting will be scheduled between the parent/guardian, the student, and the grade level assistant principal. A plan that contains specific strategies to help improve the student's attendance will be created and signed. The parent and the student will also be reminded of the consequences for continued unexcused absences. The student's attendance will continue to be monitored. The parent/guardian and student will be contacted for noncompliance of the plan and contract. All contacts made will be documented.
6. After Thirteen Unexcused Absences: The parent/guardian and/or student may be referred to the Thomas County School System's Truant Officer if the student continues to accrue unexcused absences.
7. After the student has been referred to the Truant Officer, the school will continue to monitor the student's attendance and continue to use school-based interventions to help prevent continued unexcused absences. The school will also continue to inform the parent/guardian, the student, and the Director of Pupil Services of any continued unexcused absences by any means of communication deemed necessary. All contacts will be documented.

Based upon the determination of the Truant Officer, the parent/guardian and/or student may be referred to the Community Based Risk Reduction Team (CBRRT).

#### **COMMUNITY BASED RISK REDUCTION TEAM (CBRRT)**

The Thomas County Board of Education has adopted the Community Based Risk Reduction Team (CBRRT) as a sub-committee of the Thomas County Schools/Thomasville City Schools Student Attendance Protocol Committee. The CBRRT was created in an effort to help improve school attendance and to provide early community intervention for students who are at risk of becoming delinquent, unruly, or deprived. The CBRRT includes representatives from the following community agencies: the District Attorney's Office, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Family and Children Services, GA Pines Mental Health, the Vashti Center, the Thomas County Sheriff's Department, the Thomasville Police Department, the Thomas County School System, and the Thomasville City School System.

Upon encountering chronic absences and/or tardies, along with other matters which may constitute educational deprivation, the Thomas County School System's designee may refer a student to the CBRRT. The team of school and community agency representatives will hold a scheduled mandatory meeting for the parent/legal guardian to attend. The student is also mandated to attend the CBRRT meeting if he/she is in grades 4th-12th. The meeting will be held in the Thomas County Judicial Center located at 325 N. Madison St. in Thomasville, Georgia, and the parent/legal guardian will receive prior notification of the meeting's scheduled date and time.

The CBRRT will prepare a multi-agency intervention plan with the parent and student that will address factors which may be negatively impacting the student's education. If the parent and/or student fail(s) to attend the mandatory CBRRT meeting, or if the parent and/or student continue(s) to be non-compliant, then the CBRRT may recommend that the District Attorney's Office proceed with an educational deprivation petition in the Thomas County Juvenile Court or criminal prosecution in the Thomas County State Court for the parent/legal guardian and/or prosecution in the Thomas County Juvenile Court or any other court having jurisdiction for the student.

#### **BULLYING**

The Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Such prohibition shall be included in the Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system.

Bullying is defined as an act that is:

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

2. any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - a. causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
  - b. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - c. is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
  - d. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

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

Procedures may be developed at each school encouraging a teacher or other school employee, student, parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student, either anonymously or in the person's name, at the person's option, to report or otherwise provide information on bullying activity. Any teacher or other school employee who, in the exercise of his or her personal judgment and discretion, believes he or she has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that someone is a target of bullying is encouraged to immediately report it to the school principal. Any report will be appropriately investigated by the administration based on the nature of the complaint in a timely manner to determine whether bullying has occurred, whether there are other procedures related to illegal harassment or discrimination that should be implemented and what other steps should be taken. Any report of retaliation for reporting bullying will also be investigated and addressed as called for in this policy and in accordance with school procedures.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which may be done electronically.

Students and parents will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at each school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.

### **MEDICATIONS**

All medications other than the exceptions listed in this policy, whether prescription or over-the-counter, may be administered only in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the principal of each school. All medications must be taken by the parent or guardian to the school office immediately upon arrival at school and must be in original pharmaceutical containers, clearly labeled as to the name of the student, the name of the medication, the appropriate dosage, and the times for dosage. Any student possessing prescription or over-the-counter medication not in accordance with these guidelines will be considered in violation of the School District's drug policy and shall be subject to the discipline set forth in the student code of conduct and/or the student/parent handbook.

A student for whom the school has on file supporting medical documentation may carry at all times with parental/guardian permission inhalers for asthma, auto-injectable epinephrine for allergic reactions, ready-to-use glucagon, and all necessary supplies and equipment to perform monitoring and treatment functions authorized by the student's diabetes medical management plan or medication and supplies authorized by the student's seizure action plan. Students authorized to self-administer such medications shall be instructed not to permit any other student to handle, possess, or otherwise attempt to use his/her medication and shall be informed that violations of such instructions will be dealt with in accordance with the student code of conduct.

In order for the student to carry and self-administer such medications, or in order for the school to store and administer the medication for students who are unable to self-administer because of age or any other reason, parents must provide a written statement from a licensed physician confirming that the student is able to self-administer the medication, if applicable, and written permission from the parent for the nurse or designated employee to consult with the doctor regarding any questions that may arise concerning the medication. Such permission shall release the school district and its employees and agents from civil liability for administering such medication to students, or if the self-administering student suffers an adverse reaction as a result of self-administration of such medication. The terms of this paragraph may be met through a student's diabetes medical management plan or seizure action plan developed and implemented pursuant to state law.

Parents are encouraged to provide to the schools duplicate medication and supplies in the event a student is unable to self-administer or fails to bring the medication or equipment to school.

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. Such persons also are authorized to administer levalbuterol sulfate, if available, to a student in perceived respiratory distress, regardless of whether the student has a prescription for levalbuterol sulfate. Any school employee who in good faith administers or chooses not to administer such medication to a student in such circumstances shall be immune from civil liability.

### WITHDRAWALS

The Thomas County School Board authorizes the schools to withdraw a student who:

1. **has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences;**
2. is not subject to compulsory school attendance;
3. is not receiving instructional services from the local school system through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the Federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); or
4. is subject to compulsory attendance if the local Superintendent or designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program.

