

Parent Express

2008-09 ★ Back-to-School Guide

SCHOOL
STARTS
Tuesday,
August 19

 GREENVILLE COUNTY
SCHOOLS
Where enlightening strikes

From the Superintendent...

Dear Parent,

The beginning of a new school year is an exciting time for everyone and the start of a journey toward success for students, parents, and teachers.



Students whose parents are involved in their education go farther in school – and the schools are better as a result. Now is the time to start preparing for the upcoming school year and what to expect. If you're new to the area, take time to visit the school at the beginning of the year and find out what is ahead. Familiarize your child with the trip to school, and make time to meet your child's teacher and let them know you appreciate feedback on your child's progress. The more you know about the school, the more likely your child will have a productive and positive school experience.

I encourage you to read *Parent Express*, your one-stop resource for back-to-school information, including the school calendar, attendance requirements, student behavior code, and transportation. Our Service Center is also available to answer additional questions at 355-3100.

We look forward to helping your child learn and grow in a supportive environment. Thank you for being a part of Greenville County Schools.

Sincerely,

Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher

What Are the Academic Expectations?

Parents are invited to meet with their child's teacher(s) during the first weeks of school to discuss academic expectations. At the beginning of the year, teachers will discuss the syllabus for each class/subject.

If you have questions or need additional resources, please contact your child's teacher.

How Are Children Assigned To Schools?

Students are assigned to schools based on their parent's or legal guardian's home address. Information regarding your child's school assignment is available on the *Find Your School* link on the GCS website (www.greenville.k12.sc.us) or by calling INFOLine at 355-3100.

A parent may request that his or her child attend another school by submitting a Change in Assignment form to the requested school or by applying to a Select School (magnet academy). Certain restrictions apply.

Parents who do not reside in the school system's attendance area and wish to enroll their child must pay out-of-district tuition. For information, call 355-3100.

Inspection of Instructional Materials

Parents or guardians may inspect all instructional materials that will be used as part of their child's educational curriculum or in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation of their child. No student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals certain categories of personal, political, family, financial, or religious information without the prior consent of the parent/guardian.



Did you know?

Parents can direct questions to INFOLine at 355-3100. Service representatives can answer questions about school assignment, attendance requirements, school calendar, student enrollment procedures, bus transportation, and other matters.

For further information, call 355-3100 or log onto our website at www.greenville.k12.sc.us.

How Much Do Meals Cost?



- Lunch – \$1.75 daily or \$8.75 weekly
- Breakfast – 85 cents daily or \$4.25 weekly (Note: Prices were last increased in 2005.)
- Menus are posted on the GCS website, listed on The Schools Channel (Charter Cable 14 and 99), and printed in area newspapers and school newsletters.
- Parents applying for free or reduced price meals should submit one application per family. Parents should complete appropriate forms on the first day of school if they think their child qualifies for free or reduced price meals.

Each year, schools serve more than seven million lunches and two million breakfasts. That breaks down to 42,000 lunches and more than 13,000 breakfasts served each day! For further information, contact Food and Nutrition Services at 355-1246.

School Bus Transportation



- **Distance from School** - Bus transportation is available to students who live 1.5 miles or farther from their school.
- **Student Information** - It is very important that parents provide schools with current home address, two or more active phone numbers, and whether student is an AM and/or PM school bus rider. If you have questions whether your child's information is current, please contact your child's school.
- **Bus Delays** - Parent/Guardian will be called if his/her child's bus (AM and/or PM) is delayed more than 15 minutes. Delays are also posted on the GCS website at www.greenville.k12.sc.us.
- **Requests for Bus Transportation After School Year Begins** - Parents should contact the student's school to request bus service after the beginning of the year. Up to five days may be required to add a student to a bus route. Every effort is made to add students as soon as possible. Time required depends on existing bus routes in the student's area.
- **Adult Supervision of 4K, 5K and 1st Grade Students** - Parent /Guardian should be present at the bus stop for both the morning pickup and afternoon drop-off. Another adult or a student who is in 5th grade or above can serve as the parent's/guardian's designee. The parent/guardian is ultimately responsible for the safety and conduct of his/her child at the school bus stop.
- **What Happens if Adult or Designee is Not Present?** If a 4K, 5K, or 1st grade student, whether alone or in a group, departs the bus AND a parent/guardian/designee is not present at the bus stop, the student(s) could be returned to his/her elementary school. When a student is returned to the elementary school, school staff will contact the parent/guardian via contact information provided by the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian cannot be located, the matter could be referred to the Greenville County Schools Law Enforcement Division and/or the Greenville County Department of Social Services (DSS). Repeated instances may result in the loss of bus privileges.
- **Concerns:** E-mail transportconcerns@greenville.k12.sc.us.

What Are School Entrance Requirements?

4K Programs

4K programs are offered at various elementary schools and five child development centers. Children who will be four years old on or before September 1 of the current school year may be eligible for this free program. Eligibility for 4K is based on academic and developmental needs, family income, and parent education level. Screenings are held each May for the upcoming school year. For more information, call 355-7359.

What Are School Entrance Requirements?

Kindergarten And First Grade

Children who will be five years old on or before September 1 of this year must enroll in public or private kindergarten, unless the parent or legal guardian signs a waiver. Any child who will be six years old on or before September 1 of this year must enroll in first grade.

To enroll a new student in kindergarten or first grade, a parent must present the following at registration:

- state-issued birth certificate,
- a properly completed immunization certificate or religious exemption certificate, and
- proof of residence.

If a child is entering school for the first time, the parent is encouraged to register him or her before the opening day of school. To determine where your child will attend school, check the GCS website or call INFOLine at 355-3100.

Transfers From Other School Districts

A student transferring from another school system in South Carolina or from another state must provide his or her previous school transcript, state-issued birth certificate, South Carolina Immunization Certificate, and proof of residence. An out-of-state student must take his or her immunization record to a doctor, health department, or child's school nurse to receive a South Carolina certificate.

