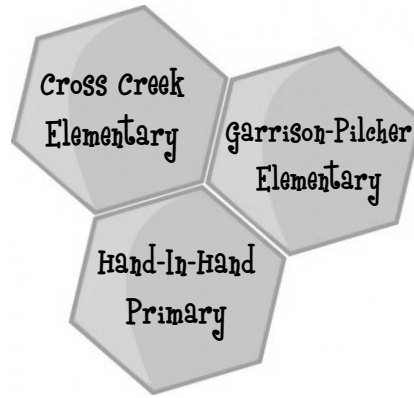


MISSION STATEMENT



Working In Together, we teach and nurture Children to Ensure their Success.

VISION STATEMENT

TCES are supportive learning communities where extraordinary learning experiences inspire children to dream and prepare them for a dynamic future.

Our school system colors are Blue and Gold

We welcome you and your Pre-K through fourth grade students to Thomas County Schools. Our schools are designed to provide your student with a rigorous education to prepare him/her for a life time of learning. We are conveniently housed in three age-appropriate locations that offer optimal educational experiences for every child.

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide for students/parents of Thomas County Elementary Schools and explain most of the policies and rules of the school. However, it does not address every policy of the school or school system. If you have questions, please contact your child's school.

Thomas County Elementary Schools:

Hand-In-Hand Primary School – Pre-K and Kindergarten
Jeanna Mayhall, Principal

4687 US Hwy 84 Bypass
Thomasville, GA 31792
(229) 225-3908 Fax 225-3982

Garrison-Pilcher Elementary School – Grades 1 and 2
Sharonda Wilson, Principal

277 Hall Road
Thomasville, GA 31757
(229) 225-4387 Fax 227-2428

Cross Creek Elementary School – Grades 3 and 4
Clay Stanaland, Principal

324 Clark Road
Thomasville, GA 31757
(229) 225-3900 Fax 225-3904

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SCHOOL HOURS

The school is open from 7:30am to 3:30pm. We follow the same calendar as all Thomas County Schools. Official school hours are from 8:00am – 3:00pm. The tardy bell rings at 8:05am. If your child is not in class at 8:05 a.m., he/she is considered late. Our office personnel are available to answer phone calls between 7:00am and 4:00pm.

For safety reasons and by order of the School Superintendent, we cannot allow teachers to be out of the classrooms and on the telephone during instructional time. Each teacher within Thomas County Elementary Schools has voicemail, as well as, email. These are the most effective methods of getting messages to specific faculty members. Email addresses for our staff may be found on the school system website:

www.thomas.k12.ga.us



ATTENDANCE

- Please have your child at school by 7:55 a.m., first bell rings at 8:00.
- Dismissal begins at 2:45 p.m.
- If you pick up your child early, he/she will miss part of our instructional day.
- Students are considered absent if they are signed out before 11:30 or signed in after 11:30.
- Sign outs are not allowed after 2:30.
- Changes in transportation should be made before 2:00.
- Excessive absences and tardies will be reported to the proper authorities, and action will be taken to insure regular school attendance.
- Letters referencing the state attendance policy will be sent home the week the student misses the 5th, 7th and 10th day of school. This letter will be sent home each absence after the 10th absence.
- If absenteeism persists, the Parent Involvement Coordinator and/or the school administration will make home visits.
- Parents can write 5 “parent excuses” per semester. All other absences must be supported with an excuse from a doctor’s office.

Pre-K Policy:

The Department of Early Care and Learning requires that children enrolled in the lottery-funded Pre-K programs be in school for a minimum of 6 ½ hours daily and attend 180 days during the year. (Exceptions are made for

sickness or a family crisis.) Tardy arrivals and early checkouts disrupt the routine and are strongly discouraged. Pre-K parents should note that Bright from the Start –Georgia’s Department of Early Care and Learning specifies “*children who do not attend class or are late for two consecutive weeks without a medical or other reasonable explanation must be removed from the roster.*” When your student is absent, an absentee form must be completed and returned to school following *each* absence. There is a waiting list for Pre-K students. If a child is disenrolled for attendance reasons, the slot is immediately filled with the next student on the waiting list.

Signing Out

Prior to 2:30, parents must sign a child out in the office. No student will be allowed to be signed out after 2:30. This is a critical time of day for teachers to ensure that students are being dismissed to the appropriate locations. Please make sure that you have listed

the names of all those who may pick up your child with the secretaries in the office and are aware of our pick-up policies and the reason for our policies. We will require a driver’s license ID to match with names on our pick-up list if we do not recognize the person picking the child up. Please make sure that all of your friends and relatives understand this policy before picking up your child.

Tardy Policy

Students are tardy at 8:05 a.m. After 8:30, an adult **must** go to the office and sign the child in, giving the reason in writing for being tardy. If you are going to arrive at school after 8:05, please make sure that your child has had breakfast.

