



Student and Family Handbook

Pre-Kindergarten-12th Grade

2023-2024

<https://www.csdecatur.net>

Superintendent

Dr. Gyimah Whitaker

The Board of Education

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Carmen Sulton, Vice-Chair

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Welcome Message from Dr. Gyimah Whitaker, Superintendent

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM DR. GYIMAH WHITAKER

Welcome back! As your new superintendent, I am humbled and delighted to serve the students, families, and staff of City Schools of Decatur (CSD), and I am very excited about the 2023-24 school year.

CSD is a gem, a rare and special find that shines brightly. Our top-ranked schools are surrounded by a supportive community with highly qualified, caring teachers and administrators who inspire students in enriching learning environments. At the core of CSD is a commitment to equitable outcomes for our students. We are truly “All In” at CSD. This year, we will recenter our focus on all students, reimagine what school looks like to meet all student needs and create spaces where all students feel included. In addition to promoting equity, we will establish an infrastructure around high-quality literacy instruction.

I look forward to a great year and seeing what our students will accomplish. Your partnership is encouraged and needed to ensure CSD reaches a higher level of greatness.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gyimah Whitaker

Superintendent

Mission

In partnership with our community, our mission is to inspire and enable student growth through meaningful and engaging learning experiences supported by highly qualified and caring educators in a safe and inviting environment.

Vision

We strive to cultivate an educational foundation that empowers students to realize their full potential, thrive as productive global citizens, ignite positive change, and create a more just and equitable world.

Board of Education

The City Schools of Decatur Board of Education is an elected body of five members including a chairperson and a vice-chairperson chosen by the board each January. The school board is responsible for:

- setting the vision and goals for the district
- adopting policies that guide the work of district administrators
- adopting and overseeing the budget
- hiring and evaluating the Superintendent
- advocating on behalf of public education

CSD parents, guardians, and residents are encouraged to actively participate in school board meetings.

Board Meeting Schedule

Decatur Board of Education meetings start at 6:30 p.m. in the boardroom at the Elizabeth Wilson School Support Center, 125 Electric Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030. Regular monthly board meetings include community input. Meeting dates are subject to change, therefore, the public should always confirm dates via postings at schools or the CSD website. Regular Monthly Meetings for the 2023 - 2024 school year occur generally on the second Tuesday of the month.

Board Policies and District Operational Guidelines

The rules and procedures outlined in this handbook are based on the approved policies of the board of education and district operational guidelines. Written policies are maintained in the City Schools of Decatur Policy Manual that is now an online publication and housed at <https://www.csdecatur.net/policiesandregs>.

Accreditation

All schools in the City Schools of Decatur are accredited by Cognia (formerly known as AdvancEd and before that the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools).

Equity

In City Schools of Decatur, we are committed to aligning educational practices, policies, and resources to ensure that all students have access to and feel welcome to participate in high-quality learning experiences, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, gender, ability, religion, sexual orientation, linguistic diversity, or other cultural characteristics.

Consistent with the District's Strategic priority to reduce disproportionality, the Department of Equity and Student Services is committed to paying the education debt to historically marginalized students. We work to address root causes of disproportionality by examining achievement and discipline data; providing input on district policies and practices; engaging faculty and staff in culturally relevant pedagogy, cultural awareness and cultural proficiency professional learning activities; and strengthening family and community partnerships.

CSD Equity Definition and Beliefs

We define educational equity as ALL students having the resources, opportunities, and rigorous and relevant learning to ensure their educational success.

We believe that educational equity requires...

- high expectations for all students.
- a culture that celebrates and is reflective of and inclusive of all students and staff regardless of age, belief systems, disability status, ethnicity, gender identity, race, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or national origin.
- the systematic use of data to determine the allocation of resources.
- the purposeful development and implementation of district policies and practices with a focus on amplifying equity.

In terms of educational equity, we believe that...

- positive relationships form the foundation of an equitable school district.
- a world-class education requires racial consciousness, cross-cultural awareness and gender equity.
- all students should be empowered to be active participants in their own learning.
- we must work together to eliminate predictably negative patterns of academic achievement based on race, socioeconomic status and gender.
- we must measure our efforts to promote equity to ensure that "all means all."

For questions or concerns related to educational equity, please see the District's [equity website](#) or contact contact Dr. Mari Ann Banks, Equity Director at mbanks@csdecatur.net or 404-371-3601, ext. 1029.

Hours of Operation

College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center	7:15 am – 6:00 pm
K-2 Elementary Schools (Clairemont, Glennwood, Oakhurst, Westchester, Winnona Park)	8:20 am – 2:50 pm
Fifth Avenue Upper Elementary School	7:45 am – 2:15 pm
Talley Street Upper Elementary School	7:45 am – 2:15 pm
Beacon Hill Middle School	8:45 am – 3:45 pm
Decatur High School	8:35 am – 3:35 pm

Wilson Center Leadership Staff

Dr. Mari Banks, Equity Director	404- 371-3601 x 1029
Ms. Monique Breedlove, Nutrition Director	470-237-0368 x 760
Ms. Lonita Broome, Chief Financial Office	404-371-3601 x 1023
Ms. Jennifer Burton, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning	404-371-3601 x 1045
Ms. Lowanda Bowman, Transportation Director	470-237-0368 x 7602
Mr. Matthew Damico, Security Director	404-371-6677 x 7703
Ms. Jennifer Dunn, Math and Science Director	404-371-3601 x 1052
Ms. Amanda Lynch, Chief of Staff	404-371-3601 x 1033
Ms. Christian Gibbons, Instructional Programs Director	404-371-3601 x 1049
Ms. Alexis Glenn, Director of Accountability and Assessment	404-371-3601 x 1095
Dr. Shannon Hervey, Director of Restorative Practices & Beh. Support	404-371-3601
Mrs. Frances Holt, Chief of State and Federal Programs	404-371-3601 x 1039
Dr. Lillie Huddleston, Associate Superintendent of Equity & Student Services	404-371-3601 x 1026
Mr. Eston Melton, Chief Information Officer	404-371-3601 x 1027
Ms. Mikkal Hart Murunga, Chief Communications Officer	404-371-3601 x 1047
Ms. Karen Newton-Scott, Chief of School Performance	404-371-3601 x 1034
Mr. Sergio Perez, Chief Operations Officer	404-371-3601 x 1035
Ms. Courtney Simon, ELA and Social Studies Director	404-371-3601 x 1087
Mr. Rodney Thomas, Executive Director of Student Services	404-370-4170 x 2476
Ms. Adena Walker, Chief Human Resources Officer	404-371-3601 x 1012
Ms. Willie Washington, ESOL and Federal Programs Director	404-371-3601 x 1019

Ms. Heidi Whatley, Director of Alternative Programs

404-371-3601 x 1064

Dr. Gyimah Whitaker, Superintendent

404-371-3601 x 1056

Mr. Chris Young, Facilities and Maintenance Director

404-371-6677 x 7702

School Principals

College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center, Sarah Garland	404-370-4480
Clairemont Elementary, Ms. Tatrabian Lockwood	404-370-4450
Glennwood Elementary, Dr. Holly Brookins	404-370-4435
Oakhurst Elementary, Ms. Jennifer Triplett	404-370-4470
Westchester Elementary, Ms. Christine Knox	404-370-4400
Winona Park Elementary, Mr. Greg Wiseman	404-370-4490
Fifth Avenue Upper Elementary, Ms. Lynn Hanson	404-371-6680
Talley Street Upper Elementary, Mr. Billy Heaton	470-283-7340
Beacon Hill Middle School, Mr. Derrick Thomas	404-370-4440
Decatur High School, Mr. Duane Sprull	404-370-4170

