

DPS CODE OF CONDUCT and DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

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DALTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2017-2018

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

It is the purpose of the Board of Education to operate the schools in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend our schools.

The schools' primary goal is to educate, not to discipline; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective action may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by the policies, regulations and rules set forth herein.

Such governing rules shall be published and disseminated to school personnel and students. Students will be asked to share this copy with parents. Additional copies will be available at each school.

The superintendent shall take appropriate action to assure the establishment and administration of procedures necessary to provide effectively for pupil control and discipline.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the policies, regulations and rules of this district, and to be supportive of these in their daily communication with their children and other individuals of the community.

In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-735(e), Dalton Public Schools encourages parents to inform their children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

THE DALTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

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STUDENT SAFETY:

The Dalton Public School System endeavors to provide a safe and secure environment for all students, and takes precautions to ensure student safety. School officials may search any student if there is reasonable suspicion that he or she is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Student vehicles brought on campus; student book bags, school lockers, desks and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without further notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors, alcohol sensor devices and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be used at school or at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of school administrators. Parents and students should be aware that all of these options are available to school officials and may be used.

NOTE: Georgia law allows a school system to refuse to enroll, or to dismiss from enrollment under appropriate circumstances, any student who is found to be subject to a disciplinary order of another school system. Dalton Public Schools will consider enrolling students currently under suspension into the Dalton Alternative Education Program. Dalton Public Schools will not enroll a student under expulsion from another school system. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.2)

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

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

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

Students may also be disciplined for conduct off campus which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school which disrupts the educational process.

AUTHORITY OF PRINCIPAL:

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, through assistance from the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. The principal's authority extends to include any student visiting the campus from another school. In cases of a student's disruptive, disorderly, or dangerous conduct not covered in this brochure, the principal may undertake corrective measures which he or she feels to be in the best interest of the school and the student involved. Principals and teachers have the authority to remove a student from the classroom. The superintendent shall fully support that authority pursuant to Code Section 20-20-738. Students who violate acceptable conduct on a school bus distract the driver and jeopardize the safety of all who ride the bus. Failure to respond to correction of the bus driver shall be reported to the school principal who shall determine the consequences. Offenses committed on the bus carry the same penalties as shown in this brochure. In addition to the penalties listed in this brochure, the student may lose his/her privilege to transportation.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors. Repeat offenses will subject the offender to a more severe disposition. Any student who repeatedly exhibits a pattern of behavior which interferes with the learning process of others will be identified as a chronic disciplinary problem student.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute appropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Dalton Board of Education policies.

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved by the school and the superintendent or his/her designee in accordance with local board policy.

When a student is suspended for 10 days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. *If the student is suspended, school administrators will make reasonable efforts to contact the student's parents.*

School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

A Student Support Team at each school may be asked to function at hearings for any student who repeatedly commits offenses which could lead to a referral to the Disciplinary Tribunal. A Student Support Team may offer suggestions, recommendations, and/or provide resources that might prevent the need for the student to appear before the Disciplinary Tribunal. The student and parents will be requested to appear at such hearings.

School officials reserve the right to punish as appropriate any other behavior which is subversive to good order and discipline in the schools, or at school functions, even though such behavior may not be specified in the following written guidelines.

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While suspension out of school is an unexcused absence, Dalton Public Schools expects teachers to provide assignments to students and/or parents upon request. Those assignments are to be accepted and graded as they are for students who are present.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of this Code of Conduct:

- Warning, Counseling and/or Hearing with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Isolation or Time Out within the guidelines established in State Board Rule 160-5.1-.35
- Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Fines
- Detention/Saturday School
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Short-term Suspension
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Temporary Placement in the Dalton Public Schools Alternative Education Program (DAEP)
- Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The School will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.
- Other Appropriate Remedial Actions in the discretion of school principals or administrators, consistent with Dalton Board of Education policy.

The Dalton Alternative Educational Program (DAEP) is a non-traditional learning environment that assists students in developing the academic and social skills necessary to be successful in the traditional learning environment. DAEP is operated by Dalton Public Schools for the benefit of our students and is located in the Annex building on the City Park School campus.

The Educational Program is designed to provide middle and high school students the opportunity to continue their education while serving long-term suspension from their home school (Dalton Middle School, Dalton High School or Morris Innovative High School). Placement in the program is determined as appropriate by a Tribunal, Tribunal Waiver or by the Superintendent. Each student will have his/her own work area with a computer. Academic course work will be accessed through an online curriculum with assistance from the teaching staff at DAEP in concert with their teachers from the home school. Counseling and social services will be provided by the home school.