Students shall be withdrawn retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

Thomas County Schools notifies parents and students that Section 504 student rights and procedural safeguards are included in their entirety in our student handbooks and on our website. Parents and students are entitled to Section 504 student rights and procedural safeguards on request.

### WEAPONS

It is the policy of the Board of Education that a student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.
- b. Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to

swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or Taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. The Superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one year expulsion under circumstances where the one year expulsion appears excessive to the Superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment. Finally, in any tribunal decision appealed to the board of education, the board may reduce the mandated punishment but shall consider whether the Superintendent and/or tribunal considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction. Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the student code of conduct.

#### Reporting Requirements

Any employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a student possesses a weapon as defined in paragraph 1, is involved in an assault using a weapon as defined in paragraph 2, or is involved in a second offense with a weapon on campus must report such violations to the principal or assistant principal of the school. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that such report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney. The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any activity involving weapons.

Students will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct, which includes a statement of prohibited conduct with regard to weapons and possible disciplinary actions.

### **SECTION 504 PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS**

1. Overview: Any student, parent, or guardian may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding a child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system's Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.
2. Hearing Request: The Request for the Hearing must include the following:
  - a. Student name
  - b. Address of student
  - c. School student is attending
  - d. Reason for request of the hearing
  - e. Decision objecting to
  - f. Remedy suggested
  - g. Name and contact information of person requesting a hearing

Within 10 business days from receiving the Request for Hearing, the 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request from the parent, guardian, or student is incomplete, the 504 Coordinator will tell the grievant what specific information is needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will stop until the Request for Hearing contains all the above noted information.

3. Mediation: The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues. Mediation is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. If mediation is terminated without an agreement, procedures for conducting an impartial hearing will be followed without an additional Request for Hearing.

4. Hearing Procedures:
- a. The 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official and hearing within 45 calendar days unless a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
  - b. A continuance request in writing to all parties may be granted by the hearing officer with good cause.
  - c. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.
  - d. The grievant may be represented by legal counsel at his/her own expense. The grievant may participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If represented by legal counsel at the hearing, the grievant or legal counsel must notify the 504 Coordinator in writing at least 10 calendar days before the hearing. Failure to do so will constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.
  - e. The burden of proof will be on the grievant. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the school or 504 Coordinator to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A school or 504 Coordinator shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the system unless it is demonstrated by the school or 504 Coordinator that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R.§104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.
  - f. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.
  - g. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence.
  - h. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
  - i. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.
  - j. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.
  - k. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the system. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the system.
  - l. Unless otherwise required by law, the impartial review official shall uphold the action of the school system unless the grievant can prove that a preponderance of the evidence supports his or her claim.
  - m. Failure of the grievant to appear at a scheduled hearing unless prior notification of absence was provided and approved by the impartial review official or just cause is shown shall constitute a waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the impartial review official.
5. Decision: The impartial review official shall issue a written determination within 20 calendar days of the date the hearing concluded. The determination of the impartial review official shall not include any monetary damages or the award of any attorney's fees.
6. Review: If not satisfied with the decision of the impartial review official, any party may pursue any right of review, appeal, cause of action or claim available to him or her under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

#### **NOTICE OF RIGHTS OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS UNDER SECTION 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your system's Section 504 Coordinator at the following address:

Beth Weiss  
School Psychologist  
Garrison-Pilcher Elementary School  
229 225-4387  
[bweiss@tcjackets.net](mailto:bweiss@tcjackets.net) - office email

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provides parents and/or students with the following rights:

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents.
3. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student.
4. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs.
5. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students.
6. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility.
7. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child.
8. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations.
10. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities.
11. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement.
12. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
13. You have the right to examine your child's educational records.
14. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney.
15. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request.
16. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure.
17. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

### **THE THOMAS COUNTY SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

The Thomas County Special Education department offers services for children who have been identified as having a disability. A child with a disability is a child evaluated and determined to be eligible for special education services for intellectual disabilities, a hearing impairment including deafness, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment including blindness, emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, or deaf/blindness. Special education is specially designed instruction provided at no cost to parents that meets the unique needs of each student that is identified with a disability. Special education includes instruction in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals, institutions and other settings, physical education, travel training, and vocational education.



Related services are services such as transportation and developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to fully benefit from special education.

Decisions regarding eligibility, least restrictive environment, and services are made by a committee of individuals that work directly with the child and the child's parents or guardian. Parents can contact the Thomas County Special Education Department by calling 229-225-4380.

### **SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT POLICY**

As part of the emergency procedures in place in our schools, any student who poses an imminent risk of injury to him/herself or others may be physically restrained by school staff in accordance with Thomas County Board of Education policies. This restraint could occur along with other emergency actions such as contacting law enforcement. Significant violations of the law including assaults on students and staff will be reported to law enforcement. Within a reasonable time, not to exceed one school day, parents or guardians will be informed in writing when any of these actions occur.

### **HOSPITAL HOMEBOUND**

Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services

Hospital/Homebound (HHB) services are designed to provide continuity of educational services between the classroom and home or hospital for students in Georgia public schools whose medical needs, either physical or psychiatric, do not allow them to attend school for a limited period of time. HHB instruction may be used to supplement the classroom program for students with health impairments whose conditions may interfere with regular school attendance (e.g., students receiving dialysis or radiation/chemotherapy or students with other serious health conditions). Students must be enrolled in a public school in Georgia in order to receive Hospital Homebound services.

HHB services are not intended to supplant regular school services and are by design temporary. The student must anticipate being absent from school for a minimum of ten consecutive or intermittent school days due to a medical or psychiatric condition. The student's inability to attend school for medical or psychiatric reasons must be certified by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist who is currently treating the student for the diagnosis presented. For HHB forms or questions contact your school counselor or Chris Huckans, Director of Student Service at 229 225-4380, or [chuckans@tcjackets.net](mailto:chuckans@tcjackets.net).