The accumulation of tardies will warrant action. Also, parents are encouraged not to pick their students up before the end of the school day except where there is a legitimate emergency. Tardies and early sign-outs, combined, should not exceed twelve per school year, as these are factored into a student’s eligibility for perfect attendance awards. Exceeding twelve combined tardies and early sign-outs will cause a student to be ineligible to receive such awards.

Excused tardy-includes events that are physically uncontrollable such as: an accident, road closed due to an accident: power outage, etc. (GADOE)

Unexcused tardy-includes: over-sleeping, traffic too heavy, errand for parents, delayed at train crossing, etc. (GADOE)

BOOK BAGS

For the safety of our students, rolling book bags or backpacks and other large bags are not allowed at any Thomas County Elementary Schools. Large bags are not necessary and present a safety hazard. Please make sure your child brings a book bag (with a name) each day that is large enough to hold a standard size folder.

BUS RIDERS

Riding a school bus is a privilege provided by the Thomas County Board of Education. This privilege may be denied if it is determined that a child is not mature enough to ride or exhibits behavior which causes a safety risk to himself or others on the bus. In the event the child is not allowed to ride the school bus, it is the responsibility of the parents to get the child to and from school each day. Being suspended from riding the school bus does not constitute an excused absence.

Bus problems should be reported to the school administration or the bus garage at 225-4386 or 227-3187.

THOMAS COUNTY SCHOOLS BUS BEHAVIOR POLICIES:

All students are expected to conduct themselves in such a way as not to hinder the driver from giving his full attention to driving the bus. Students misbehaving will have a Bus Conduct Report Form filled out by the bus driver. The student will be seen by an administrator or counselor. To maintain a safe, orderly, and comfortable atmosphere on all buses, rules and safety features must be observed at all times.

CAR RIDERS

Each school has staff members on duty 7:15-8:00 a.m. and 3:00-3:30 p.m. Cars should YIELD to BUSES at all times.

For the safety of our students, staff, and parents, all drop off/pick up areas are a NO PHONE ZONE. If you are found texting or talking on a cell phone, you will be asked to park and walk to the building to drop off or pick up your student. Repeat offenses may result in the revocation of the option to drop off in the circle in the mornings or drive through for afternoon pick-up.

As a result of child custody issues and overall child safety, we have an important pick-up policy that is strictly enforced. If you are picking up your child in the afternoons, **YOU MUST DISPLAY A CAR RIDER SIGN GIVEN TO YOU BY THE OFFICE STAFF AT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL. IF YOU ARE PARKING IN THE**

PARKING LOT AND ARE WALKING TO SCHOOL DOORS, YOU MUST HAVE THE CAR RIDER SIGN IN YOUR HAND.

This identifies you as the custodial parent or the person approved to pick-up the child. If you do not have a pick up sign, you will be asked to report to the school office to sign the student out. Please make sure you have a photo ID (driver's license) with you. **WE WILL MAKE NO EXCEPTIONS EVEN IF WE KNOW YOU!!!** Everyone will follow this policy.

Changes in Transportation:

If a student needs to ride a bus, other than his/her regularly scheduled one, a note from the parents must be sent to and signed by the principal authorizing the change. We must know if the bus driver knows your child and where the child gets off the bus. Young children do not always know when to get off the school bus. If you need to call the school about a change in transportation you must do so before 1:00. After this time, we cannot guarantee that the teachers will get the message and get your child to the correct pick-up area.

Please refer to your student's school page, in the back of this handbook, for specific details regarding drop off and pick up.

CURRICULUM

Thomas County Elementary Schools are Learning-Focused schools where all teachers utilize research-based instructional strategies on a consistent and pervasive basis school wide. The instructional program is based on the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS), for grades K-4. If you would like a more in-depth look at the courses, please visit the CCGPS website. If you still have questions, please ask your child's teacher or an administrator at our school.

www.georgiastandards.org

- "Click" on the Georgia Performance tab near the top of the page
- Look down the left hand column and "click" on CCGPS by grade level
- Then choose the grade and subject of your choice.

CUSTODY ISSUES

If you have primary custody of your child and do not want the non-custodial parent to pick up or visit your child at school, you must provide court documentation supporting your wishes.

DELIVERIES TO STUDENTS

Please do not send flowers or balloons to your child at school. These items are a safety hazard on the buses and are disruptive in the classrooms. It is recommended that these items



not be brought to the school at all, as it is difficult for other young children in the class to understand why they didn't get the same. Flowers and balloons make a wonderful surprise sitting on the kitchen table or on a child's bed when they come home from school.