OFFENSES WHICH WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. Alcohol and other drugs:
 - A. Purchase, sale, use, distribution, being under the influence of or possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, other chemicals, tobacco, alcoholic beverages or other intoxicants, or the attempt to do any of the above. (Any item or substance, which is represented to be a drug, chemical, tobacco, alcohol or other intoxicant, will be treated as such.)
 - B. Possession of medication in violation of school medication control procedures.
2. Possession or use of a weapon. A student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered to be a weapon.
3. Possession and/or use of fireworks or other explosives.
4. Verbal assault:
 - A. Verbal assault, including threatening violence, of teachers, administrators and other personnel.
 - B. Verbal assault of other students, including threatening violence or sexual harassment as defined pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
 - C. Disrespectful conduct toward teachers, administrators other school personnel, persons attending school related functions, or other students, including the use of vulgar or profane language. Insubordination, disrespectful or disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations or directives, disobeying orders of principals, teachers or other supervisory personnel.

5. Physical assault, battery or physical violence.

A. Physical assault, or battery of teachers, administrators, or other school personnel. Acts of physical violence against teachers, school administrators or employees will be dealt with in accordance with Georgia law. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.6) A student who is alleged to have committed any act of physical violence (as defined below) against a teacher, school bus driver or other school official or employee will be referred to a Tribunal. The penalty for committing a physical act of violence which causes physical harm against a school employee is expulsion for the remainder of the student's school years.

B. Physical assault or battery of other students, including sexual harassment as defined pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

6. Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of the school or to personal property of any person legitimately at school, including the marking, defacing or destroying of property of the school or other students during school or off-school hours.

7. Illegal or disruptive activity on campus.

A. Theft, bribery, extortion, solicitation or acceptance of a bribe, or fraud.

B. Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses, bomb threats or other similar offenses.

C. Gambling.

D. Any behavior, which causes, encourages or advocates any illegal or disruptive activity or behavior of any kind.

E. Use of profane, vulgar or obscene words or gestures; indecent exposure; possession of pornography.

F. Inappropriate displays of affection.

8. Inappropriate use of a Dalton Public Schools computer, and any act or omission, which violates the Dalton Public Schools Internet Acceptable Use Policy IFBG and Regulation IFBG-R. Network users are informed and agree to the terms of use when accessing the Dalton Public Schools network.

9. Misbehavior on school buses or other forms of transportation. Student behavior on school buses and in other vehicles provided for transportation is covered by the same standards and code of conduct, which govern classroom behavior. Students who violate these standards of behavior or who fail to respond to correction by drivers shall be reported to the school principal.

10. Bullying, hazing, or harassment.

Harassment of any kind, or any behavior based upon a student's race, national origin, sex, religion, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted and/or uninvited by the recipient is prohibited, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, the use of racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual slurs, and other unwelcome or offensive verbal or physical conduct. Georgia law mandates that upon a tribunal finding that a student in grades 6 through 12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4) Refer to No. 6 Bullying under "Definitions."

11. Cheating on tests, assignments or in any school-related activity.

12. Violation of attendance requirements

A. Failure to comply with compulsory attendance as required by O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1

B. Violation of attendance procedures such as unexcused absences, unexcused tardies, cutting class, leaving class or campus without permission. (See Dalton Public Schools Board Policy JBD on absences and excuses.)

13. Moving or non-moving traffic violations (example: speeding, racing, reckless driving, failure to display parking decal, improper parking).

14. Any off campus behavior of a student which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school, or which disrupts the educational process.

15. Loitering: It is unlawful for any person to be or remain upon the premises of any school, or within any school safety zone, of the Dalton Public Schools, when that person does not have a legitimate reason to be present there. The principal at each school has the authority to prohibit any such person from loitering at the school or within the school safety zone. Any such person who fails or refuses to leave when asked to do so may be guilty of a misdemeanor. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-1180).

16. Electronic communication devices: No student of the Dalton Public School system may operate a cell phone (or any other electronic communication or personal interactive data storage or wireless access device such as a tablet or smartphone) during instructional time or at any other time designated by school administration or by school personnel without permission.

