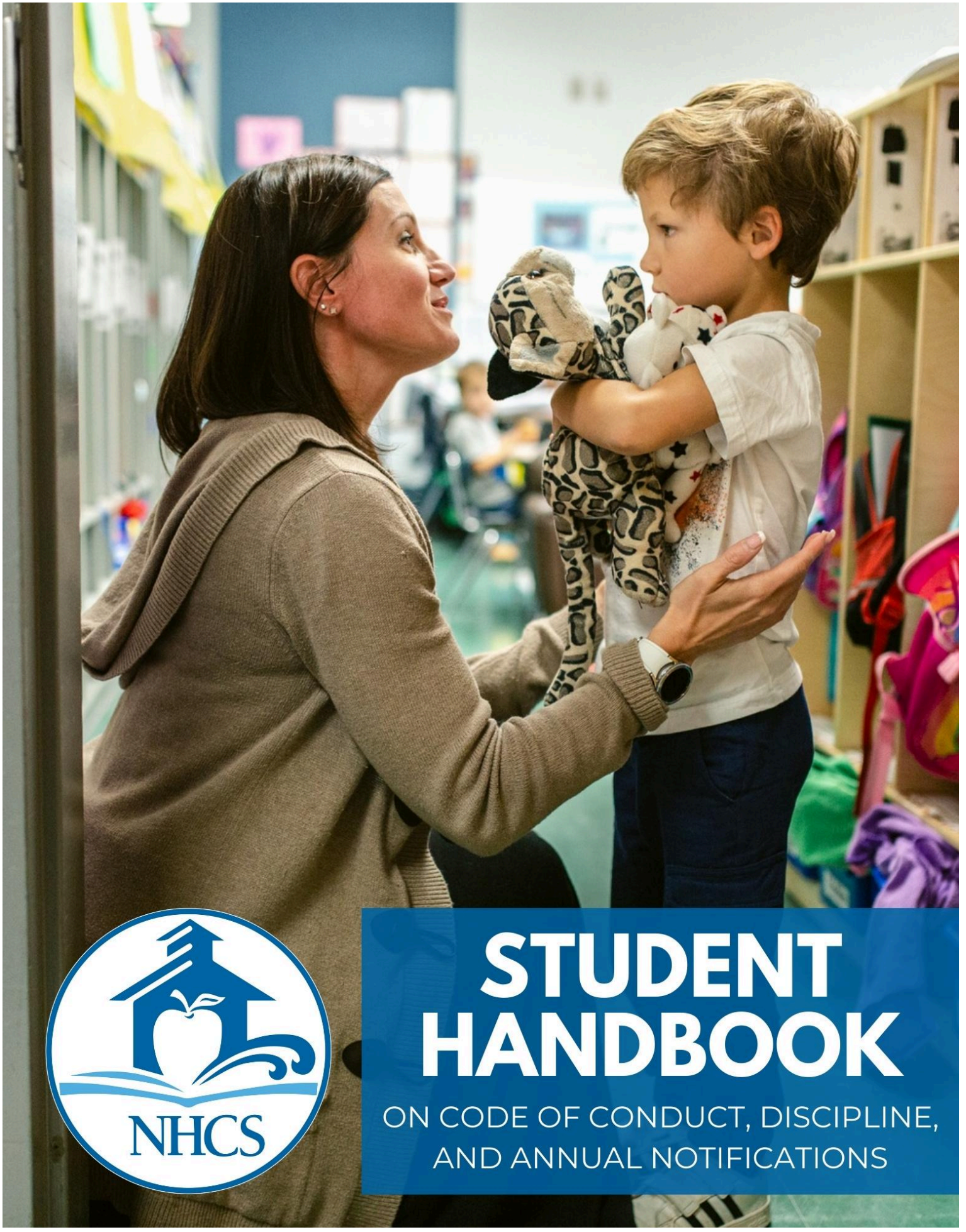


NHCS

STUDENT HANDBOOK

ON CODE OF CONDUCT, DISCIPLINE, AND ANNUAL NOTIFICATIONS

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ACCESS TO POLICIES

Students and families are encouraged to review and discuss the materials contained in this handbook, which summarizes several important policies. **Please note that this document is not a comprehensive list of all district policies and these summaries are not a substitute for the policies themselves.**

