

Whitfield County Schools Student and Parent Handbook

Middle Schools 2019-2020

1306 S. Thornton Ave., Dalton, GA 30720 (706) 217-6780 <https://www.wcsga.net/>



Crossroads Academy

#OneWhitfield



Eastbrook Middle School

Home of the Mustangs!



New Hope Middle School

Home of the Kodiaks!



North Whitfield Middle School

Home of the Pioneers!

Valley Point Middle School

Home of the Green Waves!



Westside Middle School

Home of the Rockets!

Revision Date July 1, 2019

Valley Point Middle School



VALLEY POINT
GREENWAVES

Student/Parent Handbook 2019-20

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Statement of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of the Whitfield County School District that racial, sexual, or other forms of harassment are strictly forbidden. Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent or other individual who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district based upon his or her race, color, religion, national origin, disability or sex should promptly report the same to the principal of their school or the appropriate coordinator, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor. Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. A copy of the discriminatory complaint procedure of the Whitfield County School District (GAAA/JAA) is located online in the board of education policy manual at <https://www.wcsga.net/> and is available in all school offices and the central office. State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems (Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A. 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that the Whitfield County School System does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this school system may be submitted to the sports equity coordinator.

The handbook may be amended as deemed necessary by the administration and staff in the best interest of the students. Changes will be provided in oral, written, or digital form at any time during the school year.

Handbook Distribution Date: August 8, 2019

Principal's Message

Dear Students, Parents & Guardians:

Welcome to Valley Point Middle School! It is an honor to serve the students, parents and community as principal. Middle school years can be one of the most memorable times in students' lives, and we are excited about the wonderful experiences and challenges that await our students this year. Students will be changing physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually. The staff at Valley Point Middle is honored and excited to work with each student as he/she develops unique and special talents. Participating in a wide variety of activities offered through classes, special events, and after school programs will make students well-rounded and will help make the middle school years the best!

Parents and guardians – we are delighted that you will be partners with us to support your children. We know that when parents and staff members work closely together, students do their very best.

The College and Career Ready Performance Index – CCRPI – is Georgia's annual tool for measuring how well its schools, districts, and the state itself are preparing students for the next educational level. It provides a comprehensive roadmap to help educators, parents, and community members to promote and improve college and career readiness for all students. The CCRPI includes four main components: Achievement, Progress, Achievement Gap, and Challenge Points. These components, encompassing multiple indicators, are combined for a total CCRPI score on a scale of 0 to 100.

Valley Point's 2018 score was 78.0 along with a climate rating of 5 out of 5. We look toward continued growth in both of these ratings over the next school year. The 2019 score is not yet available, but we always strive to improve at every level. We are proud of our students' achievement and progress and will continue to strive to help every student achieve at his/her potential.

Valley Point Middle School is a Title I school and receives Federal Title I funds to assist students in meeting state achievement standards. As part of being a Title I School, we have a variety of documents that guide our work with our stakeholders. Those documents include the School Wide Plan, the Parent Involvement Policy, the School Compact, and the School Improvement Plan. In addition to specifically inviting parents to review and give input on these documents, we invite your volunteered review and input as well. Additionally, we ask for your input in how we spend our Parent Involvement funds to best serve you and our students. All of these documents are available on our website and in our office, as well as available at all parent meetings. As you review these items, if you would like to give input, please contact Valley Point Middle by emailing/calling via the contact information listed below. Additionally, I would like to invite you to the many parent involvement opportunities, stake-holder input meetings, and family trainings that we offer. Please watch for invitations sent home with students, check our website often, listen to the recorded phone messages, and check our school Facebook account for information about meetings and activities.

I am also pleased to announce that all of Valley Point Middle School's teachers and paraprofessionals are ranked "Professionally Qualified" by the Georgia Department of Education. Whitfield County Schools and Valley Point Middle School are committed to providing your students with the best teachers and staff possible. You have the right to request information pertaining to the credentials of your child's teacher, and you will be notified if your child is taught by a teacher who has not met "professionally qualified" standards in core academic areas as defined by the state.

Again, I am pleased to welcome you to Valley Point Middle School, and I look forward to a great year! If you ever have a question, concern, or need, please feel free to contact me at steve.edwards@wccsga.net or call 706-277-9662. Go Greenwaves!

Sincerely,

Steve Edwards, Principal

Mission, Vision, and Beliefs



Vision

We envision a school of high academic excellence that prepares students to be successful, productive members of society.

Mission

Our mission is to maximize student learning by creating engaging learning experiences, fostering parent involvement, and providing opportunities for the use of technology in a safe, caring environment.

Beliefs

1. We believe the needs of students, personnel, families, and the community are best met with a unified direction.
2. We believe our purpose is to lead students to success by engaging them in challenging and meaningful work.
3. We believe teachers are leaders who design learning experiences for students.
4. We believe our personnel, families, and community members are vital to the education of our students.
5. We believe in creating and maintaining a safe, inviting, and inclusive learning environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

BE ON POINT

BE RESPONSIBLE

Be responsible for yourself academically, socially and physically.

Be responsible with your work, your attitude and your commitments.

BE RELIABLE

Be someone that can be counted on by peers,
teachers, and community members.

BE RESPECTFUL

Be respectful to yourself, your friends and adults.

Respect the property and feelings of others at all times.

Whitfield County Schools

2019 – 2020 Calendar

Board Approval on 2/4/19

<p>Friday–Wednesday, August 2–7 Thursday, August 8 Monday, September 2 Monday, October 14 Tuesday, October 15 Wednesday, October 23 Monday–Friday, November 25–29 Friday, December 20 Monday, December 23–Friday, Jan. 3 Monday, January 6 Tuesday, January 7 Monday, January 20 Monday, February 17 Wednesday, March 18 Monday–Friday, March 30 – April 3 Friday, April 10 Friday, May 22 Monday, May 25 Tuesday–Thursday, May 26–28 Friday, May 29</p>	<p>Pre-Planning for Teachers First Day of School for Students Labor Day Holiday Staff and Student Holiday Student Holiday and Staff Professional Learning Day Early Dismissal (Parent Conference/Professional Learning) Thanksgiving Holidays Early Dismissal for Students (P.M. workday for staff) Christmas Holidays for Students and Staff Professional Learning Day for Staff Only Students Resume Classes after Christmas Holidays Staff and Student Holiday (Martin Luther King Birthday) Student Holiday and Staff Professional Learning Day Early Dismissal (Parent Conference/Professional Learning) Spring Holidays Student Holiday/Staff Prof Dev OR Inclement Weather Make-up Day Early Dismissal (Last Day of School for Students 180 days) Memorial Day Holiday Post-Planning for Teachers Make-up Post-Planning for Teachers</p>
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In case Inclement Weather Days are used

Elementary Schools – Four 9-Week Grading Periods				Middle Schools – Six 6-Week Grading Periods							
Progress Reports Issued		Nine-Week Grading Period Ends		Report Card Dates		Grading Periods		Six-Week Grading Period Ends		Report Card/Progress Report Dates	
1 st	Tuesday, Sept. 10	Wednesday, Oct. 9	Tuesday, Oct. 15	1 st	Friday, Sept. 20	Thursday, Sept. 26	2 nd	Friday, Nov. 1	Thursday, Nov. 7	3 rd	Friday, Jan. 10
2 nd	Tuesday, Nov. 12	Friday, Dec. 20	Friday, Jan. 10	2 nd	Friday, Nov. 1	Thursday, Nov. 7	3 rd	Friday, Dec. 20	Friday, Jan. 10	4 th	Tuesday, March 17
3 rd	Tuesday, Feb. 11	Thursday, March 12	Tuesday, March 17	3 rd	Friday, Dec. 20	Friday, Jan. 10	4 th	Friday, Feb. 21	Thursday, Feb. 27	5 th	End of Year
4 th	Tuesday, April 21	Friday, May 22	End of Year	4 th	Friday, Feb. 21	Thursday, Feb. 27	5 th	Thursday, April 9	Thursday, Apr. 16	6 th	End of Year
				5 th	Thursday, April 9	Thursday, Apr. 16					
				6 th	Friday, May 22	End of Year					
High Schools											
Semester Ends				Progress Reports Issued				Semester Report Cards			
1 st	Friday, Dec. 20			Thursday, Sept. 19 Thursday, October 31				Friday, Jan. 10			
2 nd	Friday, May 22			Thursday, Feb. 20 Thursday, April 9				End of Year			



Stay in touch!

facebook.com/WCSchools
twitter.com/WCSchools



<https://tinyurl.com/yapnb97c>

ABSENCES AND CHECKOUTS

If a student is to be absent from school, parents/guardians should call the middle school office between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. with the reason for the absence. When students return to school, they are to bring a written excuse signed by their parent/guardian, properly dated, and stating the reason for the absence. ***Without a written, dated, and signed note, absences, check-outs, and tardies will remain unexcused.*** E-mail messages will not be accepted in place of the note, as the school must have a parent signature on the written excuse.

