



**Student and Family Handbook**  
**Pre-Kindergarten - 12th Grade**

**2024-2025**

<https://www.csdecatour.net>

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## **Superintendent**

Dr. Gyimah Whitaker

## **The Board of Education**

James Herndon, Chair

Carmen Sulton, Vice-Chair

Jana Johnson-Davis, Member

Hans Utz, Member

Tracey Anderson, Member

Sophia D'Elena, Student Representative

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the City Schools of Decatur Student and Family Handbook. In this handbook, the term family includes parents, guardians, and caregivers. Our partnership with families is critical 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 and to highlight important procedures and expectations for families and students. The handbook is organized into three sections: Notices, Rights, and Resources, Practices and Procedures, and Student Services and Support. If you have questions, contact information is listed throughout.

## Welcome Message

On behalf of the City Schools of Decatur Board of Education, I am excited to welcome our new and returning students, staff, and families for the upcoming 2024-25 school year.

CSD's highly-ranked schools are at the heart of a supportive community, with dedicated teachers and administrators who create inspiring learning environments for our students daily. To ensure a successful school year, we created this Student & Family Handbook to offer families guidance. Please review the handbook with your student(s) to acquaint them with the expectations and guidelines for school, such as attendance and technology. Together, we can ensure safe and inclusive learning environments where all students can thrive.

We are also excited to partner with you as we implement our five-year strategic plan, All In Decatur. This plan aims to bring out the best in our students by becoming more student-focused while equitably and effectively meeting the needs of all students, unearthing their gifts and talents to achieve their highest potential.

Thank you for being All In and helping us to make this a great school year!

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 participate actively in school board meetings.

## **Board Meeting Schedule**

Decatur Board of Education meetings allow the board to conduct official business to improve student achievement and organizational effectiveness. Monthly 2024-2025 school year meetings generally occur on the second Tuesday and are held in the boardroom at the Elizabeth Wilson School Support Center, 125 Electric Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030. Regular monthly board meetings include community input.

The Board of Education also holds quarterly retreats and seasonal community meetings. Retreats allow the board to dive deeply into data, discussion, and information. Community meetings enable the board to foster two-way communications with the community about vision, values, and results.

Meeting dates are posted on the district website but may be subject to change. Therefore, the public should always confirm dates via school postings or the CSD website.

## **Board Policies and District Regulations**

The rules and procedures outlined in this handbook are based on the approved policies of the Board of Education and district regulations. Written policies are maintained in the City Schools of Decatur policy manual. The manual is an online publication that can be accessed at <https://www.csdecaturnet/policiesandregs>.



**Accreditation**

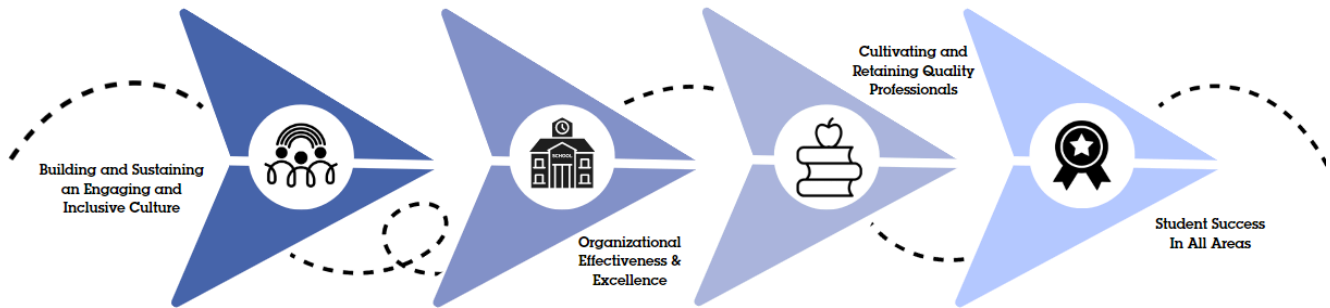
All schools in the City Schools of Decatur are accredited by Cognia (formerly known as AdvancEd and, before that, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools).

**Strategic Plan**

CSD’s five-year strategic plan is community-inspired, student-centered, and equity-focused. It encompasses and impacts everyone. Its successful execution will require everyone in our community to *learn, teach, and lead*.

The plan will provide CSD with a clear focus on students as we confront and overcome racial, economic, and social injustices and disparities. Bottom line: the plan will ensure CSD can equitably and effectively meet the needs of ALL of our students.

To achieve our ambitious outcomes, in collaboration with our community, CSD identified four key strategic accelerators that leverage our strengths to improve our areas of growth while also taking advantage of the many opportunities in our community.



## **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 Professional Learning is committed to ensuring the necessary urgency, capacity-building, and defined flexibility that will both strategically support and hold schools accountable for subgroup performance. We work to address root causes of disproportionality by examining achievement and discipline data, building teachers and leaders through professional development, leveraging partnerships, and engaging faculty and staff in culturally relevant pedagogy, cultural awareness, and cultural proficiency professional learning activities - thereby targeting equity and maximizing student outcomes.

See below to learn more about our District's partnerships that help us ensure equitable outcomes for all students.

