

**2011 - 2012**  
**Student Code**  
**of**  
**Conduct**



**Building the Future**  
**Together**

**SCHOOL BOARD OF LEON COUNTY,  
FLORIDA**

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**DISTRICT CONTACTS**

Division of Teaching and Learning .....	487-7219
Early Childhood Programs Office .....	922-2099
Elementary .....	487-7106
Exceptional Student Education .....	487-7158
FERPA .....	487-7103
Health Services.....	487-6380
HIPAA .....	487-7103
Intervention, Equity and Support Services .....	487-7306
Nutrition Services.....	488-7426
Policy and Planning.....	487-7235
Professional and Community Services .....	487-7177
School Safety Officer .....	487-7117
Secondary.....	487-7139
Sexual Harassment .....	487-7306
Special Programs and Sites .....	487-7525
Student Assignment .....	487-7257
Student Reassignment .....	487-7546
Student Services .....	488-2275
Transportation .....	488-2636
Zoning .....	487-7257

*Please Note*

*This publication is developed to assist parents, guardians, and students to understand their rights and responsibilities as Leon County Schools strive to maintain a safe and orderly educational environment. The descriptions contained within this document do not supersede applicable Florida Statutes or School Board Policy. Copies of School Board Policies may be found at [www.planning.leonschools.net](http://www.planning.leonschools.net) or may be obtained by calling 487-7235.*

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**August 2011**

Dear Parent/Guardian and Student:

Leon County School Board members and I have identified safe school environments as a major priority. We believe that an environment that is positive and safe is absolutely necessary for students and teachers to be successful. It is also important that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

We also believe that proper student behavior in school is essential for academic success. By adhering to the guidelines in this Student Code of Conduct booklet and working together, we can ensure that students in the Leon County School District are provided the very best educational opportunities.

The Student Code of Conduct will be discussed at school by students, teachers, administrators, and others. I encourage you to spend some time together with your child to review the contents of this booklet and to commit to make this school year one of the best ever.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have any questions or comments, please contact your child's school or my office.

Sincerely,



Jackie Pons,  
Superintendent

**August 2011**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN AND STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This Student Code of Conduct was developed to provide critical information which will assist your son or daughter in his or her school interactions and experiences. We believe that along with the support and encouragement that you provide, proper student conduct is essential for student success in school. We hope you will discuss this booklet with your child to let him or her know their rights and responsibilities and your expectations for their acceptable and responsible behavior at school.

If you have any problems or concerns about something that happens at school, please contact your child's teacher or the school's administration directly. Our teachers and administrators are available to work with you to resolve any issues that might negatively impact your child's success at school.

Please sign the "Notice of Receipt" page included in this booklet, tear it out, and return it to the school. This will acknowledge that you received and read the important information included in the Code of Conduct. We also welcome any comments you might have. Thank you for being our partner in your child's success.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marvin J. Henderson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marvin J. Henderson, Ph.D.  
Deputy Superintendent of Schools

Dear Parent or Guardian:

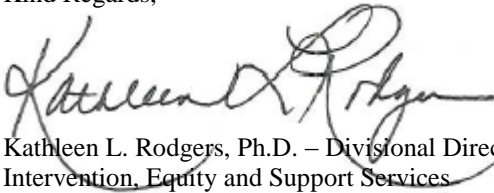
Welcome! We look forward to a year in partnership with you. As the primary caregiver, participation in your children’s education is important to their success in our school district. This publication serves as a critical component in helping us forge the relationship between home and school. The Student Code of Conduct Book provides information on guidelines for the expected behavior of students enrolled in our schools. It highlights policies and procedures germane to the success of each student.

This Code of Conduct outlines the key rights, responsibilities, and requirements for students and parents in our schools. A more detailed description of discipline, grievance, dress code, and other policies may be found at the Leon County Schools Policies web site at [www.planning.leonschools.net](http://www.planning.leonschools.net). Additional information may be found in the student handbook sent out by your school.

It is our hope that this book will provide the necessary information you need to capture what we expect in a model student for the Leon County School District. By reviewing it with your child, it helps to set the tone for a banner year. Once you have reviewed its contents, do not forget to sign the “Notice of Receipt” and return it to your child’s teacher.

Once again, we welcome you! Know that you are a valued team member and with our concerted efforts we will have a promising school year. Do let us know if you have any questions or clarifications as the need arises.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen L. Rodgers', written over a faint circular watermark or background.

Kathleen L. Rodgers, Ph.D. – Divisional Director  
Intervention, Equity and Support Services

# LEON COUNTY SCHOOLS

## VISION

Leon County Schools will be an engaging, safe, and respectful learning environment that embraces change and produces successful learners who value diversity and are conscientious contributors to our society.

## MISSION

The mission of Leon County Schools is to prepare students to become responsible, respectful, independent learners equipped with the critical thinking skills necessary to compete in our global society.

## CORE VALUES

1. **Excellence** - LCS pursues the highest standards in academic achievement and organizational performance.
2. **Integrity and Personal Responsibility** - LCS requires the highest level of integrity and personal responsibility for individual actions as a family member, teacher, student, and citizen.
3. **Equity** - LCS fosters an environment that serves all students as we strive to eliminate the achievement gap.
4. **Citizenship** - LCS honors the diversity of our community by working as a team to ensure the educational success of all our students and recognize that our obligations go beyond our professional responsibilities to promote democratic principles.
5. **Compassion and Respect** - LCS builds positive relationships through honesty, respect and compassion, which enhance the self-esteem, safety, and well-being of all stakeholders.
6. **Perseverance** - LCS promotes the inner strength to remain constant to a purpose, idea, or task in the face of obstacles. This includes dedication, consistency, and having a positive attitude.

# **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Code of Conduct applies to all students in the district. It applies to activities at school, on school buses or other school property, on field trips, at athletic events, and at other school-sponsored activities. State law and district policy also provide for discipline for certain serious offenses by students that occur off campus, at school bus stops, and after school hours.

## **RULES OF CONDUCT**

### **Expectations**

The School Board and our community hold the highest expectations for the conduct of the students in Leon County Schools. Violence in the schools shall not be tolerated and students who engage in violent criminal acts on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, or during school-sponsored activities will receive the most severe consequences provided for by this policy. Students are expected to:

1. Be in school and learning every day.
2. Demonstrate appropriate and responsible behavior at all times.
3. Demonstrate quality and pride in their academic work and co-curricular activities.
4. Refrain from any conduct which interferes with another student's opportunity to learn.
5. Contribute to a safe and orderly learning environment by respecting themselves, others, their property, school rules and regulations.

