



PAUL DUKE STEM

TRAILBLAZERS

Paul Duke STEM High School
Student/Parent Handbook 2026-2027

Dr. Jonathon Wetherington, Principal

Marlene Goodall, Assistant Principal

Tiffany Houston, Assistant Principal

Ashley Joiner, Assistant Principal

Devin Jones, Assistant Principal

Dennise Peagler, Assistant Principal

5850 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard Norcross, GA 30071

This handbook contains the best available information at time of its publication. Updates will be published on the Paul Duke STEM High School website as necessary.

The officers, employees and officials identified in this handbook are charged with using their personal judgment and deliberation in executing the functions and tasks set forth herein and nothing in the procedure, process, practice, or handbook should be construed or interpreted to create any ministerial duties on behalf of any officer, employee or official.

ADMINISTRATION

Principal

Dr. Jonathon Wetherington

Assistant Principals

Marlene Goodall

Tiffany Houston

Ashley Joiner

Devin Jones

Dennise Peagler

PHONE NUMBERS

- Main Office: 470-323-3600
- Attendance Office: 470-323-3628
- Counseling Office: 470-323-3606
- Clinic: 470-323-3604
- Title I Parent Center: 470-323-3625

TITLE IX

If you believe you are being mistreated on the basis of your race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin or handicap or you believe you are being sexually harassed, you have a complaint and a remedy. Please tell any school employee in whom you have confidence that you have a complaint about the manner in which you are being treated and why. You may also contact the school system's Division of Human Resources and Talent Management for assistance by writing or calling: Director of Equity and Compliance, Title IX Coordinator, Gwinnett County Public Schools, 437 Old Peachtree Road, Suwanee, GA 30024-2978, 678-301-6811.

Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs, activities or employment practices and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. GCPS is expressly prohibited from subjecting any person to discrimination or harassment on the basis of his/her membership in a protected class by the following laws: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title I and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Gwinnett County Public Schools 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

3	Independence Day Observation (Systemwide Holiday)	JULY 2026 <table> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		JANUARY 2027 <table> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							1 Winter Break (School Holidays) 4 Teacher Planning/Staff Development [#8] (Student Holiday) 5 Begin 2nd Semester [Day 88] 18 MLK Jr. Day (Systemwide Holiday)																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																						
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 First and Last Days of School
 Teacher Planning/Staff Development/Student Holiday

 Student/Teacher Holiday
 Digital Learning Day

Electronic copy found at: [GCPS 2026-27 School Calendar](#)

The officers, employees and officials identified in this handbook are charged with using their personal judgment and deliberation in executing the functions and tasks set forth herein and nothing in the procedure, process, practice, or handbook should be construed or interpreted to create any ministerial duties on behalf of any officer, employee or official.

ACADEMICS AND INSTRUCTION

ACADEMIC LETTERS

Academic letters are available to students seeking a general academic diploma. Upperclassmen that have an overall 90 grade point average may earn an academic letter. These averages are calculated without rounding up scores.

CLASS RANK

Class rank is based on cumulative grade average at the end of each semester. The student's class rank is listed on his/her transcript.

END OF COURSE TESTS

The following courses (as mandated by the State of Georgia) require that students take an End of Course Exam. End-of-Course Exam grades will count as 10% of the final course grade. The following courses have an End-of-Course Exam:

- 10th Grade Language Arts
- Biology
- Algebra: Concepts and Connections
- US History

FINAL EXAMS

Cumulative exams are given the last four days of each semester. We ask that parents and students avoid scheduling appointments on the final days of the semester due to review for and administration of final exams. **Teachers will not give exams early.** Students are not permitted to check out during an exam period. There are no checkouts on the three Final Exam Early Release Days (half days) of each semester. If a student misses an exam due to an excused absence, the exam can be taken on the announced Make-up day. Students are not granted pre-arranged absences on exam days.

Any and all final exam exemptions will follow GCPS Policy and Procedure around Exam Exemptions.

GIFTED PROGRAM

The Gwinnett County Public Schools gifted education program serves students in grades K-12 by providing academic challenges for students who are intellectually advanced. Any responsible person who has knowledge of a student's intellectual abilities may refer a student to the local school's gifted referral committee. The classes offer accelerated learning and enriched academic curriculum experiences that focus on and extend Gwinnett County Public Schools' Academic Knowledge and Skills. Students are identified and placed in gifted education based on criteria established by the Georgia General Assembly and the Georgia State Board of Education. Students who transfer from public gifted education programs within the state of Georgia have reciprocity into the Gwinnett program providing the original placement was correctly completed. Students who transfer from out-of-state must meet Georgia requirements. Parents should notify the school when registering their child that he/she was identified as a gifted education student in their previous school. Paul Duke Stem High School offers gifted level courses in some core subject areas at all grade levels. Any questions about the gifted education program should be directed to the Gifted Education Lead Teacher.

GOVERNOR'S HONORS PROGRAM

The Georgia Governor's Honors Program (GHP) is a residential summer program designed for gifted and talented high school students who will be rising 11th and 12th graders during the program. GHP provides highly specialized instruction that goes beyond the traditional high school curriculum, with a focus on academic, cultural, and social enrichment. The program aims to foster the development of students as the next generation of critical thinkers, innovators, and leaders. Students are nominated by their teachers and must compete at the county and state levels to

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be selected. Once chosen, students engage in a variety of academic and artistic disciplines while residing on a college campus for the duration of the program, gaining a transformative educational experience.

GRADING SCALE (as of 6/15/2026)

Excellent Performance	A	101-110	5.0
		90-100	4.0
Above Average Performance	B	80-89	3.0
Average Performance	C	70-79	2.0
Failure to Achieve	F	Below 70	0.0

GRADUATION

The graduation ceremony is by invitation to students in good standing who have met all credit requirements, as indicated in the senior letter/application distributed in the fall. Students must also have returned their chromebooks, all textbooks, library books, and school issued items, and cleared all outstanding fines. Appropriate behavior before and during ceremonies is expected.

HEALTH CLASSES

During the semester, a unit in Family Life Education will be taught in health class. If a parent or guardian prefers that a son/daughter be exempted from this unit, the request for exemption should be made in writing to the principal.

HOMEBOUND/HOSPITAL/TELECLASS

A student who has a medically diagnosed physical or mental condition restricting him/her to his/her home or hospital for a minimum of ten consecutive school days may be eligible for Hospital / Homebound / Teleclass instruction. Please contact the Counseling Office for more information.

HOMEWORK

The Board of Education strongly endorses the use of homework to promote student learning. Through quality homework, students have opportunities for enrichment, extension, and remediation of instructional objectives, and practice of skills. A student who will be out of school for three or more consecutive days may contact the teachers to collect homework assignments for the period of time he/she will be absent. The teachers must have forty-eight hours' notice. The student is expected to turn in all requested work within three school days upon returning to school.

HONOR GRADUATES

Students in all grades whose grade point average for the previous semester of high school course credit is 90.0% or higher qualify for the Student Honor Roll (GPA is not rounded up). Students who have earned a cumulative average of 90.0% or higher at the end of the 1st Semester their senior year will be recognized as honor graduates. Grades lower than 90 will not be rounded up for this recognition.