Parents checking their student out of school should come to the front office before 3:00 p.m. and log the student out using the check out system. The front office clerk, after checking for authorization and the adult's identification, will then call the student to the office. Students are not allowed to check out after 3:00 p.m.

Excuse notes must also be returned to the attendance office if a student checks in late or checks out early.

WHITFIELD COUNTY SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Students are expected to be in school each day unless excused for one of the reasons listed below:

1. Personal illness that would endanger the student's health or the health of others.
2. Serious illness or death in the student's immediate family.
3. Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith.
4. Mandated absence by order of governmental agencies, e.g., court order or pre-induction physical for the armed forces.
5. Conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to health or safety.
6. A period not to exceed one day is allowed for registering to vote or voting in a public election.
7. Approved college visitation in accordance with high school regulations.
8. Working at an electoral poll site during an election.
9. Student trips deemed educational by the Assistant Superintendent.

Parent notes may be accepted for up to 10 absences in a school year and must be turned in within five (5) days after the absence. After 10 absences, parents will be required to provide written medical excuses or documentation. However, in cases when a student's absences become excessive and are addressed through an attendance intervention (i.e. Attendance Review Team, Educational Improvement Team or School Social Work Referral) absences will only be excused by written medical documentation.

Students shall be counted present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly and/or while representing the school in an activity approved by the school and/or Board of Education. Students in foster care shall be counted present when they attend court proceedings relating to their foster care.

A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the U. S. armed forces or National Guard, and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted up to five (5) days of excused absences per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to the parent's deployment or during the parent's leave.

Individual students who have emergencies to arise that necessitate their absence from school for a portion of the school day must have been present for one half of the instructional day in order to be included in attendance counts.

An unlawful (unexcused) absence is one not permitted under the Compulsory School Attendance Law (20-2-690) and policies of the Whitfield County School Board.

Any combination of five (5) unexcused tardies / late check-ins or unexcused early check-outs will be considered one (1) unexcused absence. If a student has excessive absences or tardies, the school social worker may refer the student and

parent(s) to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS), Educational Improvement Team (EIT) or the appropriate court when sufficient legal causes for these absences or tardies do not exist. Corrective measures may be taken against the student and/or parent(s).

When a high school student has more than six (6) unexcused absences per semester in a class meeting fewer than 90 days (6 block days), the student will not receive credit for that course. If a high school student has more than 10 unexcused absences in a class meeting more than 90 days (yearlong courses) the student will not receive credit for that course. Any student who is absent one half day is considered absent the full day. The student must be present for at least one half of the high school class period to be considered present for the class. The student and/or parent/guardian may request the school principal or designee to review the case if there are extenuating circumstances. Upon denial, it can be appealed to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

According to the State Board of Education rules, a student is truant who during the school calendar year has more than five (5) unexcused absences.

- The school will contact you in writing by mail when your child has 5, 10 and 15 total absences each school year.
- Parents may be requested to attend an Attendance Review Team (ART) meeting when students reach 5 unexcused or 10 total absences. Parents who do not attend the ART meeting will be referred to the school social worker. Parents may also be asked to provide a written medical documentation to excuse future absences due to illness.
- Upon review of the student's attendance, the school social worker may refer the student and family on to the community Education Improvement Team (EIT), the Department of Family and Children Services or the Whitfield County Juvenile or Magistrate Court.
- The ART and EIT process is ongoing and may not start over each year. If the intervention was held the previous school year, the family may not attend an ART or EIT the following year. However, the family will be notified by the school social worker of the continued attendance concerns.

Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law

CODE SECTION --20-2-690-1.

- (a) Every parent, guardian, or other person residing within this state having control or charge of any child or children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays shall enroll and send such child or children to a public school, a private school, or a home study program that meets the requirements for a public school, a private school, or a home study program.

Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of a child or children and who shall violate this Code Section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine not to exceed \$100.00 or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, or both, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school in violation of this part shall constitute a separate offense.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

STUDENT ARRIVAL

Parents dropping off students in the morning should enter the car rider line by way of Old Fields Road and drop students off at the southwest corner of the school on the 6th grade hallway after 7:00 am. Bus riders will enter through the double doors next to the cafeteria and proceed directly to the gym. Students will remain in the gym until dismissed to breakfast by grade levels. Breakfast will be offered to all students. All students should be at school in class by 7:55.

Students arriving after 7:55 will be counted tardy to school. Staff members are not on duty to supervise students before 7:00 a.m., so students should not be dropped off at VPMS before that time.

STUDENT RELEASE

Bus riders and car riders will be dismissed at 3:30 p.m. All parents picking up children at school should arrive and get in the car-rider line no later than 3:50 p.m. unless the child is involved in an after-school activity supervised by a staff member. Please follow the directions of the faculty member on duty. When car riders are dismissed, they should go directly to the covered walkway at the west end of the 6th grade hallway. The entrance to the car rider line will be on the back side or west side of the school off Old Fields Road, and exit around the south end of the building, past the elementary school. Please pull all of the way forward in the car rider line in order to expedite dismissal. Buses and cars will all share the access road entering campus to the south of Valley Point Elementary School. **Valley Point Middle School does not provide after school care so students should not be left at school after 4:00 p.m.**

- **Please be patient with our construction process this year as it will impact our drop off and pick up process.**

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED)

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is located in the front hall near the reception desk, in the gym lobby and in the main hallway. The locations are easily accessible to the general public and near a telephone. The AED shall be used in emergency situations warranting its use.

BALLOON AND FLOWER DELIVERIES

It is against Whitfield County School Policy to have balloon or flower bouquets delivered to students at school. Bouquets delivered to the school will be sent back to the florist.

BULLYING

The Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Such prohibition shall be included in the Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system.

Bullying is defined as follows: (1) An act that is any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; (2) any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or (3) any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that: (a) causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1; (b) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; (c) is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or (d) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system. The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose. For purposes of this Code Section, electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.

Procedures may be developed at each school encouraging a teacher or other school employee, student, parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student, either anonymously or in the person's name, at the person's option, to report or otherwise provide information on bullying activity. Any teacher or other school employee who, in the exercise of his or her personal judgment and discretion, believes he or she has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that someone is a target of bullying is encouraged to immediately report it to the school principal. Any report will be appropriately investigated by the administration based on the nature of the complaint in a timely manner to determine whether bullying has occurred, whether there are other procedures related to illegal harassment or discrimination that should be implemented and what other steps should be taken. Any report of retaliation for reporting bullying will also be investigated and addressed as called for in this policy and in accordance with school procedures.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which may be done electronically. Students and parents will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at each school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is provided by the Whitfield County School System for every student living more than 1 1/2 miles from his/her school. Safety of all students is the primary goal in bus transportation. Students are expected to care for the buses, exhibit respect, courtesy, and consideration for bus drivers and other bus riders, and behave appropriately on the buses. Abuse of any of these may result in the loss of the privilege of participation in the bus transportation program. No food, drink, or candy is permitted on school buses. As a reminder, Department of Family and Childrens' Services (DFCS) policy states:

- Children under eight (8) years old should never be left home alone.
- Children ages of nine (9) to twelve (12) can be left home along for short periods of time (up to 2 hours).
- Children ages thirteen (13) and older can be at home alone for up to 12 hours and act as a babysitter for younger children (children who are 12 years old and who display maturity also fall into this category).
- If your child has special needs, consider your child's ability to be safe at home alone even if they are old enough.