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that The Renaissance Center, with certain exceptions, obtain a parent/guardian's written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records. However, the school may disclose appropriately designated "Directory Information" at the discretion of the school unless the principal or designee has been notified in writing by August 31 of each school year by the parent/guardian or eligible student that some or all of this information shall not be designated as Directory information. The primary purpose of Directory information is to allow the school to include this type of information from the student's education records in certain school publications. Directory information includes student name, address, year of birth, enrollment, dates of attendance, grade level, degrees and awards received, date of graduation and photograph. Section 8025 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that school systems provide, upon a request made by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education, access to the name, address, and telephone listing of each secondary school student. A parent of a secondary school student, or a student who has reach the age of 18, may submit a written request to the school, that the student's name, address, and telephone listing not be released to a military recruiter or an institution of higher education without prior written consent of the parent.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

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Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Title II of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984); or handicap (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) in education programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Employees, students, and the general public are hereby notified that the Thomas County School District does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities or in employment policies. Dr. Bob Dechman, Director of Federal Programs for Thomas County Schools, is responsible for coordinating the district's effort to implement this nondiscriminatory policy. Inquiries concerning the application of Title II, Title IV, or Section 504 to the policies and practices of the district may be addressed to: Dr. Bob Dechman, Thomas County School, 200 North Pinetree Blvd, Thomasville, Georgia 31792. Inquiries concerning Title IX (discrimination based on sex) can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator, Chris Huckans, 200 N. Pinetree Blvd, Thomasville, GA; or 229-225-4380, or [chuckans@tcjackets.net](mailto:chuckans@tcjackets.net).

## **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The ultimate responsibility for a student's behavior rests with the student and his/her parents/guardians. Students are to respect constituted authority, which includes obedience to school rules, regulations, and procedures. The school anticipates that parents will be cooperative in dealing with any behavioral problems which may arise and expects that this cooperation will be made apparent to the child.

One of the most significant objectives of discipline must be to develop, within the individual student, the desire to exercise his/her rights judiciously. To realize this objective, the school reserves the right to hold parental conferences, guidance conferences, or a conference with the court, and the right to request schedule changes or psychological examinations and/or treatment.

Georgia law (O. C. G. A. 20-2-766) provides that school administrators who identify a student as a chronic disciplinary problem may require the parent to attend a conference to participate in the development of a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan. Parents who do not attend such conferences may be referred to the courts where they may be fined up to \$500.00. **The need for a parental conference is indicated whenever a student is suspended at home, or when a teacher or administrator informs the parent that a conference is needed.**

## **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

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The school has an approved emergency management plan on file in the Administrator's office. This plan has provisions for tornadoes, fire, and terroristic situations. Anyone interested in reviewing the plan should request a copy from the Principal's secretary.

## **STAFF**

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The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development is composed of a staff that demonstrates strong instructional and behavior management skills along with positive interpersonal skills.

## **POLICIES**

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Every student has the right to an education, and our policies are enforced to protect this right. School regulations are developed keeping in mind the requirements set by Georgia state law, the Georgia State School Board, and the Thomas County Board of Education. In areas where these organizations do not give specific directions, the administration and faculty develop regulations. All policies and regulations are subject to review and help us work well together by treating fellow students and teachers with courtesy and respect. We request your cooperation in abiding by these policies.

## ADDRESS/NAME CHANGES

Parents must inform the school office if there is a change of address or telephone number. A legal document is required before the name of a student is changed on student records.

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS, GRADES & GUIDANCE SERVICES

### Grading Criteria

Classes at the Renaissance Center are taught using Odysseyware software which allows students to progress through their lessons at their own pace. Students will be provided a syllabus at the start of each course that will include a pacing guide, with assignment due dates, that correlate with each grading period. **STUDENTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS BY THE RESPECTIVE DUE DATE PER ASSIGNMENT.** Once your child has completed 100% of a course, he or she will be awarded the course credit. Credit in all classes (except citizenship, economics, health, and personal fitness) is awarded on a yearly system with one (1) credit being earned for the year. Credit in citizenship, economics, health, and personal fitness is awarded on a semester basis. If a Georgia Milestones End of Course assessment is given in a course, that assessment score counts 20% of the yearly grade for that course. High school students must earn a total of 23 units of credit to graduate. Students may also earn additional academic credits to make up for previously failed courses.

### STATE-REQUIRED AREAS OF STUDY

*(High School Students Only)*

#### Course Requirements for Promotion:

<b>10<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b>	Literature/Composition, Math, Science, Social Studies
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b>	Literature/Composition, Math, Science, Social Studies
<b>12<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b>	Literature/Composition, Math, Science, Social Studies

#### Graduation Requirements:

<b>English:</b>	4 units
<b>Mathematics:</b>	4 units
<b>Science:</b>	4 units
<b>Social Studies:</b>	3 units
<b>Physical Education:</b>	1 unit (Health/Personal Fitness)
<b>Pathway Courses:</b>	3 units (CTAE and/or Fine Arts and/or Foreign Language)
<b>Additional Electives:</b>	4 units
<b>Total Units Minimum:</b>	<b>23 Carnegie Unit Credits</b>

Students are required to take a Georgia Milestones End of Course (EOC) assessment while enrolled in each EOC subject (GSE Algebra, Biology, U.S. History, and American Literature and Composition). The EOC Test contributes 20% to the course grade.

**Courses:** Students must complete specific course requirements as outlined in the State Board of Education Graduation Rule: 160-4-2-.48. Furthermore, students must pass all courses that have a Georgia Milestones End of Course (EOC) Test.