New residents may temporarily enroll their children in school for 30 days with a special exemption issued by the school until an immunization certificate can be obtained. Existing immunization records and/or out of state certificates may be evaluated by your child's school nurse who is authorized by the Health Department to issue a SC Certificate if all of the requirements have been met.

If a certificate is not presented to the school at the end of the 30 days, the student will no longer be allowed to attend school.

How Can My Child Be Excused From Studying Materials That Are Offensive To Me?

General Instructional Materials

Students are not required to use instructional materials that offend them or their parents. If a parent objects to instructional materials, a request for an alternative assignment should be completed and returned to the teacher. The parent should also specify if he or she does not desire the child to be in the classroom during discussion of the regular assignment.

Efforts are made to keep parents informed of the instructional materials that are used. For example, middle and high schools provide students and parents with lists of books to be studied in depth. For further information, refer to policy IFA in the school system Policy Manual.

Sexuality Education Materials

Students may be excluded from the sexuality education component of the Health Education Program if the curriculum conflicts with the family's beliefs. Prior to instruction, schools mail parents information regarding the opportunity to preview all sexuality education instructional materials, and the parent's right to exempt his/her child from any portion or the entire unit. Excused students study other health education topics. Requests to excuse students must be submitted in writing to the principal.



Did you know?

Registration - Students must be registered by their parent or legal guardian. A student's legal name should be used for enrollment.

Freedom of Religious Expression

Greenville County Schools supports the right of individual students to express their religious beliefs as long as the expression does not interfere with the rights of others or the operation of the school.

For a comprehensive overview of students' rights, please review the U.S. Department of Education's guidelines concerning religious expression in public schools at <http://www.ed.gov>.

What Immunization Shots Are Required?

A child cannot be admitted to any school or child development program without a valid SC Certificate of Immunization or a medical, religious, or special exemption. For details, contact the Health Department or your physician.

If your child does not have a valid certificate, take his/her shot records to your physician or the county health department (282-4100). A parent or adult authorized by the parent must accompany a student under 16 who requires shots. For further information, call Medical Health Services at 355-3170.

Students with Special Health Care Needs

Many health care services can be provided to keep students with Chronic Health Related Conditions in school where they can learn and participate with other students. The goal is to provide information to parents and legal guardians about some of the services and programs available for addressing the health care needs of students during the school day. It is important that information is shared with the appropriate people - such as teachers on duty during recess, bus drivers, and cafeteria employees - to ensure students' needs are met.

Individual Health Care Plans or Individual Health Plans (IHPs)

Individual health care plans are also called IHPs. School nurses who are registered nurses write IHPs to guide how a student's health care needs will be met while at school. The nurse works with the student, the student's parents or legal guardians, the student's health care provider, and other school staff to write the plan. IHPs are written for students who have special health care needs that must be met by school staff during the school day. IHPs are also written for students who have been approved by the school district to self-medicate or self-monitor. To learn more about IHPs, talk with your child's school nurse or the Coordinator of Health Services, Catherine A. Storey, RN, BSN.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 is a federal law that requires public schools to make adjustments so that students with certain disabilities can learn and participate in settings like other students who do not have disabilities. To be eligible for services under Section 504, a student must have a condition that substantially limits one or more

major life activities. A team decides if a student is eligible. The team should include the student's parent or legal guardian, the student (if able), and others who know the student or know about the student's disability, such as a teacher, a guidance counselor, a school nurse, and other school staff. If the student is eligible, the team develops an individual accommodation plan. The individual accommodation plan explains how the student's needs will be met while at school and may include the Individual Health Care Plan written by a registered nurse. To learn more about Section 504, contact Dr. Melanie DeWitt.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Students, ages 3 through 21 years, may receive services under the IDEA if the student needs special education and related services to benefit from his or her educational program. A team decides if a student qualifies for services under the IDEA. The team includes the student's parent or legal guardian, teachers, and other school staff. The team develops an individualized education program (IEP) if the student meets federal and state requirements. The IEP outlines a

Did you know?

Students, with written permission from their parents, may receive moral or religious instruction off school campus.

Did you know?

Medications for students may be given with the parent's written permission. Medication must be provided by the parent to the school.



How Many Days Must My Child Attend School?

In South Carolina, all children are required to attend a public or private school from age five until their 17th birthday. If a parent chooses not to send his or her child to kindergarten, a waiver must be signed. Waiver forms are available at local schools.

In accordance with the State Compulsory School Attendance Law, uniform rules for all schools have been adopted to ensure that students regularly attend school. Students are counted present only when they are in school, on homebound instruction, or present at an activity authorized by the school principal. Requirements for a standard 180-day school year follow. Regulations for 4x4 block schedules and A/B schedules are available from high schools.

- I. The school year consists of 180 school days. To receive credit, students must attend at least 85 days of each 90-day semester course and at least 170 days of each 180-day year course, as well as, meet all minimum requirements for each course. Accrued student absences may not exceed ten days during the school year. Any absence in excess of ten days may cause the student to lose credit for the year.
- II. Because 170 days are the minimum required by the state, the first ten absences may be lawful, unlawful, or a combination. All absences beginning with the eleventh must be lawful and will be excused if they fall within the following guidelines:

A. Lawful Absences

1. Absences caused by a student's own illness* and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others.
*Absences verified by a statement from a physician within two days of the student's return to school. Absences for CHRONIC or EXTENDED illness will be approved only when verified by a physician's statement.
2. Absences due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family verified by a statement from the parent within two days of the student's return to school.
3. Absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith when approved in advance. Such requests must be made to the principal in writing.
4. Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal. This would include absences for extreme hardships. Such approval should be prearranged when possible.
*Including doctor's appointments

B. Unlawful Absences

1. Absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents.
2. Absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents.
3. Suspension is not to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes.