DISCIPLINE PLAN:

When a student chooses to participate in behavior that is contrary to good order and discipline of the school, consequences will be implemented to correct the behavior. Consequences are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the expectations for behavior in our schools. Behaviors which might warrant administrative intervention include, but are not limited to:

- Defiance/Disrespect/ Non-compliance
- Disruption
- Dress Code Violation
- Inappropriate Language
- Physical Contact/ Physical Aggression
- Property Misuse
- Tardy for class
- Technology Violation
- Abusive Language/ Inappropriate Language/ Profanity
- Arson
- Bomb Threat/False Alarm
- Fighting/ Physical Aggression
- Forgery/ Theft
- Gang Affiliation Display
- Harassment/Bullying
- Inappropriate Display of Affection
- Inappropriate Location/ Out of Bounds Area
- Lying/Cheating
- Property Damage/Vandalism
- Skip class
- Truancy
- Use/Possession of Alcohol
- Use/Possession of Combustibles
- Use/Possession of Drugs
- Use/Possession of Tobacco
- Use/Possession of Weapons

Depending on the severity of the behavior and the number of times the behavior has occurred, the following consequences may be used to correct student behavior.

- Verbal reprimand
- In-class isolation
- Telephone parent
- Requirements to obtain appropriate clothing
- Parent conference
- Change seating

- Participation in service project which allows the child to engage in desired behavior
- Restriction from school programs/assemblies
- Compensation (cleaning or repair)
- Compensation (financial)
- In School Suspension
- Out of School Suspension
- Morning or after school detention
- Other consequences deemed appropriate by parents, teachers, and/or school administration

Please note: Corporal punishment is not permitted in the Thomas County School System. No adult, not even parents, will be allowed to hit or spank a child on any Thomas County Elementary School campus.

Our schools are participating in an important district initiative. It is called Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

What is Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports?

PBIS is a process for creating safer and more effective schools. It is a systems approach to enhancing the capacity of schools to educate all children by developing research-based, school-wide, and classroom behavior support systems. The process focuses on improving a school's ability to teach and support positive behavior for all students. Rather than a prescribed program, PBIS provides systems for schools to design, implement, and evaluate effective school-wide, classroom, non-classroom, and student specific plans. PBIS includes school-wide procedures and processes intended for all students and all staff in all settings. PBIS is not a program or a curriculum. It is a team-based process for systemic problem solving, planning, and evaluation. It is an approach to creating a safe and productive learning environment where teachers can teach and all students can learn.

What is PBIS at our school?

We have adopted a unified set of school rules. These rules define our expectations for behavior in our school. You will see these expectations and rules posted throughout the school and your child will be learning them during his or her first days at school. Our unified school expectations are found in every classroom and non-classroom setting in the school.

DRESS CODE:

Students will wear acceptable attire which exhibits good taste and which is appropriate for the occasion. Comfortable tops (T-shirts), shorts/pants, and tennis shoes are recommended. This makes playground activities, bathroom times, and other activities easier for the children. Active learning is sometimes "messy". Please send your child to school in clothes that are suitable for "active" activities. The school is not responsible for soiled clothing. Boots, flip flops and open toe shoes are not recommended for outside/ playground play.

Policy of the Thomas County School System:

All students shall be modestly dressed and groomed as not to unreasonably distract the attention of others or cause disruption or interference with the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

Please avoid the following when sending your child to school:

- Unnatural, distracting hair color and styles (ex: Mohawk, letters/patterns in hair, temporary hair color spray)
- No make-up
- Body piercing, other than pierced ears on girls
- Pierced ears or earrings on boys
- "Heelys" or any other shoe with wheels
- Distracting hair color
- Tank tops
- See-through clothing
- Shirts, pants, or shorts with vulgar or inappropriate messages
- Shorts/pants with writing on the seat
- Bare midriffs
- Over-sized pants
- Bare feet
- Short shorts (Cross Creek student's shorts must be fingertip length or longer)
- Uncleanliness
- No bandanas
- No gang related signs, symbols, names, or other items that can be associated with any street gang. The principal or designee shall have the final say in determining if an item is gang related.

Parent Dress:

All parents and adults visiting the campus should dress in a manner appropriate for our program and follow the same guidelines that are expected of students. Do not wear sleep attire or clothing that exposes undergarments or private body parts. Low-cut tops, and extremely short skirts or shorts are not appropriate for this school environment. Clothing that advertises

alcohol or drugs is not allowed on campus. Any parent dressed inappropriately will be asked to leave campus.

All guidelines are subject to the interpretation of the administration.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES & CELL PHONES

All schools in the Thomas County School System discourage the bringing of cell phones and other electronic devices to school by students and prohibit the use of cell phones and other electronic devices during school hours. School hours begin when the student arrives on school premises and ends when school is dismissed for the day. Students are prohibited from using cell phones and other electronic devices during the operation of a school bus that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus. Electronic devices and cell phones that are used by students and/or are taken out in class will be taken to the office by the teacher. The device will be held until a parent comes to pick it up. The schools will not be responsible for lost or stolen communication devices.