A complete list of policies is available online at https://boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=hanover_county_new

PARENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Parent's Guide to Student Achievement

NHCS provides parents and guardians with access to information pertaining to student achievement through the district Parents' Guide to Student Achievement. Learn more

Parental Right to Withhold Consent and Opt Out

Parents may request in writing to opt out of any of the following:

- Release of the student's directory information (For more information see Board Policy 4700 Student Records and 1310/4002 Parental Involvement);
- Release of the student's name, address, and telephone number to military recruiters or colleges/universities (For more information see Board Policy 4700 Student Records and 1310/4002 Parental Involvement);
- The student's participation in certain instructional activities related to reproductive health and safety (For more information see Board Policy Comprehensive Healthful Living Education Program (Family Life) and 1310/4002 Parental Involvement);
- The student's participation in certain academic, career guidance, personal or social counseling services provided to students in a group setting (For more information see 3610 Counseling Program and 1310/4002 Parental Involvement);
- The student's participation in certain types of surveys (For more information see Board Policy 4720 Surveys for Students and 1310/4002 Parental Involvement);
- Collection, disclosure or use of the student's personal information for marketing purposes (For more information see Board Policy 4720 Surveys for Students and 1310/4002 Parental Involvement);
- The student's participation in online classroom recordings (For more information see Board Policy 4700 Student Records);
- Release of student's free and reduced-price meal information to State Medicaid or to the State Children's Health Insurance Program (For more information see Board Policy 1310/4002 Parental Involvement).

For additional information about the Parent Bill of Rights see https://www.nhcs.net/parents/parent-bill-of-rights

STUDENT RIGHTS

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as well as the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, prohibits discrimination against students with diagnosed physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, learning, concentration, walking, seeing, breathing, hearing, lifting, bending, performing manual tasks and the operation of major bodily functions/systems. For more information see Board Policy: 1730/4022/7231 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment are unacceptable behaviors that should be immediately addressed. Bullying and harassment include any physical act, threatening communication, or pattern of gestures or communications that places a student in actual and reasonable fear of harm or is certain to create a hostile environment. Bullying and harassing behavior includes, but is not limited to, behaviors motivated by the victim's identifying characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender identity, religion, age or disability. If bullying or harassment is suspected, parents should contact their child's school for help. Parents and students also can share safety concerns via Ethix 360°. For more information see Board Policy 4239/7311 Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited.

Students and their families are urged to review the actual language of these school board policies, which include

important information about student rights and responsibilities.

Please contact the administration at your school if you have questions about a policy.

Child Find for Students with Disabilities

New Hanover County Schools is required to identify, locate, and evaluate children with disabilities, ages 3 through 21, who may be in need of special education and related services. Parents of children aged 3 to 5 who are not yet eligible to enter kindergarten should call the child find office at 910-254-4236. Parents of children in kindergarten through 12th grade should contact their child's school.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Notice of Directory Information

A federal law known as FERPA provides parents and eligible students with rights to inspect and review the student's educational records, to request amendments to such records, and to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding and alleged FERPA violation. FERPA also provides that student records and personally identifiable information contained in those records may be released to third parties only if the parents or eligible students provide written consent. One of those exceptions to this requirement is that "directory information" about a student may be released to anyone upon request unless the parent or eligible student has opted out of the disclosure of such information. "Directory Information" includes the student's name, grade, school most recently attended, dates of attendance, date of graduation, awards received and participation in officially recognized sports and activities. **Any parent, guardian or eligible student who does not want directory information released must notify the school in writing each year.** For additional information relating to FERPA and student records see Board Policy 4700 Student Records

Non-Discrimination

In compliance with federal law, the district administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination against any person on the basis of gender, race, gender identity, color, religion, national origin, age or disability. New Hanover County Schools has broad protections against discrimination as set forth in multiple Board Policies. Parents and students who perceive any form of discrimination should report it to the school principal. Parents and students also should contact the principal to request assistance or accommodations to assure a non-discriminatory, inviting, and inclusive school environment. For more information see Board Policy: 1730/4022/7230 Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law

Title IX Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex

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

The board has designated a Title IX coordinator to coordinate its efforts to comply with its responsibilities under Title IX and its implementing regulations. Inquiries about the application of Title IX and its implementing federal regulations may be referred to the Title IX coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education. The contact information for the Title IX coordinator is as follows.