C. Approval of Absences in Excess of Ten Days and Approval of Credit

1. The Board of Trustees, or its designee, shall approve or disapprove any student's absences in excess of ten days, whether lawful, unlawful, or a combination thereof, for students in grades K-12. For the purpose of awarding credit for the year, school districts must approve or disapprove absences in excess of ten days regardless as to whether those absences are lawful, unlawful, or a combination of the two.
2. High School Credit
In order to receive one Carnegie unit of credit, a student must be in attendance at least 120 hours per unit, regardless of the number of days missed. Students whose absences are approved should be allowed to make up any work missed in order to satisfy the 120-hour requirement. Local school boards should develop policies governing student absences giving appropriate consideration to unique situations that may arise within their districts when students do not meet the minimum attendance requirements.

D. Procedures for Makeup Work

1. Provision for make up of school work missed during excused absences shall be worked out with the teacher(s) concerned at the earliest time possible, but should not exceed five school days after the student returns to school.
2. Make up of school work missed during unexcused absences may be approved only with the permission of the principal after consultation with the teacher(s) concerned.

- III. These rules apply to all schools in the school system.



Is Insurance Required To Participate In School Activities?

Insurance is required for students who participate in South Carolina High School League sponsored interscholastic activities. The cost is \$32 for high school athletes and \$18 for middle school athletes. Insurance benefits are coordinated with other insurance coverage.

Student accident insurance is also offered as a service to parents through each school. The cost is \$14 (standard) or \$11 (basic) for school-time only coverage, which includes coverage for accidents on school grounds when school is in session and for accidents during school-sponsored activities. The cost for 24-hour coverage for 12 months is \$75 (standard) or \$56 (basic). Student accident insurance does not coordinate with other plans. Benefits are paid directly to you. Enrollment forms are distributed during the first weeks of school. For further information, contact your child's school.



What Information Will I Receive From My Child's School?

Fees - List of Fees to be Charged by Your Child's School. Distribution - At Registration

School Report Card - Summary of School Progress. Distribution - November.

School Report to the Community - Summary of School Progress. Distribution - February.

Attendance Warning - Notification of Missed Days. Distribution - Telephone Call or Letter for Each Absence.

Sexuality Education Program Announcement - Notice Regarding Review of Program Materials (Grades 5-9). (See Article Regarding Excusing Students from Studying Materials on Page 2.)

Discipline Letter - Notification of Suspension, Probation or Expulsion. Distribution - As Needed.

Extracurricular Activities and Field Trips - Permission Slip for Child to Participate. Distribution - As Needed.

Free/Reduced Price Meal Guidelines - Application for Program. Distribution - First Week of School and As Needed.

Instructional Materials List - Materials to Be Studied (Middle and High). (See Article Regarding Excusing Students from Studying Materials on Page 2.)

Newsletters - School Publication (Some PTA) that Includes School News, Meal Menus, Program Changes, Etc. Distribution - Throughout the Year.

Parent/Student Handbook - Publication Regarding Operation of School. Distribution - Beginning of School Year.

Parent-Teacher Conference Letters - Announcement of Dates and Times to Discuss Student Progress. Distribution - Varies by School Level.

Personal Data, Health Card/Emergency Contact Request - Student Information In Case of An Emergency. Distribution - Beginning of School Year.

Progress Reports - Interim Reports of Student Progress. Distribution - No Later than the 5th Friday of Each Quarter.

Registration Form (5th Grade and Up) - Course Registration for Next Year. Distribution - February-March.

Report Cards - Quarterly Report of Student Progress. Distribution - See Calendar for Dates.

School Assignment Letter - Designates School Assignment for the Following School Year. Distribution - Late May/Early Summer.

Student Directory Information - Notice Whether Student Information Can Be Released by the School. Distribution - Beginning of School Year.

Teacher Expectations for Students - List of Academic, Conduct and Other Expectations. Distribution - Beginning of Each Year or Class.

Testing Dates - Letter Regarding Dates for Various Testing Programs. Also Includes Tips for Parents. Distribution - Prior to Testing. See Calendar for Dates.

Student Behavior Code

Student Behavior (Policy JCDA)

The Board expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified and respectful manner. This requirement refers to their actions toward other students and teachers, their language, their dress and their manners. The Board believes self-discipline is an interpersonal goal of public education.

Students have a responsibility to know and respect the policies, rules and regulations of the school and District. Violations of such policies, rules and regulations will result in disciplinary actions. The Board directs students to the District's Behavior Code set forth in this policy and the student handbook for their individual school. The Board authorizes its school authorities to employ probation and suspension and to recommend expulsion, if necessary, to enforce this policy.

It is the philosophy of the District to handle all student disciplinary matters at the lowest supervisory level possible and in the most reasonable manner possible. Disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with appropriate procedural rights being afforded to students and their parents/guardians as provided by state law, State Board of Education regulation, and/or the policies of this District.

The Board and the administration offer the following listing of offenses and the required or recommended dispositions for the information of students, parents/legal guardians and school personnel.

Application of this Policy

The following rules regarding student conduct are in effect during the following times and in the following places:

- on the school grounds during, and immediately before or immediately after, school hours
- on the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group
- off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event
- en route to and from school or a school activity on a school bus or other school vehicle
- at any time or in any place that impacts the school's ability to maintain order and discipline in the Greenville County School District

Student Conduct Away from School Grounds or School Activities

The Board expects administrators to take appropriate action when information becomes available about student misconduct away from school grounds or school activities that may have a direct and detrimental effect on or seriously threaten the discipline, educational environment, safety or general welfare of students, faculty, staff and/or administrators of the District. When assessing the impact of out-of-school behavior on a District school, the administrator should take into consideration the seriousness of the alleged out-of-school offense and the protection of students, faculty, staff and administrators from the effects of violence, drugs and/or disruptions.