## **Communities In Schools (CIS)**

Students thrive in environments where they feel safe, respected, engaged, and valued. When students feel safe, they respond with enthusiasm and commitment. When they are engaged, they strive to succeed and learn more effectively. When we show them they are valued, they embrace their potential and create stronger futures for themselves and their communities. Communities In Schools works hand-in-hand with parents, families, caregivers, educators, and other caring adults to help students access important resources that put them on a path to success in school and beyond. Furthermore, Communities In Schools help students succeed by removing roadblocks and providing them with the resources, support, and opportunities needed to thrive.

## **OneGoal**

Students from low- and high-income communities aspire to earn a postsecondary degree or credential at similar rates. However, too many students—the vast majority of whom are students of color—are left to confront economic, academic, and social barriers that make it almost impossible to achieve their greatest postsecondary aspirations. A closer look at the opportunity gap shows the vast majority of students who do not complete their postsecondary education are pushed out of the system between the final two years of high school and the first year of a postsecondary program. This remains one of our nation's most complex and critical injustices, with deep roots in systems of oppression and racism, and has persisted despite decades of work and millions invested. OneGoal is proven to help schools and districts increase student outcomes and close equity gaps. Students engaged in this program are about 1.5x more likely to earn a credential or degree than peers from similar backgrounds.

## **University of Virginia Partnerships for Leadership in Education (UVA-PLE)**

The UVA-PLE Core Partnership is the only research-proven effort in the country focused on establishing system conditions ripe for change and building transformative leadership capacity to achieve that change. UVA-PLE transformative and tailored leadership development increases the capacity of our district and school teams to shape the future, address inequities, and achieve lasting improvements in student learning. Through integrated executive education and on-site thought partnership, this partnership drives organizational learning and collaboration, empowering teams to heighten focus and confront complex

problems. This collaboration with district and school teams creates the conditions for change, redesigns systems to serve historically marginalized students better, and accelerates their ability to advance lasting transformation.

For questions or concerns about educational equity, please contact Dr. Mari Ann Banks, Director of Equity and Professional Learning, at [mbanks@csdecatour.net](mailto:mbanks@csdecatour.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, Director of Equity and Professional Learning	404- 371-3601 x 1029
Ms. Monique Breedlove, Nutrition Director	470-237-0368 x 7606
Dr. Lonita Broome, Chief Financial Officer	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
Vacant, Security Director	404-371-6677 x 7703
Ms. Jennifer Dunn, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction	404-371-3601 x 1052
Ms. Sydney Dupriest, Communications Director	404-371-3601 x 1096
Ms. Christen Gibbons, Director of Academic Enrichment Programs	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 x 1053
Mrs. Frances Holt, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services	404-371-3601 x 1039
Mrs. Chanell Huff-Cox, School Health Nurse Supervisor	470-237-0368 x 7605
Ms. Iris Im, MTSS Director	404-371-3601 x 1103
Ms. Amanda Lynch, Chief of Staff	404-371-3601 x 1033
Mr. Eston Melton, Chief Information Officer	404-371-3601 x 1027
Ms. Mikkal Hart Murunga, Chief Communications Officer	404-371-3601 x 1047
Ms. Michelle Lowe, Special Education Director	404-371-3601 x 1206
Ms. Karen Newton-Scott, Deputy Superintendent	404-371-3601 x 1034
Mr. Sergio Perez, Chief Operating Officer	404-371-3601 x 1035
Mr. Rodney Thomas, Athletics And Activities Director	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
Ms. Melinda Williams, Coordinator to the Office of the Superintendent	404-371-3601 x 1024
Mr. Chris Young, Facilities and Maintenance Director	404-371-6677 x 7702

## School Principals

College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center, Ms. 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
Winnona 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, Dr. Duane Sprull	404-370-4170

## School District Calendar 2024-2025

July 30, Tuesday	First day for all students
September 02, Monday	Labor Day Holiday (Administrative Offices Closed)
September 23 - 27	Fall Break
November 05, Tuesday	Digital Learning Day
November 25 - 29	Thanksgiving Break (Administrative Offices Closed)
December 19, Thursday	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester Ends
December 20, Friday	Teacher PL/Work Day
December 20 - January 03	Holiday Break
January 06, Monday	Teacher PL/Work Day
January 07, Tuesday	First Day Second Semester
January 20, Monday	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 17 - 21	Winter Break
April 07 - 11	Spring Break
May 23, Friday	Last Day for all students/2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester Ends



# Notices, Rights, and Resources

## Attendance/Truancy Protocol

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

### **Attendance Law**

Compulsory Attendance § 20-2-690.1. Mandatory Education for Children Between Ages 6 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.*

### **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 Committee**

A school-level team led by the principal/ principal designee to address student absenteeism. At a minimum, the committee will consist of a principal or assistant principal, an attendance secretary/designee, and a school counselor. The committee reviews attendance data and interventions outlined in the attendance protocol.

#### **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.

#### **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 must present appropriate medical documentation regarding family members within three school days of returning 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 student's faith 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 is, at most, one day for registering to vote or to vote in a public election.
- Students are counted as present at school when 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).