School District Calendar 2023-2024

August 01, Tuesday	First day for all students
September 04, Monday	Labor Day Holiday (Administrative Offices Closed)
September 18 - 22	Fall Break
September 09, Friday	1 st Marking Period Ends
October 31, Monday	2 nd Marking Period Ends
November 07, Monday	Digital Learning Day
November 20 - 24	Thanksgiving Break (Administrative Offices Closed)
December 20, Monday	3 rd Marking Period/1 st Semester Ends
December 20, Wednesday	Teacher PL/Work Day
December 20 - January 03	Holiday Break
January 03, Monday	Teacher PL/Work Day
January 04, Thursday	First Day Second Semester
January 15, Monday	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 10, Friday	4 th Marking Period Ends
February 12 - 16	Winter Break
March 31, Friday	5 th Marking Period Ends
April 01 - 05	Spring Break
May 22, Wednesday	Last Day for all students/6 th Marking Period Ends
May 27, Monday	Memorial Day Holiday

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Introduction

Welcome to the City Schools of Decatur Student and Family Handbook! In this handbook we use the term family to include parents, guardians, and caregivers. We believe that our partnership with families is key to helping our students reach the goal of educational success and to ensure that they graduate ready for fulfilling post-graduate opportunities.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the support and services available through the Elizabeth Wilson Student Support Center (Wilson Center) and to highlight important rules and procedures for families and students. The Wilson Center departments work together to support schools in providing a high-quality educational experience for our students. The handbook is organized into three sections: Family Resources and Rights; Student Services and Support, and Compliant Policies and Procedures. If you have questions, contacts are listed throughout the handbook.

Family Resources and Rights

Rights and Notices

Attendance/Truancy Protocol

Introduction

Attendance is an essential component to a student's academic success. When students are absent or arrive late, they lose important opportunities to learn. Excessive tardies and absences can prevent children from succeeding academically and socially.

The purpose of this manual is to provide a plan for the implementation of City Schools of Decatur Attendance/Truancy Protocol. The attendance/truancy protocol should increase academic achievement and reduce truancy among students in the school system in compliance with the mandates of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690-2.

Background

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1. mandates attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall be required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma.

Definitions

Attendance Contract - An attendance contract helps students and families understand that school attendance is serious. Moreover, it represents mutually-agreeable goals and stipulations that both parties will follow to address unlawful absences.

Truant - Any child who is subject to the compulsory attendance law who has more than five days of unexcused absences during a single school year.

Excused Absence - Absences for the following reasons are excused upon presentation of documentation from parent(s) in accordance with the school's published attendance policy:

- Personal illness of the student or when attendance in school would endanger the health of the student or the health of others when, upon the student's return to school, a parent note is presented within three (3) school days of the student's return to school or appropriate

medical documentation (i.e. doctor's excuse, dental excuse, discharge papers, etc.). See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-693(Serious illness or death in student's immediate family necessitating the absence. In case of serious illness in a student's immediate family, the student is required to present appropriate medical documentation regarding family members within three school days of the student's return to school. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-262.2(b)

- Court order by a government agency mandating the student's absence from school, including pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces
- Special or recognized religious holidays observed by the faith of the student which require the student to remain out of school for religious observation.
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or potentially dangerous to the student's health or safety as determined by the local school system.
- An absence not to exceed one day for registering to vote or to vote in a public election.
- Students are counted present at school when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly.
- Visiting with a parent or legal guardian prior to overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting or during leave from such deployment member of the armed forces of the United States or National Guard (maximum of five school days a year. See O.C.G.A. § 2-20-692.1(b).

Unexcused Absence- Failure to attend school, with or without the knowledge of the parent or guardian, for reasons other than those specifically outlined as excused absences in the school district's published attendance policy and procedure or excused at the discretion of the administrator or designee.

- Absences may be counted as unexcused due to parental neglect, illegal employment or any undocumented absence that would otherwise be excused with the proper documentation.

Tardy- A student is tardy when he/she arrives at school after the beginning of the official school day or is not in the assigned class at the beginning of the class period.

- Excused: Late arrival to school or class which is a result of reasons defined herein as excused absences or as a result of events physically out of one's control such as inclement weather, health related emergencies, doctor's appointments, compliances with court order, etc.
- Unexcused: Arriving late to school or class with or without the knowledge of parent/guardian, as a result of events within one's control, such as oversleeping, parent errands, etc., unless it is an excused tardy.
- Cumulative Tardies shall not be converted to absences under this protocol. However, this policy does not bar the conversion of tardies to absences if the tardiness is greater than half a school day.

Attendance Committee- A school level team led by the principal/ principal designee to address student absenteeism. The committee at minimum will consist of a principal or assistant principal, attendance secretary/designee, and school counselor. The committee is responsible for review of attendance data and attendance interventions as outlined in the attendance protocol.

Attendance Law

Compulsory Attendance § 20-2-690.1. Mandatory Education for Children Between Ages Six and 16:

Mandatory attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall be required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma.

Procedures

Schools will keep a daily record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure. An absence, tardy, or early departure will be entered as "excused" or "unexcused" along with the stated reason.

A copy of the appropriate documentation will remain on file at the school for verification, if needed, for at least two years.

Parents must provide written documentation including handwritten notes or email or appropriate medical documentation (i.e. doctor's excuse, dental excuse, discharge papers, etc.) for all absences from school within 3 school days of the student's return to school. If no written documentation or appropriate medical documentation (i.e. doctor's excuse, dental excuse, discharge papers, etc.) is received, then these absences, tardies, early departures will remain unexcused and appropriate attendance procedures will be followed.

The principal/designee may require medical documentation (i.e. doctor's excuse, dental excuse, discharge papers, etc.) after receiving 10 emails or hand written notes from a parent for student illness.

Parent and Student Notification

1. City Schools of Decatur will provide each student as well as his/her parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the student, with a copy of the City Schools of Decatur Attendance Protocol and a summary of the possible consequences and penalties for non-compliance at the beginning of each school year (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1 (c)).
2. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the City Schools of Decatur, both parent/guardian and student, age ten or older, must acknowledge receipt of the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices which includes the attendance/truancy policy and protocol (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1). If the parent/guardian

does not acknowledge receipt within thirty (30) days, schools will send a copy of the written statement of possible consequences via certified mail, return receipt requested, or First-Class mail to the parent. O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1(c).

Reporting /Investigating Absences

The school attendance team will ensure that there have been two (2) reasonable attempts (including, email, but not limited to, phone calls to the parent or guardian, letters to the parent or guardian, either through U.S. mail or sent home with the student, and home visits) to notify the parent, guardian or other person who has charge or control of the student of the student's absences.

Three unexcused absences:

1. The principal/designee will send written notice of student absences to parent/guardian.

Five unexcused absences:

1. The principal/designee will send written notice of student absences to parent/guardian and notifying parent/guardian of the possible consequences and penalties for truancy.
2. A member(s) of the attendance committee will contact the parent/guardian to complete an attendance contract.
3. If unable to communicate with parent/guardian to facilitate an attendance contract; the school shall send a letter notifying parent/guardian of the possible consequences and penalties for truancy certified mail, return receipt requested or First-Class mail. The school shall retain signed copies of the notice and return receipts for the time period specified in State and Federal law as it applies to school attendance records. See O.C.G.A 20-2-690.1 (c).

Ten unexcused absences:

1. The Student Attendance Committee will determine appropriate school level interventions to support students with ten or more unexcused absences. This may include, but is not limited to; a 504 plan, individualized health plan, hospital-homebound, alternative educational plan, etc.
2. The Student Attendance Committee will refer the student to the school social worker. The district's school social worker may file a petition with the Dekalb County Juvenile Court (6-12) or Solicitor General's Office (K-5) for violation of the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law. Prior to filing a truancy petition the school social worker will send a notice to parent or guardian or other person who has control or charge of a child or children. O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1(c).

Excused absences:

The Student Attendance Committee will determine appropriate school level interventions to support students with ten or more excused absences (.i.e. Attendance contract, 504, HHB, etc). After 10 or more excused absences in a school year, the parent may be required to provide a doctor's excuse for subsequent absences. The principal or principal's designee shall send a letter to the parent or guardian notifying them that subsequent absences require a doctor's excuse.