Office Address: 6410 Carolina Beach Rd, Wilmington, NC 28412
Email Address: titleix@nhcs.net
Phone Number: (910) 254-4200

The contact information for the Office for Civil Rights with jurisdiction over North Carolina is as follows.

Address: 4000 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-1475
Telephone: 202-453-6020
TDD: 800-877-8339
FAX: 202-453-6021
Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov

For more information see Board Policy: 1720/4030/7235 Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex NHCS Title IX Office

Rules for use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools

The use of seclusion, restraint, and isolation of students is governed by N.C. General Statute 115C-3911, Board

Policy, and Regulation & Procedures. To the extent allowed by these laws, policies, and procedures, N.C. General Statute 115C-390.3 authorizes school personnel to use reasonable force to control behavior or remove a person from the scene when necessary to correct students, quell a disturbance threatening injury to others, obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the person or within the control of a student, act in self-defense or to protect other persons in the classroom or at a school-related activity on or off educational property. For additional information see Board Policy: 4302-R Rules for Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools

Safe Surrender

A parent may lawfully abandon an infant under seven days of age by voluntarily delivering the infant to one of the following; health care provider, law enforcement officer, social service worker, certified emergency medical service worker or any responsible adult. For additional information see https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/pregnancy-services/safe-surrender

Students Experiencing Homelessness

The McKinney-Vento Program provides legal protection and support services to children and youth experiencing a housing crisis. Contact the School Social Worker at your child's school for assistance. For more information see https://www.nhcs.net/divisions/student-support-services/mckinney-vento and Board Policy 4125 Homeless Students

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Student Searches

Schools must be safe and free of weapons, drugs, and other contraband. School Officials may search a student, student lockers, student automobiles, or school computers under the circumstances outlined in Board Policy and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered during the search. For additional information see Policy Code: 4342 Student Searches

Student Surveys

A parent or eligible student must provide prior written consent before the student is permitted to participate in a survey involving a protected topic, other than those surveys given as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey. If a survey does not involve a protected topic or is a protected topic survey that is given as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey, parents or eligible students must be given an opportunity to opt out of the survey.

In an evidence-based program used as a part of the curriculum to address grade level essential based standards, the term "survey" often refers to the pre-assessment that is required along with the post assessment to measure impact. Any such pre and post assessment is not intended to be considered a "survey" for purposes of this policy. For more information see Board Policy:4720 Surveys of Students.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance

Coming to school every day ready to learn is important for your child's success. In addition, school attendance is required by state law for children between the ages of 7 and 16. Being tardy to class, skipping class or school, leaving campus without permission or being in an unauthorized area is prohibited. Excused absences include: illness or injury, a death in the family, health care appointments, court appearances, college visits, and religious observances. Participation in a valid educational opportunity outside of the school setting may be approved with prior notice. Elementary and middle school students who are absent more than 20 days in a school year may be retained. Elementary and middle school students who are chronically absent (excused or unexcused) for more than 10% of the school year will be referred for academic and/or attendance interventions within a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS). High school students who are chronically absent (excused or unexcused) for more than 10% of the school year will be referred for academic and/or attendance interventions within a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS).

In addition, the following policies are in place regarding high school attendance:

a. First and Second Absences: Make up work shall be assigned by the student's teacher as deemed appropriate. All make up work shall be completed within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the child's teacher.

b. Third-Tenth Absences: Make up work shall be assigned by the student's teacher as deemed appropriate. All make up work shall be completed within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the child's teacher. If absences are consecutive, more time may be allowed at the teacher's discretion. Parents will be notified after the third, sixth and tenth absences.

c. Eleventh Absence: In grades 9-12, a student who misses more than 10 days in a semester, shall not be awarded course credit except by determination of the principal/designee upon careful review of the student records with a panel of individuals to include the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s) of course(s), and other appropriate support staff (i.e. EC Chair, MTSS Coordinator). Make up work shall be assigned by the student's teacher as deemed appropriate. All makeup work shall be completed within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the child's teacher.

d. When total absences (lawful and unlawful) exceed 10 days per semester, further documentation will be required (doctor's statement, court documentation, etc.) For additional information see Board Policy 4400 School Attendance.