HOPE GRANT

HOPE Grant is available to Georgia residents who are pursuing a certificate or diploma. A HOPE Grant recipient must maintain a minimum 2.00 cumulative postsecondary grade point average to remain eligible. The grant provides tuition assistance to students enrolled at a HOPE Grant eligible college or university in Georgia. A student is ineligible to receive HOPE Grant funds once the student has reached the 63 semester or 95 quarter hour limit. More information can be found here: <https://www.gafutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/hope-zell-miller-grants/hope-grant/>

HOPE SCHOLARSHIP

HOPE Scholarship is a merit-based award available to Georgia residents who have demonstrated academic achievement. A HOPE Scholarship recipient must graduate from high school with a

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minimum 3.00 grade point average (as calculated by GSFC) and maintain a minimum 3.00 cumulative postsecondary grade point average to remain eligible. The scholarship provides tuition assistance to students pursuing an undergraduate degree at a HOPE Scholarship eligible college or university in Georgia. A ten-year limit exists for students first receiving the HOPE Scholarship during summer term 2019 (FY20) or later. A seven-year limit exists for students first receiving the HOPE Scholarship during the 2011-2012 academic year (FY12) or later. A student is ineligible to receive HOPE Scholarship funds once the student has reached the 127 semester or 190 quarter hour limit. More information can be found here: [HOPE Scholarship | Georgia Student Finance Commission](#)

MEDIA/ELECTRONIC PRESENTATIONS

This is a notice to parents that PDSHS may develop, participate in, or be the subject of media and/or electronic based presentations and events that highlight various educational activities that take place during the course of the school year. If you do not want your child to participate in these presentations, contact the Media Specialist for a form requesting that participation be denied.

PARENT PORTAL

The Parent Portal is an online resource that allows parents and guardians the ability to check their student's grades, attendance, and discipline. To participate, parents must register by completing a registration form and showing proof of identification in the front office or the Parent Center. Please contact the Parent Center for help or any questions with the parent portal.

PROGRESS UPDATES

Students and parents can access academic, attendance and behavioral progress via the Parent Portal and Student Portal. Parents and Students can access grades on the GCPS website at <https://www.gcpsk12.org/GA02204486> by using the sign-in links at the top of the page. Parents who desire additional information about their student's progress may email the teachers individually. Teachers will respond within 24 hours to emails.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

Students are assigned to grade levels based on the number of credits attained by fall semester. No adjustments of grade level assignments will be made during the school year; however, exceptions will be made for seniors who are on track to graduate. Students are assigned as follows:

- 10th Grade – 5 credits
- 11th Grade – 11 credits
- 12th Grade – 17 credits

REPORT CARDS

Un-official transcripts for the first semester will be mailed home in mid-January. Transcripts for the second semester will be mailed home two weeks after the end of the spring semester.

SCHEDULE CORRECTIONS

All students should follow the schedule that they received prior to or on the first day of school. Students and/or parents who desire a schedule correction must make the request immediately.

Class placements will be changed for the following reasons only:

- Student has already passed the course or has not passed the pre-requisite.
- Course needed is a graduation requirement.

Reasons for schedule changes that WILL NOT be approved:

- Request for a specific teacher.

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- Changes in order to rearrange an existing schedule (i.e., students prefer physical education class in the afternoon rather than in the morning.)
- Request a change in electives.

STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION DATES

Standardized assessment administration dates will be available on the Gwinnett County Public Schools website before the beginning of each semester:

<https://www.gcpsk12.org/families/accountability-and-assessment/test-dates>

SUMMER SCHOOL GRADUATION

In order to participate in the summer school graduation ceremony, all courses must be taken through Gwinnett County Public Schools (classroom instruction or GOC).

TEACHER-STUDENT ADVISEMENT

This program has been developed and implemented to support student's academic achievement and social skills. Activities will be conducted twice weekly during scheduled periods to provide important support to our students. These activities will be facilitated by members of our faculty, staff, and student leaders.

TEXTBOOKS/FINES

Students will be responsible for reimbursement to the school for lost or damaged textbooks. Fines should be paid via MyPaymentsPlus or via money order. Money orders for textbooks should be made payable to "Paul Duke STEM High School" and submitted to the front office for a receipt.

TRANSFER CREDITS

Gwinnett County students desiring to take course work outside GCPS must provide the following documentation prior to receiving credit. An official transcript of course title, grade and credit awarded must be sent to the local high school records department. Students or parents must provide official accreditation documentation of non-Gwinnett programs to the receiving high school.

Grading scale for outside coursework must reflect the GCPS grading scale of 70% as the lowest passing grade for credit.

Policy P.JBCB states that the grade for a non-GCPS course for a graduating senior must be received by the school by May 1 preceding graduation.

School Accrediting programs directly accepted by Gwinnett County are as follows:

- SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools)
- MSACS (Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools)
- NCACS (North Central Association of Colleges and Schools)
- NASC (Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges)
- WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges)
- GAC (Georgia Accrediting Commission)
- APSAC (Georgia Private School Accreditation Council)

Students who take courses NOT accredited by one of the organizations listed above must pass a GCPS final exam or End-of-Course Test in order to receive credit for the course.

VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be determined after the completion of the fall semester of the senior year. A senior with the highest cumulative grade point average will be recognized as the Valedictorian. The student with the second highest cumulative grade point average will be recognized as Salutatorian. Both students must be enrolled at Paul Duke STEM High School and meet all current GCPS procedures for Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCES

Within 48 hours of the absence, a student should bring a note signed by his/her parent/guardian or the parent should send an email, including the date and the reason for the absence, submitted to the Attendance Office. If a student has forgotten his/her excuse, he/she has 48 hours/two days after the absence to submit it; otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused. Work missed during unexcused absences may be made up for full, partial, or no credit at the teacher's discretion.

An absence will be unexcused unless it qualifies to be excused under one of the following areas as defined by state law:

- Students who are personally ill and whose attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others.
- Students in whose immediate family there is a serious illness or death that would reasonably necessitate absence from school.
- Students who observe special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith.
- Students who are mandated by order of governmental agencies (pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces or court order).
- Students who are expelled from school for short-term suspension.
- Students who are at least 12 years of age and are serving as pages in the General Assembly.
- Students may be excused from school attendance when prevented from such attendance due to conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to their health and safety.

TARDIES

Attendance and punctuality are important for academic success. As such, students are required to arrive at school and class on time. If students are late to class, they will be marked tardy by the teacher.

TARDY TO SCHOOL/LATE CHECK-IN

Students who arrive at school after 7:00 a.m. should report directly to the Attendance Office Tardy Station. The Tardy Station is located in the Attendance Office. The student's tardiness will be recorded, and they will receive a pass to class. This process will help administrators keep records of the students who are late to school. Consequences will be issued for unexcused and/or repeated tardiness or late check-in.