Administrators are directed to evaluate each situation on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, administrators or their designees should meet with the student upon his/her arrival at school, give the student notice of the concerns based on the reported out-of-school behavior and allow the student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story. Based upon all of the circumstances, including a finding that the alleged conduct will have a direct and immediate effect on the school or threatens the discipline, educational environment, safety or general welfare of students, faculty, staff and/or administrators of the school, the administration may either permit the student to attend classes as usual or may take appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension in order to conduct an investigation into the matter. The parents/

legal guardians of students will be notified of any action taken by the administration and offered the opportunity for a conference with the administration.

In the event the student is incarcerated based on his/her out-of-school conduct, the principal or his/her designee will notify the student that he/she is to meet with the administration prior to returning to school.

At the conclusion of the inquiries to obtain more information on the matter, the administrator or his/her designee should take appropriate action which may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- returning the student to his/her normal class schedule and removing all evidence of suspension
- placing the student on probation and allowing the student to resume his/her normal class schedule
- placing the student on probation, allowing the student to continue class work, but restricting the student's participation in extracurricular activities and/or designated school activities, for example, clubs, study halls, pep rallies, student government activities and so forth
- suspending the student
- recommending placement in the District's alternative school
- recommending expulsion of the student for the remainder of the year

The disciplinary action taken must be supported by the evidence and take into full consideration the impact of the student's presence at school on the discipline, educational environment and safety or general welfare of other students, faculty, staff and/or administrators of the school.

Levels of Offenses

Students who engage in an ongoing pattern of behavior that is disruptive to the orderly operations of the school shall be recommended for expulsion. The following is a general listing of offenses and the required or recommended disciplinary actions which should be taken as a result of such offenses being committed.

Disorderly Conduct - Level I

Disorderly conduct is defined as any activity in which a student engages that tends to impede orderly classroom procedures or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school or the frequency or seriousness of which disturbs the classroom or school.

Acts of disorderly conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- classroom tardiness
- cheating on examinations or classroom assignments
- lying
- blackmail of other students or school personnel
- acting in a manner so as to interfere with the instructional process
- abusive language between or among students, to include profane language
- failure to complete assignments or carry out directions
- use of forged notes or excuses
- violation of school bus regulations
- cutting class

- possession or use of a paging device in violation of District policy
- school tardiness
- truancy
- use of obscene or profane language or gestures
- other disorderly acts as determined at the school level, which are not inconsistent with Board policy

The administration may apply sanctions in cases of disorderly conduct which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- verbal reprimand
- withdrawal of privileges (a privilege, as defined by the Greenville County School Board, is a student's opportunity to participate in any function of the school beyond attending class, riding buses and participating in the School District's food service program)
- demerits
- detention
- in-school/out of school suspension
- other sanctions approved by the Board or administration

Disruptive Conduct - Level II

Disruptive conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which are directed against persons or property and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of themselves or others in the school. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both administrative sanctions and court proceedings.

The administration may reclassify disorderly conduct (Level I) as disruptive conduct (Level II) if the student engages in the activity three or more times.

Acts of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- fighting
- vandalism (minor)
- stealing
- use or possession of laser pointers, fireworks, smoke bombs, pepper-style sprays, and other similar devices or materials
- threats against others
- trespass
- abusive language to staff, to include profane language
- other disruptive acts which interfere with the educational process
- refusal to obey school personnel or agents (such as volunteer aides or chaperones) whose responsibilities include supervision of students
- possession or use of unauthorized substances, including tobacco and tobacco products, non-prescription drugs, "look-a-like" drugs, and drug paraphernalia, including rolling papers
- illegally occupying or blocking in any way school property with the intent to deprive others of its use
- inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- misuse of District technology resources
- gambling on school property
- unlawful assembly
- disrupting lawful assembly
- harassment, intimidation or bullying
- intimidating, threatening, or physically abusing another student
- any other acts as determined at the school level that are not inconsistent with Board policy

The administration may apply sanctions in cases of disruptive conduct which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- in-school suspension
- withdrawal of privileges (a privilege, as defined by the Greenville County School Board, is a student's opportunity to participate in any function of the school beyond attending class, riding buses and participating in the School District's food service program)
- temporary removal from class
- out-of-school suspension
- referral to outside agency

Did you know?



In addition to discipline at school, a student is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion, for misconduct away from school if the school administration determines the student's presence to be detrimental to the best interest of the school.

- assignment to alternative school
- expulsion
- restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities
- other sanctions as approved by the Board or administration

Criminal Conduct - Level III

Criminal conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by students (whether or not they result in criminal charges) that result in violence to themselves or to another's person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of themselves or others in the school. These activities usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities and/or action by the Board.

Whenever a student is engaging or has engaged in activities including, but not limited to, one of the acts specified below, while on school property or at a school sanctioned or sponsored activity which a principal or his/her designee has reason to believe may result, or has resulted, in injury or serious threat of injury to a person or to his/her property, the principal or his/her designee is required to notify law enforcement officials.

Acts for which principals must recommend students for expulsion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- bomb threat
- possession, use or transfer of weapons - a weapon is defined as a firearm (rifle, shotgun, pistol or similar device that propels a projectile through the energy of an explosive); a knife, razor, bludgeon, blackjack, metal pipe or pole, brass knuckles (to include multi-finger rings); incendiary or explosive device; or any other type of device or object which may be used to inflict bodily injury or death
- sexual offenses (which include sexual acts that do not result in a criminal offense)
- arson
- distribution, sale, purchase, manufacture, use, being under the influence of, or unlawful possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, as defined in S.C. Code Ann. §§ 44-53-110 through 44-53-270. (See Policy JCDAC)
- threatening to take the life of or inflict bodily harm upon a school employee or member of their immediate family
- ganging ("Ganging" or participating as a member of a gang and inflicting a violent act of bodily harm, however slight, upon another person will not be tolerated. A "gang" shall consist of two or more persons acting together for and with the purpose of committing an act of violence against another person. "Participation" also includes any act that interferes with or hinders a staff member from stopping the infliction of bodily injury that is the objective of the gang.)