ELEMENTARY TRANSITION PLAN

It is important for children to have smooth transitions between schools. Every school within our school system works to provide opportunities for students to visit and participate in special events at their future schools. The Thomas County Elementary Schools have scheduled visits each 9 weeks for students rising to the next grade level. These events help to alleviate anxiety about transitioning to a new building for both students and parents. Students are able to become familiar with teachers and students that will be with them the following year, and the layout and design of the buildings.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The school will do everything possible to ensure the safety of your child. Monthly fire drills and periodic severe weather drills will be held. Another part of our safety program is a sign-in pass policy for all visitors to the building. When you come into the building, please come by the office to get a pass before going to any other part of the building. Visitors on campus without an appropriate pass will be asked to report to the office to sign in and obtain a pass.

LOST AND FOUND

Please **label all clothing and personal items** before they leave your home. Unlabeled articles that are found are put into a designated lost/found area. Parents are encouraged to check this frequently. Unclaimed items will periodically be donated to charity. **The school**

is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or misplaced items belonging to students. We will, however, do our best to help you locate them. **Please do not let students bring special or expensive toys to school that could be lost or stolen.**

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Each child's belongings including school supplies, sweaters, jackets or coats, should be plainly marked to avoid loss or exchange. Students are not allowed to sell or trade items at school. No toys, small gadgets, or electronic devices may be brought to school except with the permission of the teacher. The school is not responsible for any loss of personal property and will not assume liability. At the teacher's discretion, these items will be taken by the teacher or administrator and held until the parent comes to get them.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Promotion requirements are determined by the State Board of Education and the Thomas County Board of Education. Criteria for promotion include passing course grades and acceptable scores on state-mandated criterion-reference tests.



Hand-In-Hand Students:

Students will be promoted from Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten unless there is a successful appeal to the Bright from the Start, Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning.

Students will be promoted from Kindergarten to Grade 1 unless there is a successful appeal to the school administration.

Garrison Pilcher students:

Students in grades 1 and 2 will be promoted according to the student's classroom achievement, state mandated tests, benchmark and STAR assessments.

Cross Creek students:

Students in grades 3 and 4 must pass both reading and math and one of the following courses: language, science, and social studies. Quarterly benchmark tests that assess mastery of Georgia's Performance Standards will be considered as part of the subject grade.

Grade placement of students in grades 1 through 8 who have repeated a grade previously and who are currently failing to meet criteria for promotion including state promotion requirements for grades 3, 5, & 8 will be handled on an individual basis.

REPORT CARDS

Midterm progress reports are sent home with students in grades 1-4. Report cards/progress reports are sent home with students in grades K-4 at the end of every nine weeks. Both will indicate the progress a student has made during the grading period. Pre-K students will receive progress reports in December and May at Student-Led Conferences.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

When withdrawing a student from a Thomas County School, it is necessary for the parent to notify both the teacher and the office. Withdrawal forms must be completed, bills paid, lunch charges paid, and all textbooks and library books returned before a student's record is cleared. If a parent comes to school to withdraw a child, he/she should go to the office, not the classroom.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS & SERVICES

BUSINESS EDUCATION EXCHANGE

Goals of the Business and Education Exchange are:

- to increase student achievement using incentives
- to promote good school attendance
- to increase awareness of career opportunities and work ethics within the community
- to improve communication between school, home, and work
- to improve parental involvement
- to introduce students to community service
- to establish community relationships

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

Guidance and counseling considers the physical and emotional development of students and offers age-appropriate support in the forms of preventive counseling, responsive services, academic and career support.



If you have concerns about your child's adjustment to school or other issues, you may contact your child's school counselor. If your child is having any difficulty identified at school, we will refer him/her to the counselor. Our counselor will contact you if your child has been referred for services.

HOSPITAL HOMEBOUND PROGRAM

Hospital/Homebound (HHB) services are designed to provide continuity of educational services between the classroom and home or hospital for students in Georgia public schools whose medical needs, either physical or psychiatric, do not allow them to attend school for a limited period of time. HHB instruction may be used to supplement the classroom program for students with health impairments whose conditions may interfere with regular school attendance (e.g., students receiving dialysis or radiation/chemotherapy or students with other serious health conditions). Students must be enrolled in a public school in Georgia in order to receive HHB services.

HHB services are not intended to supplant regular school services and are by design temporary. The student must anticipate being absent from school for a minimum of ten consecutive or intermittent school days due to a medical or psychiatric condition. The student's inability to attend school for medical or psychiatric reasons must be certified by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist who is currently treating the student for the diagnosis presented.