A students final course grades will not be penalized for excused absences if the following conditions are met:

1. Absence is justified and valid documentation is presented.
2. Make up work for excused absences is completed satisfactorily within the time frame specified by the classroom teacher, administrator, or designee.
3. In the instances where the above conditions are not met, penalties and consequences are to be determined and imposed by the administrator or designee.
4. Each school is required to provide make-up work for all absences without penalty if requested within the specified time period, determined by the district, upon the student's return to school.

Tardy Protocol

Attendance is an essential component to a student's academic success. When students are absent or arrive late, they lose important opportunities to learn. Excessive tardies and absences can prevent children from succeeding academically and socially.

Definitions

Tardy: A student is tardy when he/she arrives at school after the beginning of the official school day or is not in the assigned class at the beginning of the class period.

Excused Tardy: Late arrival to school or class which is a result of reasons defined herein as excused absences or as a result of events physically out of one's control such as inclement weather, health related emergencies, doctor's appointments, compliances with court order, etc.

Unexcused Tardy: Arriving late to school or class with or without the knowledge of parent/guardian, as a result of events within one's control, such as oversleeping, parent errands, etc., unless it is an excused tardy.

Early Checkouts: Leaving school prior to the end of the instructional day time or the end of the school day by a parent or legal guardian. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to schedule all appointments following dismissal if at all feasible. Early checkouts must follow the individual schools checkout procedures.

1. To be considered “in attendance” on a school day for truancy purposes, a student must be present for at least one half of the school day, excluding the lunch period.
2. A parent or legal guardian must bring appropriate documentation (i.e. doctor’s excuse, dental excuse, discharge papers, etc.) showing the necessity of an early checkout in accordance with the City Schools of Decatur published attendance policy.

Tardies /Early Check-Out: (Tardies are considered part of the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices)

Consequences for Tardies Unexcused Tardies/Early Checkouts

- A. Each school will develop school-level guidance for reducing tardiness and early checkouts in conjunction with their school attendance committee. A progressive system should be incorporated in each school whereby appropriate consequences increase based on the number of tardies and early checkouts.
- B. A student coming in tardy must report to the office before going to class. No student who has been tardy is eligible for the perfect attendance award. All students are expected to be on time. Promptness is important to a student’s success in school.

It is the philosophy of CSD school social work department that excessive tardies and early check-outs are symptoms of larger issues (i.e. change in residency or parent work schedule, delinquency, school disengagement). Therefore, school teams should assess students' circumstances individually and provide support accordingly.

Withdrawal for Excessive Unexcused Absences

City School of Decatur is authorized to withdraw a student who:

- has ten consecutive days of unexcused absences;
- is not subject to compulsory school attendance
- is a sixteen or seventeen year old student who has not completed all requirements for a high school diploma and wishes to withdraw from school (the student must have the written permission of his or her parent or legal guardian prior to withdrawing). The principal or designee will make a reasonable attempt to hold a conference with the student and parent or guardian to share the educational options available pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1(e).

CSD attendance procedures must be followed prior to any withdrawal of a CSD student of compulsory attendance age. If the school has been unable to make contact with the student or guardian after following the attendance procedures, the school shall refer that student to the school social worker to conduct a

home visit prior to initiating a withdrawal. If the school social worker is unable to make contact with the family the school will send written notice of intent to withdraw.

Students 16 years of age and older that are absent for more than 10 consecutive days may be withdrawn if the following conditions are met:

1. The school has documented and made two reasonable attempts to contact the student and guardian.
2. The principal or designee shared with the student and parent or guardian the educational options available, including the opportunity to pursue a general educational development (GED) diploma and the consequences of not having earned a high school diploma, including lower lifetime earnings, fewer jobs for which the student will be qualified, and the inability to avail oneself of higher educational opportunities.
3. A social worker/home-visit was completed if the school was unable to make contact with the student or guardian.

Technology Use Responsibilities and Other Technology Notices

Overview

The equipment, services, and connectivity available throughout City Schools of Decatur (CSD) are available to support and enhance learning, support efficient and sustainable operations, and otherwise pursue CSD's mission and vision. Use of CSD resources is a privilege that carries significant responsibilities. Users shall not, and shall not attempt to, disrupt CSD resources, interfere with student learning or staff work, diminish or circumvent security systems, or undermine staff or student privacy. These Technology Use Responsibilities (TUR) have the effect of a regulation, and they are predicated on and promulgated per Board Policy IFBG: Acceptable Use of Technology Resources.

Access to CSD resources shall be approved by the principal, program manager, supervisor, or their designee. A school or office may restrict, alter, or terminate any user's access, without prior notice, if such action is deemed necessary to maintain system performance, availability, security, or privacy. TUR violations may result in consequences as described in the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices Handbook (CCRPH), Employee Handbook, and/or other evaluation or accountability measures. CSD reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, delete, edit, conceal, record, retransmit, and store at any time and without prior notice any network activity, device, file(s), content, email, text, data, metadata, or any other information transmitted or received through CSD resources.

Definitions

For the purpose of this TUR:

- “CSD equipment” is any technology device owned or leased by CSD, whether provided for use by a specific individual or available for use by multiple individuals, and includes computers, phones, tablets, printers, copiers, peripherals, and the like.
- “CSD services” includes any software or service that is developed, owned, or licensed by CSD for use by its employees, students, parents, and others, such as CSD email, collaboration tools, data systems, and the like.
- The “CSD network” includes all networks operated by CSD for the interconnection of CSD equipment and/or for CSD equipment and other equipment to have access to internal and external CSD services, both through wired and wireless connections.
- “CSD resources” are the CSD equipment, the CSD network, and the CSD services.
- “Users” are the students, employees, and authorized guests (e.g. vendor, outside presenter, etc.) who access CSD resources.

Scope

This TUR applies to all users when they use CSD resources, including during the regular school day, summer school, Extended School Year, intersessions or special programs, school-related activities, and during remote learning. The TUR also applies even when school is not in-session *per se* but users still have access to and use CSD resources, including after and before school, during school breaks, holidays, placement in alternative settings, and study-abroad opportunities.

Users’ responsibilities ...

... to themselves and others

It is **every user’s** – student, staff, and authorized guests who accesses CSD resources – responsibility

- to use CSD resources in a manner that is consistent with the mission of the school system, and not to access internet or other digital content via CSD resources that is inconsistent with CSD’s educational mission.
- to be considerate when using scarce CSD resources.
- to leave CSD equipment and rooms in good condition for the next user(s).
- not to access, change, share, or delete files, content, or information belonging to others without appropriate permission.
- not to disrupt or attempt to disrupt CSD resource performance or interfere with the work of other users.
- not to use offensive, obscene, and/or harassing language when using the CSD resources.

... for safety, security, and privacy

It is **every user’s** responsibility

- to log off equipment after finishing work.

- to use only their assigned CSD resource credentials (e.g. username and password). It is a violation of the TUR to give access to one's account to any other user.
- to promptly report to their teacher, principal, supervisor, or Information Services any inappropriate material they receive via email or other electronic means.
- to promptly report to Information Services any spam, phishing, or otherwise malicious emails or other communications.
- to connect personally-owned or non-CSD-owned equipment only 1) to an approved CSD guest Wi-Fi network 2) with explicit approval of a principal or supervisor. Connection to other CSD networks, including physical network connection, is permitted only with explicit approval from the Chief Information Officer, the Network Services Coordinator, or their designee.
- to share sensitive staff or student information 1) only with known, authorized parties and 2) only to the extent necessary to fulfill that party's specific, documented, and approved objectives.
- not to tamper with, illicitly access, or otherwise disrupt CSD resources, and not to use CSD resources to tamper with, illicitly access, or otherwise disrupt systems outside CSD.
- not to post, share, or transfer information if it violates others' privacy; jeopardizes others' health, privacy, or safety; is obscene or libelous; disrupts school activities; plagiarizes others' work; is a commercial advertisement not otherwise approved; violates local, state, or federal policy or law; and/or is otherwise not approved by the principal, supervisor, or program manager.
- not to view, send, download, or access illegal or inappropriate material via CSD resources.