Dress Code

The board believes that responsibility for the dress and grooming of a student rests primarily with the student and his or her parents or guardians and that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. The board expects students to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to wear clothes that are suitable for the school activities in which they participate. The board respects students' rights to express themselves in the way they dress in accordance with the dress and grooming standards established in Board Policy 4316: Student Dress Code.

Student Identification Cards

All high school students are required to maintain a student identification (ID) card on their person at all times when they are on school campus and present it as requested by school staff. ID cards are issued free of charge and replaced for a fee at the respective schools. In addition to the student's name, photograph, and grade level, each card will contain a scanner barcode, which can be used for student check-in and check-out, for library book loans, and for cafeteria purchases. For additional information see Board Policy: 4317 Student Identification Cards

Wireless Communication Devices

The board recognizes that cellular phones and other wireless communication devices have become an important tool through which parents communicate with their children. Therefore, students are permitted to possess such devices on school property so long as the devices are not activated, used, displayed, or visible during the instructional day unless otherwise allowed or directed by school rules or school personnel. Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, electronic devices with internet capability, two-way radios, and similar devices. For additional information see Board Policy 4318: Use of Wireless Communication Devices

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Citizenship and Character Education

Every school has programs and activities to help students develop good character and citizenship, including programs to help students understand, assess and take responsibility for their behavior and learning, as well as how to act responsibly towards others. School staff members ensure that positive behavior is practiced, demonstrated, modeled, and reinforced within an environment of mutual respect, caring, and dignity. For more information see Board Policy: 3530 Citizenship and Character Education.

Counseling Program

Our guidance and counseling programs support students in their personal and social development and help them transition from school to higher education or a career. School counselors are available at each school as the first point of contact if a student has needs and families are unsure where to start. Visit https://www.nhcs.net/divisions/student-support-services/school-counselors-social-workers for links to additional resources and support information. See Board Policy 3610 regarding the Counseling Program.

Special Education

New Hanover County Schools provides special education and related services to students identified with a disability according to the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and N.C. Public School Law Article 9. For additional information on special education services see the following resources;

www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/exceptional-children
NHCS Special Education and Related Services
NHCS Special Needs Registry for Emergency Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Selection of Instructional Materials

In order to help fulfill the educational goals and objectives of the school system, the board strives to provide instructional materials that will enrich and support the curriculum and enhance student learning. Instructional materials should be representative of the rich diversity of our nation and appropriate for the maturity levels and abilities of the students. Instructional materials include textbooks and supplemental materials. For more information on materials selection guidelines and process see Board Policy 3200: Selection of Instructional Materials.

Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials

The board recognizes that despite the opportunity to participate in the selection of materials, parents still may have concerns about instructional materials used in the school system. Thus, to further involve parents in the education of their children, the board also provides opportunities for parents to review instructional materials and a process for parents to use when they object to instructional materials.Parents may submit an objection in writing to the principal regarding the use of particular instructional materials. The school media and technology advisory committee shall review the objection. In addition, the decision of the school committee may be appealed to the district curriculum committee appointed by the superintendent. Any challenge to the decision of the district curriculum committee will be determined by the board. For more information see Board Policy 3210: Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials and the Media and Instructional Appeals Process

Evaluation of Student Progress

An evaluation system of students' effort, growth, and academic performance is necessary to help ensure that all students are succeeding within the framework of the educational goals and objectives of the board. Teachers shall evaluate student performance in a timely manner and provide appropriate feedback to parents. Teachers shall allow students, who are failing a course, opportunities for intervention and support to demonstrate mastery and improve their grade. For more information see the following:
Board Policy 3400: Evaluation of Student Progress
Board Regulation Code: 3400-R NHCS Evaluation of Students Performance Regulations - Elementary, Secondary Year-Long, and High School.
Regulation Code: 3400-R Academic Contract - Teacher Strategies
Regulation Code: 3400-R New Hanover County Schools Academic Contract

CHILD NUTRITION

Student well-being and adequate nutrition contribute to a student's physical health, growth, development, and preparedness for learning. Every meal and item provided by Child Nutrition Services meets rigorous nutritional standards. All food and drinks offered to students throughout the school day aim to foster a school environment that enhances student health and wellness.