17. Dishonesty, deceit or the giving of false information to school officials, including falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by school employees. Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

18. Any gang-related activity that is reasonably likely to disrupt or adversely affect the educational climate or mission of the school. Such activity may include, but is not limited to, wearing or display of clothing, articles, paraphernalia, graffiti, symbols or gestures, assault, theft, extortion, hazing or bullying.

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20. While on a school bus, a student must be prohibited from using devices that play audio (unless used with headphones), mobile phones, pagers, lasers, flash cameras or any other device that may impair the driver's operations of the school bus.
21. Willful and persistent violation of student codes of conduct.

DEFINITIONS

1. **ASSAULT:** An attempt to commit injury to another person, or any act or statement that reasonably places another person in fear of bodily harm. This may include verbal assault such as profanity, threatening or abusive language.
2. **AGGRAVATED ASSAULT:** When any person assaults another: (a) with the intent to murder, rape or rob; or (b) with a deadly weapon, or with any object which, when used offensively against a person, is likely to, or does, result in serious bodily injury.
3. **BATTERY:** Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive or provoking manner, or in a way that physically harms the other person.
4. **AGGRAVATED BATTERY:** The offense of aggravated battery consists of maliciously causing bodily harm to another by depriving him or her of a member of his or her body, by rendering a member of his or her body useless, or by seriously disfiguring his or her body, or member thereof.
5. **BRIBERY:** The gift, offer or promise of something of value to another person in an inappropriate, wrongful or dishonest attempt to influence the person to whom the gift, offer, or promise is made.
6. **BULLYING:** 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 cyber-bullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication:

1. is directed specifically at students or school personnel;
2. is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school; and,
3. creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

For purposes of this definition, 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.

7. **CHRONIC DISCIPLINARY PROBLEM STUDENT:** A student who exhibits a pattern of behavior that interferes with the learning process of other students and which appears likely to recur, or as otherwise provided by law. (O.C.G.A. 20-2- 764)
8. **DETENTION:** A penalty assigned to students who violate the discipline code. Students are required to report to a specified school location and to remain in that location with a designated teacher or school official for a specified length of time. The student may be required to make up work missed, do assigned class work, or sit quietly while in attendance before school, after school or on a Saturday.
9. **DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL:** A group of school officials appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact-finder and judge with respect to student disciplinary matters.
10. **DRESS CODE:**

The MINIMUM standard of dress for Dalton Public Schools students shall be as follows:

- Any articles that may reasonably be considered to be a safety hazard or potential weapon are prohibited.
- Hair, including facial hair, shall be kept neat and clean. Hair which is painted or dyed unnatural colors and hairstyles that have a distracting appearance are prohibited.
- Jewelry, body art or tattoos that have a distracting appearance or that communicate gang allegiance or affiliation are prohibited.

- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- The wearing of oversized coats (trench coats, overcoats, etc.) is prohibited IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING.
- Garments that expose the midriff, see-through or mesh clothing, halter or tank tops are prohibited.
- Inappropriate form-fitting clothing is prohibited.
- Students are prohibited from wearing hats, caps, hoods, combs or brushes in the hair, sunglasses (except prescription sun glasses with a doctor's note on file), or bandannas inside school buildings
- Any type of apparel which has a reference (i.e. pictures, symbols, words, etc.) to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sex, obscene language, suicide, violence, vulgarity, gang symbols/affiliation, cult symbols/ affiliation or ethnic, sexual or religious disparagement is prohibited.
- Deliberately tattered, torn or cut garments are prohibited.
- Chains and dog collars are prohibited.
- Skirts, dresses and shorts should be no shorter than three inches above the knee.
- Low-cut blouses, low-cut dresses or low-cut shirts are not appropriate for school and are prohibited.
- Oversized clothing of any type, to include but not limited to wide leg and/or sagging pants, oversized shirts or other garments is prohibited. Clothing must be size and age appropriate, neither too large nor too small.
- Pants must be size appropriate and worn at the waist. Sleepwear or pajama pants are prohibited. Belts must be worn with pants containing belt loops.
- Proper undergarments should be worn at all times. Undergarments must not be visible.

11. **DRUG:** Chemicals, medications or other substances intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment or prevention of disease in humans or other animals, or which is intended to effect the structure or any function of the body of humans or other animals.

12. **LONG-TERM SUSPENSION:** Removal of a student from school for more than 10 days.

13. **EXTORTION:** Obtaining money, goods or anything of value from another person by violence, threats, undue influence or pressure, or misuse of authority.