TARDINESS TO CLASS

There is adequate time between classes and before school for students to arrive on time to class. Students should be in the classroom or gym before the tardy bell rings. Teachers will be marking attendance immediately following the bell. If students are not across the threshold, they will be marked tardy.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

According to Georgia Law (Ga. Code Ann. § 20-2-168 | Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 160-5-1-.02), students are identified as chronically absent/truant if they miss 10% or more of the school year (excused+unexcused), which equates to 18 days out of the required 180 days ([Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law](#)).

Consequences for Tardies

1. 1-5 tardies → Warning
2. 6-10 tardies → 1 x Silent Lunch + Parent Email
3. 11-15 tardies → 2 x Silent Lunch + Parent Email
4. 16-20 tardies → 3 x Silent Lunch + Parent Email
5. 21-25 tardies → 1 Admin Detention + Counselor MTSS Referral (Parent + Student Contact by Counselor)
6. 26-30 tardies → 2 x Administrative Detention (Navigate 360) + Parent Contact (Admin)
7. 31-35 tardies → 3 x Administrative Detention (Navigate 360) + Parent Conf (Couns/Admin)

8. 36-40 tardies → 1 x Friday School (Navigate 360) + Parent Contact (Admin)
9. 41-45 tardies → 2 x Friday Schools (Navigate 360) + Parent Contact (Admin)
10. 46-50 tardies → SARC (Attendance Contract i.e. Rule 10, Rule 12) + ISS + Behavior Contract

Administrators will also implement positive behavior interventions to help students make lasting improvements in their behavior. Ultimately, attending class on time and being fully prepared to learn is crucial for your future success, and we're here to support you every step of the way.

AWOL ABSENT WITHOUT OFFICIAL LEAVE (AWOL)

A student who leaves campus without checking out or who is absent from school without a reason allowed by law will be considered AWOL from each class he/she misses. A student who skips a class or classes is considered to be AWOL. A student who fails to stay in an assigned area during a specified time by school personnel, including the Commons Area during lunch, will be considered AWOL. A student who is more than 5 minutes late to a class or a tardy station without a pass from school personnel is considered AWOL from class. A student who has not returned to class from lunch by the start of the next lunch period is considered AWOL from class. A student who is anywhere on campus without the consent of their current class period teacher during instructional time is considered AWOL from class.

Per the scope of the Student Conduct Behavior Code, students can receive up to 3 days of OSS per AWOL. Per the discretion of the administrator, the following consequences will be administered when a student has been due processed for being AWOL from class or school. Please note that if a student is found in violation of going AWOL from school, consequences may be more severe.

Consequences for Period AWOLs (10C)	Consequences for AWOLs from School (10D)
● 1st Offense: Warning + Parent notification ● 2nd Offense: Silent Lunch + Parent notification ● 3rd Offense: Restricted Lunch + (Parent+Student Contact by Counselor) ● 4th and 5th Offense: Admin Detention+Navigate 360, and Parent Contact ● 6th Offense: 1 Period ISS + Counselor/SW Referral Parent Conf ● 7th Offense: 1 Day of ISS and parent meeting with Administrator ● 8th Offense: 1 Day of ISS and SARC & Attendance Contract (Rule 10) ● 9th Offense: 1 Day of OSS and Rule 12 Behavior Contract - Parent Contact ● 10th Offense: 2 Day of OSS ● 11th Offense: OSS pending a Disciplinary Hearing - Parent Must Attend	The disciplinary actions for students who are AWOL from school (full or partial) will be implemented based on the Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) Discipline Matrix.

ABSENCES: PRE-ARRANGED

If parents find it necessary for students to miss school due to a pre-scheduled event, absences must be approved by the attendance administrator three days in advance. If the absence is approved, it will be classified as unexcused, but students may be allowed to make up missed work. The required pre-arranged absence form should be obtained from the Attendance Office, completed and returned three days prior to the days missed. This procedure should also be followed for college visits. All pre-arranged absences will count toward the attendance requirement per class, per semester and will affect senior exemptions.

ABSENCES: MAKE-UP WORK

Students are allowed to make up work only if a note is brought verifying the absence is excused based on the seven state approved reasons previously noted. A student returning from an excused absence has limited days to make up work. Arrangements to make up work must be completed within *the time period allotted by the teacher*. Exceptions to the two-day rule may be made for students with three or more

consecutive excused absences based on a plan devised by the individual teachers. Every effort should be made to make up work as soon as possible.

It is the student's responsibility to see that this is done at the teacher's convenience, outside the regular class period. The two-day rule does not apply to long-standing due dates on assignments such as projects or term papers. In these cases, the students would be expected to return the assignment on time.

OTHER ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

- **FIRST TEN & LAST TEN** - Students are NOT allowed out of the classroom for the first and last 10 minutes of class. The beginning and end of class are critical periods of time for teachers and students. Therefore, all students needing to leave class will be asked to wait until the class is up and running before leaving class.
- **Unexcused Absences** - Students with more than 5 unexcused absences are subject to disciplinary consequences and proactive interventions. Students with more than 10 days of excused and/or unexcused absences are also subject to disciplinary action and consequences.
- Parent notes will be accepted for up to ten (10) excused all day absences and six (7) check-in or tardies per semester. Formal medical documentation may be required for the purpose of validating a serious illness or extended illness.

CHECKING IN

Students arriving after 7:00 a.m. must enter the school through the rear doors and proceed directly to the Attendance Office to check in prior to attending class. See Attendance Policy.

Late arriving students must present a note signed by a parent stating the reason for tardiness, which will be verified. A note must be presented at the time of checking in. Only five personal illnesses will be accepted per semester, after that unexcused tardies will be issued. Students checking in from a doctor or dentist appointment must have a note or fax from the doctor or dentist otherwise a tardy will be issued. Unexcused check-ins may result in disciplinary action. Failure to follow check-in procedures may result in disciplinary action.

LATE CHECK- IN (TARDY TO SCHOOL)

If a student checks in late to school due to a doctor's appointment, they must provide a doctor's note; otherwise, the time absent will be counted as unexcused.

REPEATEDLY CHECKING IN/OUT

Administrators monitor student check ins and check outs. Students who have excessive check in and/or check outs will receive consequences. A student who checks in/out of school five or more times in a semester may have his/her parking privileges revoked at any time.

CHECKING OUT

Once a student arrives on campus, he/she must check out through the Attendance Office. Students are not allowed to request a check-out in the attendance office. **Contact with the parent will be required before a student is released.** Parents checking students out will be required to present identification. Parents will not be permitted to check out students after 1:15 p.m. Students are not permitted to check out during a final exam period. There are no checkouts on the three Final Exam Early Release Days (half days) of each semester.

Once a student is on campus, the student must checkout, including Fridays. Students leaving campus without checking out are considered AWOL, even if the school day has not yet begun. Truant students will face disciplinary measures. Students who check out or attempt to check out under a false pretense will be subject to disciplinary action.

CHECK OUTS/EMERGENCY

Students who leave school during the day due to illness or emergency must follow routine check out procedures. Only parents or guardians may give permission or a student's release from school. No student may leave campus prior to contact with a parent either in person or by telephone, if by telephone the parent must confirm with an email. Alternate numbers listed on the student clinic card are for emergency purposes only, not for routine checking out.