For HHB forms or questions contact your school counselor or:

Dr. Bonnie Seery
Director Exceptional Students
229 225-4380 Ext 126
229 2255234 fax
drseery@rose.net office email

MEDIA CENTER

Students will be allowed to check out a book from the school media center to take home. When a student returns the book, they may check out another one. Students will not be permitted to check out a book unless all titles checked out to that student have been returned to the library. Computers are also available for students and parents to use in our media center. The media specialist is in charge of the library. The media specialist will host Book Fairs during the year to help you build your child's library. We do not charge fines for late books, however, parents will be charged the replacement cost for books that are lost or damaged.

NURSE/CLINIC

Each elementary school has a full time nurse who will assist your child during illness or injury at school. Parents will be notified when a child is sick or complaining of continuous discomfort or pain. Students must be fever free for **24 hours** before returning to school. ***It is vital to always have up-to-date telephone numbers***

where a parent, relative or friend can be reached at all times. If your telephone number changes, please inform your child's teacher and the office as soon as possible. In case of an emergency and a parent cannot be found, an ambulance will be called and your child will be transported to the hospital. The cost of the ambulance will be the parent's responsibility. A new medical information card should be on file with the nurse every year and updated when any changes occur. This card provides information about your child's medical history and personal contact information. A medical record is kept on your child throughout his education in the Thomas County School System and follows him/her to the next grade level.

Medication:

If it is necessary for a student to take any form of medication at school, a signed permission sheet from the nurse's office must be filled out before the medication can be given. Prescription medicine must be checked in at the office in its original container with the labeled dosage/directions. All medication will be kept in and dispensed through the nurse's office. All medication should be in the original prescription bottle, labeled and dated properly. The nurse has the right to refuse to give any medication that is questionable or expired. Parents are encouraged to give medication at home whenever possible. When sending temporary medication, please only bring what is needed to be given during school hours (ex.-five days of antibiotics. We need five pills.). Please note-Georgia law states that we are not permitted to administer any non-prescription (over-the-counter) medicines. If your child needs this type of medicine, please administer it at home or you are welcome to come to school and give it yourself. Over the counter medication **can** be given **with written permission from your family doctor. Medication CANNOT be transported by children.**

***Thomas County School system will not be held responsible for any medication lost by a student while transporting medication to school. Parents have the responsibility to inform the school of any changes in medications or medical condition.**

Please do not send children to school on the buses when they have an upset stomach or other illnesses that could cause them to get sick on the bus. No child should ever be sent to school if he/she has a fever. If a child gets sick on the bus ride to school, a parent/guardian will be called immediately to come and pick up



the child. Children will be sent home due to illness at the discretion of the school nurse and/or the school administration.

Head lice:

The Thomas County School System has developed a No-Nit head lice policy. This means that if a student has been identified with lice, or nits (eggs) dead or alive, the student must be removed from the classroom and a parent will be called to come and pick up the child. Before the student can return to the classroom, he/she must gain clearance through the school nurse's office. The student must be brought in by a parent and **not** put on the school bus. If a student is found to have an infestation, then other siblings will be checked. The nurse has information that can help get rid of head lice and parents are encouraged to set up an appointment time with her so that she can help.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to confer with teachers on a regular basis concerning the progress of the student. Conferences must be held before school, after school, or during the teacher's planning period. Teachers will not be able to leave class to meet with parents. Parents may make appointments for conferences by calling the school office and leaving a message for the teacher. Teachers will return phone calls as soon as possible.

At Hand-In-Hand, student led conferences will be held twice yearly (in the fall and in the spring). Your child's teacher will be working with you on the best time to have your conference. **STUDENTS MUST ATTEND WITH THE PARENT.** During your conference, a portfolio of work samples, pictures, and anecdotal notes will be shared with parents.

PARENT RESOURCES/TITLE I

All Thomas County Elementary Schools are classified as Title One Schools. We qualify as Title One schools based on the number of students receiving free and reduced meals. As Title One schools, we are required to use research-based teaching strategies and programs to improve student achievement. Our staff must be highly qualified and be involved in on-going staff development. School staff studies data gathered from student assessments, parent surveys, and staff surveys to guide our School Improvement Plan. Our Title One Parent Involvement Plans are distributed to every parent at the beginning of school. The plan will also be attached to our school web page. We have a parent advisory panel that meets twice a year to discuss school accomplishments and areas for improvement. If you have concerns or

questions, feel free to contact a parent advisory member.

Each elementary location houses a wealth of parent information available pertaining to child health, discipline, development, and other topics relevant to the ages of the students at that school. Additionally, we have many different types of parent books for check-out in the media center. Our media specialist is available to help you. If you need information that we do not have, please ask. In most situations, we are able to secure resources for you to check-out.

A copy of our Title I Plan is located in the school office and is available for parents to view. Please contact a Parent Coordinator if you would like to see this document.