### Grading/Promotion Requirements

(Middle School Students Only)

90-100 Excellent

80-89 Good

70-79 Average

69 and below Failing

Promotion Requirements:

1. Earn a yearly average of 70 or above in all academic areas: Language Arts/Reading, Math, Science & Social Studies
2. 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students must pass the reading and math portions of the Georgia Milestones End of Grade Assessment

Students who do not meet the promotion requirements will be retained or considered for placement by a placement committee.

### Conferences

The staff of The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development welcomes the opportunity to discuss with students and parents classroom performance, behavior, or any other topic. Conferences with staff should be scheduled through the secretary at 229-227-3222. Appointments will be made at a time that is convenient for everyone involved. **Appointments may not be made at times that interfere with instructional activities.** Conferences may be held before or after school. Parents are not permitted to go to a teacher's classroom during the school day to discuss their child's performance, as this would interrupt instruction.

### Guidance

The staff at The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development will help all students make the most of their abilities, interests, and opportunities. The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development attempts to accomplish this purpose by assisting the students in making their many education and career decisions. Parents are invited to call for an appointment or for information at any time.

### Grade Reports

Weekly progress reports are sent home with students at the end of each week. Parents are invited to call for an appointment or for information at any time.

2023-2024 Testing Schedule	
Test Name	Test Date
GA Milestones EOC Re-Test	July 10-13
GA Milestones EOC Mid-Month	August 21-25
GA Milestones EOC Mid-Month	September 11-15
GA Milestones EOC Mid-Month	October 16-20
PSAT/NMSQT	October 25
PSAT (8/9)	October 27
ITBS, CogAT (6 <sup>th</sup> )	November 6-17
GA Milestones EOC Mid-Month	November 6-10
GA Milestones EOC:ELA, Math, SCI, SS	December 14-20
GA Milestones EOC Mid-Month	January 22-26
GA Milestones EOC Mid-Month	February 12-16
GA Milestones EOC Mid-Month	March 11-15
GA Milestones EOG (3-8)	April 15-25

GA Milestones EOC • American Literature (Day 1)	May 1
GA Milestones EOC • American Literature (Day 2)	May 2
GA Milestones EOC • Algebra I	May 4
GA Milestones EOC • Biology	May 8
GA Milestones EOC • US History	May 10
GA Milestones EOG Retest(5, 8 Only)	May 22-23
GA Milestones EOC Summer School	June 10-14

## ONLINE TEST REGISTRATION INFORMATION

**Renaissance Center School Code: 112989**

Online registration for ACT: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

Online registration for SAT: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

### Transfer/Home School Credit

Students transferring into public school from home school programs must take an exam for each course in which academic credit is sought. A combination of the student's test scores and performance in future classes will determine whether credit is awarded.

### Dual Enrollment

Dual Enrollment provides for participation in dual enrollment credit for eligible high school and home study students. These students earn postsecondary credit hours while simultaneously meeting their high school graduation or home study completion requirements.

### Withdrawals

Students withdrawing from school, for any reason, should see the school secretary for the proper forms. The student must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Books must be returned and all debts paid in order to clear a student's records. Students deciding to quit are required to have an exit conference with the school administrator to discuss their future options prior to withdrawal.

### Re-entry Students

All re-entry students must complete the necessary forms and pay all outstanding school debts (lost textbooks, media center fines, broken equipment, etc.) before the re-entry process can be official. In addition, a conference must be held with an administrator, and a parent/guardian must be present. The re-entry conference applies to any student who withdraws from school.

## REGULATIONS

### Automobiles/Motorized Vehicles

Students will **not** be allowed to drive his/her personal vehicle to and from the Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development, unless special permission is granted from the Principal.

### Bus Transportation

Bus transportation will not be provided for students attending The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development program unless the student has an IEP requiring transportation. Students who successfully transition back to their regular school will be reinstated and will be allowed to ride on their regular bus route.

## Campus Maintenance

Students are to assist in maintaining our school. All paper and trash should be placed in the proper receptacles. Students may be assigned to work detail and required to complete community service as a behavior consequence before being allowed to return to the regular school program.

## Disturbances

Students are required to submit to screenings before entering the building. Cell phones, Smart watches, MP3 players, iPads or iPods, radios, CD/tape players, cameras, beepers, noisemakers, pets, or any nuisance devices are prohibited at Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development. Any action or piece of equipment that may create a disturbance in the school is strictly prohibited, and such items will be confiscated.

## Dress Code

Students attending The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development will be required to follow a school uniform dress code every day. Dress code criteria are listed below:

1. Students **MUST** wear The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development uniform at all times. Khaki colored pants, (NO JEANS, SHORTS, CAPRI PANTS, LEGGINGS, JEGGINGS, JOGGERS, or SWEAT PANTS), plain navy blue/white polo/buttoned down shirt (NO T-SHIRT or SHEER/SEE-THROUGH SHIRTS). ALL STUDENTS must wear shirts at waist level and tucked into pants. ALL STUDENTS must wear pants at waist level and not have any holes in them. Belts must be worn with the pants at all times.
2. Students are not allowed to cover their uniform. This includes sweatshirts, jackets, etc. No jackets with hoods. During cold weather days, students can cover themselves when they are outside, but must remove coats, sweater, sweatshirt, etc. upon entering the building. Exceptions to this rule will be made at the administrator's discretion
3. . A long-sleeve tee shirt (white, khaki, or navy) may be worn under the uniform shirt.
4. Absolutely no head gear (hats, bandannas, rubber bands, etc.) of any kind unless religious exception.
5. With the exception of earrings, no exposed body piercings are allowed.
6. All tattoos must be covered at all times.
7. Female students must wear clothing that adequately covers cleavage.
8. No distracting hairstyles.
9. No inflammatory or gang related clothing/styling/paraphernalia is allowed. The principal or designee will have final say in determining if item is gang related or inflammatory.
10. No flip flops, sandals, bedroom slippers, or steel toed boots will be allowed. Tennis shoes are preferred.