Additionally, it is **every employee's** responsibility

- to monitor how students under their supervision use the internet and other CSD resources. Although CSD maintains a robust technology measure to filter inappropriate content, adult supervision is an essential element of providing students a safe online learning experience. This responsibility also includes approving and monitoring websites or other student-produced classroom products that are posted online.
- to ensure personal data or data not related to the employee's job function is not stored on CSD equipment or in CSD services.
- to communicate with students only through approved communication resources, and not to use non-public third-party web services, chat rooms, social networking sites, or personal pages to communicate with students.
- to respect the rights of families who have opted out of the disclosure of directory information under FERPA by, for example, not sharing student names, parent email addresses, etc. of those students whose families have submitted an appropriate opt-out request.
- to respect the rights of families who have opted out of the school creating certain recordings under other state law.
- not to bypass the internet content filter (the "technology protection managed" required under the Children's Internet Protection Act) except for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- not to communicate, store, or convey student or staff confidential information through software or services or on equipment that has not been approved by CSD.

... for property

It is **every user's** responsibility

- to understand that all CSD resources are property of or licensed to CSD.
- to maintain control over and the safety of their CSD-owned and CSD-issued equipment; and, to promptly report lost, damaged, missing, stolen, or found/recovered CSD equipment to their teacher, principal, program manager, or the Information Services department.
- to report CSD equipment problems immediately to their teacher, principal, supervisor, or the Information Services department.
- to leave or return CSD equipment in its designated place.
- to use assigned CSD equipment as directed by the teacher, principal, or other supervisor.
- to recognize and honor the intellectual property of others and to comply with legal and local restrictions regarding plagiarism and copyright. Duplicating, downloading, or streaming copyrighted software, movies, or other media without full compliance with the terms of an authorized license agreement is not permitted. Modifying copyrighted software or borrowing software is not permitted. The only software, other than teacher-assigned student projects that yield a software program and have been reviewed by the teacher, to be used on CSD equipment or the CSD network are those products that the school may legally use.
- to ensure CSD resources are used only by authorized users. CSD resources are not to be used by family members or anyone other than authorized CSD students, employees, vendors, or other users authorized by the Information Services department.
- not to modify or rearrange device configurations, settings, keyboards, individual keycaps, monitors, printers, or any other integrated or peripheral equipment of CSD equipment or CSD resources without authorized permission.
- not to download non-educational games or other non-educational files or programs on CSD equipment or via CSD services.
- not to install on CSD equipment any software that is not owned or licensed by CSD.

Additionally, it is **every student's** responsibility to

- return all CSD equipment immediately upon unenrollment or upon direction from a teacher, administrator, or Information Services staff.

Additionally, it is **every employee's** responsibility to

- return all CSD equipment immediately upon termination of employment at CSD, retirement, resignation, suspension, and upon direction from supervisor or Information Services staff.
- collaborate with Information Services and district security staff to notify law enforcement if CSD equipment is stolen from their car, home, or other location outside of CSD property. This is to ensure the district's ability to fully engage with law enforcement on efforts to recover stolen equipment.
- not to use CSD email or collaboration accounts to initiate or perpetuate personal emails, chain emails, or other non-CSD-related communications.
- not to use CSD resources for commercial activities, product or service advertisement, second jobs, or other unauthorized personal gain.

Cybersafety Notice for Families

City Schools of Decatur, as a recipient of E-Rate funds, is required to have in place a versatile cybersafety system.

CSD will:

- Enhance learning through the safe use of technology, and do its best to keep the students and their data safe online. This includes working to restrict access to inappropriate, illegal, or harmful material when students use, on- or off-campus, CSD-owned equipment/devices and/or CSD-issued service credentials. Additional information is available at <https://www.csdecatur.net/techqa>.
- Work with children and their families to develop an understanding of the importance of cybersafety through education designed to complement and support the use agreement. Some useful information for families is available at <https://www.csdecatur.net/technologyathome>.
- Provide children with cybersafety strategies.
- Respond to any breaches in an appropriate manner.
- Welcome inquiries from students and families about cybersafety or privacy issues.
- Establish and maintain an Technology Use Requirements (TUR, available in the Student and Family Handbook and at <https://www.csdecatur.net/forms>)

Parent/guardian responsibilities:

- Read this cybersafety notice.
- Discuss this notice and the AUP with my child and explain why it is important.
- Support the school's cybersafety program by encouraging my child to follow cybersafety rules, and to always ask the teacher any questions about technology use.
- Contact the school to discuss any questions I might have about cybersafety and/or this notice.

Student responsibilities:

- Review this cybersafety notice with a parent/guardian.
- Follow cybersafety rules and instructions, including the AUP, whenever using CSD technology.
- Follow cybersafety rules whenever using privately-owned technology on the school site or at any school-related activity, regardless of its location.
- Avoid any involvement with material or activities that could put at risk the safety or privacy of any student, the school, or other members of the school community.
- Take proper care of school technology
- Ask a teacher if they have any questions about this agreement.

Additional information

- [Cybersafety from the Georgia Department of Education](#)
- [CIPA consumer guide from the FCC](#)

Internet Content Filter Notice

- CSD implements internet filtering in accordance with the federal Children’s Internet Protection Act. While no filter is 100% accurate all of the time, CSD strives to control the content of the sites accessed through the internet by the use of appropriate filtering software.
- Schools educate students on personal safety practices and effective techniques for identifying and evaluating information and its sources.
- CSD cannot guarantee that students will be prevented from accessing inappropriate material or sending or receiving inappropriate communications; however, the district has an Internet Safety administrative regulation with the objective of keeping students safe when using school system technology resources.
- Students are prohibited from bypassing or attempting to bypass the internet content filter. Employees may bypass the filter only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes to support instruction.
- The content filter is in place for all users 1) when connected to the CSD network, 2) when using CSD equipment, whether on or off the CSD network, and 3) in many instances when logged into a CSD-provided account, even when off-campus and using a non-CSD-owned device.
- Students and employees should immediately report any inappropriate internet material to the teacher, administrator, or Information Services staff. The site should be noted by an adult employee and then closed. If the inappropriate material is in a pop up or displays on the screen automatically, the computer should be turned off immediately, unplugged, and a support ticket submitted to have the device analyzed. The age of the student should be taken into consideration and a follow-up conference by the teacher, counselor, or an administrator should be held with the student if warranted. If deemed appropriate, the parent/guardian should be contacted as well. If inappropriate content is encountered on a website, it should be reported immediately to Information Services staff so that the same material will not be accessed again. Websites that need to be blocked should be reported as soon as reasonably practicable as a support ticket. It is the user’s responsibility to never willfully access inappropriate or usually non-accessible websites; this type of web use is strictly prohibited.

Issued Equipment (Including 1:1) Notice

As part of our commitment to ensuring access to online learning resources, CSD issues a take-home device to each student in grades 6-12. Equipment is also available for issuance to all students participating in the Decatur Virtual Academy. Equipment might be available for issuance to additional students, short-term or long-term, as part of particular circumstances, programs, or other needs. Students are responsible for safekeeping CSD equipment, and for ensuring it is present in class when expected. Use of this equipment is bound by CSD’s Technology Use Requirements and other policies. Students and their families who are issued equipment are notified of the following:

- Equipment is the sole property of City Schools of Decatur. CSD equipment must be returned upon direction from CSD staff. 1:1 devices will be returned to the school at the conclusion of each school year.
- Equipment is provided solely for school-related educational purposes. All use of equipment and services must comply with the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices Handbook and the Student & Family Handbook

(including the Technology Use Requirements). Both documents are available at <https://www.csdecatur.net/forms>.