### **Tardy**

A student is tardy when they arrive at school after the beginning of the official school day or is outside the assigned class at the start 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 a court order, etc.
- Unexcused: Arriving late to school or class with or without the knowledge of parent/guardian due to 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 tardiness exceeds half a school day.

### **Truant**

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

### **Unexcused Absence**

Failure to attend school, with or without the knowledge of the parent or guardian, for reasons other than those outlined explicitly 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.

### **Procedures**

Schools will record each student's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure daily. An absence, tardiness, 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 within three school days of the student's return. If no written or appropriate medical documentation (i.e., doctor's excuse, dental excuse, discharge papers, etc.) is received, these absences, tardies, and 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 ten emails or handwritten notes from a parent for student illness.

### **Parent and Student Notification**

- City Schools of Decatur will provide each student, as well as their parent, guardian, or another 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)).
- 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.

### **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 ten 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 student's final course grades will not be penalized for excused absences if the following conditions are met:

- Absence is justified, and valid documentation is presented.

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

### **Three Unexcused Absences**

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

### **Five Unexcused Absences**

- The principal/designee will send written notice of student absences to the parent/guardian and notify the parent/guardian of the possible consequences and penalties for truancy.
- A member(s) of the attendance committee will contact the parent/guardian to complete an attendance contract.
- 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 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**

- 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.
- The Student Attendance Committee will refer the student to the school social worker. The district's school social worker may petition the DeKalb County Juvenile Court (6-12) or Solicitor General's Office (K-5) for violating the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law. Before filing a truancy petition, the school social worker will send a notice to a 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).

## **Tardy Protocol**

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

### **Definitions**

#### **Tardy**

A student is tardy when they arrive at school after the beginning of the official school day or is outside the assigned class at the start of the class period. Tardies are considered part of the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices.

#### **Excused Tardy**

Late arrival to school or class is a result of reasons defined herein as excused absences or due to events physically out of one's control, such as inclement weather, health-related emergencies, doctor's appointments, compliances with court orders, 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 before the end of the instructional day or the end of the school day by a parent or legal guardian. If feasible, parents and legal guardians are encouraged to schedule all appointments following dismissal. Early checkouts must follow the individual school's checkout procedures.

- To be considered "in attendance" on a school day for truancy purposes, a student must be present for at least half of the school day, excluding the lunch period.
- 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.

### **Consequences for Tardies Unexcused Tardies/Early Checkouts**

- 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.
- 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.

*The philosophy of the CSD school social work department is that excessive tardies and early check-outs are symptoms of more significant 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 their parent or legal guardian before 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 before a CSD student of compulsory attendance age is withdrawn. If the school cannot contact 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 before initiating a withdrawal. If the school social worker cannot contact the family, the school will send a written notice of intent to withdraw.

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

- The school has documented and made two reasonable attempts to contact the student and guardian.
- 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.
- A social worker/home visit was completed if the school could not contact the student or guardian.

## **Be SMART Model Secure Storage Notification**

### **Resolution - Adopted by the CSD Board of Education on May 2024**

Whereas Evidence strongly suggests that secure firearm storage is an essential component of any effective strategy to keep schools and students safe;

Whereas An estimated 4.6 million American children live in households with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm;

Whereas Every year, roughly 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else. That's nearly one unintentional shooting per day, and 70 percent of these incidents take place inside a home;

Whereas Another 1,200 children and teens die by gun suicide each year, most often using guns belonging to a family member;

Whereas, In incidents of gun violence on school grounds, 75 percent of active shooters were current students or recent graduates;

Whereas Research shows that secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens;

Whereas The U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center recommends the importance of appropriate storage of firearms because 76 percent of school shooters used firearms acquired from the homes of parents or close relatives;

Across the country, lawmakers, community members, and local leaders are working together to implement public awareness campaigns, such as the Be SMART program, which is endorsed by the National PTA and encourages secure gun storage practices and highlights the public safety risks of unsecured guns;

Whereas School districts across the country have begun to proactively send materials home to parents and guardians, informing them of applicable firearm storage laws and firearm secure storage best practices;

Whereas Keeping students, teachers, and staff safe from the threat of gun violence should be the responsibility of all adult stakeholders at each of our school sites;

Whereas, In order to continue with preventative measures to increase student and school safety, we must act now; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Board directs the Superintendent and staff to update the Student Handbook to include information about the secure storage of firearms;

Resolved further That the Board directs the Superintendent to create an appropriate letter, in English and Spanish, to parents and guardians that explains the importance of secure gun storage to protect minors from accessing irresponsibly stored guns, to be included in annual registration materials at each school site, and requiring a signature acknowledging awareness of secure gun storage responsibilities; and, be it finally;

Resolved That the Board and the Superintendent will continue to work with local law enforcement agencies, health agencies, and nonprofits to collaborate and increase efforts to inform District parents of their obligations regarding secure storage of firearms in their homes.

## **Letter to Parents and Guardians**

This letter may be translated using the CSD website translation feature or may be translated by a parent's request into whatever language best suits their needs.