**STUDENTS MUST BE IN DRESS CODE BEFORE ENTERING THE SCHOOL BUILDING. STUDENTS WHO FAIL TO ABIDE BY THE DRESS CODE WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

### **Early Dismissal/Supervised Work Study**

Students must be enrolled in an approved work-study program in order to qualify for early dismissal from The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development for work purposes. The approved work-study program will be sponsored by Thomas County Central High School or Bishop Hall Charter School. Students on early dismissal must be out of the school building and in the process of leaving campus upon being released. Any loitering on campus may result in termination from work study and assignment to classes for the remainder of the school day.

### **Emergency Drills**

**Fire Drills** will be held monthly. Students are to file out of the building to the designated area where their teacher will take roll. Any student found tampering with the fire alarm, fire extinguisher or emergency equipment will be suspended, and the appropriate authorities will be notified.

### **Lockdown Drills**

A soft lockdown means all exterior and classroom doors are secured but class activities continue as scheduled. In the event of a hard lockdown, all exterior and classroom doors are secured and staff and students remain in place until further notice is given.

### **Severe Weather Drills**

When a tornado watch is issued, staff secures all exterior doors and students remain indoors and continue to conduct the day as usual.

A tornado warning is issued when tornadic activity has been spotted in the vicinity. Staff and students transition to safety zones and remain in place until an all-clear has been given.

All emergency drills are practiced throughout the school year.

### **Flowers, Gifts, and Parties**

The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development faculty and staff will not permit delivery of flowers or gifts to students at any time during the school day. Students should ask businesses to deliver these items to the recipient's home. Parties may not be held during the school day.

### **Fundraising/Clubs**

Students are permitted to engage in the sale of approved items as a means of financially supporting the programs and activities of clubs and school organizations. The principal, Superintendent, and board of education must approve all fund raising activities before solicitation begins. These activities may be held before school, after school, and at lunchtime only. No candy or food sales will be approved. The sale of raffle tickets by students as a school-sponsored activity is illegal and against the State Board of Education standards.

### **Hall Passes**

Students are not to be out of class unless supervised by an adult or during a scheduled restroom break, lunch, or class change time.

### **Interscholastic Activities and Contests**

Students who attend The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development are **not allowed to participate in any school-sponsored activity during the time of their placement.** Students who attend events without permission while assigned to The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development risk being **arrested and charged for criminal trespassing.**

### **Parent Portal**

Parents may view attendance and grades for their students using the Parent Portal program available online through the Thomas County School District or through the Campus Portal App. To obtain an Infinite Campus access code,

parents should contact The Renaissance Center. Access codes will not be issued by phone, mail, or fax. Parents may also view their child's Odysseyware grades and view student progress by submitting a working email address to The Renaissance Center.

### **School and the Law**

Unlawful acts occurring on or off school grounds or buses will subject students to penalties, which the court may prescribe and may result in suspension or dismissal from school.

### **School-Based Health Center**

Thomas County Schools and Primary Care of Southwest Georgia, Inc. (PCSG) have developed a comprehensive health clinic at Thomas County Middle School (TCMS). This center is staffed with a Board Certified Family Nurse Practitioner and a Licensed Practical Nurse. Services include diagnosis and treatment of acute illnesses and minor injuries, management of chronic illnesses, routine health physicals, immunizations, health education/promotion, hearing, vision and lab testing. The primary focus of the clinic is to provide quality, accessible health care to the children of Thomas County Schools in order to impact the children's health, school attendance and academic performance.

### **School Material**

The care of textbooks/Chromebooks is the responsibility of the student to whom they are issued. The condition and number of the textbook/Chromebook are recorded when it is issued by the teacher. The student must pay for any abuse or loss of the textbook/Chromebook. Students are required to provide pencil/pen and paper for their use at school.

### **Selling on School Campus**

Only items approved for club/organization fundraising activities may be sold on campus, and then only at designated times (see Fundraising). Students **may not** engage in the sale of items sponsored by an organization not affiliated with the school. The sale of candy or other food items by individuals or clubs on campus is prohibited.

### **Telephones**

The phones in the school office are reserved for official school business and are not to be used by students prior to 30 minutes before dismissal. **Cell phones are strictly prohibited.**

### **Visitors**

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff, any visitor having valid business at the school must report to the School Office or the Principal's office and request a visitor's permit from the administrator or administrator designee. Visiting with students by anyone other than the parent and/or guardian will not be allowed.

### **Water Safety/Swim Lessons**

The American Academy of Pediatrics cautions that drowning is one of the top causes of injury and death in children each year in the United States. Parents can help prevent these tragedies by enrolling children in water safety courses and swimming lessons. In our community, the Everett-Milton and Butler-Mason YMCA locations offer swim lessons with year-round and seasonal options. Private, semi-private, and group lessons are available. Please contact the YMCA (229-226-3446) for more information.

This information is provided in accordance with H.B. 402, also known as the Edna Mae McGovern Act.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

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### **Cafeteria**

The goal of the Thomas County Schools Nutrition Program is to provide high quality nutritious breakfast and lunches to all students in the Thomas County School System. Menus must meet school lunch program meal



requirements. Meals are planned with a goal of providing students with one third of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for key nutrients and calories.

Breakfast will be served each day. The lunch period will begin at 12:00 PM and end at 12:30 PM. No one is required to eat a lunch prepared by the lunchroom staff. However, no one will be permitted to leave the school campus for the purpose of eating lunch.

### **Clinic**

Thomas County Schools provides clinic services for students according to the policy approved by the Thomas County Board of Education. Each student is requested to complete a personal data sheet. This will be placed on file in the administrative office. The student's parents or guardian **MUST** complete a school nurse form. **The student's parent or guardian MUST transport ALL over-the-counter medicines and prescribed medicines to the school. NO student will be allowed to transport any kinds of medicines to and from school.** All prescription drugs must be properly labeled.