WCS Transportation Guidelines

Whitfield County Schools provides School Bus Transportation for approximately 9,000 of our students on a daily basis. In order to maintain a safe and efficient transportation program and to offer this privilege with fairness and equity, we must require all students to attend their zoned school in order to receive school bus service. Any parents who have been granted permission for their students to attend the school of their choice and whose residence address is not located within that school zone are responsible for transporting their students to and from school.

An exemption exists for students who qualify for special-needs bus services to specific programs in another school as authorized by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Once a student has been enrolled in the school where their residence is zoned, the student and their family will be given bus route information for the bus to take them to and from their home of record. Due to safety and resource limitations, riding the bus to and from other locations cannot be accommodated.

On a limited basis, students may ride to an alternate location as long as they have a signed note from a parent, verified by the school administrator and presented to the bus driver prior to boarding. This exception is also contingent upon space being available on the bus.

Bus routes are established between schools, private residences, and designated neighborhood bus stops. Due to safety concerns, school buses do not deliver students to business locations.

All students are expected to understand and abide by the Bus Safety Rules provided in the student handbook.

BUS NOTES

Students wishing to have a friend ride home on the bus with them must turn in a parent note to the front office the morning of the request. **Both riders must have notes from their parents granting permission.** The student’s full name, parent’s full name, a contact phone number, and the bus number must be included in the notes. There are times that buses are too full for extra riders. Students will go home on their regular bus should an overcrowded bus situation occur. **Due to overcrowding, no bus notes will be accepted on Fridays.**

CAFETERIA

Both breakfast and lunch are served daily in the school cafeteria. Prices are:

Student Meals:

Meal Prices 2018-19	Amount
Breakfast Elementary	Free
Breakfast Middle & HS	1.35
Lunch Elementary	2.35
Lunch Middle & HS	2.60
Extra Milk	.50
Reduced Breakfast	.30
Reduced Lunch	.40

Adult Meals:

Meal Prices	Amount
Breakfast	1.85
Lunch	3.35

Free and Reduced Meal Applications are available on-line. Go to the Whitfield County School website at <https://www.wcsga.net> or www.lunchapplication.com to access the on-line application. You are encouraged to complete an application if you think your children may qualify. ONLY ONE APPLICATION PER HOUSEHOLD needs to be completed, listing all school age children on the form.

Parents are able to pay for student meals with cash, money order, check or online.

On-Line Payment Option

Parents are able to pay for student meals with cash, money order, check or online.

Advantages of Using Online Payment System-

- See your student's meal balance at anytime from anywhere
- Deposit payments for multiple students in just one click
- Setup recurring payments for monthly or weekly deposits
- Reviewing individual student meal histories
- Automated notifications via email or text when your student's balance falls below an amount you choose

Go to: www.K12PaymentCenter.com to setup your child's account. You will need your child's Student ID number to setup an account. If you do not know your child's Student ID number you may contact your child's cafeteria manager.

Biometric finger scan

Schools will be using a biometric finger scan to identify students. Parents can opt out of the finger scan by contacting their school's cafeteria manager.

Charges

Students have a limited charge privilege. If an elementary or middle school student arrives at school without money, they are allowed up to (5) five days of charges. If a high school student arrives at school without money, they are allowed up to (3) three days of charges. If the student has reached the charge limit, he/she will be provided an alternate meal (such as a cheese sandwich and milk). Every effort will be made to notify parents of charges and the alternative meal policy at the first negative balance, utilizing automated calls, letters and email. Charges are not allowed for extras or a la carte items. Parents are able to pay for student meals online at www.k12paymentcenter.com or with cash, check or money order.

Menus

Monthly lunch menus can be viewed on MealViewer at www.schools.mealviewer.com, or you can access the site from the Whitfield County Schools' website at <https://www.wcsga.net> by clicking Departments, then Student Nutrition. The MealViewer App is also available for download on Android and iOS systems.

Outside Food

Students are encouraged to eat school prepared meals. Food items brought from home to be consumed in the school cafeteria should be in appropriate containers such as paper bags or lunch boxes. **Containers with advertising (such as Wendy's, McDonald's, etc.) may not be brought into the school cafeteria. Carbonated beverages may not be brought to school.**

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are allowed at VPMS, however according to WCS discipline code, **students should not use cell phones between the times of 7:50 and 3:30.** If students do not go by the WCS cell phone rules, the cell phone may be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian. Repeat offenders could face confiscation of the device and additional penalty at the discretion of the administration. No school employee is responsible for any lost or stolen device. If a student brings a device to school, they do so at their own risk. In most cases, students must have their cell phone put away and turned off.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

Complaint Procedures

Board Policy GAE describes the complaint and grievances procedures for certified personnel. Parents and school communication is described in parent handbooks posted on school websites. Parents are expected to address complaints or grievances beginning at the school level with the teacher first and then the administration. Central office personnel should be contacted next should parents feel the issues have not been resolved. If still unsatisfied, the superintendent should be contacted. Parents have the right to speak to the Board of Education through public participation at a Board of Education meeting. Conferences forms, notes, and minutes are kept on file as documentation of the issues. Complaint procedures are described and a form for documenting complaints is located in the

administrative handbook. The complaint procedures describe grounds for complaints, federal programs for which complaints can be filed, filing and investigation of a complaint, as well as rights to appeal. The GADOE address to which complaints should be filed is included in the procedure.

Complaint Procedures under the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) of 1965

A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency (“complainant”) may file a complaint with the Whitfield County School District Board of Education if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a violation of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) of 1965 has occurred. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

1. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
2. Title I, Part C: Migrant Education Program
3. Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
4. Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
5. Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology
6. Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement
7. Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1: Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities
8. Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children

C. Filing a Complaint

A formal complaint must be filed in writing to the Whitfield County School District superintendent or his/her designee.

The complaint must include the following:

1. A statement that the LEA has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program;
2. The date on which the violation occurred;
3. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation);
4. A list of names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information;
5. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complaint’s position and
6. The address of the complainant/s.

D. Investigation of Complaint

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, the Superintendent or his/her designee will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

1. The date the Department received the complaint;
2. How the complainant may provide additional information;
3. A statement of the ways in which the Department may investigate or address the complaint; and
4. Any other pertinent information.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the Superintendent will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings. If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included. Either the 30-day or 60-day timelines outlined above may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant.

E. Right of Appeal

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the local level, the complainant has the right to request a review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Superintendent's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

The complaint must be addressed to:

Georgia Department of Education
Office of Legal Services
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE
2052 Twin Tower East
Atlanta, GA 30334

PARENT/ELIGIBLE STUDENT DATA PRIVACY COMPLAINT POLICY

The Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act is a Georgia state law that is designed to ensure student data is kept private and secure from unauthorized access. Any parent or eligible student ("Complainant") may file a complaint with the local school system if that individual believes and alleges that a possible violation of rights under the federal or state privacy and security laws has occurred. A parent is defined as a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. An eligible student is defined as a student who has reached 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

O.C.G.A. §20-2-667 Parental and student review of education record; model policies subsection (g)(1) directs the Georgia Department of Education to develop model policies and procedures for a parent or eligible student to file a complaint with an LEA regarding a possible violation of rights under federal or state student data privacy and security laws.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that parents or eligible students are provided a formal process to file a complaint with a local school system regarding a possible violation and to set forth the official process that the local school system must use to handle the complaint. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received.

In accordance with OCGA §20-2-667 section (g)(1), Whitfield County School System policy is as follows:

1. Any Parent/Eligible Student with a complaint should request, in writing, a Parent/Eligible Student Complaint form from the following official:
Chris Parker
Director of Student Services
201 East Tyler Street, Dalton, GA 30721
2. The Complainant will be provided a complaint form within 3 business days of receiving the request.
3. A written response must be provided to Complainant within 10 business days of receipt of the complaint.
4. The Complainant may file an appeal with the local school superintendent within 10 business days of receiving written response from local school system.
5. Parents or eligible student may file an appeal for a final decision to the local board of education within 10 business days of receipt of written response from local school system.
6. Local boards of education must render a decision within 10 business days of receiving an appeal.

