

# Madison County Board Of Education

## Classified Personnel Handbook: 2023-2024

Updated 07/2023

**It is the policy of the Madison County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age religion, creed or disability in educational programs and activities, admission to facilities, or employment practices. (GAAA)**

It is not the intent or purpose of this handbook to answer all the questions that may arise for the employee. It may, however, serve as a guide to the major issues that come into question. It is the responsibility of the employee to become familiar with this handbook and to explore other sources of information when needed. In most instances each school issues a school level handbook. A Madison County Board of Education Policy is available on line at the system web site, [www.madison.k12.ga.us](http://www.madison.k12.ga.us). By going to this site and clicking "Board of Education" and then the "simbli" link, you will find links to local Board of Education policy and state legislation. In this handbook policy codes (i.e. GAAA for the non-discrimination statement as shown above) are shown for your reference. State laws are referenced by their code (e.g. 20-2-210 for Evaluations). The school system has the right to change policies, practices and benefits. The policies and guidelines in this handbook are references only and do not replace or extend official existing policies.

### I. BOARD OF EDUCATION

#### MADISON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Madison County Board of Education is composed of five members elected from each of the county's educational districts. The officers of the Madison County Board of Education are a chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. By Georgia law the Superintendent serves as secretary for the Board. Three members constitute a quorum. Madison County Board of Education regular meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month in the Professional Learning center of the BOE Office. Current members of the Madison County Board of Education are as follows:

<b>District 1</b>	Dr. Robert Hooper, Chair P.O. Box 589 Ila, GA 30647 (706) 336-8808	<b>District 2</b>	Mr. Dan Lampe 947 Highway 29 S Danielsville, GA 30633 (706) 601-5331
<b>District 3</b>	Ms. Cindy Nash, Vice Chair 1228 Virginia Lane Hull, GA 30646 (706) 549-1279	<b>District 4</b>	Mr. Bryon Lee 3084 Duffell Martin Road Comer, GA 30629 (706) 338-3174
<b>District 5</b>	Ms. Brenda Moon 767 Hardman Morris Road Colbert, GA 30628 (706) 224-0670		

## **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

The basic premise of the philosophy of the Madison County School System is graduating independent, productive citizens. Each student possesses those qualities and characteristics necessary to become a productive and successful individual. It is the goal of the school to provide each student with the maximum opportunity to realize his/her or their full potential.

A second premise upon which our philosophy is based is the need to relate to the whole student. While academics and intellectual development of the student are our primary concerns, the social and emotional development cannot be ignored. All areas of growth must be stimulated and guided to reach mature levels of development.

It is also the belief of the school system that to reach the highest level of achievement in these areas requires the commitment and close cooperation of the school, the student, and the parent. Teachers, administrators, and support personnel as the immediate representative of the school, have the responsibility of always demonstrating a professional, caring attitude in interactions with the student and the parent.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS (For classified employees involved in instruction)**

Working with students in Madison County Schools is a privilege. The students we serve deserve the best we have to offer. As a district we must be united in how we serve our students and families. There are instructional expectations that all staff must understand and agree to before they commit to employment in Madison County. Our mission is to **graduate independent, productive citizens**. All expectations are research-based and will support our collective efforts to provide all students the opportunity to achieve their best.

**If you work in the Madison County School System you are expected to:**

- Provide a standards-based classroom environment for all students with clear expectations.
- Implement GSE standards in ELA, Math; Training for new GSE standards in Science and Social Studies. Implement Literacy standards in Science, Social Studies and CTAE.
- Communicate and actively use standards for teaching by teachers and learning by students.
- Ensure that students can communicate what they are expected to know, understand, and do. Provide timely feedback to students and communicate with parents regarding what students should know, understand and do.
- Participate in the administration of and review of benchmarks or other common assessments.
- Agree not to reveal the content of benchmark or common assessments to students prior to testing.
- Participate in data team meetings to inform student progress, improve instruction, and help struggling students.
- Participate in the MTSS (Multi Tiered Systems of Support) to serve struggling students.
- Review IEP and 504 plans for students and provide accommodations and/or modifications as indicated.