School Meals, Free or Reduced-Price

If your family meets income eligibility requirements, your child may be able to receive free or reduced-price meals from the school cafeteria. Parents can complete a meal benefits application online at myschoolapps.com. Paper applications also are available at all schools.

School Meals, Charges

Students who are required to pay for meals are expected to provide payment in a timely manner. Use of the prepaid meal plan is encouraged. Efforts should be made by the school system and the individual schools to encourage students and parents to participate in the prepaid meal plan as an alternative to purchasing meals on a daily basis in order to reduce the incidences of students forgetting or losing their meal money. A student's meal plan account history will be available to parents or guardians upon request. Students may purchase a la carte items, at individual prices, only if they do not have an outstanding charge balance on their account.

The board recognizes that students occasionally may forget or lose their meal money. In the event that a student is unable to pay for a meal on a particular day, the student may charge a reimbursable meal. To safeguard the dignity and confidentiality of students in the serving line, reasonable efforts must be used whenever possible to avoid calling attention to a student's inability

to pay. For more information see the following: Board policy: 6220 Operation of School Nutrition Services

STUDENT HEALTH

Cervical Cancer, Cervical Dysplasia, and Human Papillomavirus

N.C. General Statute 115C-4751 requires school districts to provide information about cervical cancer, cervical dysplasia and human papillomavirus to parents and guardians of students in grades 5 through 12. Visit The Health Services site for more information.

COVID-19

COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease caused by a virus. It can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death. Older people and those who have certain underlying medical conditions are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. Vaccines against COVID-19 are safe and effective, so it is recommended that you discuss it with your student's physician. Information about COVID-19 may be found at www.nc.gov/covid19.

To minimize the spread of COVID-19, the district adheres to all COVID-19 health measures required by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Service and consults with New Hanover County Public Health to determine what precautions are needed in our schools to keep our students, staff, and community healthy in a safe and welcoming environment. Visit www.nhcs.net/covid-19-resources for more information.

Flu

The flu is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death. Symptoms include: fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry couch, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Avoid close contact with people who are sick, cover mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing, avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth, and wash hands to protect from germs. It is important to stay home when sick. The flu vaccine is generally effective in preventing cases of the flu, so it is recommended that the pros and cons of taking the vaccine be discussed with the student's physician. For more information visit www.immunize.nc.gov.

Medications at School

Students may receive or in certain cases self-administer medication at school when the medication is medically necessary for health or learning and must be taken during the school day. A form is required for a student to receive medication at school. Parents should contact the school for guidance. For more information on medications at school visit the Health Service site or see Board Policy: 6125 Administering Drugs at School

Meningococcal Meningitis

Meningococcal meningitis is a respiratory illness with symptoms that may resemble the flu. Seek immediate medical care if your child develops fever, headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting, confusion, sleepiness and sensitivity to light. The Advisory Committee of Immunization Practices recommends vaccination for college-aged students. Information about meningitis may be found at www.immunize.nc.gov

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs

A healthy learning environment is free of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. The possession, use, distribution, or sale of these substances in any form is prohibited on school property.

The prohibition of tobacco and nicotine includes all lighted and smokeless e-liquid products, e-cigarettes and vaporizers even if they do not contain tobacco or nicotine.

For additional information see Board Policy: 4325 Prohibition of Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs, Board Policy: 4320 Use of Tobacco and Nicotine Products, and Student Code of Conduct.

Assault, Fighting, Threats

Students who become angry or upset with anyone are encouraged to resolve conflicts peacefully. Teachers, counselors, school administrators and other school personnel can help students find civil ways to handle disagreements. A student who threatens to harm, attempts to harm or harms another student, staff member, school volunteer or visitor is subject to consequences. See Board Policy 4331 Assaults and Threats and the Student Code of Conduct

Bus Conduct

Bus transportation is an extension of the school day, and the same student behavior standards that apply in the classroom also apply on the bus and at the bus stop. A driver will report to the school administrator any misconduct or violation of the driver's instructions. Buses are also equipped with cameras on board to provide video that school leaders may use to manage student behavior. See Board Policy 6305 Safety and Student Transportation Services and the Student Code of Conduct