PRE-PLANNED CHECK OUTS

If a student has a note from the parent requesting permission for the student to leave school for an appointment, the students should present the note to the Attendance Office as soon as possible, so that the appointment can be confirmed (the student must report back to the Attendance Office to sign out at the appropriate time). If the parent intends to pick up the student, no note is necessary.

FUNERALS

If a parent/guardian wishes for a student to check out to attend a funeral, he or she should write a note and it should be turned in to the Attendance Office prior to first period. A parent will be contacted to verify the note.

COLLEGE VISITS

Each student is allowed three excused absences per year for college visits. The student should submit documentation of the visit with the note/email from the parent.

PAUL DUKE STEM HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE

The school counseling department provides an important system of support for students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Counselors work with students individually, in small groups, and through classroom guidance activities. Parent meetings are held throughout the year to provide both parents and students with information specific to each grade level to facilitate an on-time graduation. Students are assigned counselors according to their last name and grade level.

APPOINTMENTS

Students are able to visit the Counseling Office to request an appointment with their counselor via online (E-Class) or in person. Students may also email their counselor with questions, and it is open for drop-in appointments during lunches. A counseling appointment is considered instructional time and is not a class absence. The counseling office is open 6:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

COLLEGE AND CAREER

The school houses a wealth of information ([School Website Link HERE](#)) concerning occupations and post-secondary choices. A counseling staff member or volunteer is available to assist students and parents in their search for information. Information concerning colleges, technical schools, careers, college admissions testing, and financial aid is available.

CRISIS HELP NUMBERS

- Abused Women's Services & Shelter: 770-963-9799 (24 hours)*
- Alanon, Alateen: 404-685-9040
- Child & Elder Abuse Reporting: 770-995-2122
- Department of Family and Children's Services: 855-422-4453
- Gwinnett Sexual Assault Center: 770-476-7407 (24 hours)*
- SAFE House: 770-995-7620
- Suicide Prevention Hotline: 988
- The United Way: 2-1-1

*Available 24 hours; help also available at any Quick Trip

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DUAL ENROLLMENT

The Dual Enrollment program gives qualified high school students the opportunity to earn college credits. Students are “concurrently” enrolled in high school and college, full time or part time. Students earn both college and high school credits needed for graduation while working toward a college degree. Please access www.GaFutures.org for specific guidelines. Contact the counseling office for more details.

RECORDS TRANSFER

Copies of a student’s educational record may be transferred to officials of other schools in which the student seeks to enroll. Please note that we are unable to fax student records. Effective July 1, 1977, Georgia law requires:

Students in sixth grade or higher transferring to a new school will be required to provide academic and disciplinary transcripts to school officials. Students will be required to disclose conviction of designated felony acts, whether they currently are serving a suspension or expulsion from another school, the reason for such discipline, and the term of the discipline. Schools can refuse to admit students under disciplinary action from other school systems. In lieu of compliance, a student may be admitted on a conditional basis if he or she and his or her parent or legal guardian execute a document providing the name and address of the school last attended authorizing the release of all academic and disciplinary records to the school administration. Every school system in the state will be obligated to provide complete information to a requesting school within ten (10) days of receipt of request.

STUDENT RECORDS

Under the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, parents have several rights. These include: the right to inspect and review educational records of their child, the right to challenge the content of those records, the right to control the release of educational records of their child, the right to complain to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Office about the school’s failure to comply with the law, and the right to be informed of these rights just listed. To obtain a copy of the Gwinnett County policies on their compliance with the law, or to request the opportunity to inspect and review your child’s records, contact your child’s school.

Gwinnett County Public Schools provide the student and his or her parents with important rights pertaining to student records. The rights include: the right to receive this information in a format understandable to the student and parent; the right to inspect and review student records by parents (and in the case of students over the age of eighteen, by students) within 45 days of the request and the right to have the records explained; the right to copies of student records; the right to challenge the content of student records and the procedures for doing so, including the availability of formal proceedings to resolve these disputes; the right to request that material be removed from student records and the procedures for doing so; the requirement of parental or student consent and methods of consent before the disclosure of student records except in certain specific circumstances; the rights of separated or divorced parents and legal guardians pertaining to student records; the schedule of destruction of particular student records; the content, location and particulars concerning permanent records, official records and supplemental records.

TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS

Official transcripts can be sent directly to Georgia Colleges and Universities on www.GaFutures.org. Students may request transcripts in the front office for a fee of \$5.00. Students are responsible for mailing applications, officially sealed transcripts, and all supporting materials. Transcripts require a 48-hour turnaround.

WITHDRAWAL REQUESTS

PDS HS reserves the right to allow a minimum of forty-eight hours to process withdrawal requests.

PAUL DUKE STEM HIGH SCHOOL FOUR YEAR TIMELINE

FRESHMAN (9TH GRADE)

- Ask your parents/guardians to help you monitor your academic progress. Be sure to share progress reports.
- Encourage your parents/guardians to sign up for and check grades, attendance, discipline, etc. on the parent portal.
- Take the Preliminary SAT (PSAT).
- Become involved in sports, clubs, and community activities.
- Be present on the day your counselor completes the “Four-Year Plan”. Make certain you’ve selected the most appropriate and challenging courses for your sophomore year.
- Begin an “Activities and Awards Portfolio” – record activities, organize and file important documents like the Community Service Log.
- Remember to record all Community Service hours on a Paul Duke STEM Community Service Log. Copies are kept in the Counseling Office and can be found on the PDS website under counseling.
- Log onto your GaFutures account (<https://www.gafutures.org/>) to look up your Hope GPA after both the Fall and Spring Semesters.
- Continue to check your progress on eCLASS.
- Start portfolio for Senior Experience & Exhibition (SEE). Students in the SEE course complete an internship during the Senior year.

SOPHOMORE (10TH GRADE)

- Continue to monitor your academic progress using the Student Portal.
- Take the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and use this score to begin to identify good college matches based upon your score.
- Start to explore and discuss post-secondary options in Naviance (college, university, technical college, military, work, apprenticeship programs, etc.)
- Log on to your GaFutures.org account (<https://www.gafutures.org/>) to look up your Hope GPA after the Fall and Spring Semesters.
- Make certain that you have selected the most appropriate courses for your junior year.
- Choose meaningful activities for the summer months (work, community service, athletics, and travel).
- Continue in the two to three activities that you enjoy the most. Do your best to assume leadership roles/positions.
- Create a list of seven to ten universities, colleges, or programs that you are considering..
- Update your Activities and Awards portfolio and continue to keep track of all Community Service hours on the log.
- Continue portfolio for Senior Experience & Exhibition (SEE). Think about internship interests and possibilities.