PARENT VOLUNTEERING

All Thomas County Elementary Schools welcome parents to participate in their student's school life. A parent volunteer orientation is held in the fall of each school year. If you are interested in volunteering in your child's school, please contact the Parent Involvement Coordinator at that school. They will be more than happy to schedule times that are convenient for you and will not disrupt class schedules.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)

It is our job to ensure that every child is challenged, prepared, and successful. If a student is having difficulty academically or behaviorally or needs enrichment above and beyond what the classroom teacher can provide, he or she will be referred to the RtI team. The RtI team includes all staff directly involved with the child and specialized staff in the area that the child is experiencing difficulty or need. The RtI team always includes the parent of the child. Through the RtI process, structures and programs are put in place to assist the child in learning academic skills and appropriate behaviors. The RtI team will meet as frequently as needed to review student progress and review the effectiveness of interventions put in place by the team. All elementary schools have the following specialists that serve as resources and provide direct services to students: Speech Therapists, School Psychologist, School Counselor, Behavior Interventionist, Special Education Teachers, and School Nurse. We also have access to a Physical Therapist and Occupational Therapist that contract with our school system. If your child is referred to the RtI team, you will be invited to attend the meetings. You will be included in all decision-making regarding the education and success of your child.

SCHOOL BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

The purpose of the Booster organizations is to encourage and promote the education, care, and nurturing of all children and youth of Thomas County. Schools alone cannot adequately prepare our children for the demands of the future; it is through the involvement of each of us –parents, teachers, friends, and the business community– that we can truly educate and care for all our children. We believe that we must all work together - sharing ideas and encouraging one another for the betterment of our children.

The elementary school staff and Booster officers invite each parent to become part of the Boosters at your child’s school. Each group will have a variety of projects, fundraisers, and activities throughout the school year.

Please look for meeting dates and times in school newsletters and calendars. We look forward to a great year!

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Each school has its own School Council that meets four times a year. Council members include two teachers, the principal, two parent-business representatives, and two parents. Council members serve a two year term. School Council members will be posted on the school web page with contact information. If you have concerns or questions, feel free to contact a school council member.



SCHOOL NUTRITION



**“Building Healthy Bodies...
Ready to Learn”
Thomas County Schools
Nutrition Program**

“Our mission is to be a partner in the educational process by providing quality meals at a reasonable price and nutrition education opportunities for students that promote healthy children, READY to LEARN.”

The school nutrition program: Provides breakfast and lunch to help your child get the nutrition they need to learn, grow and develop. After school snacks are provided for after school tutorial programs. Nutrition goals of the Thomas County School Nutrition Program must be in compliance with the United States Department of Agriculture. Menus must

adhere to strict guidelines issued by USDA. The menus must meet USDA nutrition goals when averaged over a school week. Each meal planned must provide the required (USDA) number of food components and food items and meet the nutrient standards for the age/grade group served. The four components for lunch are meat/meat alternate, vegetables/fruits, grains/breads, and milk. Your child’s monthly menus are posted on the Thomas County School’s web site, www.thomas.k12.ga.us. Menus are published weekly in the Thomasville Times Enterprise.

Free and Reduced Meal Applications:

If you believe your family qualifies for the free/reduced meal program, complete **ONE Family Application per family**. Be sure to list **ALL** students enrolled in the Thomas County School System as well as other family members on the application.

**** A new application must be completed EVERY YEAR.** Even if your child (ren) qualified for free/reduced benefits the previous school year, you **MUST complete a current 2012-2013 application.** All applications are confidential. Applications are available on the website and/or at each school office.

Meal Accounts: Each cafeteria has a computer program for tracking meals and payments. **ALL** Thomas County students are assigned a student identification/account number that serves as their library number and their meal account number. Prepaying for school meals is preferred. Parents may call the school nutrition manager’s office concerning their child’s meal account. Parents may pay for meals via internet; Go to www.thomas.k12.ga.us or www.myschoolbucks.com for on line payments. Click on School Nutrition and then click On Line Cafeteria Payment (myschoolbucks.com). Breakfast is offered to **ALL students at NO CHARGE**. Lunch prices for grades **PK through 4th are \$1.50** and **5th – 12th are \$1.75**. Reduced status meal price is **\$.40**. Adult lunch price is **\$2.75** and **\$1.75** for breakfast. Students attending middle and high may purchase extra items for **.75** and **1.25**. Elementary students may purchase extra milk or juice for **.50**.

Charging Meals: The meal charge regulation states that the school nutrition program realizes that a child may forget his lunch money from time to time, thus having to charge a meal. We **discourage** any charging of meals. Charge letters will be sent to the classrooms weekly. Students are responsible for taking these letters home to parents. Students are told by cashier **each time** the student owes money. Students may check their balances on the computer as they go through the line. Students and parents are expected to send money each week for lunch. Parents may call the nutrition office or school manager office any time to check their children’s account balance.

Schools follow these progressive steps when charging becomes necessary:

- ❖ The School Nutrition manager will notify parents via bill/letter from the child’s account and will send the letter/bill home with the child notifying them of the charge(s).