- Be willing to seek help; we are a community of continuous learners, and the journey is never over.
- Participate fully in the Teacher Keys Evaluation System.
- Participate in the development and monitoring of the annual school improvement plan (i.e., surveys, system and school committees, implementation, and program evaluation).
- Participate in the system's annual strategic planning update, the periodic accreditation review and other initiatives, which help to target the needs of the system so that the school system can better serve schools, students, and families.
- Follow system-developed curriculum maps, pacing guides, and assessment maps.
- Participate in Professional Learning Communities/Data Teams at the school and system level to better understand student learning and achievement.
- Participate in collaborative planning meetings to review and discuss curriculum unit plans prior to and following teaching.
- Participate in and support the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program at the school and system levels.
- Accept responsibility for the system as a whole, understanding that each classroom is part of the school, and the school is part of the system; we are not a system of schools, rather a school system for Madison County students.
- Work collaboratively with parents and guardians of the students we serve; the school-home partnership is critical for student success.

Madison County's Instructional Expectations are considered part of the employee evaluation process which is done annually.

### **CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT (GBA)**

All new non-certified employees must have a Criminal Background Check. Additionally, a complete fingerprint and background check through the GCIC and FBI are required. This information is not transferable from other systems and agencies. The CBC consists of two parts: 1) Criminal History Record Information, completed at the 911 Office in Danielsville; 2) Forms returned to the Human Resources Office for Processing and 3) fingerprinting, completed in the Human Resources Office located at 800 Madison Street, Danielsville, GA 30633. It is the responsibility of the employee to promptly report to his/her supervisor any arrest or charge involving moral turpitude brought against him/her during his/her employment with the school system.

The following documents must be on file at the Board of Education Office:

- 1) Your completed application
- 2) Federal and State Tax Forms will be completed at the time of employment.
- 3) I-9 Employment Eligibility. The system participates in E-Verify
- 4) Criminal Background Check

### **AT WILL EMPLOYEES (GCB)**

It shall be the policy of the Madison County Board of Education to classify all personnel not under contract as classified personnel. Classified employees are "at will" employees of the Board of Education whose employment is continuous until ended by resignation, retirement, or discharge. No policies or procedures of the Board of Education or Superintendent shall be

construed as establishing a contractual relationship with any classified employee, and no tenure right is granted or implied by such policies or procedures.

#### **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS (20-2-211)**

OCGA 20-2-211 requires criminal background checks for all school employees at the time they are hired and periodically thereafter. CBCs must be done in Madison County. This information is not transferable from other systems and agencies. The CBC consists of two parts: 1) Criminal History Record Information, completed at the 911 Office in Danielsville; 2) Forms returned to the Human Resources Department and 3) fingerprinting, completed in the Human Resources office at 800 Madison Street, Danielsville, GA 30633.

#### **OFF-DUTY CONDUCT (20-2-984.2)**

Employees are expected to comply with all local, state, and federal laws. Except for minor traffic violations (N.B. Driving Under the Influence and Driving While Intoxicated are not considered minor violations.) Employees shall report to their immediate supervisor any violation which results in an indictment, arrest, or conviction, including misconduct adjudicated under first offender status. Such report shall be made within five days of the violation. Failure to report shall subject the employee to possible disciplinary action, up to and including possible dismissal.

#### **TRANSFERS (GMB)**

Personnel may be transferred at the discretion of the Superintendent and other administrators to serve the best interest of the employee, students, and school system. Employees may initiate a transfer by seeking permission of the current supervisor, future supervisor, and superintendent.

If an employee is interested in transferring to another school or position, they can apply for any position they feel qualified for when they are posted in our jobs vacancy system on the system website. As a professional courtesy, an employee should always make their current supervisor aware of their desire to transfer.

#### **RESIGNATIONS (GBO)**

The following procedures should be followed when an employee considers ending his or her employment status with the Madison County Board of Education: (1) discuss the decision with the principal/supervisor and submit a resignation to the supervisor; (2) the supervisor will submit a letter to the superintendent stating your decision to resign or leave your position. Your last date of employment should be clearly stated in your letter. A two-week notice is expected.

#### **SALARY (GAK)**

All personnel will be paid monthly. Checks or direct deposit transactions will be issued on the last working day of each month. Checks will be mailed to personnel not on direct deposit during summer months. Employees must complete the proper form, available in your ESS account, and provide account numbers for direct deposit. Salaries are calculated by using the salary schedules. Salary schedules are based on years of experience in the county. For classified directors, outside experience will be considered. **It is especially important that each staff member's correct mailing address be filed in the central office. Any changes should be submitted immediately in your ESS account. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide notification through ESS of any changes of name, address, or withholding tax information.** Notice of change must be submitted before the payroll cutoff date effective that month. Changes to tax status may be made at any time by completing a G-4 Form (State) or a W-4 Form (Federal) in your ESS account. Forms must be submitted in ESS prior to the payroll cutoff date.