JUNIOR (11TH GRADE)

- Continue to monitor your academic progress on the student portal
- Be prepared to meet with your counselor to review your credit evaluation. The key is to ensure that you are on track for graduation.
- Be sure to register for the Preliminary SAT (PSAT). The test is administered in October and students must register and pay a fee to participate. The PSAT is the required qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship.
- Talk to your parents/guardians about post-secondary options.
 - Have an honest and candid discussion about your family's financial ability to pay for college, technical college, etc.
- Consider your test-prep strategy for the SAT and/or the ACT. Check with your counselor to see what preparation classes might be available to you through Paul Duke STEM or Gwinnett County Public Schools.
- In the spring, take the SAT at school as a part of the required SAT testing day.
- Go on college/university visits.
- Carefully select appropriate and challenging classes for your senior year.
- Start looking into scholarships. Visit the College and Career site ([CLICK HERE](#))!
- Update your Activities and Awards portfolio.
- Narrow your list of choices to five or seven colleges/universities or programs.
- Continue to keep track of all Community Service hours on your log.
- Assume leadership roles in clubs, sports, activities, etc.
- Log onto your GaFutures account (<https://www.gafutures.org/>) to look up your Hope GPA after the Fall and Spring Semesters.
- Narrow internship interests. Register to take the SEE course Senior year.

SENIOR (12TH GRADE)

- Continue to monitor academic progress on the student portal
- Be prepared to meet with your counselor to review your graduation status. He/she will help you to complete your "GCPS Senior Application for Graduation" letter.
- Set up a calendar for the year. It is most important to include impending deadlines!
- Take the SAT and/or the ACT again in early fall.
- Narrow your college choices. By now you should have identified five to seven schools to which you will apply for admission.
- Apply to colleges, universities or programs that you are interested in. Pay attention to DEADLINES!
- Apply for financial aid and scholarships. Visit the counseling office for a list of legitimate websites.
- Complete the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid" (FAFSA) from the Counseling Office in January! Complete and submit form at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- Log onto your GaFutures.org account (<https://www.gafutures.org/>) to look up your Hope GPA after the Fall and Spring Semesters.
- Be aware of Paul Duke STEM High School's deadlines for requesting transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc.
- If you wish to graduate with a community service cord and/or seal, be sure to turn in your completed Community Service forms to the Counseling Office by early March.
- EXPECT to graduate on time and do everything in your power to achieve that goal!
- Complete your activities and awards portfolio.
- Learn all you can from your Senior Experience. SEE yourself as a graduate, a professional. Prepare a presentation for the Exhibition in the Spring.

CLINIC INFORMATION

For the safety and well-being of students, it is imperative that a clinic information form be completed for every student each school year. This form must include the student's current address and phone number, medical conditions, emergency numbers, and a valid parent signature. If changes occur during the year, parents should notify the clinic. This form must be on file before students are allowed to check out by someone besides the parent, otherwise a parent will have to come to school to check the student out.

CLINIC POLICY

The clinic worker is present in your child's school to act as a liaison between home and school regarding health concerns. Although we provide this service, clinic workers are not registered nurses, therefore, we cannot diagnose or treat illness. Prompt arrival of the parent/legal guardian upon notification of your child's illness is extremely important. By working together and keeping contagious illnesses contained at home, we can strive to ensure the health and well-being of every student so that he/she can benefit from the educational program. Please remember to make sure the school knows how to reach you during the day.

MEDICATIONS ON SCHOOL CAMPUS

Gwinnett county regulations require that our Clinic Worker must have permission in writing to administer medication to your child. Please complete one form for each medication. A "Parent/Guardian Authorization to Administer Medication at School" form is available for your convenience on the school website or in the clinic.

Students may not possess prescription or over the counter medications on campus. However, self-administration of asthma medication and prescription auto-injectable epinephrine is permitted with written parental approval and required documentation to the principal or his designee. See an administrator for completion of proper forms/procedures.

The clinic does not store any kind of medication except for medications brought into the clinic by the parent for their child. The medication is then stored in a student file and only given to the student to whom it belongs.

Administration of prescription and over the counter medicine (even for a short period of time) is discouraged. Parents should check with their physician regarding the need for medications to be administered during school hours. Medications prescribed for three times daily often can be given before school, after school, and at bedtime. If you have any questions about this procedure, please call the school clinic.

All medications, both prescription and over the counter, must be accompanied by the medicine release form and brought to the school clinic by an adult. All medications must be in the unopened ORIGINAL CHILD PROOF CONTAINER. Prescription medications must be in the labeled prescription bottle. Medication stored in envelopes, baggies, etc. will not be administered, and will be discarded.

Medications must be picked up at the end of the year, or the school will dispose of them.

DRESS CODE

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Our dress code is designed to maintain an academic focus in the classroom while on campus and prepare students for college and their career. Before coming to school, both students and parents should ensure the student's clothing meets the following dress code guidelines. No student shall dress in such a way that is not professional and appropriate for school or the workplace. Inappropriate dress can distract from the learning process of other students. If in the judgment of the administration or staff, a student is dressed inappropriately or unprofessionally, the student will be required to change clothing. There may be additional disciplinary consequences as well, including professionalism assignments through eClass.

- **DC1 - Shirts/Blouses/Tops/T-shirts:** Clothing must cover chest/cleavage, midsection/midriffs, and/or buttocks. If the midriff shows when arms are raised to shoulder height, the blouse/shirt is unacceptable and the student will be made to change into a shirt meeting dress code. Simply putting on a jacket or shirt over a midriff shirt will not be permitted. Students with an exposed stomach/midriff at school will receive a dress code violation and be required to change into a shirt meeting dress code. No strapless shirts of any kind may be worn during the school day. This includes shirts that are meant to be worn off the shoulder---these are not allowed and all shirts worn must have straps on both shoulders.
- **DC2 - Undergarments:** Undergarments should NOT be visible at any time. Clothing that reveals undergarments (including sports bras/bralettes) or overexposes one's body is not allowed.
- **DC3 - Shorts/Skirts/Pants:** Shorts and skirts must be no more than 6 inches from the knee. Slits, rips, or holes 6 inches above the knee must not show skin. Waistlines should rest on or above the hips with no undergarment of any kind showing.
- **DC4 - Headwear:** Students are not permitted to wear hats, beanies, skull caps, scarves, shower caps, bonnets, wave caps, and/or non-religious head wraps. Headwear of any type should not be visible inside the building at any time and are only permitted outside of the building.

**** Exceptions for religious or medical reasons may be granted by the principal.****

- **DC5 - Hoods:** Students are allowed to wear the hood from hoodie sweatshirts in the school. Hoods must be worn in a manner that does not obstruct any part of the face or ears. However, faculty and staff have the right to ask students to remove them in the classroom.
- **DC6 - Shoes:** Health regulations and safety factors require that shoes be worn at all times. Bedroom shoes are not allowed. Some classes require students to wear closed toe shoes.
- **DC7 - Pajamas or sleepwear:** Pajamas and/or sleepwear are not to be worn. Blankets and pillows are NOT to be brought to school.
- **DC8 - Jewelry or accessories:** Jewelry or accessories that may be used as weapons are not allowed to be worn on campus. This includes, but is not limited to wallet chains, spiked rings, spiked bracelets, or two or three finger rings that are joined. Sharp objects such as spikes are not allowed on clothing or book bags.
- **DC9 - Words or symbols:** Articles of clothing that have words or designs that suggest obscenity, drugs, alcohol, weapons, illegal behavior, and/or gang behaviors are prohibited.