Parents of students who are being treated for epilepsy or a seizure disorder may provide the school with a seizure action plan. If you would like more information regarding how to develop a seizure action plan for your student, please contact the school nurse.

### **Work Permits**

A work permit may be required for any student under the age of 18 who works outside of school. These may be obtained from the student's employer or from The Renaissance Center office.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code of Conduct provides for the welfare and safety of all students and ensures a conducive learning environment. The school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of the individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by the following progressive Code of Conduct. This 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 school grounds at any school activity, function, or event; and while traveling to and from such events;
3. on vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system; and
4. off school grounds for felonious conduct or conduct which adversely impacts the school's learning environment or the safety of students or employees.

### **GENERAL RULES:**

The faculty and staff of The Renaissance Center expect **ALL** students to...

1. wear the assigned uniform, pants at waist level, and belts on;
2. complete all assigned class work/projects by due dates;
3. be ready/prepared to work each day by having paper to take notes, and pencil or pen to write with;
4. be respectful, courteous and kind to everyone; and
5. be responsible for their choices and actions.

Students are **not** allowed to...

1. have personal electronic devices of any kind on school campus;
2. to bring book bags;
3. to wear head gear of any kind unless religious exception;
4. to use profanity or profane gestures;
5. to yell or fight;
6. to have facial piercings;
7. to put others down; or
8. to eat or drink in class.

## Discipline Codes

Definitions of terms and basic information relating to the discipline code:

<b>Expulsion</b>	Expulsion is the permanent removal from school.
<b>Drug Testing</b>	Students appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on school property are subject to mandatory drug testing. The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development also reserves the right to randomly drug test any student.
<b>In-School Suspension (ISS)</b>	ISS refers to the removal of students from their regular classes for a period of one or more days to a highly-structured, supervised environment. Students who exhibit disruptive behavior and/or repeat school offenses are subject to ISS. Students who refuse/fail to serve ISS days will serve ISS days as OSS. Parents will be notified by phone or letter when students are assigned. Students are counted present for school attendance and provided individualized assignments from their regular classroom teachers. Students who fail to abide by the rules and regulations of ISS will receive additional ISS days or be terminated from the program. Any absences during an ISS assignment will be made up before the student returns to the regular classroom. Students will bring basic learning supplies and will do assigned work quietly in their seats. Students will obey all school rules and regulations.
<b>Lunch Detention</b>	Teachers may assign students to lunch detention. Students who fail to report will be referred to the administration for disciplinary actions.
<b>Out-of-School Suspension</b>	Out-of-School suspension is the removal of students from school for a specified period of time. Students are not allowed on campus during the school day nor are they allowed to attend any school functions or activities during the period of suspension.
<b>Searches</b>	Students and/or property of the students are subject to searches upon entering the building and at any time while under the direct supervision of The Renaissance Center for Academic and Career Development staff on or off campus. Students may also be charged with insubordination, up to level 3, for failure to comply with a search directive.
<b>Security Cameras</b>	Security cameras are strategically placed throughout the building and on the campus to assist staff in maintaining a safe and supervised environment. Students who are video recorded while engaging in misconduct are subject to the same disciplinary action that they would receive if their behavior had been directly observed by a teacher or administrator.
<b>Time-out</b>	Time-out is the removal of students from a specific class or classes for a specified period of time. Students who fail to serve time-out will serve doubled days in ISS. Parents will be notified by phone or letter when students are assigned. Students are counted present for school attendance and are provided individualized assignments from their regular classroom teachers.
<b>Suspensions for Parent Conference</b>	<b>Students who are suspended for a parent conference are not allowed to attend school until a parent accompanies the student to</b>

**school for a conference.** It is not necessary for students to miss any school time provided a parent/guardian accompanies the student to school the following day.

## Weapons

It is the policy of the Board of Education that a student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

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

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

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

Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the student code of conduct.

### Reporting Requirements

All employees must report violations of this policy to the principal or assistant principal of the school. If the principal has reasonable cause to believe that a report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney.

The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any activity involving weapons. Students will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct, which includes a statement of prohibited conduct with regard to weapons and possible disciplinary actions.

**\*All dispositions are subject to administrative discretion with regard to the severity of the circumstances, the events surrounding the offense, and the stipulations given to a student by the Thomas County Board of Education. All persons, vehicles and personal belongings on school property are subject to search by school administrators and/or school resource officers.**

**\*\*When a student is assigned Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), a parent/guardian may be required to attend a post-suspension conference before the student is allowed to return to school.**