Disruptive Behavior

An orderly school environment is necessary for teachers to be able to teach and for students to be able to learn. Students are encouraged to participate in efforts to create a safe, orderly, and inviting school environment. Students also are entitled to exercise their constitutional right to free speech as part of a stimulating, inviting educational environment. A student's right to free speech will not be infringed upon; however, school officials may place reasonable, constitutional restrictions on time, place, and manner in order to preserve a safe, orderly environment. See Board Policy 4315 Disruptive Behavior and the Student Code of Conduct

Gang-Related Activity

The district strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting school environment. Gangs and gang-related activities have proven contrary to that mission and are prohibited within the schools. A gang is any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors, or symbols. The violence and crime that accompany gangs pose a serious threat to the safety of students and employees of the school system. Even absent acts of violence or crime, the existence of gang-related activity within the schools creates an atmosphere of fear and hostility that obstructs student learning and achievement. See Board Policy 4328 Gang-Related Activity and the Student Code of Conduct

Integrity and Civility

All students are expected to demonstrate integrity, civility, responsibility, and self-control. This expectation is directly related to the district's educational objectives for students to learn to be responsible for and accept the consequences of their behavior and for students to respect cultural diversity and ideological differences. Integrity, civility, responsibility, and self-control also are critical for establishing and maintaining a safe, orderly, and inviting environment. See Board Policy 4310: Integrity and Civility and the Student Code of Conduct

Weapons

Students are not permitted to possess, hangle, or transit any weapon, facsimile of a weapon, dangerous instrument or substance or other object that can reasonably be considered or used as a weapon or dangerous instrument or substance. See Board Policy 4333 Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety and the Student Code of Conduct

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND RANGE OF STUDENT CONSEQUENCES

The Student Code of Conduct rules are leveled according to the severity of violation and type of consequence. In any given situation, based on the unique circumstances of a situation, the principal may use a different level of intervention than is indicated on the chart. Various interventions may be considered to address a student's behavior including restorative practices, detention, referrals to the counselor or community resources. Below is a summary of corrective responses levels.

Parent communication is embedded throughout the range of consequences as seen through the leveled corrective responses. It is the expectation that parents and school personnel work collaboratively to decrease the likelihood of challenging student behaviors. Unless there is a need for an emergency removal, parents can expect contact from school administration prior to reaching the graduated response of suspension from school.

Level 1: Classroom and Building Based Corrective Responses

Level 1 corrective responses are appropriate for unacceptable behavior that should be managed by the teacher in the classroom and usually does not warrant a discipline referral to the administrator. These behaviors are of low-level intensity, can be passive in nature and are non-threatening.

Level 2: Support Staff, Administrative and Classroom Teacher Corrective Responses

Level 2 corrective responses are appropriate for unacceptable behavior that should be managed with assistance from an administrator or member of the school's student services team. These infractions will be addressed with corrective responses that may include removal from class up to 2 days of Out of School Suspension.

Level 3: Intensive Personalized Corrective Responses

Level 3 corrective responses are appropriate for unacceptable behaviors that are chronic in nature, significantly interfere with others' safety or learning, are of a threatening or harmful nature and/or are legal violations and warrant administrative involvement. Level 3 responses to behavioral incidents may include in-school or out-of-school suspension on the first violation, if it is a safety related behavior.

Level 4: Corrective Responses for Serious Violations

Level 4 corrective responses are appropriate for unacceptable behavior that seriously affects the learning environment or the safety of the student and/or others in the school or is a legal violation. Corrective responses at this level could include suspension, referral for an alternative school placement and/or referral to law enforcement.

Level 5 Corrective Responses for Dangerous Violations

Level 5 corrective responses are appropriate for unacceptable behavior that endangers individuals in the school community. Corrective responses at this level could include Long-term Suspension.

Level 6 Corrective Responses for the Most Dangerous Violations

Level 6 corrective responses are appropriate for the most dangerous student behaviors that result in serious legal violations in the school setting. Corrective responses at this level could include recommendation for expulsion from the school district.

For a complete listing of leveled behaviors, consequences, and interventions, please see the Student Code of Conduct