CONFERENCES/INFINITE CAMPUS FOR PARENTS

Parents/guardians are encouraged to use our Infinite Campus parent portal system as a way to check on their student's progress. Upon written request parents will be issued a user ID and instructions from the school for logging onto the system. Parents are also encouraged to visit the middle school website for announcements, calendars of events and other important information. Parents/guardians are encouraged to regularly speak with their child about his/her progress, performance and grades. E-mail is another excellent way to communicate with teachers. The middle school staff also welcomes and uses phone calls, written communication, and face to face conferences whenever the parent or teacher has a concern. We truly believe it takes good communication between home and school to ensure student success.

COUNSELORS

All middle schools have at least one full-time counselor on staff. Students and parents are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss matters of concern. In addition to individual conferences and small group sessions, guidance classes will be provided at each grade level throughout the school year.

DAILY SCHEDULE

In order to provide a broad educational scope, the two content components of the middle school instructional program include academic courses and the connections program. Academic courses are designed to continue building skills that will enable the student to successfully move into high school and to allow exploration of new fields and content. The connections program provides opportunities for the student to have a positive and successful learning experiences in the fine arts, technology, health, and physical education. The connections courses are success-oriented, allowing students the opportunity to explore and develop interests outside of, yet complementary to, the academic program.

It is believed that the affective and academic needs of students are best met in smaller settings in which there are a limited number of teachers who become well acquainted with each student. Therefore, the academic program is organized into teams of teachers who are assigned a designated group of students. The teacher team is responsible for instruction in reading/literature, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Teams work together to minimize the chance of failure for each student. The team is allowed flexibility in the scheduling of students and time within the academic block. Teachers are provided common planning daily in order for them to meet together to address the needs of individual students and to do interdisciplinary planning.

DRESS CODE FOR STUDENTS - GRADES 6-12: BOARD POLICY JCDB

The Whitfield County Board of Education believes that an appropriate dress code will support a safe school environment that is conducive to learning. A committee of board members, administrators, teachers, parents, and students will review this student dress code each year. The Board of Education intends for this dress code to continually adapt to changing styles, reflecting the needs and opinions of our schools and our community.

SECTION A: ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS FOR PROPER ATTIRE

1. SHIRTS/BLOUSES (All colors and color combinations are acceptable.)
 - Styles – all styles which conform to rules concerning fit
 - Fabric – all except sheer, see-through, unlined lace, or anything similar
 - Fit
 - Sized appropriately, fitted modestly, (no cleavage showing), sleeveless with material extending from collarbone to end of shoulder bone
 - Buttoned properly
 - Long enough to cover midriff at all times (no skin showing at midriff)

2. SKIRTS/DRESSES/JUMPERS (all colors and color combinations)
 - Length – no shorter than knee length when standing
 - Fabric – all except sheer, see-through, unlined lace, or anything similar
 - Fit
 - Sized appropriately, fitted modestly, (no cleavage showing), sleeveless with material extending from collarbone to end of shoulder bone
 - Skirts properly fitted and secured at the waist
 - Jumpers must be worn with blouse meeting the dress code
 - No splits above the knee in skirts or dresses
3. PANTS/SLACKS/SHORTS
 - Styles – dress, chino, denim (jeans), cargo, sweatpants (no pajama pants, or similar styles)
 - Fabric – all except sheer, see-through, unlined lace, or anything similar
 - Leggings, yoga pants, any form-fitting pants must be worn with an appropriately sized covering that comes to the knees while standing and made of a material that meets the dress code
 - Fit
 - Sized appropriately (no baggy or oversized pant legs)
 - Shorts at the knee when standing
 - Shorts may be dress, chino, denim (jeans), or cargo, gym, athletic, and basketball shorts are acceptable (must be at least knee length)
 - All styles fitted and secured at the waist
4. SHOES/BOOTS
 - Must be properly fastened (tied, buckled, laced)
 - No shoes with wheels
5. SWEATERS/JACKETS/OUTERWEAR
 - All dress code rules will apply to sweaters/jackets/outerwear when worn inside the school building
 - Hoodies must fit appropriately and not be oversized

SECTION B: INAPPROPRIATE DRESS

The following fads, styles, types of clothing, accessories, and appearances are deemed inappropriate:

- If clothing is worn with rips, holes, tears (above the knee), all holes must be permanently filled with fabric meeting dress code standards. Underwear cannot be visible under pants or shorts with holes above the knee.
- Baggy and oversized clothing
- Pajamas or similar styles
- Revealing, immodest
- Clothing or tattoos with writings, numbers, pictures, graphics, monograms, symbols or drawings, that promotes:
 - Gang/cult memberships or activity
 - Trademarks, slogans, or advertising advocating the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or other unlawful activity
 - Discrimination based upon cultural, religious, racial or sexual orientations
- Clothing or jewelry deemed a safety risk or unlawful (see Discipline Code)
- Headwear (caps, scarves, bandanas, sunglasses, hoods, etc.) at any time inside the building
- Any objects in pierced body parts other than the ear and/or one side of the nose (One **small** stud in nose is allowed only). Stretchers, spikes or tunnels are not allowed. Any holes in ear lobes must be plugged for safety reasons.
- Writing on rear of pants or shorts

The administrator's decision will stand as to the accepted judgment in the preceding examples of inappropriate dress.

SECTION C: ADHERENCE TO THE DRESS CODE

- During the first five days of attendance within the school year, a student in violation will be asked to correct the infractions.
- Enforcement as to the progressive discipline procedures in the “Student Discipline Code” will begin on the sixth school day for any student.

No student shall be considered to be out of compliance with this policy in the following instances:

- When the student’s parent/guardian has secured an exemption from the policy as set forth in the procedures outlined in the exemptions section below
- When the student wears a button, armband, or other accessory to exercise the right of freedom of expression, unless the button, armband, or other accessory is related to gangs, gang membership, or gang activity
- When the student wears a uniform of a nationally recognized youth organization such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts on regular meeting days
- When a student is wearing an approved form of dress for a school sponsored activity
- When the school administration waives the dress code policy for physical education classes or any class where the dress code is not conducive to the learning environment
- When the school administration waives the dress code policy for school spirit wear (clothing that is affiliated with school clubs, organizations, athletics)

SECTION D: EXEMPTIONS

In order to qualify for an exemption, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Request by mail, email (chris.parker@wccsga.net) or in person from the school an “Application For Exemption Form.”
2. Complete the application in full and submit it to the designated administrator at the student’s school.
3. Meet with the designated school administrator to discuss the reasons and goals of the policy and the objection to the policy.
4. Receive formal approval/disapproval by the designated district administrator.

ENROLLMENT

The Whitfield County Schools Enrollment Center is located at 201 East Tyler Street. The enrollment center is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m.– 4:00 p.m. For more information and required paperwork please visit our webpage at <https://www.wccsga.net>

EXTRACURRICULAR / ATHLETICS

We encourage students to get involved in extracurricular activities during their middle school years. Students need to listen and watch the announcements every morning to stay informed about events such as sign up meetings and information about try-outs. We will post information on our facebook page as well as our school website. All students trying out for a sport must have a current sports physical to be eligible. 6th graders are not eligible to try out for football or basketball.

Fall sports: Football, Softball, Cross Country, Cheerleading, Archery, Quiz Bowl

Winter sports: Basketball, Wrestling, Archery, Quiz Bowl

Spring Sports: Baseball, Soccer, Track and Field, Archery

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

Districts and schools are required to set aside 1% of their budget for activities for building the capacity of parents to help their children succeed academically. The district has one family engagement coordinator to coordinate activities at the district level who helps to facilitate the relationship between school and families. Parents are asked for input at the district level on our district Title I plan, the parent involvement plan, Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) and 1% parental involvement set aside funds. The district does not keep any of the required 1% set aside at the district level. All funds are distributed to schools on an equitable per pupil allocation based on the previous October FTE number of students on free and reduced meals.

At the school level, parents are asked for input on the school wide Title I plan, school improvement plan, parent involvement plan, school compact, and 1% parent involvement set aside funds.

At Valley Point Middle we offer a variety of parent nights throughout the year to address student work and progress in all four academic areas. We will host a Title I information night at the beginning of the school year to both inform parents and gather parent input for our School Improvement Plan, use of Parent Involvement monies and the culture and climate of our learning environment. We also encourage parent conferences, called by both the teachers and/or the parent.

In the front hallway of the school we house our Parent Resource Center which contains useful resources, learning games and parenting information for parents of middle school students. Please ask any of our staff about checking out materials that are available. We are here to help you help your student be successful in school. We work better together to insure success for our students, and you as a parent are a vital part of that equation for success.