- ❖ The School Nutrition director will notify parents bi-weekly with **One Call Now** automated phone messaging program and via email messages.
- ❖ The School Nutrition manager or director will notify school administrator if charges persist or are not cleared. The school administrator or designee will discuss the charges via telephone or conference with parent of student.
- ❖ End of year negative balances will be transferred to the student's account for the following year.
- ❖ Seniors owing for lunches must clear ALL school debts before graduation date.

Food/Beverages brought in the cafeteria during the school day: Our local board policy prohibits the sale of non-nutritional foods and carbonated beverages during the school day in all areas of the school campus. With this in mind and in order to encourage better nutrition and to develop healthy eating habits, students or parents **are not allowed** to bring foods to school from outside restaurants anytime during the school day. Of course, lunches sent with students when they come to school in the morning in lunch boxes or plain bags are permissible. Healthy food choices are encouraged when parents bring foods for school parties.

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.”

When packing meals from home...

The school nutrition meals are planned to meet specific age appropriate dietary needs of all students who eat in the cafeteria. Their goal is for every Thomas County student to eat in the cafeteria. We do know that students will want to pack a lunch from time to time, so we would like to offer a few suggestions. Choose USDA MyPlate as a guide for planning meals from home. When packing your child's lunch, be sure to follow these simple guidelines for healthy life long habits:

- Make half their meal veggies and fruits. These foods are full of nutrients and promote good health.
- Add lean protein. Choose protein foods, such as lean beef, turkey, chicken or beans.
- Include whole grains. Aim to make at least half your grains whole. Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber.
- Avoid extra fat. Avoid putting high fat snack items like chips in the lunch.
- Help with portion control. Children will feel satisfied without overeating.
- Try new foods. Keep it interesting by picking out new foods like mango.
- Avoid packing unhealthy



sweets. Be sure to pack a piece of fruit instead of a dessert.

- Keep cold food cold and hot food hot. Food safety is critical to your child's health and well being.

The National School Meal Program provides your child with all of these items mentioned above. Fresh fruits and vegetables, lean protein, dark green and orange vegetables and lower fat items are on the menu everyday in the cafeteria. The school nutrition program follows all of USDA regulations while serving food in a safe environment. The best bargain in town is a school meal. Remember to encourage your child to try the newer menu items offered in the cafeteria.

Parties and Celebrations

When bringing foods for celebrations or parties, we strongly encourage healthy food choices, such as those listed below. Homemade goods, including cupcakes and other snacks will not be served to students. Due to the number of food allergies in our schools, we ask that all foods be sealed and have a nutrition information label.

Healthy Party Snacks:

- Pretzels
- Goldfish
- Cheese Crackers
- Animal Crackers
- Trail Mix
- Yogurt Parfaits
- Light Popcorn
- Applesauce or Fruit Cups
- Raw Veggies/Low Fat Dip
- Graham Crackers
- Raisins or dried Fruit
- Low Fat Pudding Cups
- String Cheese
- 100% Fruit Snacks
- Canned fruits (in light or own juice)
- English Muffins, Whole Grain
- Rice Cakes

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual school pictures will be taken early in the school year. Every student in the Thomas County Elementary Schools will be photographed, however pictures must be prepaid to receive a packet. Information on the types of picture packets and their cost will be furnished prior to picture day. Fall, Spring, and class pictures will be taken by professional photographers. See the school calendar for your student's picture dates.

SECTION 504

Safeguards:

1. Overview: Any student, parent, or guardian may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school

system's Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.

2. Hearing Request: The Request for the Hearing must include the following:

- a. Student name
- b. Address of student
- c. School student is attending
- d. Reason for request for the hearing
- e. Decision objecting to
- f. Remedy suggested
- g. Your name and contact information

Within 10 business days from receiving the Request for Hearing, the 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request from the parent, guardian, or student is incomplete the 504 Coordinator will tell the grievant what specific information is needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will stop until the Request for Hearing contains all the above noted information.

3. Mediation: The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues. Mediation is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. If mediation is terminated without an agreement, procedures for conducting an impartial hearing will be followed without an additional Request for Hearing.

4. Hearing Procedures:

- a. The 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official and hearing within 45 calendar days unless a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
- b. A continuance request in writing to all parties may be granted by the hearing officer with good cause.
- c. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.
- d. The grievant may be represented by legal counsel at their own expense. They may participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If represented by legal counsel at the hearing, they must notify the 504 Coordinator in writing at least

10 calendar days before the hearing. Failure to do so will constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.

e. The burden of proof will be on the grievant. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the school or 504 Coordinator to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A school or 504 Coordinator shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the system unless it is demonstrated by the school or 504 Coordinator that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R. §104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.

f. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.

g. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence.

h. The hearing shall be closed to the public.

i. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.

j. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.

k. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the system. All

documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the system.

l. Unless otherwise required by law, the impartial review official shall uphold the action of school system unless the grievant can prove that a preponderance of the evidence supports his or her claim.

m. Failure of the grievant to appear at a scheduled hearing unless prior notification of absence was provided and approved by the impartial review official or just cause is shown shall constitute a waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the impartial review official.