Somali: Warqadani waxa lagu turjumi karaa iyadoo la isticmaalayo aalada turjumaada wabsaaydka CSD iyo/ama waxa turjumi kara codsiga waalidiinta ee luuqad kasta oo kuhaboon baahiyaha carruurtood.

Arabic: الإلكتروني و/أو يمكن ترجمتها بناءً على طلب الوالدين إلى أي لغة تناسب CSD يمكن ترجمة هذه الرسالة باستخدام ميزة الترجمة في موقع احتياجاتهم.

Pashto: ويب سائنت په کارولو سره یا/او کیدای شي د دوي مور پلار په هره هغه ژبه کي چي د دوي اړتیاوو سره CSD د دي لیک ترجماني به د سمون خوري دا ترجمه کړي.

Dari: ترجمه شود و/یا ممکن است به دلیل درخواست والدین به هر زبانی که CSD این مکتوب ممکن است با استفاده از ویژگی ترجمه وبسایت به بهترین وجه با نیازهای آن ها مطابقت دارد ترجمه شود.

Spanish: Esta carta puede traducirse utilizando la función de traducción del sitio web del CSD y/o puede traducirse a petición de los padres/madres al idioma que mejor se adapte a sus necesidades.

Chinese: 这封信可以使用CSD网站的翻译功能进行翻译，也可以根据家长的要求，将信件翻译成最适合他们理解的语言。

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Providing our students and staff in the City Schools of Decatur (CSD) with a safe, educational environment remains one of our top priorities. We are all aware of incidents of gun violence in our surrounding communities and across the nation. A national survey found that 51 percent of teens are worried that there will be a shooting in their school or a school near them.

Studies of all types of school-based gun violence across decades all point to the same significant point of intervention—addressing student's unauthorized access to guns in the home. For example, a Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center study of targeted school violence incidents found that 76 percent of firearms were obtained from the home of a parent or close relative.

Unsecured guns in the home pose a risk to students beyond gun violence in schools. Every year, 350 children under the age of 18 [unintentionally shoot](#) themselves or someone else. That's roughly one unintentional shooting per day. Gun suicide among children has reached the highest rate in more than 20 years. In the overwhelming majority of these incidents, the gun used was one that belonged to someone in their home.

One study found that 70 percent of parents believe their teen cannot access the gun(s) in their home. Yet, the study also found that half of teens said they could gain access to a loaded gun in their home in under an hour, including one-third who said they could do so in under five minutes. Research shows that **secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens.** [Storing firearms securely](#) protects any child in the home and students throughout the school district and community.



## Child Access Prevention & Safe Storage in Georgia as of April 15, 2024

### Child Access Prevention

Georgia law generally makes it unlawful for any person to intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly furnish a handgun to a minor under age 18, subject to multiple exceptions discussed below.<sup>1</sup> A minor's parent or legal guardian may also be held criminally liable for "permit[ting]" their minor child to possess a handgun in circumstances where they know the minor is engaging in conduct that constitutes illegal possession of a firearm and the parent or guardian failed to take reasonable efforts to prevent them from doing so.<sup>2</sup>

These restrictions do not prevent a parent or guardian from furnishing handguns to a minor or permitting a minor to access handguns when the minor is:

1. Attending a hunter education course or a firearms safety course;
2. Engaging in practice in the use of a firearm or target shooting at an established range authorized by the governing body of the jurisdiction where such range is located;
3. Engaging in an organized competition involving the use of a firearm or participating in or practicing for a performance by an organized group under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3) which uses firearms as a part of such performance;
4. Hunting or fishing pursuant to a valid license if such person has in their possession a valid hunting or fishing license if required; is engaged in legal hunting or fishing; has the permission of the owner of the land on which the activities are being conducted; and the pistol or revolver, whenever loaded, is carried only in an open and fully exposed manner;
5. Traveling to or from any of the aforementioned activities if the pistol or revolver is not loaded;
6. Who is on their parent's, legal guardian's, or grandparent's real property, and who has the permission of their parent, legal guardian, or grandparent to possess the handgun or
7. Who is at their residence and possesses a handgun while exercising rights authorized in Ga. Code Ann. §§ 16-3-21 or 16-3-23 (provisions regarding the justified use of force against another) with the permission of their parent or legal guardian.<sup>3</sup>

A separate provision of Georgia law prohibits any parent or legal guardian from intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly furnishing or permitting a minor to possess a handgun if the parent or legal guardian is aware of a substantial risk that the minor will use the handgun to commit a felony.<sup>4</sup> This criminal liability also attaches if the parent or legal guardian, who is aware of a substantial risk that the minor will use the handgun to commit a felony, fails to make reasonable efforts to prevent commission of the offense by the minor.<sup>5</sup> A parent or legal guardian may also be criminally liable if they furnish a handgun to, or permit possession of a firearm by, any minor who has been convicted of a forcible felony or forcible misdemeanor or who has been adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would constitute a forcible felony or forcible misdemeanor if such minor were an adult.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ga. Code Ann. §§ 16-11-101.1(a)(1), (c).

<sup>2</sup> Ga. Code Ann. §§ 16-11-101.1(c)(1).