Each student, while waiting at a school bus stop, on school premises, during the time he/she is being transported to or from school, during the time he/she is attending school, participating in a school activity on or off school campus, or is presumed by law to be attending school, shall be under the control of the principal or teacher in charge of the school and shall be subject to these provisions.

Failure to meet the aforementioned expectations, in-school misconduct, or other inappropriate behavior on the part of the student shall require interventions, and when necessary, informal or formal consequences.

### **Teachers' Authority**

Teachers and other instructional personnel shall have the authority to undertake any of the following actions in managing student behavior thereby ensuring the safety of all students.

1. Establish classroom rules of conduct and implement consequences designed to change behavior for infractions of classroom rules.
2. Have disobedient, disrespectful, violent, abusive, uncontrollable, or disruptive students temporarily removed from the classroom for behavior management intervention.
3. Assist in enforcing school rules on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, and during school-sponsored activities.
4. Press charges if a crime has been committed against the teacher or other instructional personnel on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, or during school-sponsored activities.
5. Use reasonable force, according to standards recommended by the Education Standards Commission and the Education Practices Commission and adopted by the State Board of Education, to protect himself/herself or others from injury.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is not permitted by School Board Policy. Schools shall promote the use of nonviolent dispute resolution through the development of curriculum, programs, conflict-mediation, arbitration, or other dispute resolution systems at designated schools.

### **Infractions Requiring Informal Consequences**

Infractions involving informal consequences are those which, whenever possible, should be dealt with by the classroom or supervising teacher or administrator on an individual basis without invoking formal discipline procedures. If repetition of these offenses occurs, or if they are of a severe nature, formal referral and discipline may be considered necessary. Examples of in-school misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Tardiness (see also Board Policy 3.03)
- b. Failure to return required forms
- c. Failure to have required materials or equipment
- d. Cheating or plagiarism
- e. Unauthorized use of school property
- f. Failure to report to class or leaving class without permission (see also Board policy 3.03)
- g. Stealing (minor theft)
- h. Violation of school parking regulations
- i. Violation of school bus rules of conduct
- j. Inappropriate use of toys, games, telephones, electronic communication devices, audio or videos during the school day

## **Informal Consequences**

In addition to informal teacher interventions, examples of informal consequences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Confiscation of contraband items and/or direct discussion with student and/or parent/guardian, in order to work out a problem. In cases where it is appropriate, Student Services staff or outside social agencies may be requested to assist with this procedure.
- b. A written warning or reprimand to a student and parent/guardian from the teacher, or principal or designee.
- c. Class reassignment may be imposed during school hours by the principal or designee. The student may be assigned for a period of time, determined by the principal or designee, to an alternative classroom under the direction of a certified teacher. Regular academic instruction shall continue in the reassigned classroom.
- d. School detention may be imposed for a limited period of time with a maximum of one hour a day unless extended at the parent/guardian request. A period of detention may not begin without one day's notice to the student and parent/guardian and a student shall be detained only under the supervision of school personnel.
- e. School privileges may be withdrawn by the principal or his designee. These may involve field trips, co-curricular activities, school government and school social events as well as other functions.
- f. Referral may be made to a dispute resolution program, if available.
- g. Probation or other consequences may be imposed in lieu of suspension.

## **Infractions Requiring Formal Consequences**

Suspension, expulsion and exclusion are formal consequences usually employed after parental assistance and all available school and support services have been unsuccessful in dealing with the pupil misconduct; or when pupil conduct or conditions are disruptive, dangerous or of an emergency nature. These infractions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Disruption or obstruction of the orderly educational process.
- b. Defacement or destruction of school property.
- c. Disrespect or disobedience of school officials acting pursuant to their official responsibilities, which results in a disruptive effect upon the education of other students.
- d. Interference with, or intimidation of, school personnel by threat or actual force or violence or creating a hostile environment that includes harassment.
- e. Interference with or intimidation of other students, by threat or actual force or violence.
- f. Behavior which is inappropriate or detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students, including fighting on school grounds or on a school

- bus, at a school bus stop or while participating in a school-sponsored function or activity.
- g. Interference with, or disruption or obstruction of the operation of a school bus or severe infractions at a school bus stop.
  - h. Failure to correct repeated misconduct as described under Infractions Requiring Informal Consequences.
  - i. Participation in secret societies.
  - j. Illegal possession, distribution, use, sale, or attempted sale of any drug, including any alcoholic beverage or any substance controlled under Chapter 893, Florida Statutes. Self referral or court ordered referral to a state licensed drug abuse program, and successful completion thereof; or voluntarily disclosing unlawful possession of controlled substances prior to arrest; or divulging information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person(s) who supplied the controlled substance may constitute sufficient grounds for a waiver of the suspension or expulsion for illegal possession or use only.
  - k. Theft or larceny.
  - l. Burglary.
  - m. Extortion.
  - n. Possession of an electronic telephone pager.
  - o. Possession of a self defense spray (such as mace or pepper gas) or laser pointer that is not displayed in a threatening manner or used as a weapon (see Section 8, Zero Tolerance).
  - p. Indecent exposure.
  - q. Malicious mischief including intentional damage to personal property or vandalism.
  - r. Robbery.
  - s. Trespass (see Policy 7.15, Entering Premises or School Grounds).
  - t. Leading or participating in a riot on school grounds.
  - u. Intentionally making false accusations that jeopardize the professional reputation, employment, or professional certification of a teacher or other member of the school staff.
  - v. Creating a hostile environment that includes harassing, physical, verbal, graphic or written conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent as to interfere with an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from school activities. This includes all forms of sexual, racial, national origin, disability or other forms of discrimination or harassment prohibited by School Board policies.
  - w. Formally charged by a proper prosecuting attorney, with a felony, which allegedly occurred on property other than School Board property, or with a delinquent act which would be a felony if committed by an adult. Also, formal consequences apply if that incident is shown in a properly noticed administrative hearing to have an adverse impact on the educational program, discipline or welfare in the school in which the student is enrolled.

**Each of the aforementioned offenses calls for three immediate responses. They are the following:**

1. Reference to the appropriate governmental authorities having jurisdiction for possible criminal penalties.
2. If the offense involves a victim, notice to the victim and victim's parents or legal guardian, if the victim is a minor, of the offense and of the victim's right to press charges against the offender. School personnel shall cooperate in any investigation or other proceedings leading to the victim's exercise of rights as provided by law.
3. Action to suspend or expel from school pursuant to the suspension and expulsion policies and procedures of the School Board.