Additional acts for which principals may recommend students for expulsion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- vandalism (major)
- theft, possession or sale of stolen property
- disturbing the schools
- possession, use, or transfer of "look-a-like" weapons
- assault and battery
- extortion
- any other acts as determined by the Board

Note Regarding Student Under the Influence

In determining whether a student is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, the student's appearance, behavior, manner, presence of an odor of the substance, and statements made by the student as to the use of controlled substances or alcohol may be considered without regard to the amount of alcohol/controlled substance consumed.

Note Regarding Recommendations for Expulsion

Recommendations for expulsion do not automatically result in expulsion. Hearing officers have the authority and flexibility to consider other disciplinary action based on the offense, age of student, previous disciplinary record, extenuating circumstance, and totality of the incident.

The principals must recommend students for expulsion if they have committed offenses which are underlined. If a student commits an offense that is not underlined, the principals may recommend the student for expulsion when the circumstances warrant it. The administration may apply sanctions in cases of criminal conduct which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- withdrawal of privileges (a privilege, as defined by the Greenville County School Board, is a student's opportunity to participate in any function of the school beyond attending class, riding buses and participating in the school District's food service program)
- out-of-school suspension
- assignment to alternative school
- expulsion
- restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities
- other sanctions as approved by the Board or administration

Extenuating, Mitigating or Aggravating Circumstances

The Board confers upon the Superintendent or his/her designee the authority to consider extenuating, mitigating or aggravating circumstances which may exist in a particular case of misconduct. The administrator should consider such circumstances in determining the most appropriate sanction.

Discipline of Disabled Students

Students identified as disabled pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA disabled") will be disciplined in accordance with federal and state law as set forth in the special education procedures developed by the administration.

Paging Devices, Telecommunications Devices, and Cell Phones

For purpose of this policy, paging devices are defined as telecommunications devices, to include mobile telephones, that emit an audible signal, vibrate, display a message or otherwise summon or deliver a communication to the possessor.

Students who choose to bring paging devices to school must keep them in their vehicles or lockers, or another appropriate location determined by the school principal. During school hours while on school grounds, no student may use, or have turned on, a paging device without the prior permission of the principal, as set forth below. "Turned on" includes a paging device that is activated and set or programmed to ring, vibrate or otherwise send or receive a signal.

The principal or his/her designee may authorize a student to otherwise possess a paging device if the student is an active member of an emergency service organization, needs the paging device for a legitimate medical reason or otherwise needs the paging device for a legitimate reason, as determined by the principal. In such cases, the student must have prior written consent from the principal or his/her designee.

A person, who finds a student in possession or use of a paging device in violation of this policy, must report the student to the school principal. The principal or his/her designee must confiscate the device. The device will be returned to the student's parent/legal guardian according to the terms set forth below. A student who violates this policy regarding use and possession of paging devices is subject to discipline as follows:

First offense – confiscation of the paging device or mobile telephone and after a conference with the parent/legal guardian, the paging device or mobile telephone will be returned to the adult.

Second offense - confiscation of the paging device or mobile telephone and after a conference with the parent/legal guardian, the paging device or mobile telephone will be returned to the adult 30 days after the confiscation.

Third offense - confiscation of the paging device or mobile telephone and after a conference with the parent/legal guardian, the paging device or mobile telephone will be returned to the adult 60 days after the confiscation and the student may be subject to additional disciplinary consequences including: detention (during or after school), in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and work detail assignment.

Fourth and subsequent offenses - confiscation of the paging device or mobile telephone and after a conference with the parent/legal guardian, the paging device or mobile telephone will be returned at the end of the school year and the student may be subject to additional disciplinary consequences including: detention (during or after school), in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and work detail assignment.

Suspension (Summary of Policy JDD)

The Board provides due process of law to students, parents/legal guardians and school personnel through procedures for the suspension of students, which are consistent with federal law, state law and regulation and local policy.

According to state law, the Board may authorize the suspension of a student from school for commission of any crime, gross immorality, gross misbehavior, persistent disobedience or for violation of written rules and regulations established by the District Board of Trustees (Student Behavior Code Policy JCDA), or the State Board of Education. The Board may also authorize the suspension of a student when the presence of the student is detrimental to the best interest of the school. Suspension means a student cannot attend school or be on the school grounds, cannot attend any program at the school in the daytime or at night and cannot ride a school bus.

Suspension is the exclusion of a student from school and school activities for a period of time not to exceed 10 school days for any one offense. The Board uses the word suspension in this policy to mean either suspension from school or in-school suspension as determined by the principal.

The Board delegates the power of suspension to District administrators.

Requests for review of suspensions may be made to the principal and the Superintendent's designee. The decision of the Superintendent's designee ends the appeal process for suspensions. However, the Board must review suspensions that occur within the last 10 days of the school year if such suspension would make a student ineligible to receive credit for the school year.

Suspension of students who are classified as disabled will be handled consistent with federal and state law and with procedures established by the Board.

Missed Work

Students who are suspended must make up missed work.

Did you know?.....

School information is available on The Schools Channel (Charter Cable 14 and 99).



Expulsion (Summary of Policy JDE)

Expulsion is the removal of a student from a school for the remainder of the school year, except in cases of permanent expulsion.

A student may be expelled for any reason listed in the Student Behavior Code Policy JCDA, for the commission of any crime, gross immorality, gross misbehavior or the violation of any other written rules and regulations established by the Board or the State Board of Education, or when the presence of the student is deemed to be detrimental to the best interests of the school. Students who engage in an ongoing pattern of behavior that is disruptive to the orderly operations of the school shall be recommended for expulsion, as set forth in Policy JCDA. Expulsion means the student cannot attend school or be on the school grounds, cannot attend any school-related events or activities on or off campus, and cannot ride a school bus.