For the first dress code violation, students will change clothes and receive a documented warning. Parents are also contacted. Additional violations will result in further consequences. Additionally, positive behavior interventions will be used to support students in their behavior.

EXCEPTIONS-Exceptions to the Paul Duke STEM High School dress code may be made by the principal or his/her designee for legal, moral, and ethical reasons.

Electronic Devices (including Cell Phones and Ear Buds)

- Electronic Devices, except for calculators, are not to be used while inside a classroom during the school day without explicit consent of the classroom teacher or other legal documents.
- Photographing, audio recording or videotaping another student or staff member by any means is strictly prohibited while on school system premises without the consent of a staff member.
- Employees of GCPS will not investigate the loss or theft of any electronic device.
- Paul Duke STEM and its employees will not be liable for technology that is taken when a student uses inappropriately

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GENERAL INFORMATION

BULLYING POLICY

Any student who is considered to be “bullying” other students with oral, written, cyber or physical threats or threatens the safety of any student, staff, faculty member or community member will receive a discipline consequence. Bullying is considered a threat and disruptive to the educational function of the school.

BUS POLICY

Gwinnett County Public Schools provides a service of transportation for students to and from school. Students must abide by all policies, procedures and disciplinary rules on the way to the bus stop, while at the bus stop and en route to and from school. Violation of county rules, policies or procedures may result in disciplinary action that may include revoking bus riding privileges.

Students are not allowed to ride any other bus than the assigned bus to the student’s home address. Furthermore, permissive transfer students are not authorized to ride GCPS buses. In the case of an emergency, a student will be allowed to ride an alternate bus if a note from the student’s parent/guardian is submitted to the Front Office before school begins. The note must include the emergency situation and a contact number.

CAFETERIA

The breakfast program is from 6:30 – 6:55 a.m. and the cost is \$1.50 for students and .30¢ for reduced (charging will not be allowed). The cost of a student lunch is \$2.50. Reduced lunch is .40¢. Portions may be purchased separately. Forms for free and reduced lunches are available from the cafeteria manager or the front office or online. A new application for free or reduced lunch must be submitted within the first 30 days of school each year. Students on the Free and Reduced Program may not allow others to use his/her number. Parents/Guardians may use www.MyPaymentsPlus.com to establish a school lunch account to pre-pay their student’s meal account. Containers are provided for trash disposal. Students may buy school-sponsored lunch or bring a lunch to school. Outside food may not be delivered during the school day. Students may not leave campus for lunch.

FOOD SERVICES

Parents/Guardians wishing to provide money to students for their lunch account must utilize www.MyPaymentsPlus.com. Parents/Guardians must create an account, then may load funds for meals which is then used as a debit account to purchase meals and a la carte items. Students are allowed to charge up to \$7.50, after which charging privileges are suspended.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

A complete listing of Paul Duke STEM High School clubs, organizations and athletic teams is available on the Paul Duke STEM High School website at: <https://www.gcpsk12.org/pauldukestemhs>

Please note: If students volunteer to provide items for clubs (ex: food, clothing donations, etc.), families will not be eligible for reimbursement unless an agreement is in writing from a school administrator.

COMMUNITY SERVICE CORD

The purpose of awarding a Community Service Seal is to make high school students more aware of the community in which they live and to offer avenues for them to learn about the interdependence of mankind.

The cord can be earned by completing a minimum of 200 hours. Service hours must be earned outside of the 7:00 – 1:50 school day. Service hours may be earned during the summer prior to each school year.

Service is not restricted to, but may include, community, hospital, church, scout or club activities that help those who are in need. Fundraising activities, other than for charitable causes, do not count for the seal.

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Hours worked for a commercial business for purposes other than charitable causes are not valid. Service to family members in special situations (such as babysitting) may be considered but are not guaranteed to count toward the Community Service Seal (please attach a letter of explanation and speak with the Service Seal Coordinator).

All service must be accurately recorded on the Community Service Seal Activity Log including name of organizations involved, description of service, dates, volunteer hours and signatures of adult supervisors.

Possible sources for community service may come from local service organizations and school personnel or ideas from the Community Service Center, but must meet with the approval of the Service Seal Coordinator.

The community service log is due to the Service Seal Coordinator in March of the senior year.

Rising ninth grade students may begin earning service hours during the summer preceding their ninth grade year.

DELIVERIES TO SCHOOL

Parents are discouraged from bringing items such as lunches, gym bags, and books to school to be delivered to students. Interruption of classes to deliver these items interferes with instruction. We do not deliver flowers, gifts, or fast food lunches to students. **Federal lunch program prohibits delivery of fast foods during the school day by families and companies (e.g. Uber Eats, Grub Hub).**

DRIVER'S LAW

All students 15 through 17 years old are required to bring a notarized Certificate of Attendance when applying for a driver's license or permit. Certificates of Attendance are available in the Main Office and there is a minimum 24-hour turnaround time to process the form. The cost of having this form processed is \$3 and must be paid at the time the form is presented to be processed. This form certifies that a student has not missed ten or more unexcused absences in the current and/or prior school year.

Students who need attendance verified AND a replacement ADAP form will be charged \$5 for both forms.

ELEVATOR ACCESS

An elevator is available for those who are unable to use the stairs. **Students must have an Administrator's written permission to obtain access to the elevator.** Go to the Clinic for a pass. Students who ride the elevator without permission before, during, or after school will receive further consequences. Additionally, positive behavior interventions will be implemented to support a change in behavior.

- Students that are constantly in violation of using the elevator without administrative permission will be referred to administration.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

A comprehensive safety plan has been established for the welfare of all students. A copy of this plan is located in all administrative offices.

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The Stewart B. McKinney/Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act ensures the educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. It provides legal protections for children and youth in homeless situations to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school and preschool programs. In accordance with this law, Gwinnett County Public Schools affords homeless children and youth equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education such as Head Start, Even Start, State Pre-K, and Title One Preschool Programs as provided to other students. Homeless children and youth will have access to education and other services that he/she needs to have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

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INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

It is the practice of Paul Duke STEM High School to provide instructional and related services appropriate in order to provide a free appropriate public education for individuals with documented disabilities. Individuals may contact any office for information regarding mobility impaired issues or handicapped access.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Students who violate the rules and/or regulations of Paul Duke STEM High School or the Gwinnett County Public Schools may be assigned In-School Suspension (ISS). Students are to follow the rules of ISS. Any violation of the rules of ISS may result in Out-of-School Suspension.

Failure to report to ISS as assigned may result in Out-of-School Suspension. Any student that is absent the day(s) of assigned ISS should report to ISS upon returning to school. Failure to do so may result in Out-of-School Suspension.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Students who violate the rules and/or regulations of Paul Duke STEM High School or the Gwinnett County Public Schools may result in Out-of-School Suspension (OSS). Students may not be on any Gwinnett County Public Schools' property during Out-of-School Suspension at any time, including attending extracurricular activities.

PARKING

A limited amount of parking is available on campus for students. Parking on campus is a privilege. Certain rules and regulations are expected of the student to maintain this privilege. Students who choose to park a vehicle at Paul Duke STEM High School must purchase a parking permit for \$70.00 per year or \$35.00 after winter break. No refunds will be issued.