FERPA

NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND ELIGIBLE STUDENTS OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) AND THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

FERPA affords parents and eligible students (over 18 years of age or attending a postsecondary institution) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the education records of a student who is your child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen (18) or older, your own education records. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Superintendent a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Superintendent or designee will make arrangements for access and provide notice of such arrangements.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. To request the school district to amend a record, parents or eligible students should write the school principal, specify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district decides not to amend the record, it will notify the parents or eligible students of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided with the notification of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and its implementing regulations authorize disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including school nurses and school resource officers); a member of the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a specific task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); a contractor consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom the school district has outsourced services; or a parent or student serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee) or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. FERPA requires the school district, with certain exceptions, to obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the student's education records. However, the district may disclose appropriate designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent or eligible student has advised the district to the contrary in accordance with district procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to include this type of information from the student's education records in certain school publications, such as the annual yearbook, graduation or sports activity programs, and honor roll or other recognition lists.

The School District has designated the following information as directory information:

[Note: The board may, but does not have to include all the information listed below. Information listed must be consistent with those items designated in board policy].

- b) Student's name, address and telephone number;
- c) Student's date and place of birth;
- d) Student's participation in official school activities and sports;
- e) Weight and height of members of an athletic team;
- f) Dates of attendance at schools within the district;
- g) Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in district schools;
- h) Photograph; and
- i) Grade level.

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. In addition, two federal laws require school systems receiving federal financial assistance to provide military recruiters, upon request, with students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers unless parents have advised the school system that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. You have the right to refuse to allow all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to refuse to allow it to be disclosed to the public upon request without your prior written consent. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the principal of the school at which the student is enrolled in writing within 30 days after officially enrolling in school or within 30 days of the date of the release of this notice.

5. You are also notified that from time to time students may be photographed, videotaped, or interviewed by the news media at school or some school activity or event; unless you, as a parent/guardian object in writing to the principal to your student being photographed, videotaped or interviewed. You must notify the principal of your objection by the date specified above. The principal will take reasonable steps to control the media's access to students. However, your submission of a written objection does not constitute a guarantee that your student will not be photographed, videoed, or interviewed, or that such information will not be posted on websites or social media sites not affiliated with the school or district, or in circumstances which are not within the knowledge or control of the principal.
6. You have the right to file with the United States Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA or the regulations promulgated therein. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education,
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202.

GEORGIA MILESTONES END OF GRADE (EOG) TESTS

The Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) is a comprehensive summative assessment program spanning grades 3 through high school. Students in grades 6-8 will take an end-of-grade assessment that measures how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards in language arts and mathematics. Students in grade 8 will also take an end-of-grade assessment that measures how well they have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards in science and social studies.

GRADE CARDS

At the end of each six week period, progress grades are reported to parents to indicate student performance. Report cards have been designed to communicate to parents the progress of the student during each grading period. They are designed to reflect academic achievement, conduct, and attendance. Numerical averages will be used to report achievement. Middle school grades are cumulative.

If parents/guardians desire information more frequently on their child's progress, they are encouraged to use e-mail to contact teachers and/or Infinite Campus log-in. Parents/guardians may also discuss monitoring their child's progress with the guidance counselor.

Grade equivalents are as follows:

Grade

A	(90-100)	Excellent
B	(80-89)	Good
C	(70 - 79)	Satisfactory
F	(below 70)	Not Passing

Middle School Calculation

- Most middle school academic courses will calculate final grades by the average of three twelve (12) week grading periods.
- FINAL EXAMS: all four content areas (math, ELA, science, and social studies) will conduct final exams after the Georgia Milestones Assessment. The final exam grade will be an assessment grade posted during the third 12-week grading period. Students in grade 8 who require retesting on Georgia Milestones and students taking the high school EOC for Physical Science will be exempt from the final exam without penalty.
- Connections classes may include art, music, health, physical education and STEM classes.
 - Yearlong Connections class final grades will be calculated by the average of the three 12 week grading periods.
 - Twelve (12) week Connections class final grades will be calculated by cumulative score for the period.

HARASSMENT

It is the policy of this School District to prohibit any act of harassment of students by other students or employees based upon race, color, national origin, sex, or disability at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace or at any school event or activity. Any such act by a student or employee shall result in prompt and appropriate discipline, including termination of employment, suspension or expulsion of the student.

Sexual harassment may include conduct or speech which entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, demands or physical contact which creates a hostile environment. There may be other speech or conduct which students or employees experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment which should also be reported; harassment can take many forms and it is not possible to itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by this policy.

Any student, employee, parent or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the School District as prohibited by this policy should promptly report the same to the principal of their school or to the appropriate coordinator designated in policy JAA, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints procedures as specified in that policy. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor or any administrator. Students and employees will not be subjected to

retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. If at any point in the investigation of reported sexual harassment of a student, the coordinator or designee determines that the reported harassment should more properly be termed abuse, the reported incident or situation shall be referred pursuant to the established protocol for child abuse investigation.

It is the duty of all employees to promptly report harassment forbidden by this policy. All supervisors will instruct their subordinates as to the content of this policy and, through appropriate professional learning activities, enlighten employees as to the varied forms or expression of prohibited harassment. The principals of all schools shall ensure that students and parents are informed through student handbooks and verbally that such harassment is strictly forbidden, how it is to be reported and the consequences for violating this policy.

Whitfield County Schools policies are found at: <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/index.aspx?S=4177>

HEAD LICE

If a student is discovered to have head lice or nits, the parent will be called with recommendations for treatment. Rarely should a child miss more than ONE day of school due to treatment. One day only will be excused for treatment. The parent will be asked to sign and send a confirmation of head lice treatment which will be kept on file at school. The child should be checked again before readmission by a school designated person. The school will continue to keep a file sheet to monitor head lice infestation for each infected student. If the situation becomes long-term or chronic, a referral may be made to the school social worker.

INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION

In the event of severe inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, Whitfield County Schools may be closed, may delay starting time, or may advance dismissal time. Decisions regarding school closings will be made by Central Office personnel and will be announced over radio stations WBLJ, WTTI, and WRCB, as well as Chattanooga television stations. BlackBoard Connect, a student/parent calling system, will also be employed to inform parents of school closings. If no announcement is made by approximately 6:30 a.m., it should be assumed that school will be in session. ***Please do not call the school or Central Office, as lines need to be left open for emergencies.***

INSURANCE

Low cost, optional school insurance insures students for accidents that might occur at school. Twenty-four hour coverage is also available. Students will be given insurance information during the first week of school.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All 6th grade students must have an updated immunization form (Georgia Form 3231) on file in the school office. State law allows students a 30-day waiver period if they are coming from another Georgia school. After the waiver period, a student must be removed from school until the necessary documentation is received.

ALL NEW STUDENTS ENTERING 6TH GRADE ON OR AFTER JULY 1, 2007 ARE REQUIRED TO MEET THE FOLLOWING NEW GA REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER TO STAY IN SCHOOL:

1. Have 2 doses of Measles vaccine, two doses of Mumps vaccine, and 1 dose of Rubella vaccine or laboratory proof of immunity against Measles, Mumps or Rubella.
2. Have 2 doses of Varicella (Chicken Pox) vaccine or documentation of disease or laboratory proof of immunity.

**These immunizations must be on the GA Certificate of Immunization Form 3231, which can be obtained from your healthcare provider.

7th Graders Have New Immunization Requirements as of 2014 – 2015 School Year

Seventh graders are now required to have the tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) and meningococcal (meningitis) vaccines prior to entering school. Effective July 1, 2014, children born on or after January 1, 2002 who are attending seventh grade and new entrants into Georgia schools in grades 8 through 12 must have received one dose of Tdap vaccine and one dose of meningococcal vaccine. ("New entrant" means any child entering any school in Georgia for the first time or entering after having been absent from a Georgia school for more than 12 months or one school year). For more information about this and all school required immunizations, go to the Georgia Department of Public Health website at <http://dph.georgia.gov/schools-and-childcare>. Shots are available at North Georgia Health District public health departments in Cherokee, Fannin, Gilmer, Murray, Pickens and Whitfield Counties. Go to www.nghd.org for contact information and locations.