### **OFF CAMPUS INCIDENTS - LCSB Policies 7.081, 7.18**

1. When a student has been arrested for an off-campus delinquent act which would be a felony if committed by an adult, and the principal or designee determines that the student's presence on the school grounds or on a school bus may threaten the order of the school or the safety of others, he or she may request the student be assigned to another school or alternative educational setting pending the filing of formal charges. There shall be no interruption of educational services to the student.
2. When a student is formally charged with a felony by a proper prosecuting attorney for an incident which allegedly occurred on property other than public school property, the principal or designee shall determine if there may be an adverse impact upon the school that may warrant a suspension of the student and/or a recommendation for expulsion.

Serious incidents that occur off school grounds may result in a recommendation for suspension and/or expulsion if the presence of the student will substantially disrupt the educational process or endanger the health or safety of other students.

### **OFFENSES REQUIRING SEVERE CONSEQUENCES (Zero Tolerance) - LCSB Policies 7.08, 7.081, 7.082**

Offenses on school property, school-sponsored transportation, at a school bus stop, or during a school-sponsored function or activity that pose a serious threat to the health or safety of students, staff, or others are those in which the appropriate punishment is expulsion, with or without continuing educational services, for a period of not less than one (1) full calendar year, and referral to the criminal justice or juvenile justice system. The appropriate school authority shall recommend to the Superintendent for expulsion pursuant to this section, any student who has been found to have committed the following offenses:

- a. Homicide (murder or manslaughter).
- b. Sexual battery.
- c. Armed robbery.
- d. Aggravated battery.
- e. Battery or aggravated battery on a teacher or other school personnel.
- f. Kidnapping or abduction.
- g. Arson.
- h. Possession, display, transmission, use or sale of any firearm or weapon, or such object which is utilized as, or is intended to function as a weapon while the student is on school property, in attendance at a school function, in a school vehicle, or at a school bus stop. For use in this policy, weapons shall include but not be limited to those defined in Chapter 790, F.S., and the following: air rifle, BB or pellet gun, rifle, shotgun, zip gun, stun gun, pistol, ammunition or explosive device (no matter how limited), incendiary device, ice pick, knife, box cutter, machete, hypodermic needles(s), brass knuckles, club, nunchakus, razor blade, sling shot, spear, sword, or any other object that can reasonably be considered a weapon. Exceptions may be made only in an authorized and supervised school-sponsored activity or program with the prior approval of the Superintendent or designee.
- i. Threat or intimidation using any pointed or sharp object or the use of any substance or object as a weapon with the threat or intent to inflict bodily harm.
- j. Making a threat or deliberate false report of any explosive or destructive device.

Zero-tolerance policies are not intended to be applied to petty acts of misconduct and misdemeanors, which are not required to be reported to a law enforcement agency. These include, but are not limited to:

- a. Disorderly conduct.
- b. Disrupting a school function.
- c. Simple assault or battery.
- d. Affray.
- e. Theft of less than three hundred dollars (\$300.00), trespassing, and
- f. Vandalism of less than one thousand dollars (\$1000.00).

Any student who, without the prior approval of the Superintendent, is determined to have brought a firearm or weapon on school grounds or a school bus, at a school bus stop, or to a school-sponsored function or activity, or who is

determined to have made a threat or false report shall be expelled, with or without continuing education services, from the student's regular school for a period of not less than one (1) full calendar year and referred for criminal prosecution. The School Board may assign the student to a disciplinary program or alternative learning center for the purpose of continuing educational services during the period of expulsion.

The Superintendent may consider less than a one (1) year expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis and request the School Board to modify the requirement if determined to be in the best interest of the student and the school system based on information submitted by the school administration. The following mitigating factors, uniformly applied to all students, must be documented:

1. Nature and circumstances of the offense.
2. The age, grade level and the ability of the student to comprehend the policy's intent.
3. The student's past disciplinary and attendance history.
4. The effect upon other students and/or the welfare, safety or discipline of the school.

Except for possession of a firearm or a weapon or a threat or false report of an explosive device on School Board property as specified in s.1006.13 (12)(a) and (b), the principal or site administrator may recommend to the Superintendent, and he or she may approve, a suspension or a stipulated agreement in lieu of expulsion for any offense, the documentation of the mitigating factors. The expulsion shall be held in abeyance pending the completion of all required conditions in the agreement.

Any disciplinary or prosecutorial action taken against a student who violates a zero-tolerance policy must be based on the particular circumstance surrounding the student's misconduct.

## **FORMAL CONSEQUENCES – SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

### **LCSB Policies 7.08, 7.081, 7.082**

**Note: A minor who has been suspended or expelled from school may not be or remain in a public place or establishment within 1,000 feet of a school during the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. during any school day. (Florida Statute 877.22(2)). Suspended or expelled students cannot be on school grounds anytime during the school day or when a school activity is being held.**

**Suspension.** Suspension from the regular program of Leon County Schools is defined as removal from the regular school program to a special program (in-school suspension) or removal from the school completely (out-of-school suspension) for no more than ten (10) school days, unless extended by the

Superintendent until the next regular or special meeting of the School Board, or by the School Board to a date certain, as provided herein. Suspension may include removal from prekindergarten through twelfth grade (pre-k-12) programs, from riding a school bus and from participating in any school function or school-sponsored activity. The student receiving an out-of-school suspension shall be remanded to the custody of the student's parent or guardian with specific homework assignments for the student to complete. (See detailed policy on homework assignments.)

Parent/guardian attendance with a child may be substituted for a portion or all of a suspension when offered as an alternative and approved by the principal or his/her designee. The parent must agree to attend school, shadowing his/her child, throughout the entire school day.

## **Students with Disabilities**

**Short-Term Removals.** To the extent that children without disabilities would be disciplined, school district personnel may remove a child with disabilities for up to ten consecutive or cumulative days in a school year when that child has violated the school district's code of conduct. The school district is not required to provide educational services during these short-term removals.

**Long-Term Removals.** The school district may also remove a child for more than ten cumulative days in a school year when the removal is not considered a pattern of exclusion. When determining whether or not there has been a pattern of exclusion, the following factors must be considered: the length of each removal; the total amount of time the child has been removed; and the proximity of the removals to one another. Whenever a child is removed for more than ten school days in a school year, the school district will meet to determine whether the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability or if the conduct in question was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP.

## **INTERIM ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTING**

An interim alternative educational setting (IAES) is a different location where educational services are provided for a specific time period due to disciplinary reasons. The IAES must be determined by the IEP team and must be selected to enable the child with a disability to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to receive those services and modifications, including those described in the child's current IEP, that will enable him/her to meet IEP goals. The IAES must also include services and modifications to address the behavior which resulted in the removal and that are designed to prevent the misconduct from recurring.

If your child, as a student with a disability, commits any of the following offenses, the school district may place your child in an IAES for up to 45 school days without your written consent.

1. Carries a weapon to school or to a school function or possesses a weapon at school or at a school function; or
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function; or
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the school district.