14. **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY:** Any school-sponsored club, organization, athletic team, representative office or position. Examples include but are not limited to: school band, school clubs, athletic teams or athletic events, student government, class representative, activity committees or other committees, debate clubs and literary clubs, which are not part of the Instructional Program. The school principal or designee shall determine any question about whether or not this definition applies to an activity.

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

16. **FRAUD:** Willful misrepresentation of information which in fact causes another person to act in a way which causes that other person to suffer injury, harm or loss.

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

18. **HAZING:** The attempt to intimidate, harass, humiliate, embarrass or ridicule another, especially with reference to initiation into clubs, societies or groups.

19. **HEARING OFFICER:** An individual appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact-finder with respect to student disciplinary matters.

20. **INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS:** Engaging in athletic contests with other schools as approved by the Georgia High School Association.

21. **MEDICATION CONTROL PROCEDURES:** Students are not allowed to have any type of medication on their person unless approved by administration. Medication must be kept in the clinic/attendance office and administered by designated staff, unless otherwise authorized by a physician. Medications must be in the original labeled container (no baggies, foil, etc.). Parent/guardian must provide specific instructions, as well as the medication and related equipment to the principal or school nurse. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of any changes. New medication or new doses will not be given unless a new form is completed. All medication will be taken directly to the clinic/office by the parent/guardian.

22. **PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:** Intentional physical contact with the person of a teacher, bus driver or other school official that is either insulting or provoking, or which causes physical harm, unless the latter is in self-defense.

23. **PORNOGRAPHY:** Material in the form of photographs, videos, magazines or other media, of a sexually explicit nature or which, when taken as a whole, predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful, or morbid interests, and when taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

24. **SCHOOL SAFETY ZONE:** The school safety zone is any real property or building owned by or leased to the Dalton Public Schools or Dalton Board of Education and used for elementary or secondary education purposes, including the Central Office in the Dalton City Hall and the Maintenance and Operations Building.

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The drop off and pickup zone at each school is defined as that area of roadway or parking area designated at each school where students exit and enter private vehicles.

25. **SEXUAL HARASSMENT:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually suggestive comments, statements, jokes or teasing, or other similar verbal or physical conduct, or any other conduct that may be defined as sexual harassment under Title IX.

26. **SUSPENSION:** Removal of the student from classes and/or the school campus. During all suspensions the student is excluded from all activities sponsored by Dalton Public Schools or its employees, both during and after school hours. **Students suspended out of school (OSS) are not allowed on any campus of Dalton Public Schools at any time during the suspension.** Students assigned to in-school suspension (ISS) are allowed on the campus of the in-school suspension only during the hours the school is in session.

A. IN-HOUSE SUSPENSION: Removal of a student from classes and assignment of that student to a designated supervisor until the problem is resolved.

B. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION: Removal of a student from a regular school program and assignment of that student to an alternative program away from peers.

C. SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION: Suspension for 10 or fewer school days.

D. LONG-TERM SUSPENSION: Suspension for more than 10 school days, but not beyond the current school quarter or semester.

27. **THEFT:** The offense of taking or appropriating any property of another with the intention of depriving him/her of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

28. **TRUANCY:** While subject to compulsory school attendance, being absent from school without justification for five days in school year.

29. **WAIVER:** A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.

30. **WEAPONS:** The term weapon is defined as any object that is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well-being. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

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

2. Any hazardous object, 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 as described in paragraph one will be subject to a minimum of one calendar year expulsion in accordance with Dalton Board of Education Policy JCDAE – Weapons.

NOTE: A student who is provided with the privilege of representing Dalton Public Schools as a participant in extra-curricular activities must accept the added responsibility of maintaining a high standard of conduct at all times. Since such a student serves as a representative of the school system, he or she must strive to uphold the Dalton Public Schools' Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures as well as the guidelines set forth in the Dalton Public Schools' Interscholastic/ Extracurricular Activities Student Behavior and Conduct Expectations.

NOTICE: It is a criminal offense for any person to carry or to possess or to have under control any weapon within a school safety zone or a school building, school function or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school. O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1

PUNISHMENT:

A fine of not more than \$10,000; imprisonment for not less than two nor more than ten years, or both.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contacts is extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents, as well as ongoing opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments.

Parents and students should contact the principal of the school if specific questions arise related to the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code which may result in a school staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior.

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

Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call and by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.