<sup>3</sup> Ga. Code Ann. § 16-11-132(c).

<sup>4</sup> Ga. Code Ann. § 16-11-101.1(c)(2).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Ga. Code Ann. § 16-11-101.1(c)(3).

## Safe Storage

Georgia law does not otherwise expressly make it unlawful for an adult to negligently or recklessly leave unsecured firearms, including handguns and long guns, accessible to unsupervised minors. Although [federal law](#) applies, Georgia does not require a locking device to accompany the sale of a firearm and generally does not require firearm owners to lock their weapons affirmatively. State administrative regulations may govern the secure control of firearms in specific locations.

You can [learn more](#) and download helpful resources, including a secure storage fact sheet, talking to your children about guns, and facts and resources on child firearm suicide at [BeSMARTforKids.org/resources](https://www.be-smart.org/resources).

Sources: [BeSMARTforKids.org/resources](https://www.be-smart.org/resources) and [Giffords Courage To Fight Gun Violence](https://www.giffords.org/courage-to-fight-gun-violence)

## 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 be accessed online at:

<https://campus.csdecatur.org/campus/portal/parents/decatgur.jsp> or picked up at your child's school. Please return your completed application to the cafeteria or principal's office. Only one application must be filled out per 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 the Nutrition Department website at <http://www.csdecatur.net/nutrition/>.

Parents of students are encouraged to prepay for meals using our online parent portal or by sending payment to the school cafeteria. We encourage all parents to sign up for our parent portal. You can monitor your student's account from the portal and add funds to their meal fund balance. The district's webpage has instructions for accessing the parent portal and adding funds. 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 inform them if their lunch account balance 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 particular 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 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 a licensed physician or licensed healthcare professional who is 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 can bring meals from home; therefore, meals may contain nuts or foods purchased from a facility that processes nuts.

The entire day's menu is posted on the School Nutrition website to support managing specific dietary needs.

### **Responsibility of Parents with Students requiring Special Dietary Meals**

Notify the Nutrition Supervisor/Director and School Nurse of any food allergy, disability, or specific dietary need regarding their child.

Provide Medical Statements completed by a licensed physician or healthcare professional 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, Nutrition Department Program Supervisor/Director, and others as needed.

Notify the School Nurse/Nutrition Supervisor/Director of any changes relating to the specific 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.

# Cybersafety Notice for Families

City Schools of Decatur must have a versatile cyber safety system as a recipient of E-Rate funds.

## **CSD will**

- Enhance learning through the safe use of technology, and do its best to keep the students and their data secure 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 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 cyber safety through education designed to complement and support the use agreement. Some helpful information for families is available at <https://www.csdecatur.net/technologyathome>.
- Provide children with cyber safety strategies.
- Respond to any breaches in an appropriate manner.
- Welcome inquiries from students and families about cyber safety or privacy issues.
- Establish and maintain Technology Use Requirements (TUR, available in the Student and Family Handbook at <https://www.csdecatur.net/forms>)

## **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

- Read this cyber safety notice.
- Discuss this notice and the Technology Use Requirements with their child and explain why it is important.
- Support the school's cybersafety program by encouraging their child to follow cybersafety rules and always ask the teacher any questions about technology use.
- Contact the school to discuss any questions about cyber safety and this notice.

## **Student Responsibilities**

- Review this cyber safety notice with a parent/guardian.
- Follow cybersafety rules and instructions, including the Technology Use Requirements, whenever using CSD technology.
- Follow cybersafety rules whenever using privately owned technology on the school site or at any school-related activity, regardless of location.
- Avoid any involvement with material or activities that could 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 using appropriate filtering software.
- Schools educate students on personal safety practices and practical 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 to keep 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 inappropriate internet material to the teacher, administrator, or Information Services staff. An adult employee should note the site and then close it. 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 should be submitted to analyze the device. The student's age should be considered, and a follow-up conference by the teacher, counselor, or 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 reaccessed. Websites that need to be blocked should be reported as soon as reasonably practicable as a support ticket. It is the user’s responsibility never willfully to access inappropriate or usually non-accessible websites; this type of web use is strictly prohibited.

## Issued Technology 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, to support their participation in CSD instruction or programs. Students are responsible for safekeeping CSD equipment and ensuring it is present in class when expected. This equipment is bound by CSD’s Technology Use Requirements and other regulations and 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 responsibly, 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, theft, 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 (i.e., the maximum cost for damaged equipment) of the current CSD student-issue equipment is \$250 for a Chromebook, \$30 for a case, \$30 for a power cord, and \$20 for a hotspot.
- Loss: Families are responsible for the cost of lost equipment. The replacement cost of the current CSD student-issue equipment is \$250 for a Chromebook, \$30 for a case, \$30 for a power cord, and \$20 for a hotspot.
- Theft: If equipment is stolen, the family must file a police report (no later than five days after the theft) and provide CSD with a copy. If the report is filed and CSD receives a copy, there will be no charge to the family.