The IEP Team will determine where educational services will be provided. This process may be completed without a formal meeting. When the decision to place your child in an IAES has been made, the school district must notify you of this decision that day and provide you with a copy of the notice of procedural safeguards. The school district must also follow all of the procedures described above under Long-Term Removals.

If you disagree with the decision and request an expedited due process hearing, your child will remain in the IAES placement pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the 45-day time period expires, whichever occurs first, unless you and the school district agree otherwise.

### **Conditions of Suspension**

1. When a child is suspended from riding a school bus due to misconduct, absence from school is not excused. The parent or guardian is expected to provide transportation both to and from school during the time the student is suspended from the bus. For a student with disabilities with transportation listed as a related service on the IEP or accommodation plan, an alternative mode of transportation must be provided by the District if cumulative suspensions have exceeded 10 days.
2. Absence due to an out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be considered an administrative absence. A high school student may make up any work missed during the period of only the first suspension in a school year and shall receive a passing grade in a course if all performance standards and other requirements are met. Elementary and middle school students may make up work during any suspension.
3. There shall be no evidence of the suspension posted on the student's permanent record other than that reflected by an attendance record.
4. A suspension may be terminated by the principal when it is reasonably determined that the student's presence in the school or on the school bus will not result in a situation warranting further suspension. In no case may a student's suspension be extended or prolonged because of a

failure on the part of the parent(s) or guardian(s) to attend a school conference.

5. For suspensions of 10 days or less, the decision of the principal shall be final if all appropriate procedures of Policy 7.081 are followed.

**Expulsion.** Expulsion is a denial of access to the Leon County School District. Violent crimes on school grounds, school transportation, or at school functions and serious and/or repeated misconduct may be cause for expulsion. Expulsion may be affected and rescinded only by the School Board. The length of the expulsion shall not exceed the end of that school year during which it was effected and one additional year of attendance. (See LCSB Policy 7.082.)

The School Board shall honor all expulsions from other Florida public or charter schools and may, upon the Superintendent's recommendation, honor expulsions from nonpublic and out-of-state schools or require assignment to Second Chance at Ghazvini Learning Center or other appropriate programs.

## **SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of the school district and each school to:

- provide high quality instruction for all students;
- provide and maintain a safe atmosphere that encourages good behavior and learning for all students;
- teach students to respect themselves and others by treating them fairly and with dignity and respect;
- provide in-service courses in communications to further improve the working relationships among the staff and with the students, parents, and community;
- provide courses of study, programs, activities and materials to meet the academic and social needs of all students;
- involve parents/guardians in selecting strategies for reaching academic or behavioral goals; and,
- inform parents/guardians of the availability of homebound instruction when the school suspects or knows that a student will be absent for at least 15 or more school days for health reasons.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES - LCSB Policies 7.01, 7.08**

**Students have a right to:**

- an education appropriate to their needs;
- a positive learning climate free of disruption;
- a copy of clearly defined rules of student conduct and rules enforced fairly, without discrimination;
- express their viewpoints in appropriate ways;

- print and distribute publications within the guidelines provided by the school and District;
- meet together in accordance with school rules and scheduled use of facilities;
- privacy of their personal possessions;
- prior notification of any general search of book bags, lockers, or vehicles;
- participate in all eligible school programs and activities;
- be provided due process in all instances involving disciplinary actions or the exercise of their rights;
- attend a school where all students and adults are treated equitably without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, perceived disability, or record of disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act; and,
- participate and learn in an environment free from sexual and other harassment.

**Students have a responsibility to:**

- make an effort to learn;
- come to class prepared with required books and materials;
- complete all assignments;
- ask questions, seek help and make up missed work due to excused absences or tardies;
- become familiar with the Student Code of Conduct and the school student handbook;
- know and observe school rules and regulations related to conduct and behavior;
- express themselves in a manner which does not interfere with the orderly process of education, violate school rules, or infringe on the rights of others;
- conduct themselves and their activities consistent with the educational objectives of the school;
- not disrupt the educational process or endanger the health, safety, or welfare of other students or staff;
- not carry or conceal anything prohibited by law or that would detract from the educational process;
- abide by the rules for co-curricular or other school-sponsored activities;
- use the grievance procedures described within this Code and School Board Policy when a serious problem arises;
- treat others equitably, fairly, and with mutual respect;
- conduct themselves and their activities in such a manner that they do not harass or discriminate against others; and
- report occurrences of discrimination or sexual harassment to the principal or district equity officer.

## **PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents and guardians are afforded numerous statutory rights including:

- the entitlement to a quality education for their child through a uniform, safe, secure, efficient, and high quality system;
- the opportunity to request and be granted permission for the absence of the student from school for religious instruction or religious holidays;
- a written notice and an administrative review by certified mail prior to placement in a dropout prevention, academic intervention or other special program;
- the opportunity to request exemptions related to certain health issues, including school entry health exams, immunizations, participation in biological services, if offered by the school;
- timely notification of any verified substance abuse violation by the student;
- a good faith effort by the school district to notify the parent by telephone of the student's suspension and the reason and a report in writing within 24 hours by U.S. mail;
- a good faith effort to use parental assistance before suspension unless the situation requires immediate suspension;
- a written notification of a recommended expulsion including the charges against the student and a statement of the right of due process;
- that victims and siblings of certain felony offences by other students are kept separate from the student offender both at school and during school transportation;
- controlled public school choice options (requested by March 1st of each year) that are applicable and available to students in the District;
- access to all educational programs, activities, and opportunities offered by the District without discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or marital status;
- notice and due process for parent of public school students with disabilities including an individualized written educational program plan;
- receipt of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) instruction and parental involvement for limited English proficient students;
- a written request to excuse a student from reciting the pledge of allegiance;
- access, waiver of access, challenge and hearing and privacy regarding student records of their children;
- an easy to read report card on a regular basis that clearly depicts and grades the student's academic performance in each class or course, the student's conduct, and the student's attendance;
- an appraisal at regular intervals of the academic progress and other needed information about their child; and

- notification in writing requiring written consent before a student may be transported in a privately owned vehicle to a school function.

**Parents and guardians can ensure proper discipline in school by meeting the following responsibilities:**

- encouraging respect for the authority of teachers, principals, and other school staff members;
- showing interest in their child’s school progress;
- working with school personnel to solve disciplinary and academic problems;
- getting to know their child’s school, staff, programs, and activities;
- attending parent-teacher conferences and school/parent functions, such as PTO and/or School Advisory Committee meetings, and volunteering to help in the classroom;
- teaching their child to be clean, well groomed, and wear clothes which are appropriate for school;
- making sure their child gets to school on time every day unless their child is ill or has a contagious disease;
- keeping up-to-date information at the school, including home, work and emergency telephone numbers, addresses, and health data;
- contacting the school to explain why their child is absent, as is required by Florida Statutes and School Board Policies; and
- teaching their child by word and example respect for law, the authority of the school, and the rights and property of others.

**NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER HIPAA**

**Leon County School Board Duties**

LCSB is required by law to maintain the privacy of protected health information that belongs to your child enrolled in Leon County Schools. This Notice of Privacy Practices states how your child’s protected health information may be used and how LCSB keeps your information private and confidential. As part of LCSB’s legal duties, this Notice of Privacy Practices must be given to you. LCSB is required to follow the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices currently in effect.

**Uses and Disclosures of Your Protected Health Information**

Protected health information includes demographic and medical information that concerns the past, present, or future physical or mental health of an individual. Demographic information could include your name, address, telephone number, social security number, and any other means of identifying you as a specific person. Protected health information contains specific information that identifies a person or can be used to identify a person.

Protected health information is health information created or received by a health care provider, health plan, employer, or health care clearinghouse. This medical information is used in many ways while performing normal business activities.

Your child's protected health information may be used or disclosed by LCSB for purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations. *Health care professionals use medical information in the clinics or hospitals that take care of your child. Your child's protected health information may be shared, with or without your consent, with another health care provider for purposes of your treatment. LCS may use or disclose your child's health information for case management and services. LCSB may send the medical information to insurance companies, Medicaid, or community agencies to pay for the services provided to your child.*

Your child's information may be used by certain LCSB personnel to improve the operations of LCSB's health care components. Personnel may send your child appointment reminders, information about treatment options, or other health-related benefits and services.

Some protected health information can be disclosed without your written authorization as allowed by law. Those circumstances include:

- reporting abuse of children, adults, or disabled persons.
- investigations related to a missing child.
- internal investigations and audits by LCSB divisions, bureaus, and offices.
- investigations and audits by the state's Inspector General and protected health information.

This summary does not include disclosures:

- made to you.
- to individuals involved with your care.
- authorized to you.
- made to carry out treatment, payment, and health care operations.
- for Public Health.
- for health professional regulatory purposes.
- to report abuse of children, adults, or disabled persons.
- prior to April 14, 2003.

This summary does include:

- purposes of research, other than you authorized in writing.
- responses to court orders, subpoenas, or warrants.

You may request a summary of disclosures for not more than a six-year period from the date of your request.

## **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99, is a Federal law that generally requires Leon County Schools (LCS) to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, as one exception to this general rule, FERPA permits LCS to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised LCS to the contrary. Directory information is limited to the student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, diplomas, certificates, awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These include the right to:

1. **inspect and review the student’s education records** within the 45 days of the day the Leon School District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. **request the amendment of the student’s education records** that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. This notice will include information regarding the hearing procedures.
3. **consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information** contained in the student’s education records, *except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.*

4. **file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education** concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

In certain circumstances, FERPA permits the District to disclose personally identifiable information contained in a student's education records without consent. These include but are not limited to disclosures to/of:

1. **school officials with legitimate educational interests.** A **school official** is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or entity with whom the District has contracted to perform services or functions required by the institution (such as legal; auditing; health care; safety and security; therapy; student support; or assessment, progress monitoring and other data 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 or her tasks (such as a volunteer). A school official has a **legitimate education interest** if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
2. **officials of another school district.** Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school system or district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
3. **directory information** (e.g., student names, age, enrollment status) may be disclosed unless the parent has specifically informed the school (in writing) not to disclose directory information. Additional guidance concerning directory information is provided on the back of this sheet.

For a complete list of the entities and circumstances in which disclosure is authorized under FERPA, please visit

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>

### **Military Recruiter Access To Student Directory Information**

Federal law requires secondary public schools to permit access by military recruiters to a student's name, address, and telephone listing. If a parent of a student (or the student him/herself if an emancipated minor) does not want

directory information disclosed to military recruiters, the parent must make this known to the school in writing. A form for this purpose is attached to this notice, or is available via the district's forms website ([www.forms.leon.k12.fl.us](http://www.forms.leon.k12.fl.us)). This form should be sent directly to the school.

### **For Further Information/Complaints**

Requests for more information about matters covered by both the HIPAA and FERPA notices may be directed to school personnel, the school divisional director or the administrator of the school health facility where you received the notice. You may also contact:

Gwendolyn Graham  
2757 West Pensacola Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32304  
850-487-7103  
[graham@leonschools.net](mailto:graham@leonschools.net)

OR

Bev Owens  
2757 West Pensacola Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32304  
850-487-7525  
[owensb@leonschools.net](mailto:owensb@leonschools.net)

### **REVIEW OF STUDENT RECORDS - LCSB Policy 3.21**

1. Parents/guardians and adult students have the right to inspect and review all of their student's educational records.
2. Parents/guardians and adult students have a right of access to these records and the right of privacy to these records, both of which they may choose to waive.
3. The District policy on educational records is available for parents/guardians or adult students to look at in any school or the District office.
4. Directory or public information about a student may be restricted by a written request from the parent/guardian or adult student to the school principal.

Parents/guardians and adult students have the right to file a complaint concerning noncompliance with the law to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act Office, HEW, 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201.

### **STUDENT INFORMATION - LCSB Policy 3.21**

Confidentiality of student records shall be maintained in accordance with School Board Policy 3.21. However, the school or District shall provide information related to student achievement, behavior, and attendance history on juvenile offenders or juveniles at risk of becoming offenders for the purpose of assessment or treatment under the terms and conditions set forth in School Board approved interagency agreements.

## **ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION - LCSB Policy 3.02**

A student who is not willing or able to function in a traditional school setting may be assigned temporarily or permanently to an alternative educational setting. No permanent assignment to an alternative setting will be made without the knowledge of the parent/guardian.

## **ATTENDANCE - LCSB Policy 3.03, 3.031**

All students are expected to attend all classes each day that school is in session. Unexcused absences will result in a disciplinary consequence and will negatively affect a student's grade. Determination of whether an absence is excused or unexcused is the responsibility of the site principal or designee.

The following absences may be excused with the proper documentation:

- a. Illness and/or medical care
- b. Death in the family
- c. Legal reasons
- d. Financial conditions
- e. Religious Holidays (Religious Holiday(s)/Observance(s) exemption forms shall be available), and
- f. Prearranged absences for educational purposes approved by an administrator.