The Board delegates to a District hearing officer the authority to conduct administrative hearings and expel students. The decision of the hearing officer may be appealed by either the student or the administration to the Board as indicated in Policy JDE.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (Summary of Policy JCDAG)

As provided in the South Carolina Safe School Climate Act, the District prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying of a student by another student or students, staff, or third parties that interfere with or disrupt a student's ability to learn and the school's responsibility to educate its students in a safe and orderly environment whether in a classroom, on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop, at a school-sponsored activity or event, whether or not it is held on school premises, or at another program or function where the school is responsible for the student.

The District expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified and respectful manner. Students and employees have a responsibility to know and respect the policies, rules and regulations of the school and District.

Definitions

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" is defined as a gesture, an electronic communication, or a written, verbal, physical, or sexual act that a reasonable person should know will have the effect of:

- harming a student, physically or emotionally, or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or damage to his property; or
- insulting or demeaning a student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Reporting

Any student who believes he/she has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying should file a complaint with the principal or his or her designee. Such a complaint may also be filed by a student's parent. If an employee receives a complaint of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or observes any behavior which could amount to harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the employee must transmit the complaint to the school's principal or other designated contact person as soon as practicable.

Consequences for Engaging in Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

If the investigation determines that harassment, intimidation, or bullying has occurred, the administration shall take reasonable, timely, age-appropriate, and effective corrective action. Examples of corrective action include, but are not limited

to, disciplinary action against the aggressor, up to and including termination of an employee or expulsion of a student; special training or other interventions; apologies; dissemination of statements that the school does not tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying; independent reassessment of student work; and/or tutoring.

Individuals, including students, employees, parents, and volunteers, may also be referred to law enforcement officials. The District will take all other appropriate steps to correct or rectify the situation.

Gang Activity or Association (Summary of Policy JCDAE)

Gangs and activities of gangs are prohibited on or near school property and at school-sponsored events. A "gang" consists of two or more persons acting together for and with the purpose of committing an act of violence against another person.

The following conduct is prohibited at all times on school property and at school-sponsored events, regardless of where the events are held:

- Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, manner of grooming or other item that evidences or reflects membership in or affiliation with any gang
- Engaging in any act, either verbal or nonverbal, including, but not limited to, gestures or handshakes, that indicates membership in or affiliation with any gang
- Engaging in any act in furtherance of the interests of any gang activity, including, but not limited to, soliciting membership or affiliation with a gang; soliciting any person to pay for "protection"; or soliciting any person to engage in physical violence against any other person
- Painting, writing, engraving, or otherwise inscribing any gang-related graffiti, messages, symbols or signs on school property

In determining as part of the implementation of this regulation whether certain acts or conduct are gang-related, school officials should consult with local law enforcement.

If the District determines that a student has violated the prohibitions set forth in this policy, the student will be subject to exclusion from participation in extracurricular activities, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion, dependent upon the specific circumstances of the offense. Students also may be referred to law enforcement. The District also reserves the right to permanently prohibit any student from wearing or displaying any article of clothing or accessory which the District has determined to be a gang indicator.

Searches, Student Interrogations, and Arrests (Summary of Policy JCAB)

The Board recognizes that both state law and the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution protect citizens, including students, from unreasonable searches and seizures. The Board accordingly directs all District personnel to conduct searches and seizures on District property or during District sponsored events in accordance with applicable federal and state law.

Searches

As authorized by state law, District and school administrators and officials may conduct reasonable searches on District property of lockers, desks, vehicles, and personal belongings such as purses, book bags, wallets, and satchels, with or without probable cause, subject to the limitations and requirements of this policy.

Contacting Law Enforcement

As provided in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-24-60, school administrators must contact law enforcement authorities immediately upon notice that a person is engaging or has engaged in activities on school property or at a school sanctioned or sponsored activity, which may result, or results in, injury or serious threat of injury to the person, or to another person, or his property. Such reportable activities or conduct may include, but are not limited to, the examples of criminal conduct referenced in Level III of Board Policy JCDA (Behavior Code).

The Board recognizes that, when law enforcement authorities are contacted pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-24-60, the law enforcement authorities must make the determination whether they will conduct an investigation into the matter.

Interrogations by School Personnel and School Resource Officers

Administrators and teachers, as well as school resource officers, may question students about any matter pertaining to the operation of a school and/or enforcement of its rules. The questioning shall be conducted discreetly and under circumstances which will avoid, to the extent practical under the circumstances, unnecessary embarrassment to the person being questioned. School resource officers shall act consistently with law enforcement guidelines should any routine questioning turn into a criminal investigation. Any student who answers falsely or evasively or who refuses to answer an appropriate question may be disciplined.

Interrogations by Law Enforcement

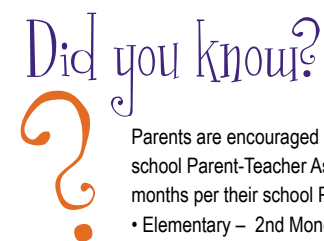
When law enforcement officers find it necessary to question a student during the school day regarding matters not connected to the school, the principal or his/her designee shall cooperate with law enforcement and shall request to be present, so long as his/her presence does not impede the investigation. The principal or his/her designee should make a reasonable attempt to contact the student's parent/legal guardian and request his/her presence.

Weapons in School (Summary of Policy JCDA)

While on school grounds, in school buildings, on buses or at school-related functions, students will not possess any item capable of inflicting injury or harm (hereinafter referred to as a weapon) to persons or property when that item is not used in relation to a normal school activity at a scheduled time for the student. No vehicles parked on school property may contain firearms, knives, blackjacks, or other items which are generally considered to be weapons. In addition to disciplinary action, having a weapon is a felony offense.