Students who purchase a parking permit will receive a decal that they must always display on the car. No student may obtain a parking permit for another student or give someone else permission to use his/her parking privileges. Refer to the parking permit application for necessary documentation in order to obtain a parking permit and for parking rules/regulations and eligibility guidelines.

The student who purchased the parking decal originally is the only person allowed to use that decal. If a decal is stolen or lost, replacement decals will be issued at the same cost as the original decal and there will be no refund for replacement decals if the original decal is found.

No student is allowed in any parking lot at any time except when arriving on campus or leaving campus. Upon arrival at school, students should go directly to the building and not remain in the parking lot or return to the parking lot without permission. Vehicles brought on campus are subject to search by school officials.

Violations of parking regulations may result in revocation of parking privileges, having the vehicle towed off campus and/or receiving a parking ticket. Vehicles without appropriate parking permits will be given one warning. If corrective action is not taken, the vehicle may be towed.

PDS LOCAL SCHOOL RULES (GCPS Student Conduct Behavior Code, Rule 11A)

1. Students are expected to conduct themselves as mature young adults while on the PDS campus.
2. Students are expected to be able to hear and comply with reasonable requests of staff, including identifying themselves by name when asked. **Students should only have one earbud in while in the hall or during class changes.** **Students should not have earbuds in their ears during class.**
3. Running in the building, jumping stairs, and jumping stair rails is absolutely prohibited.
4. Loud and disruptive behavior is not allowed.
5. Move in an orderly manner to class. Do not block hallways. Do not congregate in groups in the hallways. Walk on the right side of the hallways. Be courteous in the hallways. **Follow directional signs for hallways and stairwells, if they are present.**

6. Students must exit the building by 2:00 in the afternoon unless at a school sponsored activity supervised by a teacher. Students not with a teacher or sponsor must be in study hall at 2:00 p.m.
7. Students are not to loiter in the restrooms or stairwells.
8. Students are not allowed in the hallways without a pass during lunch. Students have several minutes to get to the Commons area for lunch. Students at lunch are to leave the Commons area when the first bell rings to return to class.
9. Students must have a hallway pass at all times when in the hallway during scheduled class time.

PROOF OF RESIDENCY AND IMMUNIZATION

The parent or guardian of the student must provide proof of residency in the district and attendance zone at the time a student is initially enrolled in a school. All students must be properly immunized and have the official Georgia immunization form on file in the counseling office. Hearing, dental, and vision screening is also required. Failure to comply with these guidelines may lead to withdrawal from Paul Duke STEM High School.

TITLE I OFFICE

Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 (formerly known as ECIA, ESEA or Chapter 1, No Child Left Behind Act) is the largest federally funded educational program. ESSA, authorized by Congress, provides supplemental funds to school districts to assist schools with the highest student concentrations of poverty to meet school educational goals. Schools qualify for Title I based on demonstrating that the enrollment of the school has a sufficiently high percentage of economically disadvantaged students. Title I funds must be used to promote:

- High academic/achievement for all children;
- A greater focus on teaching and learning;
- Flexibility to stimulate local initiatives coupled with responsibility for student performance;
- Improved linkages among schools, parents and communities.

If you have questions or would like to be an active parent, please contact the Parent Center at Paul Duke STEM High School.

VISITORS

Students are not allowed to have visitors during the school day. Parents or others with business at Paul Duke STEM High School must check- in and obtain appropriate identification in the main lobby.

WORK PERMITS

Procedures for obtaining work permits are available in the Main Office. Work permits are prepared after normal school hours and require a 24-hour turnaround. Students who are sixteen years of age or older are no longer required to obtain a work permit.

STUDENT GUIDELINES FOR MEDIA CENTER USE

The PDSHS Media Center is open Monday – Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Please note: The Media Center is occasionally closed after school for meetings.) Students may come to the Media Center with a signed pass anytime during the school day. If students would like to come to the Media Center during lunch, they will need to get a pass that morning from the Media Center. The Media Center staff is happy to help with research, technology projects, and reading recommendations, so don't hesitate to ask!

- Students may check out up to five (5) books at a time and keep them for three weeks. Items may be renewed as available.
- Students are charged \$0.10 per day for overdue books. Students will not be able to check out another book until their record is clear. Students are encouraged to take care of fines as soon as possible so that they can keep your checkout privileges.

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- Students are held personally responsible for items checked out under their student number. Students should NOT check books out for other people or share their student ID number with friends.
- If a student loses a library book, the cost to replace it is \$20 for a hardback book and \$10 for a paperback book.
- Printing costs \$.10 per page for black and white and \$.25 for color.
- Food and drink are not allowed in the Media Center.
- Students who need to use technology equipment, such as digital still or video cameras, projectors, or scanners, should see a media specialist to reserve these items in advance.
- All students are expected to abide by the GCPS Acceptable Use of Electronic Media Policy.

Student resources available at home: You will find many resources through MY eCLASS. Your teachers' Course Pages contain information about your classes. You will find access to many databases in the Online Research Library on your student portal dashboard, along with passwords to the databases. For information about the Paul Duke STEM Media Center and its resources, go to the PDSHS website at

<https://www.gcpk12.org/pauldukestemhs>

RESPONSIBLE USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR STUDENTS

The Board recognizes that electronic media, including the Internet, provides access to a wide variety of instructional resources in an effort to enhance educational opportunities. Use of electronic resources must be in support of, and consistent with the vision, mission, and goals established by the Board and for the purpose of AKS instructional support.

All users of the district wide area network and/or other electronic informational services must maintain strict compliance with all applicable ethical and legal rules and regulations regarding access. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that all GCPS technology users share the GCPS technology resources in an effective, ethical, and lawful manner. GCPS technology should be used for legitimate educational reasons only, and not for personal use.

Strict compliance with all applicable ethical and legal rules and regulations must be maintained by all users of the wide area network and/or other electronic informational services including electronic mail (email). Users must respect intellectual property rights and understand that school system data accessible over the network, regardless of the computer or device being used, constitutes property. All electronic, telephonic, and communications transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are property of Gwinnett County Public Schools. Users of such systems should have no expectation of privacy. Student email use for legitimate educational purposes will be subject to monitoring and review, including review of text and attachments that are related to that student or students. At NO TIME should a student consider GCPS email private or confidential in any way.

It is important to note that with a global network it is impossible to control or predict all materials a user may accidentally or purposefully discover on an electronic resource. Gwinnett County Public Schools personnel will make every effort to educate and guide all users in the proper use of electronic media, including the Internet. Because access to the Internet provides connections to other computer systems located all over the world, users (and parents of users) must understand that neither the Gwinnett County Public Schools nor any district staff member controls the content of the information available on these other systems. Some of the information available is controversial and sometimes may be offensive. Gwinnett County Public Schools DOES NOT CONDONE the use of such materials. Therefore, it is imperative that the user be held accountable for the appropriate utilization of this technology.