#### **DEDUCTIONS (GAL)**

The following deductions are mandatory for the employees specified: Please note that certain non-certified employees like paraprofessionals, clerical staff, nurses, technology, and supervisors are on TRS. All other non-certified employees (transportation, school nutrition, maintenance) are under PSERS.

**Social Security** - All employees are required to participate. Required contributions of 7.65% of salary will be deducted monthly. The Madison County Board of Education pays a matching amount for all employees.

**Georgia Teacher Retirement System** - All professional personnel, paraprofessionals, clerical staff, nurses, and technology are required to participate in the Georgia Teacher Retirement System. Supervisors may elect to participate in TRS. Employee contributions of 6% of salary will be deducted monthly. The Madison County Board of Education contributes 19.98% of salary to the individual's retirement fund each month.

**Public School Employee Retirement System** – All personnel not covered under TRS are required to participate in the Public School Employee Retirement System. Employee contributions will be made at \$4 or \$10 (depending on date joined/hired into PSERS) per month between September and May. An employee will contribute \$4 or \$10 in nine of their twelve paychecks. Please note that the Madison County School System does not make contributions to the PSERS. Visit [www.ers.ga.gov](http://www.ers.ga.gov) for more information.

**Madison County Retirement Savings Incentive Plan:** - The Madison County Board of Education is pleased to provide the Madison County Retirement Savings Incentive Plan for employees who are not allowed to participate in TRS. After 1 year of employment, the board will contribute \$25 per month for each month in which an employee contributes at least \$25 to a 403(b) annuity with Horace Mann after one year of employment.

**State and Federal Taxes** - all employees are subject to state and federal income tax withholding.

## **BENEFITS**

The Madison County Board of Education extends to each employee a variety of benefits. Details of these benefits may be found in your benefit guide at [www.madisoncountybenefits.com](http://www.madisoncountybenefits.com) or on the district website under Staff Resources>Staff Benefits.

### **Organization dues:**

Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE)  
Georgia Association of Educators (GAE)

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR RETIREMENT**

Retirement information is available upon request through the central office or online at [trsga.com](http://trsga.com) or [ers.ga.gov](http://ers.ga.gov).

**Service Retirement under TRS** - Active members under **TRS** may retire and elect to receive monthly retirement benefits after completion of 30 years of creditable service regardless of age, or after completing 10 years of creditable service and attainment of age 60. Effective July 1, 1992, there is a 25-year option available for those who have attained age 55. A member who retires before reaching age 62 or with less than 30 years of service is retiring early. Benefits will vary based on age and years of creditable service.

**Retirement under PSERS** – (1) Normal Retirement: Normal monthly retirement benefits can begin at age 65 with 10 years of creditable service. (2) Early Retirement: Early monthly retirement benefits can begin at age 60 with 10 years of creditable service. Retirement before age 65 results in a reduction of ½ % for each month under age 65.

**Disability Retirement** - An individual is eligible to apply for retirement under the disability provision of the law if he or she has at least 9 1/2 years of creditable service under TRS and is permanently disabled or 15 years of creditable service under PSERS and is permanently disabled.

Additional information is available on the Teacher Retirement System website [www.trsga.com](http://www.trsga.com) or PSERS website [www.ers.ga.gov](http://www.ers.ga.gov).

## CREDIT UNION

The Georgia United Credit Union is open to all employees, spouses, and immediate family members. Payroll deduction is available for shares and loan payments. Contact Georgia United Credit Union, at 1-888-493-4328, for more information concerning credit union services.

Athens Branch  
190 Gaines School Road  
Athens, GA 30605

## ATTENDANCE, LEAVE AND ABSENCES (GCRG)

This system recognizes that the staff of our school system can have a positive impact on student attendance by example. Not only will our good attendance set an example for children, more importantly, the presence of a classroom teacher and other support staff everyday will allow the students to take advantage of all we can offer.

Punctual regular attendance is expected of all employees. Employees are expected to keep accurate time records. Failure to meet this job requirement may result in disciplinary action, ranging from, but not limited to, verbal warning, written reprimand, or dismissal. Those terminated for such cause may not be eligible for benefits of unemployment insurance.