- Equipment issued in a protective case may not be removed from the case.
- Equipment may be logged into and used only by the student to whom the equipment is issued.
- Per the Children's Internet Protection Act, the equipment's internet traffic is processed through CSD's content filter, including when used off campus.
- Equipment must be used in a responsible manner, and students must take every precaution to prevent damage to or loss of the equipment.

Loss and damage

- Students must immediately report any damage, loss, or malfunction to school staff.
- Accidental damage or malfunction: In the event of accidental damage or malfunction, students must return the affected equipment to be issued a new device. CSD will generally repair promptly-reported first-time accidental equipment damage at no cost to the student.
- Deliberate damage or negligence: As outlined in the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices Handbook, if a school investigation concludes that equipment damage or loss stemmed from misuse or neglect, the consequences may include financial restitution and/or other consequences. The replacement cost of the current (fall 2023) CSD student-issue equipment is: \$250 for a CSD Chromebook, \$30 for a case, and \$30 for a power cord.
- Theft: If equipment is stolen, the family must file a timely police report (usually within 24 hours of the theft) and provide CSD with a hardcopy of the report. If the report is filed and a copy received by CSD, there will be no charge to the family.

Connectivity

- CSD devices described above can connect to non-CSD Wi-Fi networks.
- If a student does not have a Wi-Fi connection to reliable internet service at home, their parent/guardian may request the school loan them a cellular hotspot. There is no cost for this loaned equipment.

Parent's Right to Request a Teacher's/Paraprofessional's Qualifications

In accordance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, all LEAs are required to notify parents at the beginning of each school year (or at the time of enrollment of the student) of their 'Right to Know' the professional qualifications of their student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals.

In compliance with this requirement, the City Schools of Decatur 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 teacher and/or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the City Schools of Decatur's ESOL and Federal Programs Director, at 404-371-3601 ext. 1019.

Parental Rights Under the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act and Georgia Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day City Schools of Decatur receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the City Schools of Decatur to amend their child's or their education record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for

FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or 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. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the City Schools of Decatur 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, DC 20202

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the following information is classified as "directory" information, which may be released to the public without written permission of parents: Student's name, household telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in clubs and sports, height and weight (of students who are involved in athletics), grade level, school name, dates of attendance, parent/guardian name(s), parent/guardian email address(es), and awards received; video, film, photographs and recordings. Families can opt-out of directory sharing within the first 10 days of the school year or when enrolling in the district. Opt-outs must be submitted annually. Opt-outs may be submitted via the related opt-out items in the Annual Data Update/New Student Enrollment process in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal or in writing submitted to their principal.

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

1. To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers,

or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))

2. To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
3. To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
4. In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
5. To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
6. To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
7. To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
8. To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
9. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
10. To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
11. Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
12. To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
13. To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized

under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

The Georgia Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act afford parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) the right to file a complaint with their local school system regarding a possible violation of rights under O.C.G.A. 20-2-667 or under other federal or state student data privacy and security laws. Parents and eligible students who wish to file a complaint must use the privacy complaint form provided at <https://www.csdecatur.net/forms> and submit their complaint in writing to

City Schools of Decatur
Chief Information Officer
125 Electric Ave
Decatur, GA 30030

Resources

Cafeteria/Breakfast and Lunch

The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) Nutrition Program strives to offer nutritious meals to the students attending CSD Schools. Breakfast and Lunch are available daily at all schools. Meals served in CSD meet nutrient standards set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for students of all grade levels. Food items meet high quality standards and are served by caring, committed staff members.

Parents of eligible students should complete the annual free or reduced meal price application for their child yearly. Applications may accessed online at: <https://campus.csdecatur.org/campus/portal/parents/decatur.jsp> or picked up at your child’s school. Please return your completed application to the office of the principal. Only one application needs to be filled out for all members of a family. The school nutrition office approves applications based on eligibility guidelines set by the federal government. For more information about the School Nutrition program, including how to pay for your child’s meals online, please visit Nutrition Department website at <http://www.csdecatur.net/nutrition/>.

Parents of students are encouraged to prepay for meals using our on-line parent portal or by sending payment to the school cafeteria. We encourage all parents to sign-up for our parent portal. From the portal you are able to monitor your student’s account and add funds to their meal fund balance. Instructions for accessing the parent portal and adding funds are on the district’s webpage. There is a charge for all returned checks.

Meal Prices are subject to change.

Meal Prices:

Student Meal Prices	Full Pay	Reduced	Free	Adults/Visitors
Elementary Breakfast	1.75	.30	No Charge	2.50
Elementary Lunch	3.25	.40	No Charge	4.50

Middle & High Breakfast	2.15	.30	No Charge	2.50
Middle & High Lunch	3.50	.40	No Charge	4.50

Charging of meals is discouraged although sometimes unavoidable. Parents will be notified every Friday by email if the student's lunch account gets below zero. Also, parents may set up alerts in the parent portal to notify them if their lunch account balances falls below a parent designated threshold. Federal guidelines do not allow the school nutrition department to cover the cost of meal charges. Please visit the school district's web page to review the current district charge policy.

Students should not bring soft drinks or food items wrapped in packaging from an outside vendor to the cafeteria.

Accommodating Students with disabilities and/or Special Dietary Needs:

City Schools of Decatur will make accommodations for children with disabilities whose disability or special dietary need restricts their diet, when that need is certified by a licensed physician. For modifications or substitutions to the school meals, the school's Nurse or Nutrition Manager must have a written **Medical Statement to Request Accommodations for Disabilities in the School Meal Programs Form** on file that is signed by a licensed physician or licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law.

The Physician's medical statement must identify the specific nutritional needs of the student. This includes listing all dairy, peanut, shellfish, or other types of food allergies. *Note this form is available on the School Nutrition website under the Menus -Special Diet tab. Parents should have this form completed by the licensed physician or licensed health care professional who are authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law.

ECLC is our only facility where nuts are not served. However, CSD does not claim to have peanut or nut free schools. Children have the option to bring meals from home; therefore meals may contain nuts or foods purchased from a facility that processes nuts.

To support the management of special dietary needs, the entire day's menu is posted on the School Nutrition website.

Responsibility of Parents with Students requiring Special Dietary Meals:

Notify the School Nurse of any food allergy, disability, or special dietary need regarding their child.

Provide Medical Statements completed by a licensed physician or licensed healthcare professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law.

Participate in any meetings or discussions regarding the student's meal plan. Maintain a healthy line of communication with the School Nurse, Nutrition Manager, and Nutrition Department Program Supervisor/Director, and others as needed.

Notify the School Nurse/Nutrition Manager of any changes relating to the special dietary need, or needs (a new Medical Statement is required if the diet changes).

Submit a new medical statement each year or verify the accuracy of the medical statement yearly that a child requires special dietary meals or substitutions.

For additional questions regarding the School Nutrition Program, call (470) 237-0368 ext. 7608.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Emergency Dismissal

City Schools of Decatur is not part of the DeKalb County School System. For school closing information about our schools, listen and watch for City Schools of Decatur on local media.

In case of an emergency early dismissal, parents/guardians will receive phone, email and text notification of the dismissal via our emergency notification system.

The messaging service utilizes the phone number(s) and email address that were provided to the school through your child's registration materials. It is your responsibility to update the parent portal or notify the school of any change in contact information.

Emergency Drills

In each classroom are posted charts that indicate the exits and safe areas to be used for safety drills. A fire drill is held twice in the first month of school and then once every month thereafter. Students are expected to file out of the building in an orderly manner without talking or running. Classes will remain on the grounds until the "all clear" signal. All schools participate in the state-wide tornado drill, and each school has a safety plan for other emergencies with corresponding drills planned throughout the year.

Registration of New Students

When registering students new to City Schools of Decatur please see the registration page <https://www.csdecatur.net/enrollment> on the CSD website for the most updated information. Registration for students K-12 is managed at the Wilson School Support Center, 125 Electric Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030. Please call 404-371-3601 if you have questions. Registration for Pre-K students is managed at College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center.