LOST AND FOUND

Items that are found in the hallways and classrooms are turned in to the front office. All items remaining at the end of the year are given to charity. The school does not assume responsibility for lost or stolen items.

MAP TESTING (Measure of Academic Progress)

MAP is a set of computerized assessments that adapt to student responses to determine their academic levels in math, language arts and reading. MAP is administered to students in grades K-8 two or more times throughout the year. Teachers utilize the data to design lessons to support student learning.

MEDICATION POLICY

All medications other than the exceptions listed in this policy, whether prescription or over-the-counter, may be administered only in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the principal of each school. All medications must be taken by the student, parent or guardian to the school office immediately upon arrival at school and must be in original pharmaceutical containers, clearly labeled as to the name of the student, the name of the medication, the appropriate dosage, and the times for dosage. Any student possessing prescription or over-the-counter medication not in accordance with these guidelines will be considered in violation of the School District's drug policy and shall be subject to the discipline set forth in the student code of conduct and/or the student/parent handbook.

A student for whom the school has on file supporting medical documentation may carry at all times with parental/guardian permission inhalers for asthma, auto-injectable epinephrine (epi-pens) for allergic reactions and medical needs for diabetes. Students authorized to self-administer such medications shall be instructed not to permit any other student to handle, possess, or otherwise attempt to use his/her medication and shall be informed that violations of such instructions will be dealt with in accordance with the student code of conduct. Use of the prescribed medication by an unauthorized student could result in charges of distribution of drugs under Whitfield County Discipline Code 3d Sale of or distribution of drugs or alcohol on school property or at a school function.

In order for the student to carry and self-administer such medications, or in order for the school to store and administer the medication for students who are unable to self-administer because of age or any other reason, parents must provide a written statement from a licensed physician confirming that the student is able to self-administer the medication and written permission from the parent for the nurse or designated employee to consult with the doctor regarding any

questions that may arise concerning the medication. Such permission shall release the school district and its employees and agents from civil liability if the self-administering student suffers an adverse reaction as a result of self-administration of such medication. Parents are encouraged to provide to the schools duplicate medication and supplies in the event a student is unable to self-administer or fails to bring the medication or equipment to school. Nurses or other school employees are authorized to administer an auto-injectable epinephrine, if available, to a student who is having an actual or perceived anaphylactic adverse (allergic) reaction, regardless of whether the student has a prescription for epinephrine. Any school employee who in good faith administers or chooses not to administer an auto-injectable epinephrine to a student in such circumstances shall be immune from civil liability.

The office personnel will dispense all medications as prescribed by the parents or medical personnel. Staff members are not to supply or administer any type of medication to students. It is absolutely imperative that all medical conditions be reported to the school. Parents of children with medical conditions should call the school to schedule an appointment with a counselor or administrator to discuss the special medical condition as soon as possible (preferably before the first day of school).

PARENT CONNECTIONS/BLACKBOARD CONNECT COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Blackboard Connect is a school-to-parent communication system that allows periodic and personalized messages by telephone. The **Blackboard Connect** service helps provide a safer learning environment, enhance emergency preparedness, and improve student attendance. The system also improves parental involvement through messages sent to families regarding school programs, testing schedules, major events, and other initiatives underway at school. A current working contact phone number is important. Please make sure the school has your contact information up to date at all times.

PHONE CALLS/STUDENT MESSAGES

Messages will be taken for students and given to them before the end of the day. Students will only be called out of class for a message in the case of an emergency. Use of office and classroom phones by students is subject to the approval of school personnel. School personnel will monitor phone calls. If students remain with teachers after school, they may use the phone in the classroom to contact parents. Please make and review arrangements for after-school activities with your child prior to the beginning of the school day. Notify the main office via a note of any change in your child's normal pick-up time or after-school routine. Students are permitted to use the telephone in the school office **ONLY** for school-related needs. In cases of urgency, a school staff member will call a parent/guardian. Please assist us in keeping phone calls to a minimum by discussing plans with your child before he/she leaves for school. You may contact teachers during the day by leaving your name and number with the secretary, or you may email them.

Promotion, Placement, and Retention

Each school principal or designee shall establish a placement team for each student in Grades 6-8 who fail at least 2 academic classes. Additionally, Grade 8 students must achieve grade level or above on reading and/or level 2 or greater on the mathematics sections of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade (EOG) Assessments to be promoted to Grade 9. The placement team shall determine whether each student shall be placed, retained, or promoted based on a review of the overall academic achievement of the student, as well as the student's performance on the Georgia Milestones EOG Assessments. State requirements for promotion and re-testing related to the Georgia Milestones EOG Assessments are listed below:

State Promotion Requirements for Grades 3, 5 and 8

- **Reading Grades 3, 5, and 8:** On the *Individual Student Report* under the Domain Category of Reading and Vocabulary the student’s Performance designation should be Grade Level or Above.
- **Mathematics Grades 5 and 8:** On the *Individual Student Report* the Achievement Level designation under Mathematics should be Level 2: Developing Learner, Level 3: Proficient Learner, or Level 4: Distinguished Learner.

For students requiring a retest in Reading for Grades 3, 5, and 8

- Students will retest on the English Language Arts test taking three sections over two days, as is the case during the Main Administration.

For students requiring a retest in Mathematics for Grades 5 and 8

- Student will retest on the mathematics taking two sections on a single day of testing, as is the case during the Main Administration.

Students not meeting these criteria will be reviewed by a placement committee (Student Support Team) for placement or retention. The placement committee will be comprised of the principal or principal’s designee, the academic team, and any other personnel the school deems necessary. Also, the committee may choose to involve system-level instructional personnel. The placement committee for students with IEPs will be the IEP Team.

When the placement committee determines that a student would not benefit from retention, the student will then be administratively placed in the next grade level although he/she has not met promotion requirements. The committee's deliberation includes, but is not limited to, the following factors:

- * academic progress
- * age, physical size
- * social maturity
- * emotional factors
- * number of years in school
- * attendance
- * standardized test scores
- * mental ability
- * language considerations of ESOL students

PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents and eligible students (18 or older or emancipated minors) certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

Parents and eligible students will be notified at the beginning of the school year if the school district has identified the specific or approximate dates during the school year when any of the activities listed above are expected to be scheduled. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. The Board of Education has developed and adopted policies, in conjunction with parents, regarding these rights as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The district will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The district will also directly notify parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey.

The school is required by federal law to give this notice to parents. However, the school does not have any such activities scheduled as are described above. If any such activities are initiated during the school year, parents will be notified accordingly and will be afforded all rights described herein.

Following is a schedule of activities requiring parental notice and consent or opt-out for the upcoming school year: **use of internet, release of student picture and or release of directory information.** This list is not exhaustive and, for surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, the **(Whitfield County Schools)** will provide parents, within a reasonable period of time prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, notification of the surveys and activities and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys. (Please note that this notice and consent/opt-out transfers from parents to any student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.)

RIGHT TO KNOW

Parent’s Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

July 1, 2019

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, **Valley Point Middle School** would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student’s teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student’s teacher—
 - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teachers' and/ or paraprofessionals' qualifications, please contact the principal, Mr. Steve Edwards at **706-277-9662**

Professional Qualifications (formerly Highly Qualified)

The NCLB "highly qualified" requirement has been replaced by two different, but comparable requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA):

- Professional Qualifications - applies to ALL teachers and paraprofessionals in grades PK-12
- ESSA In-Field Reporting - applies to ALL teachers in grades PK-12

Under Sec. 1111 of Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, SEAs and LEAs must ensure teachers meet state certification or licensure requirements or, if applicable, must meet the requirements set forth in a state's public charter school law.

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission determines state certification requirements in Georgia. However, under O.C.G.A. §20-2-80 / SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.33 (strategic waiver) and §20-2-2065/ SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.07 (charter), Georgia LEAs may submit applications to waive provisions of Title 20 Education Law including certification requirements as determined by the GaPSC. While certification waivers vary from LEA to LEA, a review of current applications on file reflects waivers of teacher certification (§20-2-200), Professional Learning (PL) for certification renewal (§20-2-201), paraprofessional certification (§200-2-204), alternative certification (§200-2-206) and substitute teacher certification (§200-2-216). In order for the GaDOE to ensure that LEA teachers meet state certification requirements, all LEAs must outline LEA professional qualification requirements that align either with GaPSC requirements, approved charter or strategic waiver applications or a combination of the two. This is submitted annually in the District Improvement Plan (DIP) section of the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). LEAs may update professional qualification requirements at any time in accordance with charter and strategic waiver applications. (LEAs needing to update PQ requirements must contact Title II, Part A staff). LEAs may not waive federal professional qualification requirements for paraprofessionals or state professional qualification requirements.