Sick leave is earned at the rate of 1 ¼ days per month. Should it be necessary to be absent, your supervisor should be notified as soon as possible. Prior to the absence, complete the electronic leave form and forward to your supervisor for approval. All employees may build up to 130 days sick leave. **The supervisor may require a doctor's certificate to substantiate a personal illness claim for sick leave or to substantiate fitness to continue or return to work.**

All ten-month employees may use three days as personal leave. Eleven-month employees may use 3 ½ days as personal leave. Twelve-month employees may use 4 days as personal leave. Any employee with fifteen (15) completed years of continuous service with the MC BOE may use four personal days of accumulate sick leave as personal leave in a school year. **The supervisor must approve personal leave in advance.** Personal leave request shall be submitted by the employee in writing to their supervisor for approval or disapproval. These request should be submitted three workdays before the date of the request. Personal days not used are carried forward to the next year as sick leave. Employees may use allotted personal leave days for religious observances of that employee's faith. In the event of a death in the employee's immediate family (spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or any relative living in the employee's household) sick leave shall be authorized and a maximum of five consecutive leave days may be taken.

All leave is recorded at the individual school and reported to the central office. Employees will have the opportunity to verify leave reports and sign them before they are submitted to the central office for processing. Misrepresentation by an employee as to the purpose or necessity of any leave is a violation of policy and may result in disciplinary action or referral to the Madison County Board of Education and/or the Professional Standards Commission.

## FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA) (GBRIG)

Eligibility	To be eligible for FMLA Leave a MCBOE employee must:
	1. have worked for the employer for at least 12 months
	2. have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 months prior to the FMLA leave

- Entitlement      12 workweeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for 1 or more of the following reasons:
1. birth of a child and to care for a newborn child, or placement of child for adoption of foster care and to care for the newly placed child;
  2. your own serious health condition;
  3. care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, parent – but not parent “in-law”) with a serious health condition;
  4. qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that your spouse, son or daughter, or parent is on active duty or call to active duty status in support of a contingency operation as a member of the National Guard or Reserves; or
  5. you are the spouse, son or daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness sustained in the line of duty on active duty. (Military caregiver leave is available for a total of 26 weeks in a 12 month period for all types of FMLA leave.)

Spouses employed by the same employer may be limited to a combined total of 12 workweeks of family leave. Leave time is deducted from earned leave.

Job Restoration      When returning from leave the employee must be restored to his/her previous job or an “equivalent” job (in regard to pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions).

- Employee Notice      Employees may be required to provide:
1. 30 days advance notice if foreseeable;
  2. notice “as soon as practicable” (usually 1-2 business days) when not foreseeable;
  3. sufficient information for the employer to see the need for leave meets FMLA leave requirements;
  4. if prior notice not given, timely (within 1-2 business days) notice that leave was used as FMLA leave and necessary information.

#### **PAID PARENTAL LEAVE (PPL) (GARHB)**

- Eligibility:      *To be eligible for PPL a MCBOE employee must-*
1. be a fulltime employee participating in TRS or PSERS
  2. have worked for the employer for at least six continuous months or has worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested paid parental leave date.
- Entitlement:      *120 hours (maximum) during a rolling 12-month period may be taken for 1 or more of the following reasons:*
1. birth of a child of an eligible employee
  2. placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee or
  3. placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee

Paid Parental leave under state law shall run concurrently with any leave provided under federal law.

- Employee Notice: *Employees may be required to provide:*
1. 20 school days advance notice to supervisor and Human Resources
  2. submission of request on district’s designated form
  3. sufficient information for the employer to see the need for leave meets PPL requirements

### **WORKER'S COMPENSATION AND ON-THE-JOB INJURIES**

You must follow correct procedures when reporting a work-related accident or injury. The most important thing to remember is to report the injury to your Principal/Supervisor AND school nurse immediately. If able, you must complete the proper Workers' Compensation forms immediately, before you leave the premises. The Official Notice regarding Workers' Compensation and information regarding your rights and responsibilities in the event of injury are posted in your building. It is important to read and follow these to ensure receiving benefits.

It is the policy of **Madison County Board of Education** to provide a safe and healthful workplace for all of our employees and to observe all applicable safety and health regulations. The Board and our employees have and will continue to maintain a safety and health program in which all employees follow safe work practices, are able to recognize unsafe conditions, and timely hazards control is achieved. Safety and health is a necessary part of each employee's job and active participation and adherence to this program is a condition of employment at our Board.