### **Connectivity**

- CSD devices described above can connect to non-CSD Wi-Fi networks.
- CSD strongly encourages families to invest in broadband service to their homes.
- 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, which uses a cellular data connection (at no cost to the family) to provide Wi-Fi to the student device.
- Cellular hotspots are meant to be used where there is no Wi-Fi whatsoever in the home; using a cellular hotspot in a setting where there is already home Wi-Fi may harm the performance of both the home Wi-Fi and the hotspot.

## **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 notifications via our emergency notification system. The messaging service utilizes the phone number(s) and email address 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, posted charts indicate the exits and safe areas for safety drills. A fire drill is held twice in the first month of school and 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.

## Parent’s Right to Request a Teacher’s or Paraprofessional’s Qualifications

In compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act requirements, 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’s 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 concerning the student's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day City Schools of Decatur receives an access request.
  - 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 want to inspect. The school official will make access arrangements and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise violating 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 to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be 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 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.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student’s education records, except 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 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 their tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if they need to review an education record to fulfill their 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.
- 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 ten 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 the consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure meets certain conditions 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 –

- 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))
- 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))
- 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 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)
- 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))
- 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))
- 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))

- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student, if the student is dependent on the IRS for tax purposes, (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials concerning a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as “directory information” if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- 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))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service to conduct 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 affords 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 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

## Registration of New Students

When registering new students 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

City Schools of Decatur takes the issue of student residency seriously. Residency requirements are outlined in policy [JBC: School Admissions](#). Procedures have been implemented to provide consistency among the schools, including a centralized registration process at the Wilson Center for students new to the district (including Kindergarten students). These procedures include the requirements for new students to provide acceptable documents to show proof of residency.

A resident is defined as an individual who is legally domiciled within the city limits of the city of Decatur and who, on any given school day, is likely to be at their stated address when not at work or school. Where custody of a child is shared by two or more persons, that person who has the majority of time in physical custody shall be the parent or legal custodian whose residency shall be used for determining domicile and enrollment. A person who owns property in the City of Decatur but does not reside in the city is not considered a resident for enrollment purposes.

While the school system reserves the right to verify residency information provided at any time, the following checks have been put in place: residency checks when students transition from one grade configuration to another, residency checks when concerns have been reported, and random checks of residency. Additionally, families shall be required to provide a new lease when leases submitted for enrollment purposes have expired.

By signing the handbook acknowledgment, 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. In addition to the policy, additional information about residency is available at <https://www.csdecatur.net/residency>.

## Responsibility for Property

Students are personally responsible for textbooks, library books, instructional materials, and student desks assigned to them. The individual must pay for any damage. Prices will be determined by the current cost of replacing the item.

## School Safety Zones

School safety zones are established within 1,000 feet of all schools. Unless authorized by law under certain circumstances, it is unlawful for any person to carry any weapon or explosive compound within a school safety zone, at a school building, at a school function, on school property, or a bus furnished by the school. If any person violates 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 misdemeanor charge. This also applies to members of the press.

# Technology Use Responsibilities

## 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. The 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 of staff work, diminish or circumvent security systems, or undermine staff or student privacy. These Technology Use Responsibilities (TUR) have the effect of regulation and are predicated on and promulgated per Board Policy IFBG: Acceptable Use of Technology Resources.

The principal, program manager, supervisor, or designee shall approve access to CSD resources. 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

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” include 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 access internal and external CSD services 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., vendors, outside presenters, etc.) who access CSD resources.

## Scope

This TUR applies to all users using CSD resources, including during the regular school day, summer school, Extended School Year, intersessions or special programs, school-related activities, and remote

learning. The TUR also applies even when school is not in session. However, users still have access to and use CSD resources 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 access CSD resources – responsibility

- to use CSD resources in a manner that is consistent with the mission of the school system and not to access the 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 promptly report to a teacher, administrator, supervisor, or Information Services staff the appearance of inappropriate, offensive, obscene, and/or harassing language, images, or other content encountered while using CSD resources and not to create or transmit such content themselves.
- 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.

### **... for safety, security, confidentiality, and privacy**

It is **every user's** responsibility

- to log off the 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 any other user access to one's account.
- 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 and 2) with the 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.
- 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 bypass or undermine the function of any CSD resource that provides for safety or wellness, including but not limited to the content filter, content monitor, firewall, or asset tracker.
- 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 essential to providing students with a safe online learning experience. This responsibility also includes approving and monitoring websites or other student-produced classroom products posted online.
- ensure that personal data or data unrelated 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 follow other technology-related policies and regulations, including regulations IFBG-R(2) (Employee Use of Generative AI)
- 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.
- to respect the rights of families who have opted out of the school, creating certain recordings under other state laws.
- 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.
- 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 CSD has not approved.
- not to forward, share, or otherwise propagate sensitive or confidential information – such as emails with information intended for internal use or internal procedures documents – to any unauthorized outside party.

**... 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 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 any software that is not owned or licensed by CSD on CSD equipment.

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

- return all CSD equipment immediately upon unenrollment or 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 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 CSD property. This ensures the district fully engages with law enforcement 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.