Residency

The school system takes the issue of student residency very seriously. Procedures have been put in place to provide consistency among the schools, including a registration process at the Wilson School Support Center for new students. Included in these procedures are the requirements that new students provide acceptable documents to show proof of residency and that all students live within the city limits of Decatur with a parent or legal guardian.

If a Decatur resident has legal guardianship of a student, the student must reside in the resident's home. While the school system reserves the right to verify any information provided at any time, the following residency checks have been put in place: (1) residency checks when students transition from one grade

configuration to another; (2) residency checks when concerns have been reported; and (3) random checks of residency. By signing the handbook acknowledgement, I realize that City Schools of Decatur may take steps to verify my address, including, home visits, review of public documents, and contacting other government agencies, without further notification. Use this link <https://www.csdecatur.net/residency> for additional information about residency.

Responsibility for Property

Students are personally responsible for textbooks, library books, instructional materials, and student desks assigned to them. Any damage must be paid by the individual. Prices will be determined by the current cost to replace the item.

School Safety Zones

School safety zones are established within 1,000 feet of all schools. It is unlawful for any person, unless authorized by law under certain circumstances, to carry any weapon or explosive compound within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or school property or on a bus furnished by the school. If any person is in violation of this law, proper authorities will be called immediately to have the person removed from the premises.

Disruption of or interference with the operation of a public school shall be considered a misdemeanor. It is unlawful for any person to remain within the school zone when that person does not have a legitimate cause or need to be there. Failure to leave the premises when requested is grounds for a charge of a misdemeanor. This also applies to members of the press.

Transportation

City Schools of Decatur's Transportation Department requires that a completed Transportation Request Form be on file for each CSD student who needs school bus transportation. The Transportation Request Form must be completed every school year. The forms are available in the school office and on the district website. Forms should be filled out, signed, and returned to your child's school.

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Student behavior is expected to be the same as in the classroom and this requires students, parents, bus drivers, and school administrators to work together. Students who misbehave while riding the school bus may lose this privilege.

Use of School Buildings/Grounds

City Schools of Decatur facilities are available for rental for community events. Contact the Coordinator of the Superintendent's office at 404.371.3601 or the Assistant Athletic Director at 470.597.1301 with your request at least two weeks prior to your event. Your request will be reviewed to determine if it can be accommodated. Fees are charged for use of the space and for support staff who must be present to secure the building.

Student Services and Support

Academic Support

General Education and Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS)

MTSS uses a three-tiered process to systematically develop and deliver academic and behavioral interventions to learners who need additional support as well to learners who need additional enrichment and extension. It provides our educators with a common focus and a common language regarding instructional practices and interventions. It can serve as a way to explore all avenues to assist students in their learning process, ensuring that the needs of all learners are met.

Each school has an MTSS team that may include representatives from two or more of the following groups: classroom teachers, MTSS Lead, administrators, school counselors, nurse, speech and language pathologist, and Central Office representative (school psychologist, school social worker, District MTSS Coordinator), and sometimes special education teachers. The exact composition of the team may be modified based on the specific needs of each student's case. The team meets regularly, usually weekly or bi-weekly and engages in a problem-solving protocol to determine the student's areas of need and to identify appropriate research-based interventions to address the student's learning need(s). The student's progress is monitored and further decisions are made based on that data.

Parents are an essential part of the process. Regular communication occurs throughout the tiers. In addition, parents are invited and encouraged to attend all SST (Tier 3) meetings, where the team makes decisions about additional support and interventions if needed.

For more detailed information about MTSS, please click [here](#) or contact:

- Erica Godfrey, District Intervention Specialist and MTSS Coordinator at egodfrey@csdecatur.net

Gifted and Talented

The Georgia Board of Education defines a gifted student as "a student who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual, creative, and/or artistic ability(ies), possesses exceptional leadership skills, or excels in specific academic fields and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities."

CSD Gifted Services Mission

The mission of the Gifted Program is to work directly with students and faculty designing instruction and creating a supportive school environment to meet the intellectual, academic, social, emotional, and motivational needs of gifted and high-ability learners.

CSD Gifted Services Goals

- Ensure equitable access to appropriate services for all gifted learners by using the student identification process and measures defined by Georgia Board of Education policy, employing assessment of multiple-criteria (mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation).
- Continually use a variety of data to assess student progress and identify student needs.
- Employ differentiated curricula and research-based instructional practices to address the range of needs of gifted learners, including critical and creative thinking, problem-solving activities, and social and self-awareness.
- Provide services that are comprehensive, structured, sequenced, and appropriately challenging to meet the demonstrated needs of K-12 gifted learners.
- Provide ongoing professional learning for school personnel annually in regards to the nature and needs of gifted learners and appropriate instructional strategies and curricula.

CSD also offers services and programs for talented students outside of and in addition to gifted services, including the AMPLIFY Program, accelerated math, and advanced content courses in high school.

For more detailed information, please click [here](#) or contact Christen Gibbons, Director of Instructional Programs, at cgibbons@csdecatur.net.

Homework

Homework allows students practice the skills and attitudes essential in promoting personal, social, and academic growth. It provides the student with the opportunity to practice specific concepts and skills. Be aware that the amount of homework varies from grade to grade, from teacher to teacher, and from night to night. Homework for our students should be meaningful, respectful of family time, and should never directly impact the student's grade.

Homework may be classified into three areas.

1. Assignments that reinforce the instructional programs
2. Assignments that develop and enrich thinking skills
3. Assignments that provide practice and skill development

Suggestions for Students:

1. Sit down with a parent/family member to discuss a homework routine.
 - a. Arrange time and place for homework to be done.
 - b. Make study/homework time a phone-free/TV-free space.
 - c. In planning homework time, plan for extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, band, etc.
2. Read and follow directions to be sure you understand the assignment before you leave the classroom.
3. Be sure you have all materials needed before starting (pencils, books, paper, etc.).
4. Prepare for tests by doing the work when assigned and by reviewing notes/study materials daily.

5. Complete all work with strong effort.
6. Turn homework in on time.
7. When you are absent, find out what assignments you missed.
8. Pay attention and participate in class.
9. Share your work with your parents/family members to see if they have suggestions for improvement.

If you have questions about homework and/or homework procedures, please contact your child's teacher.

Media Center

The Library Media Center is open daily for student use. Materials checked out are the responsibility of the student and must be paid for if damaged or lost. Reference books are to be used in the Media Center. The mission of the Library Media Center at each school is to build a learning community of effective users of ideas and information. This mission is accomplished by:

- Promoting reading and encouraging a lifelong appreciation of books
- Providing access to a variety of materials and technology leading the community to information literacy
- Creating authentic learning experiences through collaboration and planning that will increase student achievement goals and support the school improvement plan

Our Library Media Centers are an integral part of the educational program at our schools. They are the hub of the school and are heavily used by students, staff, volunteers, and families. Please contact your school's library media specialist with any questions or comments, and please be sure to check out the Media Center page on each school's website.

Special Education

City Schools of Decatur ensures that students with disabilities ages 3-21 that reside in the City of Decatur and who have met the [Georgia Special Education eligibility requirements](#) receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations to students with disabilities (SWDs). This is accomplished by partnering with students, families, schools, and the community.

Special Education programming and services are provided on a continuum, ranging from consultative to full special education services. This continuum is designed to ensure that programs are available to students with disabilities and that the least restrictive environment is determined based on unique student needs. An [Individualized Education Program](#) or Plan (IEP) is drafted after a student meets the eligibility requirements. These plans are based on student present levels of performance data and are reviewed at least once annually.

For questions and/or concerns, there are multiple staff persons in the department that can assist. For more detailed information, please [click here](#).