ACCESS IS A PRIVILEGE—NOT A RIGHT! Inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of these privileges as well as possible assignment of disciplinary action consistent with the policies and procedures of Gwinnett County Public Schools. Local schools may establish additional regulatory guidelines for use of electronic resources that include, but are not limited to, guidelines established by this system wide procedure. Building administrators shall establish a process for informing students and staff about the district and local school Responsible Use Procedures.

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The definition of GCPS information and data resources will include any computer, server, or network, or access provided or supported by GCPS, including portal-delivered applications and the Internet. Use of computer information and resources includes the use of data/programs stored on GCPS computing systems, data/programs stored and/or delivered through magnetic tape, floppy disk, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, computer peripherals, or other storage media, that is owned and maintained by the GCPS. The “user” of the system is the student using GCPS technology. Access is a privilege, not a right, and all students are expected to treat this learning tool with respect.

GCPS technology and electronic resources must not be used to:

- Harm other people.
- Interfere with other people’s work.
- Use a computer to steal information and/or property.
- Gain unauthorized access to other people’s files or programs.
- Gain unauthorized access to online resources by using someone else’s password.
- Make changes to the hardware or software configuration of any machine, including installing or deleting any software.
- Improperly using the network, including introducing software viruses and/or bypassing local school or office security policies.
- Steal or damage data and/or computers and network equipment.
- Access, upload, download, and distribute pornographic, hate-oriented, profane, obscene, or sexually explicit material.

It is a violation of the GCPS Code of Conduct for students to misuse or alter any computer or technology system at the school or school district. It is also a violation for students to engage in computer trespass. Therefore, students are not permitted to connect unapproved devices to computers or the network. This includes cell phones and other electronic devices that might interface with the computer or network. (GCPS Code of Conduct rules 2I and 2J).

Failure to follow these guidelines can violate the Official Code of Georgia, O.C.G.A., Codes 16-9-90, 16-9-91, 16-9-93, and 16-9-93.1 as well as Title XVII of United States Public Law 106554, known as the Children’s Internet Protection Act. Such actions can also lead to disciplinary action, up to and including loss of access to GCPS technology resources and further disciplinary actions as defined by existing GCPS policies.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE GUIDANCE

Paul Duke STEM High School recognizes that Artificial Intelligence tools are increasingly part of college, career, civic, and creative life. AI can support learning, productivity, accessibility, creativity, problem-solving, and innovation when used responsibly. Paul Duke STEM High School supports responsible, ethical, and human-centered use of Artificial Intelligence tools. AI may be used to enhance learning, creativity, accessibility, and productivity when authorized by the teacher or school and when used transparently. AI may not be used to misrepresent authorship, replace student learning, compromise privacy, make high-stakes decisions without human review, or harm others. Students and staff remain responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and appropriateness of all AI-assisted work. The Paul Duke STEM HS framework establishes clear expectations for what students and staff may do, may do only with permission, and may not do when using AI tools in school-related work. [GCPS guidance](#) emphasizes a human-centered approach in which AI augments learning and operations but does not replace human expertise, reflection, judgment, or decision-making.

Students and staff are expected to adhere to our Artificial Intelligence framework that is grounded in the principles that AI use should be ethical, transparent, equitable, secure, academically honest, and supervised by humans. [Georgia’s K–12 AI guidance](#) similarly stresses that AI should enhance, not replace, human judgment and interaction, and that AI use should be supportive rather than high-stakes.

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NORCROSS CLUSTER OF SCHOOLS ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

RATIONALE

The Norcross Cluster of Schools is committed to the academic, social and ethical development of each member of our learning community. “Academic honesty must be seen as a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning, and assessment. It is influenced and shaped by a variety of factors including peer pressure, culture, parental expectations, role modeling, and taught skills.”

All stakeholders have an obligation to promote the learner profile characteristic of being principled. The guidelines set forth in this policy promote the values of academic integrity among students, parents, faculty, and administration. The policy:

- Defines and provides an example of the types of academic misconduct (collusion vs. collaboration)
- Provides examples of conventions used for citation
- Outlines the consequence of participating in such endeavors

COLLABORATION AND COLLUSION

Legitimate collaboration is cooperative work with individual responsibilities and group accountability. Students must follow teacher guidelines regarding independent and group work. Examples of unacceptable collusion include but are not limited to:

- Forging documents
- Taking an online assessment or assignment under another student’s identity
- Obtaining test or quiz materials for an assessment without the instructor’s knowledge
- Inappropriate use of graphing calculators, programmable watches, smartphones, wearable technology and other computer or electronic devices
- Sharing student work that should be individually/independently produced
- Discussing information about a quiz or test with students who have not completed the assessment
- Obtaining/giving answers from/to another student during a test with or without the student’s knowledge
- Failing to follow teacher guidelines regarding collaboration on assignments or projects
- Failing to complete all work independently unless expressly instructed otherwise

RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers will:

- Provide students with explicit requirements and directions.
- Structure conditions during testing to alleviate the possibility of cheating and strictly adhere to all testing proctor guidelines and protocols.
- Specify the types of collaboration that are allowable and those that are not allowed.
- Teach and review correct use of documentation when assigning work.
- Review citation process.
- Review the Academic Honesty Policy often, particularly before major assignments and tests.

Administrators will:

- Assure that all faculty, students and parents have knowledge of the Norcross Cluster Academic Honesty Policy.
- Create a cluster-wide environment that encourages a consistent culture of adherence to the Academic Honesty Policy.
- Encourage and support teachers in enforcing the Academic Honesty Policy.
- Maintain cumulative records of reported violations.
- Facilitate Academic Honesty Policy conference when appropriate.
- Enforce appropriate disciplinary actions based on GCPS policy.

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Media-Technology Personnel will:

- Provide ongoing collaboration with teachers to teach ethical use of intellectual property and computer applications, including the use of music, images, and video within presentations.
- Distribute GCPS Media Citation Guide

Students will:

- Avoid situations that might contribute to cheating, plagiarizing, lying, and stealing.
- Follow all school rules about technology usage on assessments.
- Avoid using any information, tool, or resource that may assist on a graded assessment or assignment.
- Use Artificial Intelligence appropriately.
- Avoid giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on all school assignments, including but not limited not to the use of collusion to produce and submit assignments.
- Document borrowed materials by citing sources using an approved format.
- Avoid plagiarizing by:
 - a. Using quotation marks for statements taken from others.
 - b. Acknowledge information, ideas, patterns of thought borrowed from any source.
 - c. Consulting faculty about any questionable situations.
 - d. Meet teachers' checkpoint deadlines.
 - e. Ensure that all smart technologies are utilized only when allowed by an instructor and are not used in an unauthorized manner.
 - f. Report any violations of the Academic Honesty Policy.

Parents will:

- Be aware of the Norcross Cluster Academic Honesty Policy.
- Provide a positive example for adhering to the Academic Honesty Policy.
- Support faculty and administration in enforcing the Academic Honesty Policy.

PROCESS FOR REVIEW OF POLICY

A committee will be formed consisting of key stakeholders from all Norcross Cluster Schools to evaluate the Academic Honesty Policy. During this annual evaluation the policy will be reviewed for needed updates and revisions, as well as to assess the effectiveness of the implementation and to ensure the policy is communicated throughout the Norcross Cluster Schools.

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