## **BUS RULES OF CONDUCT - LCSB Policy 7.19**

1. Students shall obey the following bus rules:
  - a. Be on time and stand off the roadway while waiting for the bus.
  - b. When crossing the roadway, be sure that the road is clear of traffic in both directions.
  - c. Wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt at all times when the bus is in operation if the bus is equipped with safety belt
  - d. Remain in the seat at all times until departure at an assigned stop.
  - e. Use ordinary quiet conversation and classroom conduct.
  - f. Do not talk to or distract the driver while the bus is in operation.
  - g. Refrain from foul language or racial slurs.
  - h. Keep hands, feet, arms, and head to yourself and inside windows at all times.
  - i. Do not throw wastepaper or other rubbish on the floor or otherwise litter, mark, deface, or damage any part of the bus.
  - j. Do not throw any objects from the bus.
  - k. Do not tamper with the emergency exit and do not use for ordinary boarding and alighting.
2. The following are prohibited on the school bus:
  - a. Gum chewing, eating, drinking or smoking.

- b. Animals or pets; unless approved service animals.
  - c. Small objects or toys that are loose and that could get underfoot and cause passengers to trip or fall.
  - d. Band instruments, projects and athletic equipment larger than that which can be held by the student or secured so that they do not constitute a hazard.
3. The driver shall be in full charge of the bus and pupils at all times and his or her directions shall be obeyed.
  4. The driver shall have the authority to assign pupils to certain seats if necessary to promote order on the bus.
  5. The driver may issue verbal warnings, contact parent or guardian and issue written referrals for violations of these rules.
  6. The principal or his designee shall consider the bus driver's recommendation for discipline when making a decision regarding a student's referral.
  7. The principal or his designee may suspend a student from riding the bus for serious rule violations or repeated minor violations. (See Policy 7.08)

### **CIVILITY IN SCHOOLS - LCSB Policy 1.33**

Members of the Leon County Schools staff will treat parents, guardians and other members of the public with respect and expect the same in return. Staff will take all necessary action to protect the safety and welfare of students and employees. Disruptions, threats, offensive language, unauthorized entry or willful property damage will be grounds for removal from School Board property by staff or a law enforcement officer in accordance with School Board Policy 1.33.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION - LCSB Policy 1.16**

No person shall, on the basis of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, age, color, or disability, be denied receipt of services, participation in school activities, or access to programs if qualified to receive such services.

Any student who believes that he/she has been discriminated against may file a complaint in accordance with the Student Grievance Procedure described in this Code of Conduct to the Equity and Title IX Compliance Officer, Leon County Schools, 2757 West Pensacola Street, Tallahassee, FL 32304, (850) 487-7306.

### **TITLE IX - LCSB Policy 1.36**

The School district shall comply with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Title 20 U.S.C. Sections 1681-1688). This law states that "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in,

be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against under the protections of Title IX may file a written complaint with the Title IX Compliance Officer, Leon County Schools, 2757 West Pensacola Street, Tallahassee, FL 32304, (850) 487-7306.

### **IMPARTIAL HEARINGS under Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - LCSB Policy 3.20**

The parents or guardians of a student who, because of disability or special needs, is believed to need special instruction or related services, may request an impartial hearing under Section 504 with respect to actions regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of such student. Such hearings will be conducted before a hearing officer appointed by the District who is not an employee of the District. The hearing officer may not have direct interest in the outcome of the hearing. The hearing officer shall conduct the hearing in a fair and impartial manner. The hearing officer will have adequate training or experience relating to the requirements of Section 504. The District shall give the parent or guardian notice of the time, date and place of the hearing at least 21 days in advance of the hearing.

The parent or guardian and the District shall have a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised. The parents or guardians may, at their own expense, be represented by one or more individuals of his or her own choice, including an attorney, and shall have an opportunity to examine relevant records.

The hearing officer shall make a decision in writing within a reasonable period of time after the hearing. The decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision. The hearing officer’s decision may be reviewed by filing a notice of appeal with the clerk of the School Board within 20 days of the rendition of the hearing officer’s decision, and appealing procedures described in the policy will be followed.

### **DRESS AND GROOMING - LCSB Policy 3.06**

A student’s wearing apparel and grooming shall be the responsibility of the individual student and his or her parents or guardians. Each student is expected to dress appropriately and in such a manner that it is respectful to self and others.

Dress and grooming shall be clean, healthy, and safe and shall not be permitted to disrupt the teaching and learning environment. Items that when worn together

are usually indicative of gang memberships, or apparel that contains a message that is obscene, racist, or promotes illegal activities, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products shall not be permitted on school grounds or at school functions. Students shall not wear hats or sunglasses in the classroom, hallway or other indoor instructional spaces.

Effective July 1, 2011 State Law prohibits a student, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, from wearing clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner or that disrupts the orderly learning environment.

Any student who violates the dress policy described is subject to the following disciplinary actions:

- (a) First Offense – The student shall be given a verbal warning and the principal or designee shall call the student’s parent or guardian.
- (b) Second Offense – The student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for a period of time not to exceed 5 days and the school principal shall meet with the student’s parent or guardian.
- (c) Third Offense – The student shall receive an in-school suspension for a period not to exceed 3 days. The student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities for a period not to exceed 30 days, and the school principal shall call the student’s parent or guardian and send the parent or guardian a written letter regarding the student’s in-school suspension and ineligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

The building principal shall make the final decision regarding appropriateness of dress by applying published school guidelines.

Each school, with the involvement of students, faculty, and parents, may develop a school-wide dress code.

**DRUG FREE SCHOOLS - LCSB Policy 1.27**

The possession, abuse, distribution, or sale of any drug, including alcoholic beverages or any controlled or harmful substance is prohibited at school, on School Board Property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity. The consequences for possession, use or sale may include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion and referral for criminal prosecution.

**HAZING - LCSB Policies 7.05, 7.09**

No student, employee or volunteer of the school district shall plan, direct or encourage hazing of any type.

## HEALTH

### IT'S ALL ABOUT HEALTH: Tips and Tools to Make a Healthy Lifestyle Easy

#### *For Parents...*

- Explain to your child how a healthy lifestyle will improve his or her life. Healthy eating and exercising are things your children can do to improve their lives. They are not things they should do to make others admire or approve of them. Explain how wonderful they will feel with more energy and more confidence.
- Diets are not for children. Children need healthy food and exercise to grow. They grow at different rates. As they grow they often put on weight and may look overweight and then hit a growth spurt and “grow into their weight.” Please be patient with them and help them make healthy choices. Don’t use the word “diet” when talking to your children about eating and exercise. Avoid rapid weight loss and fad diet plans, and focus on healthy eating.
- Encourage your child, but don’t use food as a reward. Praise your children when they make healthy choices, and don’t act like the “food police.” Use of nonfood rewards can be great for your relationship. Try rewarding good behavior by playing a game or having a fun family outing.
- Be a good role model. Children will often mimic their parents’ habits. Join your children in creating a healthier lifestyle. Take a team approach. Improve your children’s fitness as you improve your own. Take part in family activities such as walking, hiking, biking, playing tennis, jumping rope, swimming, dancing, shooting hoops, kicking a soccer ball, raking leaves, or working out to an exercise video. Activities will improve your fitness and your children’s fitness, and you will enjoy time with each other.
- Shop smart. Stock your kitchen with healthy, high fiber foods that are naturally low in sugars and fat. Since the parents buy the food, choose to purchase only healthy food, so children will only have healthy foods from which to choose.