OFFENSE	DISPOSITION
<p><b>1. ALCOHOL</b></p> <p>a. Sale of or attempting to sell on property or while attending school function</p> <p>b. Possession of, use of, under the influence of, on school property or while attending a school function</p> <p>P. L. 101-226: “The Possession and use of illicit drugs, and the unlawful Possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful.”</p>	<p>a. Immediate 10 Days OSS/Parent &amp; Law Officials Notification/Recommendation for Tribunal.</p> <p>b. Immediate 10 Days Home Suspension/Parent &amp; Law Officials Notification/Recommendation for Tribunal. Students must also submit to a drug test.</p>
<p><b>2. BULLYING</b></p> <p>Bullying behavior is defined as willful attempts or threats to inflict injury, physical and/or mental stress on another person, when accompanied by apparent present ability to do so; or intentional displays of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm. No student shall engage in verbal or written harassment, threat or abuse of, or towards, another student or students. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 1-5 Days OSS/Parent Notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 9 days OSS/Parent Notification/Possible Recommendation for Tribunal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICE VIOLATION</b></p> <p>Note: Cell phones and other personal electronic devices will be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Warning/Parent Notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 1 Day ISS/Parent Notification</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISS/Parent Notification</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5 Days ISS/Parent Conference</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: 10 Days ISS</li> </ul> <p>Failure to surrender a phone to teacher, 3 days ISS Failure to surrender a phone to administrator, 3 days OSS</p>
<p><b>4. CHEATING/FORGERY/PLAGIARISM</b></p> <p>Cheating includes copying another’s class work, homework, project, or giving or receiving answers during a test. Plagiarism is using or closely imitating the language and/or thoughts of another author without authorization; the representation of an author’s work as one’s own, as by not crediting the original author.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penalty at the discretion of the teacher and/or the principal. The penalty for cheating/forgery/plagiarism may include a zero on the assignment or test in question and disciplinary action.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. CHRONIC MISBEHAVIOR</b></p> <p>Chronic misbehavior is defined as students accumulating multiple disciplinary referrals for the same or a variety of offenses; or any behavior that is subversive to the good order and discipline of Thomas County Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent notification/Recommendation for a tribunal at the discretion of the school administration.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. DISRESPECTFUL CONDUCT</b></p> <p>a. WILLFUL DISOBEDIENCE toward teachers, administrator, and other school personnel</p> <p>b. DISRESPECTFUL CONDUCTS such as...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horseplay/Dangerous Play</li> <li>• Insubordination</li> <li>• Lying</li> <li>• Public Display of Affection</li> </ul>	<p>a. For willful disobedience; Immediate removal from class or activity; penalty at the discretion of the Principal 1-10 days OSS/Parent notification/continuous pattern of behavior – recommendation for tribunal</p> <p>b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: - 3 Days ISS/Parent Notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: - 5 Days ISS/Parent Conference</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: - 3 Days OSS/Parent Conference</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: - 5 Days OSS/Possible Recommendation for Tribunal</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. DISRUPTION OF CLASS/SCHOOL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any disorderly/disruptive conduct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penalty at the discretion of the Principal; depending on the nature of the offense, the disposition may be</li> </ul>

	1-10 days OSS/Parent Notification/ Recommendation for Tribunal
<p><b>8. DRUGS</b></p> <p>a. Distribution of or attempting to sell on school property, or while attending a school function. Distribution of any prescription medication to any student or sharing any prescription medication with any student will be considered a violation of this rule.</p> <p>b. Possession of, use of, under the influence of, on school property or while attending school function. This includes the possession of CBD, with or without THC, or any of the Delta variants.</p> <p>c. Possession of drug paraphernalia.</p>	<p>a. Immediate 10 Days Home Suspension/Parent &amp; Law Officials Notification/Recommendation for Tribunal.</p> <p>b. Immediate 10 Days Home Suspension/Parent &amp; law officials' notification. Recommendation for tribunal. Submission to a drug test.</p> <p>c. Immediate 10 Days OSS/Drug paraphernalia will be confiscated and delivered to the sheriff's department for testing. If residue is found the student(s) will be considered in violation of 2b.</p>
<p><b>9.EXTORTION/ATTEMPTING TO EXTORT</b> The practice of obtaining something, especially money, through force or threats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-10 Days OSS/Parent notification/Possible recommendation for tribunal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10. GAMBLING</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Warning/parent notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISS/Parent notification</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 5 Days ISS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 3 Days OSS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 6<sup>th</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS</li> </ul>
<p><b>11. GANG RELATED ACTIVITY</b> The Thomas County Board of Education establishes this policy to eliminate or prevent the influence and activities of gangs in schools. For the purposes of this policy, a "gang" is defined as any group or association, whether formal or informal, which encourages, solicits, promotes, urges, counsels, furthers, advocates, condones, assists, causes, advises, procures, or abets any illegal or disruptive activity or behavior of any kind, whether on school campuses, during school-related events, or in the community. A gang member is defined as an individual who, as a representative of or on behalf of, participates in any of the activities associated with gangs. Gangs which initiate, advocate, or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property is harmful to the education process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, tattoos, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group, disrupts the school environment. Such behaviors are contrary to educational objectives and promote an atmosphere where unlawful acts or violations of school regulation may occur.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No student shall recruit or solicit membership in any gang or gang-related organization or activity.</li> <li>2. No student will be allowed to wear, display, or carry any type of clothing, apparel, tattoos, article, gesture or manner of grooming which indicates or implies</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Days OSS/Parent &amp; possible law official notification/recommendation for tribunal.</li> </ul>

<p>membership/affiliation with a gang or gang activities. The principal or designee will have the final say in determining the presence of a gang relationship.</p> <p>3. No student will be allowed to exhibit behavior or gestures which symbolize gang membership, or cause and/or participate in activities which intimidate or seek to cause bodily harm or affect the attendance of another student.</p> <p>School officials reserve the right to punish any other gang-related behavior that is subversive to the good order and discipline in the schools, even though such behavior is not specifically identified in the preceding rules.</p>	
<p><b>12. PHYSICAL ASSAULT/FIGHTING</b> Physical assault or battery of a student, teacher, administrator, and/or any other school personnel on school property or off school property if school-related; this will include touching, striking, pushing, or threatening bodily or psychological harm to any school system employee. If a school employee is hit during the process of breaking up a fight, severe action will be taken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Days OSS/Parent notification/Recommendation for tribunal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>13. POSSESSION OF PORNOGRAPHY/OBSCENE MATERIALS</b> No student shall possess or distribute profane, vulgar, pornographic, obscene, or ethnically offensive materials. Includes acceptable computer use policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-5 Days OSS/Parent notification/Possible recommendation for tribunal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>14. PROFANITY</b> a. Towards Administrators, Teachers, Faculty/Staff No student shall verbally assault, use any type of profane, vulgar, obscene, abusive or offensive language (written or oral) and/or gestures toward any administrator, teacher, adult, faculty/staff, guest, on school property or at a school sponsored event. This includes hand signs, ethnically offensive language, suggestive initials or jargon commonly known to mean something disrespectful. This includes profanity not directly aimed at, but in the presence of an adult and any threatened violence.</p> <p>b. Towards Other Students No student shall use any type of profane, ethnically offensive language, vulgar, obscene, abusive or offensive language (written or oral) or gestures in reference to another student and/or that maybe overheard by an administrator, teacher, adult, faculty/staff, guest on school property or at a school sponsored event.</p>	<p>a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 5-10 Days OSS</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS/Possible recommendation for tribunal</li> </ul> <p>b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Warning/Parent notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 1-3 Days ISS/Parent notification</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days ISS/Parent Conference</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 3-5 Days OSS/Parent Conference</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5-10 Days OSS/Parent Conference</li> <li>• 6<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5-10 Days OSS/Possible recommendation for tribunal</li> </ul>
<p><b>15. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT</b> No student shall be guilty of sexual misconduct which may include molesting another student, indecent exposure, rape, consensual sex acts, or any other overt sexual act on school property, during school functions, or under school supervision. No student shall be guilty of sexual harassment which may include sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions, pressure for dates, leering, touching, pinching,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Days OSS/Parent notification/Possible notification of law enforcement/Recommendation for tribunal.</li> </ul>