No employee is required to work at a job which is not safe. It is our goal to completely eliminate accidents and injuries at our workplace. Because of the many different potentially hazardous conditions associated with our industry, we must all maintain a constant safety and health awareness to achieve this goal.

Employees who fail to observe proper safety procedures or fail to promptly report potential hazards may be subject to disciplinary action, ranging from verbal warning to written reprimands to more serious action, including possible dismissal for repeated or serious violations. All dismissals would adhere to the guidelines of the Fair Dismissal Act (20-2-940) or other State and Federal requirements.

### **FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT, 40 HOUR WORK WEEK**

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1937 establishes a 40-hour work week for most employees. Certified personnel are exempted from this provision. Classified personnel are included in this provision and may work only 40 hours per week. Time may not be volunteered. Time records on each employee must be accurate and up-to-date. Any overtime must be approved in writing by the building principal or system administrator. Employees working unauthorized overtime will be subject to disciplinary action, ranging from verbal reprimand to dismissal. Those with dual employment (e.g. paraprofessional who works in the After school Program or substitute teacher who also drives a bus) are subject to the limitations of the maximum 40 hour work week.

## **II. CLASSROOM AND BUILDING**

### **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

The system's chain of command is designed to promote the over-all effectiveness of school programs. If there is a question or problem to be resolved, staff at the school level shall follow the chain of command established by their principal or supervisor. The principal is directly responsible to the superintendent. System-wide personnel shall follow the chain of command established by their immediate supervisors.

### **SCHOOL DAY**

The normal school day for school personnel is 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., unless otherwise adjusted for specific duties and/or responsibilities. Supervisor or principal may approve a different workday for certain employees. These hours constitute an eight-hour day and a forty-hour week. Employees are to sign in and sign out daily to provide accurate records of service and leave.



## LEAVING CAMPUS

Employees will not leave the school campus during the workday without first making arrangements with the principal/supervisor or designee for the absence.

## DRESS CODE (GBRL)

Faculty and staff should be properly and appropriately dressed while in school as well as during the performance of their duties in school sponsored activities. Proper and appropriate dress is based on community standards. Principals and other supervisors may formulate and enforce such reasonable rules as necessary to carry out this policy.

### Dress Code

As role models for the students in Madison County schools, all employees are expected to dress in a professional manner. In an effort to be reasonable and consistent in these expectations, committees of teaching staff and administrators were consulted in developing the following guidelines for instructional and support staff.

Items representative of those that would not be considered acceptable:

- Faded soiled or torn clothes of any description
- Blue denim jeans or shorts
- Tank tops
- Dresses or tops with spaghetti straps
- V Shaped Flip Flops that are shower or beach shoes
- Garments shorter than 2 inches above the top of the knee
- Garments that are too tight
- Garments that expose any part of the midriff
- Leggings/Jeggings, unless covered by a garment not shorter than 2 inches above the top of the knee
- Sweat suit, jogging/wind suits
- Sweatshirts and t-shirts that are not school, instructional or seasonal in nature
- Extremely low-cut dresses, blouses, and pants
- Overalls
- Backless blouses and dresses
- Blouses or dresses with plunging necklines and/or backs
- Shorts, except field day and select field trips (at principal's discretion)

The principal may be given discretion to make adaptations to the dress code in the following cases: caregivers, exceptional education teacher with certain caseloads and students, physical education teachers, teachers in special laboratory situations, field trips, field days, etc.

Physical education teachers are permitted to wear shorts and wind suits and **t-shirts that are school and instructionally related**. Lab coats and scrubs are encouraged for caregiver situations.

Additionally, principals have the discretion to designate "School Spirit Days" where one or more of the "requirements" may be waived. This does not mean that every Friday is automatically "Dress Down Day" and that all guidelines will be eliminated.

Occasionally, other situations may arise that, in the judgment of the principal, are inappropriate. The principal's judgment will prevail.

When the principal determines that any manner of dress is unbecoming, that principal will meet with the employee and explain that his or her dress does not meet guidelines and should be corrected immediately. Failure of the employee to heed the warning and abide by the guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

Principals at the middle and high school can be more restrictive, if needed.

### **PARAPROFESSIONALS AND SUBSTITUTES**

Certain paraprofessionals, especially in special education, may require substitutes when absent. It shall be the responsibility of the principal or the designee to secure substitutes from an approved list of trained personnel furnished by the Human Resource office. Procedures for contacting a substitute teacher may vary at the individual schools. The employee should become aware of the procedures determined at their school.