Regardless of charter or strategic waiver status, all LEA teachers and paraprofessionals must hold a Clearance Certificate (O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-82, 20-2-211.1, 20-2-2065, SBOE Rules 160-4-9-.07 and 160-5-1-.33, GaPSC Rule 505-2-.42).

Under July 2017 edits to SBOE Rules 160-4-9-.05, 160-4-9-.06, 160-4-9-.07 and 160-5-1-.33, LEAs may not waive certification requirements for Special Education Teachers. In accordance with guidance received from OSEP January 2018, state rules are as binding.

All LEAs should be reminded that ability to waive certification under charter and strategic waiver does not remove LEA obligation to abide by federal, state and local rules, regulations, court orders and statutes relating to civil rights and labor laws. LEAs are encouraged to work with the LEA's human resources staff and legal counsel to ensure all obligations are met.

SECTION 504

Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your local system's Section 504 Coordinator at the following address:

Chris Parker, 201 East Tyler St., Dalton, GA 30721, 706-278-8070

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/or students with the following rights:

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical condition, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.

15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.

16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights

Georgia Department of Education
Dr. Richard Woods, Superintendent

STUDENT AND EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

WHITFIELD COUNTY HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of the Whitfield County School District that racial, sexual, or other forms of harassment or discrimination are strictly forbidden. Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent, or other individual who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district based upon his or her race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sex should promptly report the same to the principal of their school or the appropriate coordinator, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. The Title VI and Title IX Coordinator is Judy Gilreath to their school counselor. Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. A copy of the discriminatory complaint procedure of the Whitfield County School District is located in the school district policy manual, which is available in either the school office or the central office. State law prohibits discrimination based on gender in athletic programs of local school systems. (Equity in Sports Act, O. C. G. A 20-2-315). Students are hereby notified that the Whitfield County School System does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. The sports equity coordinator for this school system is Chris Parker, 201 E. Tyler Street, Dalton, GA 30721, 706-217-6780. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this school system may be submitted to the sports equity coordinator.

Student reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct: REPORTING OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR:

Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of suspected inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor, or administrator at his/her school. For more details, please see the Student Discipline brochure.

Georgia HB 1321 addresses the issue of falsifying reports of alleged inappropriate behavior by teachers or school personnel stating it is an offense "falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student."

"20-2- 751. 7. (a) The Professional Standards Commission shall establish a state mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student which shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities. Each local school system shall be required to implement and follow such state mandated process and shall include the mandated process in student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies."

Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct

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

(b) Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other 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 and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.*

(c) 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 report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, 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 immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written 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 the educator or the child. Educator sexual misconduct by an educator may include, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

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 (i.e. said a student was gay or a lesbian).
5. Spied on students as they dressed, showered or used the restroom at school.
6. Flashed or "mooned" students.
7. Touched, excessively hugged, or grabbed students in a sexual way.
8. Forced a 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 your body parts.
12. Called students sexual names.

STUDENT USE OF INTERNET

All students have access to the Internet. Acceptable use and internet safety guidelines are available on the Whitfield County Schools website at <https://www.wcsga.net>. Parents may request a written copy of these guidelines by contacting the school. The school district cannot provide an absolute assurance that students will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials or sending and receiving objectionable communications, but the district will ensure that all practical precautions will be taken to keep students safe from illegal and/or inappropriate material. Students are instructed in acceptable use and Internet safety and their internet use is monitored as closely as possible. If a parent

does not wish their child to be allowed on the Internet, they must notify the school principal in writing within the first week of each school term.

STUDENT PUBLICITY POLICY

A middle school may choose to use students' pictures in the local paper, in educational publications, on the school or county websites, or on teacher blogs. **If parents or guardians object to this procedure, they must notify the school in writing.** These letters will be kept on file in the media center.

Title I

Purpose and definition:

SEC. 101. IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE DISADVANTAGED.

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

TITLE I--IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE DISADVANTAGED

SEC. 1001. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments. This purpose can be accomplished by —

1. Ensuring that high-quality academic assessments, accountability systems, teacher preparation and training, curriculum, and instructional materials are aligned with challenging State academic standards so that students, teachers, parents, and administrators can measure progress against common expectations for student academic achievement;
2. Meeting the educational needs of low-achieving children in our Nation's highest-poverty schools, limited English proficient children, migratory children, children with disabilities, Indian children, neglected or delinquent children, and young children in need of reading assistance;
3. Closing the achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and nonminority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers;
4. Holding schools, local educational agencies, and States accountable for improving the academic achievement of all students, and identifying and turning around low-performing schools that have failed to provide a high-quality education to their students, while providing alternatives to students in such schools to enable the students to receive a high-quality education;
5. Distributing and targeting resources sufficiently to make a difference to local educational agencies and schools where needs are greatest;
6. Improving and strengthening accountability, teaching, and learning by using State assessment systems designed to ensure that students are meeting challenging State academic achievement and content standards and increasing achievement overall, but especially for the disadvantaged;

7. Providing greater decision making authority and flexibility to schools and teachers in exchange for greater responsibility for student performance;
8. Providing children an enriched and accelerated educational program, including the use of schoolwide programs or additional services that increase the amount and quality of instructional time;
9. Promoting schoolwide reform and ensuring the access of children to effective, scientifically based instructional strategies and challenging academic content;
10. Significantly elevating the quality of instruction by providing staff in participating schools with substantial opportunities for professional development;
11. Coordinating services under all parts of this title with each other, with other educational services, and, to the extent feasible, with other agencies providing services to youth, children, and families; and
12. Affording parents substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.

School Level Programs Schoolwide (SWP) or Targeted Assistance (TA)

School Wide Programs:

A School wide Comprehensive program is designed to **upgrade the entire educational program** in order to improve the achievement of the lowest-achieving students.

A school wide school must have a poverty percentage of 40-percent or more.

OR

A school wide school must be an identified Priority or Focus school, even if that school does not have a poverty percentage of 40-percent or more.

Targeted Assistance Schools

- Services must be targeted to specific at-risk students
- Only eligible students may participate in Title I funded activities
- Use of funds must be consistent with Title I statutes and regulations

Title I School Designation Parent Notification of CCRPI & Climate Rating

Upon approval of Georgia’s state ESSA plan in 2018, schools will be designated in fall of 2018 as either needing Targeted or Comprehensive assistance based upon the following criteria:

Provide targeted & tailored district-level supports:

Focused on identified subgroup-specific issues

- District-level coaching
- Resources, tools, interventions
- Institutes focused on subgroup (SWD, EL) needs
- Leveraging federal funds

**Tier II
Targeted**

Provide targeted & tailored district- and school-level supports:

Lowest 5% of ALL schools based on rolling 3-yr CCRPI average

- School walkthrough (GSAPS) & School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- School-level coaching
 - GaDOE: Effective Leadership
 - RESA: Coherent Instruction
- Coordination with district-level supports
- State and community partnerships

**Tier III
Comprehensive**

Whitfield County Title I Schools

In Whitfield County, we have twenty Title I schools. Thirteen elementary schools, five middle schools, and two high schools operate school wide Title I programs. All Whitfield County Schools conduct an annual comprehensive needs assessment, which leads into a school improvement plan. These plans are reviewed annually for progress and revised as needed. These comprehensive needs assessments and school improvement plans guide the Title I budget planning process at each Title I school.

Valley Point Middle School operates a school wide Title I program helps provide additional teaching support in mathematics and a support paraprofessional in science and social studies. We are also able to provide an instructional coach to assist our teachers with high quality professional learning and classroom strategies for all learners. A portion of the Title I funds provide supplemental resources for our classrooms to help teachers, and as funds allow, after school tutoring programs to help students achieve at higher levels.