#### *For the whole family...*

- Eat together as a family. If children see you eating healthy foods, they may want to try them out of curiosity. Invite children to try new foods, but never insist. Teach by example by eating a wide variety of foods.
- Make time to participate in physical activities. Start an evening tradition of walking with your child or taking part in some other activity that will get the whole family moving. Participate in a community program for healthy eating and activity or weight control. Look for the upcoming resource guide in the Tallahassee Democrat.

- Create an atmosphere for success. Chips, dips, sugary sodas, and the like should not come into your house. Stock up on fruit, low-fat cheeses, nuts, and other healthy snacks, instead of foods high in fat and sugar.
- First drink choice: water. Many times, when someone thinks he or she is hungry, he/she is really thirsty, and then is no longer hungry after drinking a glass of water. Offer other healthy choices, such as fat-free milk and 100% juice. Sodas and flavored drinks are high in sugar and calories. They are not good for your health or teeth.
- Quick tip: Try the 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 rule. That is, every day should include 5 fruits and vegetables, 4 glasses of water, 3 servings of low-fat milk products, less than 2 hours of screen time, and 1 hour of physical activity.
- Always eat breakfast. It makes a tremendous difference in your child's ability to concentrate and learn during school hours. (It makes a difference for adults, too!) Local schools offer a school breakfast program which is great for busy families.
- Get kids involved in buying, cooking and eating. If children pick it out, they are more excited about eating it. Take them to the grocery store so they can see you choosing healthy foods. Allow them to choose a fruit or vegetable. Have your children help you in the kitchen. When they help prepare foods that are good for them, they are more likely to eat them.

Health screenings and services are available free of charge to all students. Parents are given an opportunity to refuse health screenings in writing. LCS will provide care and management for students with sudden illness and/or injuries, and any chronic health conditions occurring on the school campus. If you do not wish your child to receive any of these school health services, please provide written notification to your child's school nurse. If you have any questions or concerns, contact Health Services at 487-7525.

### **MEDICATIONS - LCSB Policy 3.12**

Only medications that are medically necessary during school attendance will be accepted. Most medications can be given at home. Medication must be transported to and from school by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian must complete a Medication Permission Form for each medication.

Students requiring over-the-counter (OTC) medicine for a temporary medical condition (i.e., cough and cold medicines, pain relievers, allergy medicines, skin conditions) do not need a written health care provider order for the first five days of medicine administration, although the Medication Permission Form shall be completed by the parent/guardian. If the nonprescription medicine is needed for more than five days, a written health care provider's order is required.

Students who carry their own medication must have a Medication Permission Form and written order from the physician on file in the school clinic.

### **PARKING ON SCHOOL FACILITIES - LCSB Policy 5.13**

Students and parent/guardian visitors may park only in designated spaces during regular school hours. The site administrator may restrict student vehicle parking on school property by grade level or other equitable means. Students on high school campuses may be charged a fee for parking permits.

**Illegally parked vehicles are subject to being towed at the owner's expense.**

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL - LCSB Policy 7.11**

The school administrator is authorized to conduct searches in the presence of another witness when he or she has reasonable suspicion that items possessed or stored by the student threatens the health, safety, or welfare of another person or includes stolen or contraband property.

While protecting the right of students to be free from unreasonable search, school officials may conduct a search of a person, bags, lockers, and motor vehicles. Metal detectors or law enforcement trained narcotics detection dogs may also be used under certain conditions (see Policy 7.11).

### **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT Policy - LCSB Policy 7.13**

It is the policy of Leon County Schools (LCS) that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind, to include cyberstalking. LCS will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Consequences and remedial action for students who commit an act of bullying or harassment will be determined in accordance with School Board Policy 7.08.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT - LCSB Policy 1.31**

All students and employees shall be allowed to learn and work in an environment free from sexual harassment. Any person who witnesses sexual harassment is required to report it to the proper authorities. Violation of the district's sexual harassment policy (Policy 1.31) may result in an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion or other disciplinary or criminal penalties being imposed.

Any student who believes he or she has been placed in a hostile environment or harassed by another student or any other person in the school, on a school bus, or while participating in a school activity may file a complaint utilizing the Student Grievance Procedure in this Code of Conduct with the Districts Equity

Officer, Leon County Schools, 2757 West Pensacola Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32304, (850) 487-7306.

## **TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AND ABUSE - LCSB Policy 7.21**

It is the policy of the Leon County School District that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from dating violence and abuse of any kind. The district will not tolerate dating violence and abuse of any type. The school district upholds that dating violence or abuse by any student is prohibited on school property, during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity, or during school-sponsored transportation.

Teen dating violence is a pattern of emotional, verbal, sexual, or physical abuse used by one person in a current or past intimate relationship to exert power and control over another when one or both of the partners is a teenager. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive partner uses this pattern of violent and coercive behavior to gain power and maintain control over the dating partner.

Procedures to respond to and report incidents of teen dating violence and abuse, as defined in district policy 7.21 are identical to those found in district policies 1.31, Sexual Harassment; 7.08, Student Discipline, 7.13, Bullying; and/or 7.18, Victimization of Students and Staff.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING BULLYING/HARASSMENT**

At each school, the principal or the principal's designee is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy. All other members of the school community, including students, parents/legal guardians, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be in violation of this policy anonymously or in person.

## **INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES**

The investigation of a reported act of bullying or harassment is deemed to be a school-related activity and begins with a report of such an act. The procedures for investigating bully and/or harassment include the following:

1. The principal or designee will initiate the investigation, so long as they are not the accused perpetrator (harasser or bully) or victim.
2. Documented interviews of the victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses are conducted privately, separately, and are confidential. Each individual (victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses) will be

interviewed separately and at no time will the alleged perpetrator and victim be interviewed together.

3. The investigator shall collect and evaluate the facts.

Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances and includes:

- recommended remedial steps necessary to stop the bullying and/or harassing behavior, and
- a written final report to the principal.

The maximum of ten school days shall be the limit for the initial filing of incidents and completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of bullying and harassment, and the investigative procedures that follow.