Weapons (firearms)

The Board or its designee will expel for no less than one calendar year any student who has brought or possessed a firearm on school property, at District or school related functions, or at any setting under the jurisdiction of the Greenville County Schools. For purposes of this section of the policy, weapon is defined as a firearm. The term firearm is defined extensively in the U. S. Code, but generally means a weapon (gun) or destructive device (explosive, incendiary).



Parents are encouraged to be active members of their school Parent-Teacher Association. PTAs meet specified months per their school PTA by-laws:

- Elementary – 2nd Monday night
- Middle – 3rd Monday night
- High – 4th Monday night

**Call School for Schedule*

Did you know?



It is important that your child's emergency contact information is current. Please complete or update information throughout the year.



Alcohol Use/Drug Use (Summary of Policy JCDAC)

No student, regardless of age, will possess, use, sell, purchase, barter, distribute, or be under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, as defined in S.C. Code Ann. §§ 44-53-110 through 44-53-270, (see the Behavior Code) in the following circumstances:

- on school property (including buildings, grounds, vehicles)
- at any school-sponsored activity, function or event, whether on or off school grounds (including any place where an interscholastic athletic contest is taking place)
- en route to or from, or during any field trip
- during any trip or activity sponsored by the Board or under the supervision of the Board or its authorized agents

NOTE: In determining whether a student is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, the student's appearance, behavior, manner, presence of an odor of the substance, and statements made by the student as to the use of controlled substances or alcohol may be considered without regard to the amount of alcohol/controlled substance consumed.

The administration will recommend students who violate this policy for expulsion. The Board intends to expel all students who are determined to have distributed any controlled substance on school grounds.

Tobacco Use (Policy JCDAB)

Students are not permitted to use or possess any tobacco products while in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, or at any time that a student is under the direct administrative jurisdiction of the school or school officials. Disciplinary actions will be handled in accordance with the Behavior Code.

Computer Acceptable Use Rule

Each school year every person who uses a Greenville County School District computer must review the Acceptable Use Rule (Board Rule EFE). This rule is available on the GCS website at www.greenville.k12.sc.us/gcsd/depts/ets/policy/aup.asp.

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Student participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege (not a right) that a student earns through proper conduct and academic achievement. A student may be denied the privilege of participating in an extracurricular activity and/or an event when the student's conduct is not consistent with District Policy; the District's Behavior Code and/or academic standards; the conduct expectations and/or academic standards of the student's school; and/or the conduct expectations and/or academic standards of the particular activity. Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to, athletic teams, academic clubs/teams, prom, graduation exercises, and attendance at any school function outside of the normal school day.

Dress Code (Policy JCDAF)

Greenville County School District students are expected to dress and be groomed in such a way as to not distract or cause disruption in the educational program or orderly operation of the school. Personal appearance of students should promote health and safety, contribute to a climate conducive to teaching and learning, and project a positive image of the District to the community. Students should dress for the educational setting and not the recreational one. The principal may create further guidelines regarding student dress, which are consistent with this policy.

- Clothing and/or hair should not be so extreme or inappropriate to the school setting as to disrupt the education process. Therefore, clothing deemed distracting, revealing, overly suggestive or otherwise disruptive will not be permitted.
- Wearing accessories or clothing that could pose a safety threat to oneself or others is not allowed.
- Hats and sunglasses may not be worn in the building.
- Attire must not evidence membership or affiliation with a "gang" in any negative sense of the term.
- Proper shoes must be worn at all times.
- Attire must not be immodest, obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, indecent or offensive.
- Clothing that inappropriately exposes body parts is not permitted. Students shall not expose undergarments.
- Pants must be worn at the natural waistline and undergarments are not to be visible. Pants and slacks must not bag, sag, or drag.
- No clothing, jewelry, or tattoos are permitted that display profanity, suggestive phrases, or advertisements for, or messages or pictures depicting or suggesting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or sex.

The administration will make the final judgment on the appropriateness of clothing and/or appearance and reserves the right to prohibit students from wearing any articles of clothing or other items which lead to or may foreseeably result in the disruption of or interference with the school environment. In the event the administration determines a student's dress is inappropriate for school in accordance with this policy, the administration will either require the student to change or will inform the student not to wear the garment to school again. Repeated violations of the Dress Code will be treated as disruptive behavior in violation of the District's Behavior Code.

Did you know?



Each year, bus transportation is provided for approximately 23,000 youngsters. School buses travel approximately five million miles each year, making the school system the state's largest transporter of school children.

Transportation Rules

The School District of Greenville County must ensure that the bus ride to and from school is a safe one. All bus riders are required to follow bus safety rules at all times. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary sanctions, possibly including exclusion from the bus. Usual school disciplinary sanctions, such as suspension and expulsion, may also be imposed.

Each bus rider is expected to:

- follow the driver's directions;
- sit in the assigned seat;
- keep hands, arms, legs, and objects to himself and inside the bus;
- refrain from cursing, name calling, gestures, or loud talking;
- refrain from pushing, shoving, or annoying other students;
- refrain from eating, drinking, chewing gum, or littering;
- obey all points of the Student Behavior Code.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken for incidents which involve severe offenses, such as: fighting, possession of weapons, drugs or alcohol, use of tobacco products, any action which endangers the safety of the driver and other students, or damage to the bus. Such action could involve a longer suspension from the bus or other sanction.

The bus supervisor and transportation officials have the authority to remove a student from the bus if the student becomes uncontrollable while on the bus. The student may not board the bus again until granted permission by the principal.

Buses are equipped with video surveillance equipment that is used to view student and employee conduct by transportation management staff, principals or their designee, and other appropriate district staff.

If a student damages a school bus, the student will be charged the assessed repair rate set by the State Department of Education. The student responsible for the damage will be suspended from riding the bus until restitution is made. Total restitution must be made or the bus privilege will be lost. Appropriate action for disabled students who violate bus rules will be taken by the principal and may involve other intervention as indicated by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) Committee or as required by law.