### **SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS (JGFB)**

The policy cited above specific mentions teachers, it is the responsibility of all school employees to be attentive to the wellbeing of students.

Threats of Violence and Bullying – Being cognizant of the violence that has been all too common on school campuses in recent years, employees are encouraged to be aware of any behavior by students that might indicate the potential for violence. In particular, employees who interact with students should be aware of bullying which is defined as:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
  - b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
  - d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Any suspicion of possession of weapons or drug possession by a student should be immediately reported to an administrator for appropriate action.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY (JR)**

As professionals, educators are aware of the legal requirements of confidentiality imposed on them in their positions. Because of the "need to know" certain information to adequately complete their duties, they may have access to various data, such as special education records, free reduced price lunch lists, discipline records, etc. It is imperative that educators meet their legal, ethical, and moral responsibilities in handling these materials and information both at school and in the community. School employees are to abide by state and federal regulations concerning student records to ensure student record confidentiality.

### **EVALUATIONS (OCGA 20-2-210; GBI)**

State guidelines require that all school personnel be evaluated annually. The superintendent is evaluated by the Board of Education. He, in turn, evaluates administrative personnel. Building level administrators evaluate the employees in their buildings.

1. Become aware of the areas in which you will be evaluated. Information regarding the evaluation is available through your supervisor.
2. Objectively evaluate your own performance using the appropriate form .
3. Take advantage of the opportunity you will be given to discuss the evaluation.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OTHER EARLY DISMISSAL**

In the event of inclement weather or other events necessitating early dismissal or closing of schools public notice will be made via the following radio and television stations: WNGC 106.1 FM, WGMG 102.1 FM, WPUP 103.7 FM, WSB Channel 2. There are also system and school telephone trees. An automated calling system has been added as well that should contact employees and parents who have their phone numbers correctly stored in our calling system.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES PLANS**

The school system and each school maintains an "Emergency Procedure Plan" designed to address emergency situations. It is the responsibility of each employee to be familiar with the procedures outlined in this plan. In addition, regular drills for fire, tornado and/or other emergency are held at each school as required.

### **REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE, STUDENT WELFARE AND STUDENT INJURIES**

You are required by state law to report any suspicion of abuse and neglect of children to the Principal. The Madison County Board of Education policy concerning Child Abuse follows. The Madison County Child Abuse Protocol ([JGI](#)) requires that an employee inform the Principal immediately if there is suspected sexual, physical, or emotional abuse, or neglect of nutritional needs, lack of supervision, or extreme educational neglect. A copy of this protocol is on file in the Principal's office and is available upon request. Be ever mindful of this legal mandate and professional obligation. Information regarding signs of abuse is being provided to all staff members. A mandatory reporter's involvement ends when a staff member makes the report to the Principal. Do not discuss a referral with anyone, including persons purporting to be caseworkers, without administrative approval. All reports of suspected child abuse and neglect should be made in good faith. This reporting is legal under section 99.31 (a)(5) and 9.36 of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

With the exception of very minor cuts and bruises, if a student is injured while under your supervision, you must promptly provide or seek medical attention, through your school nurse or emergency medical personnel. Serious injuries, suspected broken bones, blows to the head, or serious sprains should be reported immediately so that decisions on medical care can be made in a timely manner. Accident Reports must ALWAYS be completed by the school nurse and turned in to the principal or his/her designee before the end of the school day in which the injury occurred, or the day on which you are made aware of the injury.

### **Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct O.C.G.A. [20-2-751.7](#)**

Any student (*or parent or friend of a student*) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other school employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. *If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral report should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee, i.e. the Human Resources Office.*

Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The oral

report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. [19-7-5](#) or [20-2-1184](#) shall be investigated by the school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicated a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics division.

"Sexual abuse" means a person's employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing any minor who is not that person's spouse to engage in any sexual act as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5.