<p>commenting about a person’s body, sending suggestive, vulgar or sexually explicit communications, drawing offensive pictures, or making obscene gestures.</p>	
<p><b>16. STEALING</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS/Parent notification/ Restitution for all damages and theft</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 9 Days OSS/parent conference/ Restitution for all damages and theft</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS/Restitution for all damages and theft/Recommendation for tribunal</li> </ul>
<p><b>17. THREAT/INTIMIDATION</b> Any threat through written or verbal language or act which creates a fear of harm and/or conveys a serious expression of intent to harm or violence without displaying a weapon and without subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm without displaying a weapon or subjecting victims to physical attack.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Days OSS/Parent notification/Possible notification of law enforcement/Recommendation for tribunal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>18. TERRORISTIC/BOMB THREAT/INCENDIARY DEVICES</b> Tampering with fire safety equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate 10 days home suspension/Parent &amp; law enforcement notification/Recommendation for tribunal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>19. TOBACCO POSSESSION</b> Cigarettes, lighters, matches, electronic cigarettes, and smokeless tobacco will be confiscated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISS/parent notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 5 Days ISS/parent conference</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 10 Days ISS/parent conference</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS/Recommendation for tribunal</li> </ul>
<p><b>20. UNAUTHORIZED WEBSITE</b> This includes the use of any login information that is not assigned to the student using it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Warning and parent notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Assigned to a Chromebook/3 Days ISS/Parent Notification</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Assigned bookwork/Parent Conference</li> </ul>
<p><b>21. UNEXCUSED ATTENDANCE</b> Truancy is defined as any absence from school without parental permission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Unauthorized Area</b></li> <li>• <b>Skipping class</b> is defined as absence from any required school activity, or being in an unauthorized area during class time. A student should have a hall pass signed by a teacher any time he/she is out of class.</li> <li>• <b>Leaving school campus without permission</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Warning</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Lunch Detention/Parent Notification</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 1 Day ISS/Parent Notification</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5 Days ISS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Warning/Parent notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 5 Days ISS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 3 Days OSS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS/Possible recommendation for tribunal. Penalty at the discretion of the Principal.</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISS/Parent notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 5 Days ISS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 3 Days OSS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5 Days OSS/Parent conference</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tardiness</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: 10 Days OSS/Possible recommendation for tribunal. Penalty at the discretion of the Principal.</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Warning/Parent notification</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Time-out/Parent notification</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: 1 Day ISS/Parent notification</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: 3 Days ISS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Offense: 5 Days ISS/Parent conference</li> <li>• 6<sup>th</sup> Offense: Additional ISS days/Parent conference</li> </ul>
<p><b>22. UNLAWFUL EAVESDROPPING OR SURVEILLANCE-INVASION OF PRIVACY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Days OSS/Parent notification/Possible recommendation for a tribunal &amp; notification of law enforcement</li> </ul>
<p><b>23. VANDALISM/DESTRUCTION OF SCHOOL PROPERTY/MISUSE OF COMPUTERS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restitution for all damages, a minimum of a 5-10 Days OSS/Possible recommendation for tribunal/Possible notification of law officials where students appear to be in violation of the law.</li> </ul>
<p><b>24. VIOLENCE AGAINST A TEACHER/SCHOOL PERSONNEL</b> Intentional physical attack against a teacher or school personnel with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack against a teacher or school personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Days OSS/Parent notification/Possible notification of law enforcement/Recommendation for tribunal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>25. WEAPONS</b> It is the policy of Thomas County Board of Education that a student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object the reasonable can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.</li> <li>Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any non-lethal air gun, and any stun gun or Taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disciplinary tribunal with a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion and notification of law officials.</li> <li>9 Days OSS/parent and possible law enforcement notification if law is violated and recommendation for tribunal. A student who uses or threatens to use a weapon on a student or employee will be suspended for a formal hearing.</li> </ol>



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**\*\* NOTE: ALL DISCIPLINARY DISPOSITIONS ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL AND SUPERINTENDENT. THIS CODE OF CONDUCT SERVES AS A GUIDE ONLY.**

These general rules, code of conduct, as well as Thomas County Policies included with this handbook, are to promote and insure an orderly and safe school environment. School rules apply to all student behavior during school hours and on the school bus. Students are prohibited from violating school rules toward persons attending school-related functions and are subject to consequences for misconduct involving persons or property at school-related functions (HB 1321). For the safety and well-being of the student body, school officials reserve the right to search book bags, lockers, or any location deemed appropriate. Teachers will not be interrupted to retrieve an item that has been taken. The school will not be held responsible for any stolen items. Principal/law enforcement will not conduct classroom/area searches for missing items.