Valley Point Middle School

Title I

Parent Involvement Policy

2017-2018

(Reviewed throughout the year 2018-2019)

The parent involvement policy has been jointly developed and agreed upon by a committee including parents, faculty, staff, and others and submitted to the local education agency. The school-wide Title I policy will be evaluated and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

1. DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION

Valley Point Middle School will develop jointly with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written policy describing implementation of the requirements in a language that is simple, concise and will be updated periodically to meet changing needs of parents and the school. The policy will be made available to the local community.

2. ANNUAL MEETING

Valley Point Middle School will hold an annual meeting at a convenient time to explain to parents the school's school-wide Title I policy and explain the requirements and their right to be involved.

3. MEETING OPTIONS

Valley Point Middle School's parents will be surveyed to ascertain optimum times to schedule parent meetings, and an effort will be made to vary meetings to accommodate parents' needs. Childcare services may be offered at selected meetings and will be provided if a parent indicates a need.

4. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

In order to organize, plan, review, and improve the school-wide Title I programs, including the parent involvement policy and School/Parent Compact, at Valley Point Middle School, parental input will be solicited by mail and through regular meetings.

5. PROVIDE AND COLLECT INFORMATION

Valley Point Middle School will provide parents of participating student's timely information concerning the Title I programs through, but not limited to, the utilization of the marquee, use of online resources, informative fliers, meetings, workshops, curriculum documents, progress reports, standardized assessment reports, and newsletters. Any questions, comments, or concerns raised by the parents will be made available to the local educational agency. Parent suggestions will be responded to in a timely manner.

6. PROVIDED ASSISTANCE

Valley Point Middle School will provide parents of all students with timely information through, but not limited to, conferences, meetings, literature, school website, or newsletter concerning:

- National Education Goals
- State content standards
- School improvement and corrective action process if applicable
- Components of a school-wide program if applicable
- Components of a targeted assistance school program if applicable
- State and local assessments
- Requirements of Title I, part A
- Ways parents can monitor their children
- Ways parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of their children.

Literature and handbooks will also be housed in the parent resource center located outside the main office.

7. MATERIALS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Valley Point Middle School will provide training to parents on how to work with their children to improve achievement. These opportunities will be publicized through, but not limited to:

- Newsletter
- Orientation
- School Website
- Parent Nights such as, but not limited to, content area nights, English classes, computer literacy classes, and Fine Arts presentations.

8. EQUAL PARTNERS

Valley Point Middle School with support from the LEA and parents or other agencies, will to the extent possible, provide opportunities to educate staff and faculty in the value and utilization of contributions given by parents. VPMS will also work as equal partners to implement and coordinate parent programs, volunteer activities, and family nights.

9. COORDINATION WITH OTHER PARENT PROGRAMS

Valley Point Middle School will coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs, activities and strategies with other programs, to the extent feasible and appropriate.

10. COMMUNITY/BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Valley Point Middle School will develop appropriate partnerships for parent involvement and activities with businesses, service organizations, and the community. VPMS will develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities, including providing information about opportunities for organizations and businesses to work with parents and schools, and encouraging the formation of partnerships between elementary, middle, and secondary schools and local businesses that include a role for parents.

11. PARENT RESOURCES

Valley Point Middle School’s parent resource center and the counselor will provide information regarding child development, parenting methods, and other requested materials as feasible. Opportunities for parents to learn about child development and child rearing issues beginning at the birth of a child, that are designed to help parents become full partners in the education of their children. VPMS will provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request to the extent practicable, including literacy training, transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school related meetings and training sessions that will educate them and possibly train them to enhance the involvement of other parents.

12. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM

Valley Point Middle School will involve parents in an ongoing and end of year assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the parent involvement initiatives, including funds, as a measure of performance evaluations of the school and report these to the local education agency. Parents may be involved in developing training for teachers, principals, and educators to improve the effectiveness of training. Also, the school may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement which would be established by a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement.

13. PRIMARY LANGUAGE

Valley Point Middle School, to the extent practicable, will provide full opportunities for the participation of LEP parents, parents of migratory children, and parents with disabilities including providing school profiles and information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities in a language and format that is used in our students’ homes.

***The parent involvement policy planning process and format is changing this school year. As the new format is rolled out and new documents are created to implement the changes for parent involvement you will be notified and a copy provided home.**

I have received a copy and am aware of the Parent Involvement Policy set forth by Valley Point Middle.

- A copy to sign and return is included in the signature pages of the handbook appendix

(Reviewed throughout the year 2018-2019)

VISITORS

For security reasons, all persons visiting the school must report to the office to sign in and receive a visitor’s sticker. All visitors must have a visible, affixed visitor’s sticker if they are outside the office area. Before leaving the school, visitors should return to the office to sign out and return their visitor's sticker.

If a visitor appears unannounced, the teacher should instruct the person to go to the office to sign in before any other business can be conducted. Parents may visit classrooms after making an appointment with the teacher. Students from other schools may not visit during the instructional day unless they are participating in a specific program.

WASTE, FRAUD, ABUSE AND CORRUPTION

As required by state and federal law, WCS has the following procedures:

The School District (Whitfield County Schools) shall not tolerate fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption of any kind and has an established system for the reporting of suspicious activities.

Definitions

Fraud: A false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, that is used for the purpose of misappropriating property and/or monetary funds from federal, state, or local grants and funds.

Waste: Thoughtless or careless expenditure, consumption, mismanagement, use, or squandering of local, state, or federal resources to the detriment or potential detriment of the District. Waste also includes incurring unnecessary costs as a result of inefficient or ineffective practices, systems, or controls.

Abuse: Excessive or improper use of resources, or employing resources in a manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for their use. Abuse also includes intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, maltreatment, or misuse of resources; extravagant or excessive use as to abuse one's position or authority.

Corruption: A form of dishonest or unethical conduct by a person entrusted with a position of authority, often to acquire personal benefit. Corruption may include many activities, including bribery and embezzlement.

Responsibilities

Employees and parties maintaining a business relationship with the District who suspect fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption, whether it pertains to federal, state, or local programs, should report their concerns to the Superintendent or his/her designee. If fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption is suspected by the Superintendent, such allegations should be reported to the Chair of the Board of Education.

All reports of suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption shall be handled under the strictest confidentiality allowed under the law. Informants may remain anonymous as allowed by law but are encouraged to cooperate with investigators to provide as much detail and evidence as possible of an alleged violation of this policy.

Any and all reports of suspicious activity and/or suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption will be investigated. Results of an investigation shall not be disclosed to or discussed with anyone other than those individuals with a legitimate need to know until the results become subject to public disclosure in accordance with state and/or federal law.

<https://www.gapsc.com/Rules/Current/Ethics/505-6-.01.pdf>

WITHDRAWALS

The parent/guardian of any student who is withdrawing from school must come to the school in order to complete the appropriate paperwork and clear cafeteria and media accounts. Students entering another school in the Whitfield County School system must take the withdrawal paperwork to the WCS Enrollment Center. Student records will be sent upon request from the school to which the child is transferring. The Whitfield County Schools Enrollment Center is located at 201 East Tyler Street. The enrollment center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. For more information and required paperwork please visit <https://www.wcsga.net>.

Are there any websites that we can use at home to help my student or find homework help? (This list will also be updated in the fall)

Websites: (LA - Language Arts, MA - Math, SC - Science, SS - Social Studies)

www.brainpop.com (LA, MA, SC, SS)
www.eduplace.com (LA, MA, SC, SS)
www.freerice.com (LA, MA)
www.mobymax.com (LA, MA)
www.khanacademy.com (LA, MA, SC, SS)
www.learnzillion.com (LA, MA)
www.mathtv.com (MA)
www.multiplication.com (MA)
www.homeworkspot.com (MA)
www.primarygames.com (LA, MA, SC, SS)
www.purplemath.com (MA)
www.readwritethink.org (LA)
www.spellingcity.com (LA)
www.studyjams.com (scholastic)
www.IXL.com (LA, MA)

Web-based Resources: (Free and online resources to use)

Google Drive and Google Classroom: a free online software that allows you to create documents, presentations and publications and save to a cloud-based storage that allows you to access your files from any computer with internet access. Requires a gmail account.

Open Office: a free software solution for students who do not have Microsoft Office on their home computer.