## Transportation

The City Schools of Decatur's Transportation Department requires a completed Transportation Request Form for every CSD student needing school bus transportation. This form must be filled out every school year. Qualifying students will receive the form via email, which is also available in the school office. The form should be completed, signed, and returned to Transportation. All bus riders must possess a transportation ID card, which is required for scanning upon entering and exiting the bus. A charge of 5.00 dollars will be applied in Infinite Campus for multiple replacements. Riding the school bus is a privilege, and student behavior is expected to be the same as in the classroom. This requires cooperation between students, parents, bus drivers, and school administrators.

# Student Services and Support

## Behavioral Support

To promote a positive school culture and climate, the District 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 Support (MTSS) Framework. MTSS integrates assessments and interventions within a school-wide, Multi-level Prevention System to maximize achievement and reduce behavior problems.

## Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices

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

## 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 level but has become a K-12 initiative to address the needs of students, pre-K through 12th grade.

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

### **School Counselors**

According to accrediting standards, school counselor(s) are assigned to each elementary school, middle school, and high school. The school counselors can be a part of the interdisciplinary teams focused on ensuring students succeed within the school environment.

School counselors support students by providing individual and/or small group counseling, crisis intervention, and preventative education through whole-classroom guidance. They may serve as members of the student support team.

### **School Social Workers**

According to accrediting standards, a school social worker is assigned to each elementary school, middle school, and high school. The school social worker can be a part of the interdisciplinary teams focused on ensuring that students succeed within the school environment.



School social workers advocate for students and families. They serve as a link between the home, school, and community. They contribute to the educational process by helping students and parents obtain the assistance and resources available to achieve their goals.

### **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 safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community.” In City Schools of Decatur, School Psychologists work to build student success in all areas and foster an engaging and inclusive culture.

The school psychologist provides various related services to students, staff, and parents/guardians at City Schools of Decatur. School Psychologists participate as multidisciplinary team members 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 psycho-educational evaluations as part of the evaluation process for special education. School Psychologists are qualified to provide school-based mental health services such as crisis intervention, behavioral consultation, and individual/group counseling. They are active members of school-based Student Support Teams (SST) and provide data-based decision-making to maximize student outcomes.

Major categories of services include:

- Consultation: Assisting students, staff, and parents/guardians in solving 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, as well as assisting in crisis intervention.

## **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. The Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices addresses infractions to the dress code.

## **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 various 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 comprehensive, structured, sequenced, and appropriately challenging services to meet the demonstrated needs of K-12 gifted learners.
- Provide ongoing professional learning for school personnel annually regarding 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, Honors courses in grades 6-10, and AP and IB courses in grades 10-12.

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

## **Homework**

Homework allows students to practice the skills and attitudes essential to 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, teacher to teacher, and 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:

- Assignments that reinforce the instructional programs
- Assignments that develop and enrich thinking skills
- Assignments that provide practice and skill development

Suggestions for Students:

- Sit down with a parent/family member to discuss a homework routine.
  - Arrange a time and place for homework to be done.
  - Make study/homework time a phone-free/TV-free space.
  - When planning homework time, plan for extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, band, etc.

- Read and follow directions to be sure you understand the assignment before you leave the classroom.
- Be sure you have all the materials needed before starting (pencils, books, paper, etc.).
- Prepare for tests by doing the work when assigned and by reviewing notes/study materials daily.
- Complete all work with a strong effort.
- Turn homework in on time.
- When you are absent, find out what assignments you missed.
- Pay attention and participate in class.
- Share your work with your parents/family members to see if they have suggestions for improvement.

Please contact your child's teacher for questions about homework and homework procedures.

## Media Center

The Library Media Center is open daily for student use. Materials checked out are the student's responsibility 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 check out the Media Center page on each school's website.

## Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

MTSS is a prevention framework that uses data-based decision-making processes to systematically identify students who could benefit from academic and behavioral interventions. The essential components of MTSS are screening, progress monitoring, multi-level prevention system, and data-based decision-making. Georgia has added a fifth essential component of infrastructure. The goal of MTSS is to use data to identify students at risk of poor learning outcomes and provide support in the area of need, whether academic, behavioral, social, emotional, or attendance.

Each school has an MTSS team that meets regularly to engage in a problem-solving process to determine which students could benefit from interventions and use systematic data to measure the impact of the interventions over time. The school team may find students with qualifying data to benefit from the Early Intervention Program (EIP) for K-5 or the Remedial Education Program (REP) for 6-12. A Student

Support Team (SST) comes together to review progress more frequently for students who need intensive interventions to meet a specific goal. When students receive support through an SST, parents are invited to meet with the school team to review the data and make decisions together.

For more detailed information about MTSS, please click [here](#) or contact Iris Im, District Intervention Specialist and MTSS Director, at [iris.im@csdecatour.net](mailto:iris.im@csdecatour.net)

## School Health

The School Health Program believes healthy children are successful learners. The school nurse has a multifaceted role in the school setting, supporting students' physical, mental, emotional, and social health and their learning success. School Nurses provide health-related services for students at each school.

Families must submit updated health information to the school clinic at the beginning of the school year. See the health forms link to access forms as needed. [Health Forms](#)

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, signed by a physician, and co-signed by a parent or 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 information. Updated health forms may be required.