"Sexual misconduct" includes behavior by an educator that is directed at a student and intended to sexually arouse or titillate the educator or the child. Educator sexual misconduct may include, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

1. Made sexual comments, jokes, or gestures.
2. Showed or displayed sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, or messages.
3. Wrote sexual messages/graffiti on notes or the internet.
4. Spread sexual rumors (e.g. said a student was gay or lesbian).
5. Spied on students as they dressed, showered or used the restroom at school.
6. Flashed or "moonied" students.
7. Touched, excessively hugged, or grabbed students in a sexual way.
8. Forced student to kiss him/her or do something else of a sexual nature.
9. Talked or asked about a student's developing body, sexuality, dating habits, etc.
10. Talked repeatedly about sexual activities or sexual fantasies.
11. Made fun of body parts.
12. Called students sexual names.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA FUNDRAISING**

There are now several websites and social media areas where educators can earn items, money or points for items they need for their school or classrooms. We encourage any teacher interested in doing this type of fundraising to explore the idea. Prior to starting any fundraising, it should be discussed with and approved by your principal. It is strongly suggested that approval be received in writing. This can be as simple as an email to the principal explaining the fundraiser with a response showing approval.

Any money received should go directly to the school and be kept in a line-item for the teacher doing the fund raiser. Any item received, belongs to the school and should be inventoried following the same procedures as if it was purchased with system funds. These items become the property of the school not the employee.

### **FINANCIAL PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

Madison County Schools has a Financial Handbook Guidelines documenting the processes and procedures all employees should use for budgeting, purchasing, payments, financial reporting and any area of money management. These financial processes and procedures should be used for

all local, state and federal funds unless otherwise noted in the manual. Employees should be familiar with and follow these processes and procedures at all times.

A copy of the Financial Handbook Guidelines can be requested from your school bookkeeper.

### **III. ADDITIONAL POLICY**

#### **CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS**

The Professional Standards Commission has developed a Code of Ethics for Educators in our state. Those employees of the Madison County Board of Education are expected to be familiar with and comply with the guidelines of this code. The code follows at the end of this handbook. The Code is updated often. When possible access the website above for the most recent version. While the code identifies specific positions for which it applies, it is a good guideline for the conduct of all employees.

#### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (GANA)**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of protecting the health and welfare of students and employees from the spread of communicable diseases (such as COVID-19). As part of its efforts to safeguard the health of students and school personnel, an on-going program of education for students has been developed. Additionally, annual training in communicable diseases and safety procedures is offered to personnel.

There shall be no discrimination in employment based on having an HIV infection, AIDS, or other diseases. All persons shall treat information concerning such illness as highly confidential.

#### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS AND/OR EMPLOYEES**

Policy relating to SEXUAL HARASSMENT may be found in its entirety at [JCAC](#). and [GAEB](#).

#### **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

Policy relating to COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES may be found in its entirety at [GAE \(2\)](#).

#### **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

Policy relating to DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE may be found in its entirety at [GAMA](#).

#### **TOBACCO (JCDA)**

The Board of Education policy prohibits the use of any form of tobacco in all school district buildings, buses and enclosed work areas. This policy applied at all hours and to all persons on school district properties.

### **IV. MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **PARTNERS IN EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The "Partners in Education" program is dedicated to the improvement of Georgia's public schools through the formation and expansion of partnerships with business, industry, civic, and governmental organizations and individual volunteers. On February 12, 1991 Madison County Middle School joined with four area businesses and organizations to become Partners in Education. Since that time, our partnerships have grown with other businesses, and every school in the county has developed partnerships with businesses in Madison County as well as surrounding areas.

Partners are typically viewed as programs that involve at least two key partners: the school system and the business community. Their purpose is to provide resources to schools or school systems for educational activities. Successful partnerships provide benefits for all partners. They promote better education, develop a better-trained work force, and strengthen the economic system. They also bring about improved communication and understanding between the schools and their communities.

## **INFORMATION DISSEMINATION**

Information school system employees have based on their positions many times is confidential. There are laws dictating what student information can be disseminated on a “need to know” basis. Madison County Schools believes, not only student information, but all information should be disseminated on a “need to know” basis. Even though some information is available via an open records request, it should not be shared without the following of open records request procedures. Information should only be shared with other employees when needed and should never be shared with people outside the school system.

## **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Faculty and Staff should refrain from the use of cell phones during instructional time or any time during the school day in which they are charged with the supervision of students. Cell phones should be turned off during these times. School Faculty and Staff should advise family and friends that emergency calls should go through the office. If an important call is expected (illness, etc.) the office should be notified and will relay any information as quickly as possible. Principals or department directors may give permission for an employee to keep their cell phone on during times when the employee is facing a crisis or emergency situation.

## **FIELD TRIP REQUESTS**

Student Field Trips must be approved prior to them being taken. The school must approve it first. A trip request should be done in the Travel Tracker software for approval by the central office as well as to have transportation needs assigned as described in the request.