Testing

The standardized testing program in the City Schools of Decatur is designed to provide information to the staff and the community about student performance. As a result, a combination of required state and locally required standardized tests provides necessary information for making sound decisions about the elements of the curriculum, the best way to deliver the curriculum, and instructional modifications that might be needed to meet the needs of individual students.

Teachers use a variety of evidence such as teacher-made and publisher-designed assessments in addition to standardized testing to assess student performance and report progress. Parents may discuss the results of standardized tests with the school principal and teacher(s). Consult individual school calendars for a testing schedule for your child. The district testing calendar outlines the schedule for assessments that are administered across the district.

Both state and federal law require public schools to annually assess all enrolled students. Neither the school nor the district has the authority to waive the student assessment requirement. Parents with questions about testing requirements for his/her child need to address these with the local school principal. If a parent/guardian refuses to comply with these laws, they must communicate their intent in writing to the principal at least two weeks prior to the start of testing. See the [Administrative Regulation for Testing Programs](#) for more information.

Title I, Part A

Title I, Part A is a part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This Act provides federal funds through the Georgia Department of Education to local educational agencies (LEAs) and public schools with high numbers or percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet the challenging state standards.

School districts target the Title I, Part A funds they receive to public schools with the highest percentages of children from low-income families. These funds may be used for children from preschool aged to high school. Title I, Part A is designed to support state and local school reform efforts by reinforcing and enhancing efforts to improve teaching and learning for students. Title I, Part A programs must be based on effective means of improving student achievement and must include strategies to support parental involvement.

For more detailed information, please click [here](#) or contact Willie Washington, ESOL and Federal Programs Director, wwashington@csdecatur.net.

Title II, Part A

Title II, Part A was originally authorized as Eisenhower Professional Development and the Class Size Reduction programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, was reauthorized in 2001 by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The purpose of the Title II, Part A grant is:

- to increase student achievement consistent with challenging State academic standards,
- to improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders,
- to increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools, and
- to provide low-income and students of color greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

For more detailed information, please click [here](#) or contact Willie Washington, ESOL and Federal Programs Director, wwashington@csdecatur.net.

Title III, Part A and ESOL

English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is the state-funded language instruction educational program for eligible English learners (ELs) in grades K-12 in Georgia public schools (Georgia School Law Code 1981, §20-2-156, enacted in 1985). ESOL language instruction is focused on developing EL students' academic English proficiency in each content area of the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE).

The goal of the ESOL language instruction educational program for EL students is to increase both English language proficiency (ELP) and academic language proficiency in content-area subject matter. Successful ESOL language programs focus on collaboration and shared accountability for the success of all EL students.

Title III, Part A is a federal program that supplements the state-funded ESOL Language Program. Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as Amended under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) awards subgrants to eligible Local Education Agencies "to help ensure that English learners, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English."

For more detailed information, please click [here](#) or contact Willie Washington, ESOL and Federal Programs Director, wwashington@csdecatur.net.

Title IV, Part A - Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE)

The Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grant was authorized in December 2015, under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Title IV-A grants are intended to improve students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of States, LEAs, schools, and local communities to:

- provide all students with access to a well-rounded education,
- improve school conditions for student learning, and
- improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.

For more detailed information, please click [here](#) or contact Willie Washington, ESOL and Federal Programs Director, wwashington@csdecatur.net.

Title IX, Part A – McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, State educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth. States and districts are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youth.

For more detailed information, please click [here](#) or contact Willie Washington, ESOL and Federal Programs Director, wwashington@csdecatur.net.

Behavioral Support

Behavior Interventionist

To promote a positive school culture and climate, the Behavior Interventionist works collaboratively with school leaders, staff, students, families and our CSD community to provide ongoing assistance via implementing a data-driven, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Framework. MTSS integrates assessments and interventions within a school-wide, Multi-level Prevention System to maximize achievement and reduce behavior problems. Contact Dr. Lillie Huddleston for more information about behavioral support at lhuddleston@csdecatur.net

Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices

City Schools of Decatur adopts a Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices for Students on an annual basis. All students are subject to the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices. It is available online at <https://www.csdecatur.net/handbook>.

Dress Code

The dress code was developed to guide students to make thoughtful choices to dress appropriately for school activities and to embody empathy when perceiving how others dress. Infractions to the dress code are addressed in the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices.

Comprehensive School Mental Health

Decatur Student Center

The Decatur Student Center (DSC) provides wrap-around services beyond the scope of the school counseling program. The DSC began at the high school, but has become a K-12 initiative to address the needs of students, pre-K through 12th.

Students can receive individual and small group counseling for social emotional concerns, as well as support for career and post-secondary planning. Programming needs are determined through surveys, data review and student voice. The DSC provides services through contracts with outside therapists and organizations, as well as through collaborative programs with Georgia State University's Community Mental Health Program. More information about the referral process and programming is available on the Decatur Student Center website <https://www.csdecatur.net/decaturstudentcenter>.

School Counselors and Social Workers

In accordance with accrediting standards a school social worker and counselor(s) are assigned to each of the elementary schools, middle school, and high school. The school social worker and counselors are part of the interdisciplinary team that is focused on ensuring that students are successful within the school environment.

The school social worker and counselors advocate for students and families. They support students and staff by providing consultation with parents, individual and/or small group counseling, crisis intervention, preventative education through whole classroom guidance, and may serve as members of the student support team.

School Psychology

According to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), "School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams that support students; ability to learn and teachers; ability to teach. They apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to create a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community." This is in alignment with the strategic plan of the City Schools of Decatur (CSD), which equitably and effectively meet the needs of ALL of our students.

Role of the School Psychologist

The school psychologist provides a variety of related services to students, staff and parents/guardians in City Schools of Decatur. School Psychologists participate as members of the multidisciplinary team during the diagnostic process of determining eligibility for students with disabilities under IDEA (special

education) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). School Psychologists also complete psychological and educational evaluations. School Psychologists in general education settings provide crisis intervention, behavioral consultation, and individual/group counseling. They are active members of school based Student Support Teams (SST).

Major categories of services include:

- Consultation: Assisting students, staff and parents/guardians to solve problems related to student learning and behavior.
- Assessment: Collecting and interpreting information about student learning and behavior to enable more effective student support and intervention planning.
- Intervention: Providing training, counseling, and other educationally oriented interventions to students, parents/guardians, and school staff, and assisting in crisis intervention.

School Health

The School Health Program believes healthy children are successful learners. The school nurse has a multi-faceted role in the school setting... a role that supports the physical, mental, emotional, and social health of students and their success in the learning process. Nurses provide health related services for the students at each school. The weekly schedule for each school's assigned nurse is located on the school website.

Each student should have an updated health information form on file every school year. Depending on the school your student attends, the health form will be received with the summer mailing from the school or will come home with your student during the first week of school. All health forms are also on the district website.

For significant conditions (ex: asthma, diabetes, life threatening allergies, seizures etc.), please contact the nurse immediately to discuss your child's health needs at school. Your child will also need a specific medical care plan filled out and signed by a physician, and co-signed by parent/guardian. The medical care plan will detail the day-to-day care your student requires at school. Throughout the school year contact your child's school nurse to report any new medications or changes in your child's health.

Medications

When possible, medications should be taken at home, including all non-essential medications such as vitamins, herbals and narcotic pain medications. However, if medication must be administered at school, on a field trip or during a "before or after" school chaperoned activity, parents must provide all medications (prescribed and over the counter), the following policies and procedures will apply:

The Authorization for Medication Administration form must be completed by the physician and co-signed by the parent/legal guardian before medication can be administered at school. The School cannot give medication without this form being completed and signed. The same form is used for all medications. Authorization for Medication Administration forms are only valid for one school year and a separate form must be used for each medication.

Prescribed medications must be brought to school in the original, labeled container prepared by the pharmacy, doctor or pharmaceutical company (i.e. no envelopes, foil or baggies). All medications should be taken directly to the office/clinic by the parent. Prescription medications require a prescribing Physician's written order.