### **Medications**

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, equipment, and supplies (prescription 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 nurse or trained personnel cannot give medicines without completing and signing this form. 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. All medications must be brought to the school by the parent/guardian.

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). Parents should take all medications directly to the office/clinic. Prescription medications require the prescribing physician's written order.

The following information is required on the prescription label:

- 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
- name of student written legibly

Herbal medications can have serious and dangerous adverse effects. When taken regularly or if the request is not within the manufacturer's guidelines, herbal medications and over-the-counter medications 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 prescription label, so one can be kept at home and one for school use. If discarded, the pharmacy that filled your child's prescription can reprint the label. The removal of prescription labels often occurs with asthma inhalers and EpiPens.

If you would like for your child to self-carry their emergency medication, such as a prescription inhaler, epinephrine auto-injector, or insulin/diabetic supplies, the prescribing physician must indicate on both the Care Plan and the Authorization for Student to Carry Medication form that the student is trained and capable of carrying and self-administering the listed medication. The Authorization for Students to Carry form requires signatures from physicians, students, and parents and is valid:

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

Medication dosage, route, or administration time changes require an updated physician-signed Authorization for Medication Administration form submitted by the parent or guardian.

Students new to the district and bringing 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.

Parents or guardians must pick up student medications (prescription and over-the-counter) by the last day of school. Students are not permitted to transport medication home. Medications are not allowed to remain in the school clinic over the summer. Any medications not picked up by the last day of school will be discarded.

Personnel who do not hold a nursing license and are designated to assist students with medication administration 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:

- 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 from <https://www.csdecalur.net/Page/1270>.
- Documentation of vision, hearing, nutrition, and dental screening on Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3300. Consult with your physician or DeKalb Public Health 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 about 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. When assessing a child for illness, clusters of symptoms may be considered to determine the need for going home.

**\*The School Nurse’s assessment and discretion will be followed when determining if a student should be sent home from school.**

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 them at home until they are 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 regular 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.

(Common Communicable Diseases of Children, Dekalb County Board of Health, Revised 2015)

## **Section 504**

Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Section 504 ensures that a child with a qualifying disability has equal access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Under Section 504, if appropriate, students may receive accommodations and modifications tailored to their individual needs in order to meaningfully benefit from the education environment. 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 specially designed instruction. While not all 504-eligible students require accommodations and modifications to access the educational curriculum, all eligible students with disabilities are protected from discrimination under Section 504. Parents can initiate an evaluation for 504 eligibility by contacting the 504 coordinator at your school.

## **Special Education**

City Schools of Decatur ensures that students with disabilities ages 3-21 who 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 ensures 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.

Multiple staff members in the department can assist with questions or concerns. For more detailed information, please [click here](#).

## Testing

The standardized testing program in the City Schools of Decatur is designed to provide staff and community information about student performance. As a result, a combination of required state and locally required standardized tests include 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 administered across the district.

State and federal law require public schools to assess all enrolled students annually. Neither the school nor the district has the authority to waive the student assessment requirement. Parents with questions about testing requirements for their 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.

## 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 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, at [wwashington@csdecaur.net](mailto:wwashington@csdecaur.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, at [wwashington@csdecalur.net](mailto:wwashington@csdecalur.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 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, at [wwashington@csdecalur.net](mailto:wwashington@csdecalur.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

student's 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 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, at [wwashington@csdecaur.net](mailto:wwashington@csdecaur.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 must 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, at [wwashington@csdecaur.net](mailto:wwashington@csdecaur.net).

# Practices and Procedures

## 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:

- Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so or
- Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm or
- Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - 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; or
  - Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education or
  - Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening education environment or
  - Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term applies to acts that occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school-related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system. The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying that occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication:

- Is explicitly directed at students or school personnel and
- Is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school and
- Creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

For purposes of this Code Section, electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic, or photo-optical system.

### **Reporting Bullying**

A verbal report of intimidation, harassment, or bullying/cyberbullying can be made directly to a school teacher or administrator, or you may submit a CSD [form](#) to report allegations of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying. Electronic forms are received by the Director of Restorative Practices and Behavior Supports and will be shared with the School Principal.

### **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.

## Drug-Free Schools

City Schools of Decatur has a drug-free school 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.

## 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 another 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 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.

## 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.

Dr. Mari Ann Banks  
Director of Equity and Professional Development & Title IX Coordinator  
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Decatur, GA 30030  
[TitleIX@csdecatur.net](mailto:TitleIX@csdecatur.net)  
404-371-3601 ext. 1029  
404-499-1684, cell

Title IX Liaison for Athletics and Student Activities  
Mr. Rodney Thomas, Athletics Director  
310 N. McDonough Street, Decatur, GA 30030  
[Rthomas@csdecatur.net](mailto:Rthomas@csdecatur.net)  
404-371-3601, ext. 1026

Title IX Investigator  
Ms. Alpha Price, Coordinator Of Audits And Investigations  
Wilson School Support Center  
125 Electric Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030  
[TitleIX@csdecatur.net](mailto:TitleIX@csdecatur.net)  
404.615.2995

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.