Students and parents should not attempt to discuss bus rule violations or suspension matters with the bus driver at a bus stop. Students who attempt to board the bus while suspended or adults who attempt to board or interfere with the operation of the bus, may be prosecuted under applicable South Carolina law.

The School District of Greenville County must safely transport all bus riders to and from school. Bus riders will be denied the privilege of riding the bus if their behavior is unacceptable or infringes on the rights of other bus riders. It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to see that the student is transported to school during this time.

School administrators review and respond to school bus discipline referrals. This brief summary provides an overview of school bus discipline guidelines. A complete copy of these guidelines can be found on the district's website under the Transportation Department at <http://www.greenville.k12.sc.us/gcsd/depts/trans/index.asp>.



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Parent Express

SCHOOL STARTS Tuesday, August 19

2008-09 ★ Back-to-School Guide

School Bells, School Bells...

- Tuesday, August 19 - First Attendance Day for All Students (Except 4K) - Full Day (Buses run and lunch served)
- Wednesday, August 27 and Thursday, August 28 (staggered) - First Attendance Days for 4K Classes (staggered schedule)



How Will I Know If Schools Are Closed?

- Check the GCS website at www.greenville.k12.sc.us
- Tune to local radio and television stations, including The Schools Channel on Charter Cable 14 and 99
- Call INFOLine at 355-3100

Parents should discuss plans for early dismissal (pickup, supervision, etc.) due to inclement weather with their children.

Did you know?

There is much more information available at the Greenville County Schools website - www.greenville.k12.sc.us. Check it out!



What Are School Hours?

4K Full-Day Child Development (4 year olds) - Offered at Selected Sites
8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Elementary Schools (Full-Day 5K, 1st Grade - 5th Grade)
Washington Center and West Greenville School
8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Middle Schools (6th Grade - 8th Grade)
8:15 AM - 3:00 PM

High Schools (9th Grade - 12th Grade)
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM



Parent Express is published at a cost of 10.5 cents per newsletter.

Keith Ray, II, D.Min.
2008 Board Chairman

Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher
Superintendent

301 Campdown Way
P.O. Box 2848
Greenville, South Carolina
29602-2848

Phone and Web Address:
864-355-3100
www.greenville.k12.sc.us

The School District of Greenville County does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, color, handicap, religion, or national origin in its dealings with employees, students, the general public, applicants for employment, educational programs, activities, or access to its facilities. For concerns, call the General Counsel at 355-8866.

Student Calendar

School Start/End Dates	
First Day	August 19
Last Day (Half Day)	June 4
4K First Days (Staggered)	August 27-28
4K Last Day	May 22

Student Holidays	
Labor Day	September 1
Teacher Workday (Elem. - Parent/Teacher Conf.)	October 17
Teacher Workday	October 20
Election Day	November 4
Thanksgiving Break	Nov. 26-28
Winter Break	Dec. 22 - Jan. 2
Teacher Workday	January 16
Martin Luther King Day	January 19
Presidents' Day	February 16
Spring Break	April 6 - 10
Teacher Workday	May 25

Makeup Days <i>If Not Needed, Days Become Student Holidays.</i>	
Makeup Day 1	March 23
Makeup Day 2	April 13
Makeup Day 3	June 5

Interim Progress Reports	
1st Quarter Report	September 18
2nd Quarter Report	December 1
3rd Quarter Report	February 19
4th Quarter Report	May 4



Grading Period

End 1st Quarter	October 23
End 2nd Quarter	January 15
End 3rd Quarter	March 24
End 4th Quarter	June 4

Report Cards

1st Report Card	October 30
2nd Report Card	January 21
3rd Report Card	March 31
4th Report Card	June 8

Graduations

H.S. Graduations	June 3 - 4
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Student Testing (Tentative)

MAP Testing (Gr. K-12)	Sept. 2 - 30
High School Exit Exam	Oct. 28 - 30
CogAT Testing (Gr. 2)	Nov. 5 - 7
ITBS Testing (Gr. 2)	Nov. 10 - 12
MAP Testing (Optional) (Gr. K-12)	Dec. 1 - 17
EOCEP Testing (H.S. Courses)	Dec. 8 - 12 & 15 - 19
Exams - Full Days	January 12 - 15
ITBS Testing (Gr. 4, 6, 8)	Feb. 23 - 25
New State Writing Tests (1 Day) (Gr. 3-8)	March
MAP Testing (Gr. K-12)	March 9 - April 3
High School Exit Exam	April 21 - 23
AP Testing (H.S.)	May 4 - 8 & 11 - 15
New State Tests (Gr. 3-8)	May 11 - 15 & 18 - 22
EOCEP Testing (H. S. Courses)	May 18 - 22
Exams - Full Day	June 1
Exams - Half Days	June 2 - 4

Makeup Days *If Not Needed, Days Become Student Holidays.*

Makeup Day 1	March 23
Makeup Day 2	April 13
Makeup Day 3	June 5

Interim Progress Reports

1st Quarter Report	September 18
2nd Quarter Report	December 1
3rd Quarter Report	February 19
4th Quarter Report	May 4



Calendar Development

The calendar is approved each year by the superintendent after considering recommendations from a committee of PTA representatives, other parents, teachers, principals, and central office staff. The calendar committee develops its recommendations after receiving input from parent groups and school facilities.

Religious Observances

School officials cooperate with students and employees when they need to be absent to participate in religious observances. Students missing work are given an opportunity to make up work without penalty. Employees may use personal days (or vacation if applicable) to observe religious holidays.

Did you know?

Programs and policies of Greenville County Schools are established by a 12-member, elected Board of Trustees. Regular Board meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month (except July) and are open to the public. Copies of policies and regulations are posted on the website at www.greenville.k12.sc.us.