These Medications must be brought to school;

- Child's name
- Name of medication,
- name of Physician ordering medication,
- dosage of medication to be given
- Route of administration
- Time(s) the medication is to be given
- Date of prescription
- Expiration Date.

Over-the-counter (OTC) medications must be brought to school in a new, sealed, original manufacturer's container (i.e., no envelopes, foil or baggies). The manufacturer's label must include;

- name of the medication (brand or generic),
- strength of the medication,
- instructions for use, and
- name of student written legibly.

Herbal medications can have serious and dangerous adverse effects. Herbal medications and over-the-counter medications, when taken on a regular basis, or if the request is not within the manufacturer's guidelines will require a physician's written authorization that in essence "prescribes" these nonprescription medications.

Please ask your pharmacist to divide your child's medication into two bottles, each with its own label, so that one can be kept at home and one for school use.

A student who has asthma, a life-threatening allergy, diabetes or another health related condition that requires self administration of medication, or needs to carry an emergency medication (Epipen, Diastat, Inhaler, Glucagon, etc) and is permitted to self administer, must submit parent/legal guardian authorization:

- a. while in school;
- b. at a school sponsored activity;
- c. while under the supervision of school personnel; or
- d. while in before-school or after-school care on school operated property.

Changes in medication dosage, route or time of administration must be written and approved by legal prescriber and accompanied by signed medication authorization form by parent/ guardian.

Students who are new to the district and bring in prescription medications from out of state legal prescribers have 60 days to obtain new prescriptions from a health provider licensed in Georgia. Valid physician contact information is required for consultation related to prescribed medication.

Medication samples must have a written prescription or a legal prescriber's written order bearing the student's name.

Personnel who do not hold a nursing license and are designated to assist students with the administration of medication shall complete in-service training regarding the district medication policy and procedures for administering medication at least once every year. A school nurse shall provide in-service training.

Health Requirements

Each student entering the school system for the first time regardless of grade level must present the following health related documents at registration:

1. Documentation of required immunizations on Ga. Department of Public Health (DPH) Form 3231 or a completed, notarized and signed Affidavit of Religious Objection to Immunization (DPH Form 2208). Religious Objection form can be downloaded at (<https://www.csdecatur.net>). Click on Families>Forms and Handbooks>Medical Forms.
2. Documentation of vision, hearing, nutrition, and dental screening on Ga. Department of Human Resources Form 3300. Consult with your physician or DeKalb County Health Department for assistance to obtain the necessary documents. Georgia Code (OCGA 20-2-771) states "No child shall be admitted to or attend any school or facility in this state unless the parent/guardian has submitted a certificate of immunization to the responsible official of the school or facility. The official of any school or facility may grant a 30 calendar day waiver of the certification requirement for a justified reason." For information related to the 30-day waiver, contact Patrice Moore, District Registrar at 404-371-3601 x 1063.

Sick Procedure

Many illnesses are most communicable during the one or two days before and the first few days after symptoms appear. School Nurse's assessment and discretion will be followed when determining if a student should be sent home from school. When assessing a child for illness, clusters of symptoms may be considered to determine the need for going home.

Any of the following signs and symptoms may indicate the beginning of an acute illness:

- Flushed face, not related to exercise or other physical activity
- Runny nose, excessive sneezing or coughing, sore throat, earache, swollen glands
- Watery or glassy appearance of eyes
- Unexpected sweating, pallor, blueness of lips or fingernails
- Rash, "bumps" or other skin changes, including discharge such as pus
- Body temperature of or above 100 degrees F.
- Abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- Pain on urination
- Swelling of any part of the body
- Stiff Neck
- Sudden onset of severe headache

If the above symptoms are present in your child, please observe your child at home until he or she is well. Remember the 24 Hour Rule:

Students may return to school after the following:

- 24 hours without fever (without taking fever reducing medication)
- 24 hours without nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and tolerating a normal diet
- 24 hours of receiving medication such as antibiotics and eye ointments

General Illness Prevention Measures

Most communicable diseases can be prevented through basic infection control measures such as regular hand washing, practicing respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes), and proper disinfection of high touch/high traffic surfaces.

Compliant Policies and Procedures

Drug-Free Schools

City Schools of Decatur has a drug-free schools program that includes age-appropriate, developmentally-based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs for all students at all grade levels. Mandated and funded by the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986, the program is coordinated by a school counselor. Information about alcohol and drug treatment services in the community is available for students and their families.

Non-Discrimination and Equitable Opportunities

CSD desires to provide a safe school environment that allows all students equal access and opportunities to the district's academic and other educational support programs, services, and activities. The District prohibits, at any district site or school activity, unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of any student based on the student's actual race, ethnicity, national origin, color, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, age, marital status, or sexual orientation; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

Prohibited discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying includes physical, verbal, nonverbal, or written conduct based on one of the categories listed above that is so severe and pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; has the effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance; or otherwise adversely affects a student's

educational opportunities. The District also prohibits any form of retaliation against any student who files a complaint or report regarding an incident of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Bullying

Bullying of any kind is prohibited at City Schools of Decatur. In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4, bullying means an act, including an act through the use of electronic communication, that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
 - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as defined in O.C.G.A. § 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 education environment; or
 - d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Reporting Bullying

A report of intimidation, harassment, or bullying/cyberbullying can be made directly to a school teacher or administrator or by submitting this [form](#) to the Office of Equity and Student Services (lhuddleston@csdecatur.net). Bullying is addressed through by local school administrators using the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices.

Retaliation for Bullying

Retaliation is defined as bullying, harassment or intimidation toward a person in response to previously reported bullying, harassment or intimidation. Under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4, retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry is prohibited. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of the code of conduct, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Any student who knowingly files a false report of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation will be punished under applicable disciplinary provisions.

Sex Education

It is a policy of the Georgia Department of Education (O.C.G.A. 20-2-143) that all State Schools shall provide instruction in the areas of sex education and AIDS prevention, which will be taught as a part of a comprehensive health program at age, grade, and developmentally appropriate levels. Information explaining this part of the curriculum will be distributed annually. Included in this information will be procedures for reviewing the instructional materials and, if desired, procedures for excusing a student from this instruction.

Title IX

What is Title IX?

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972).

Sexual harassment under Title IX is defined as conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies any of the following:

- Quid pro quo by an employee (when a school employee conditions access to educational benefits on unwelcome sexual conduct);
- Unwelcome conduct that is so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a school's education program or activity; or
- Sexual assault as defined by the Clery Act, and dating violence, domestic violence and stalking as defined by the Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA).

All K-12 employees are mandated reporters for Title IX purposes, meaning all reports of sexual harassment made to any employee must be promptly reported to the Title IX coordinator. The superintendent has designated a Title IX Coordinator to handle inquiries/complaints related to nondiscrimination policies according to established procedures.

Title IX Coordinator

Dr. Lillie Huddleston
City Schools of Decatur
125 Electric Avenue
Decatur, Georgia 30030
404-371-3601, ext. 1026

Title IX Coordinator for Athletics and Student Activities:

Rodney Thomas
City Schools of Decatur at Decatur High School
310 North McDonough Street
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Title IX Liaisons

School principals/their designees will serve as local Title IX liaisons for each school. You can report discrimination and discriminatory harassment to your school principal, any staff member, or to the district's Title IX Coordinator, listed above.

Sexual Abuse or Misconduct Reporting

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.

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 shall be investigated immediately by the school or school 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.

Section 504

Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Section 504 ensures that the child with a disability has equal access to an education. Under Section 504, if appropriate, students may receive accommodations and modifications. Unlike the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Section 504 does not require a public school to provide an individualized educational program (IEP) that is designed to meet a child's unique needs and provide the child with educational benefit. All students with disabilities are protected from discrimination under Section 504 and some students require accommodations to have access to the curriculum commensurate with their nondisabled peers. Parents can initiate the 504 evaluation process through contacting the 504 coordinator at your school.