If it is an overnight trip, an overnight trip form must be completed and forwarded to the superintendent. All school sponsored overnight trips must have prior approval of the Board of Education.

Each school has a different internal process for handling field trips, travel tracker routing and overnight field trips. It is the employee's responsibility to understand the process they are to use in their school for prior approval.

## **DRUG FREE WORKPLACE** (Added Jan. 4, 2010)

### **Drug Test Procedures:**

All testing will be done at Piedmont Occupational Medicine, 485 Hwy. 29 N, Athens, GA 30601. The Madison County School System assumes responsibility for the cost of the testing. Piedmont Occupational Medicine will bill the system. Results of the test will be submitted to the Human Resources Office and filed in a manner to assure confidentiality.

### **New Hires:**

All employees beginning work after January 4, 2010 must comply with the BOE Policy [GAMA](#) and [GCRA \(1\)](#) and complete a drug test prior to beginning their employment. New employees should get the appropriate form from the Human Resources Office at the BOE Business Offices, 800 Madison Street, Danielsville, GA. Testing is done at Piedmont Occupational Medicine, 485 Hwy. 29 N, Athens, GA 30601.

An applicant who tests positive for an illegal drug or illegal controlled substance will not be employed and will not be considered for subsequent employment for a period of six months. Any applicant who refuses the test will not be employed and will not be considered for subsequent employment for a period of six months.

### **Reasonable Suspicion/Fitness for Duty:**

All employees shall be subject to reasonable suspicion testing.

Testing will be required when a supervisor reasonably suspects an employee is impaired or unfit for duty due to illegal drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol. Testing based on a reasonable belief an employee is using or has used drugs or alcohol in violation of the policy may be drawn from specific objective and documented facts and reasonable inferences drawn from those facts and may be based upon, among other things:

- a) Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of possession, transfer or use of such drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol, or the physical symptoms of being impaired or unfit for duty due to any of same;
- b) Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior while at work including, but not limited to: slurred speech, staggered gait, flushed face, dilated or pinpoint pupils, deterioration of work performance including absenteeism and tardiness; or a report of alcohol or drug use during assigned working hours provided by reliable and credible sources and independently corroborated.

An employee who is tested will be suspended with pay pending the test outcome. If the test is negative, the employee will be allowed to return to work.

Any employee who refuses to consent to submit to a drug and alcohol test as required herein, or who fails to appear for the required test, or who fails to cooperate with a District investigation into possible violations of this policy, or who otherwise fails to cooperate to fulfill the requirements of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If a specimen is confirmed positive for drugs or a test reveals a blood alcohol level of .04 or higher, the employee will be informed of the results by the employee's supervisor. Any employee who has tested positive for drugs or alcohol shall be immediately suspended with pay pending final disciplinary action. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be determined by the superintendent in compliance with local, state and federal policy and statute.

**Post Accident:**

All employees who are involved in a work-related incident which results in a personal injury requiring medical attention or property damage exceeding \$500 may be tested promptly for drug and alcohol use in accordance with District policies, at the discretion of the Superintendent. Any employee involved in a motor vehicle accident while driving a District vehicle shall be tested for drugs and alcohol if the accident results in personal injury requiring medical attention or property damage exceeding \$500, or if there is reason to believe the employee was at fault in the accident (said reason including but not limited to issuance of a traffic citation, eyewitness testimony, or a history of prior accidents). This section shall also apply to any employee involved in a motor vehicle accident while driving a private vehicle on District business.

An employee who is tested will be suspended with pay pending the test outcome. If the test is negative, the employee will be allowed to return to work.

Any employee who refuses to consent to submit to a drug and alcohol test as required herein, or who fails to appear for the required test, or who fails to cooperate with a District investigation into possible violations of this policy, or who otherwise fails to cooperate to fulfill the requirements of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If a specimen is confirmed positive for drugs or a test reveals a blood alcohol level of .04 or higher, the employee will be informed of the results by the employee's supervisor. Any employee who has tested positive for drugs or alcohol shall be immediately suspended

with pay pending final disciplinary action. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be determined by the superintendent in compliance with local, state and federal policy and statute.

**Confidentiality:** All information from an employee's or job applicant's drug and alcohol test shall be confidential and only available to those who have a valid need to know. Disclosure of test results to any other person, agency, or organization shall be prohibited unless written authorization is obtained from the employee or job applicant.