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE - LCSB Policy 7.10**

Any dispute concerning student rights and responsibilities and the application of School Board Policy and Procedures may be grieved using these steps and the procedures contained in Policy 7.10 and 3.18.

### **Informal Grievance/Complaint Resolution**

1. When a dispute arises, the student, parent, or guardian is encouraged to first discuss the grievance informally with the person against whom it is directed. The student may seek the assistance of other school personnel or his/her parents/guardians in mediating the dispute.
2. If an initial complaint about a school level problem is made at the District office or to the School Board, it shall be referred back to the principal or site administrator.
3. The complainant should make an appointment during normal work hours with the site administrator regarding this issue.
4. When such a meeting is requested, the affected administrator or designee is expected to respond within 48 hours and arrange the requested meeting within no more than five workdays unless there are documentable extenuating circumstances. At no time shall the meeting be permitted to interfere with the orderly operation of the school.
5. In the event that additional information is required to respond to a complaint, the administrator shall have no more than five additional workdays to complete the fact gathering and provide appropriate follow-up.
6. Both parties are expected to make a good faith effort to attain a mutually agreeable accommodation regarding the issue or problem in a

timely fashion. Failure on the part of the site administrator to respond to the complaint as required above shall be justification for the complainant to immediately move to the next level of the process.

**Grievance Steps.** Any student, parent, or guardian who believes that a district policy or procedure was violated, misinterpreted, or misapplied and was unable or unwilling to reach an accommodation through the informal process may file a formal written grievance in accordance with the following steps:

1. The complainant shall file a written grievance with the principal or site administrator within 30 workdays of the alleged improper action.
2. The principal or site administrator shall meet with the complainant; investigate all specific allegations and report, in writing, the results of the investigation and his or her recommendation to the person within 20 workdays of the receipt of the grievance.
3. If the issue is not resolved by the principal/site administrator within 20 workdays or not resolved to the student/parent/guardian's satisfaction, the complainant may file an appeal to the site administrator's area director or supervisor within 15 workdays of the site administrator's response or deadline for a response. The issues shall remain the same as those addressed at the previous levels. The principal or site administrator's supervisor shall investigate and furnish both parties with a written response within 20 workdays of the receipt of the appeal.
4. In the event the complainant is not satisfied with the response or resolution provided by the principal or site administrator's supervisor, the complainant shall have 15 workdays from receipt of the written response from the supervisor to appeal the decision to the Superintendent.
5. After reviewing all written materials and consulting with the principal, site administrator and area director or supervisor, the Superintendent or his/her designee will notify the complainant and the accused of the final disposition of the grievance within 20 workdays from the date of the receipt of the appeal of the grievance. A copy of the Notice of Final Action will be filed and maintained in the office of the appropriate director or supervisor.
6. If the Superintendent's decision is unacceptable to the individual complainant, he or she may submit a signed appeal to the School Board. Such submission shall be filed with the Superintendent within 15 workdays following notification of the Superintendent's decision. The appeal shall be accompanied by a true copy of the Superintendent's written grievance decision, together with a true copy of all documents presented to or considered by the Superintendent in reaching a decision. No additional documents or evidence may be presented to the School Board and no additional testimony or evidence will be heard or considered by the Board.
7. The decision of the Board shall be final.

8. Unless safety or the learning environment for other students is a risk, all negative consequences for the grievant shall be held in abeyance from the date the appeal is submitted until its completion. This policy, however, prohibits the use of these procedures to interfere with the orderly learning process or to prevent any Leon County employee from completing their assigned responsibilities.

### **TELEPHONES AND BEEPERS - LCSB Policy 7.08(3)**

Telephones, cell phones, other electronic communication devices, toys, and/or games may ONLY be used during the school day under the following guidelines. For elementary and middle schools, a student must receive prior approval to use such equipment during the school day. For high schools, a student may ONLY use such equipment before or after school or during lunch. Inappropriate use or possession of such equipment may result in confiscation of the equipment to be returned to parent or guardian.

Cell phones and beepers ARE NOT ALLOWED into any test site such as FCAT. Possession alone will invalidate the test.

### **TOBACCO PRODUCTS - LCSB Policy 7.08(3)**

Students/parents are prohibited from possessing or using tobacco products anywhere on school grounds, including the parking lot, or on school buses or while participating in school activities.

### **TRESPASSING - LCSB Policy 7.15**

Non-students are required to report to the school office immediately upon entering the school premises. Failure to report to the office, or any act that interferes with the orderly operation of the school, will be grounds for trespass prosecution.

Students may not enter the premises or grounds of another school from one hour before to one hour after school hours without permission. Exceptions include waiting for a bus transfer, escorting a younger student, or participating in volunteer or service projects.

**Students who are suspended or expelled from a school may not enter the premises or grounds of any school at any time of the day. Suspended or expelled students may neither attend nor participate in any school-sponsored activity.**

### **VANDALISM - LCSB Policy 7.14**

A student and his or her parent or guardian shall be financially responsible for willful or malicious damage to Leon County Schools property caused by the student. The principal may impose disciplinary consequences in addition to a requirement for restitution.

### **VICTIMIZATION - LCSB Policy 7.18**

The Leon County Schools shall take all steps necessary to protect the victim of any violent crimes from any further victimization. When a student or staff member has been the victim of a violent crime perpetrated by a student who attends the same school, the principal shall make full and effective use of his or her statutory authority to take steps to protect the victim of any such crime.

These steps shall include, but not be limited to, in-school suspension of the offender or rescheduling of classes, lunch, or other school activities of the victim and the offender so as not to coincide. A reassignment request for the offender or the victim will also be considered. ESE students shall require an IEP review to determine an appropriate placement and, if applicable, continuation of services required by law.



**“No person shall on the basis of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, age, color or disability be denied employment, receipt of services, access to or participation in school activities or programs if qualified to receive such services, or otherwise be discriminated against or placed in a hostile environment in any educational program or activity including those receiving federal financial assistance, except as provided by law.”**

**An employee, student, parent or applicant alleging discrimination with respect to employment or any educational program or activity may contact:**

**Dr. Kathleen L. Rodgers  
Equity and Title IX Compliance Officer  
Leon County Schools  
2757 West Pensacola Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32304  
(850) 487-7306  
[rodgersk@leonschools.net](mailto:rodgersk@leonschools.net)**

**A student or parent alleging discrimination as it relates to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act may contact:**

**Dr. Margot Palazesim, 504 Specialist  
Leon County Schools  
2757 West Pensacola Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32304  
(850) 487-7161  
[palazesim@leonschools.net](mailto:palazesim@leonschools.net)**

**Jackie Pons, Superintendent  
Leon County School District  
Tallahassee, Florida**