5. Decision: The impartial review official shall issue a written determination within 20 calendar days of the date the hearing concluded. The determination of the impartial review official shall not include any monetary damages or the award of any attorney's fees.

6. Review: If not satisfied with the decision of the impartial review official, any party may pursue any right of review, appeal, cause of action or claim available to them under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

Georgia Department of Education
Dr. John D. Barge,
State School Superintendent
February 13, 2011

Notice of Rights of Students and Parents:

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

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

Dr. Bonnie Seery
Director Exceptional Students
Thomas County Schools
200 N. Pinetree Blvd.
Thomasville, GA. 31792
229 225-4380
229 2255234 fax
drseery@rose.net office email

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

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

13. You have the right to examine your child's educational records.
14. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney.
15. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request.
16. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure.
17. You have the right to, at any time; file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

SPECIAL EDUCATION: Inclusion Services

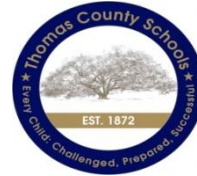
The philosophy of Thomas County Elementary Schools is that all children require as much time in a regular classroom as possible. We call this "inclusion". All students with special needs get some or all day inclusion in a regular classroom with support from special education staff. All students benefit from having an extra certified teacher and/or support teacher in the regular education classroom. Because the special education instructors serve every student, it may not be obvious which students have qualified for the additional support. Special education services are determined on an individual basis. Even though our philosophy of special education is inclusion in the regular classroom, there are times when the individual education team may determine that additional support outside the regular classroom is needed. We make every effort to provide the support that our students need in the regular classroom. Parents are *always* part of the education team.

**THOMAS COUNTY SCHOOLS
BOARD POLICIES**

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

It shall be the policy of the Thomas County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, creed or disability in educational programs and activities, in employment or recruitment for employment, admission to

facilities, or in any related policies, practices or benefits.



Notification of Provisions of Georgia's "Compulsory Student Attendance Law"

(O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1)

Georgia law requires children between the ages of 6 and 16 to be enrolled in and attend school. However, if a child is under 6 and has attended more than 20 days in a public school, he/she is subject to the compulsory attendance law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-150(C)).

A student is considered truant if he/she misses more than five unexcused absences during the school year. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1, a parent/guardian shall be held responsible for the child's failure to report to school. Potential consequences for parents and/or students include: a referral to the District Attorney's office, misdemeanor charges with a fine of not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00 for each offense, imprisonment for up to 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction may be imposed. Each day's unexcused absence from school, after the initial five unexcused days, shall constitute a separate offense.

Additionally, the Georgia Department of Driver Services will suspend the license of a minor who has dropped out of school without graduating and has remained out of school for ten consecutive school days, or who has ten or more school days of unexcused absences in the current academic year or ten or more school days of unexcused absences in the previous academic year. The suspension is mandated by O.C.G.A. 40-5-22 (a.1) (2).

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES POLICY

Definitions:

Truant: Any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences. Note: School days missed as a result of an out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Student Attendance Protocol: Procedures to be used in identifying, reporting, investigating and prosecuting cases of alleged violations of O.C.G.A. 20 - 2--690.1, relating to mandatory school attendance and appropriately addressing the issue with parents and guardians. The protocol shall also include recommendations for policies relating to tardiness.

Student Attendance Committee: A committee established by the chief judge of the superior court of each county for the purpose of ensuring compulsory attendance issue, to reduce the number of unexcused absences from school, and to increase the percentage of students present to take tests which are required to be administered under the laws of this state.

Excused Absences: Students may be temporarily excused from school:

1. Who are personally ill and attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others.
2. When in their immediate family there is a serious illness or death, which would reasonably necessitate absence from school.
3. On special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith.
4. When mandated by order of governmental agencies (pre-induction physical examination for services in armed forces or court order).
5. A student may be excused from school when prevented from such attendance due to conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety.

When a child is absent from school, the parent will furnish the school a written excuse within three school days of the absence. The school will require students to present appropriate medical documentation for absences due to illness upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence after accepting a parent excuse five times within a semester.

With proper verification, a student may be eligible for hospital/homebound instruction as outlined in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-31.

Students who miss an excessive amount of class time (as defined by school rules) may be required to participate in make-up activities as described by the individual schools. The principals shall work with the Superintendent to develop rules for implementing this policy.

Unexcused Absences:

The Thomas County School System will notify the parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the student when such student has five unexcused absences. The notice shall outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence shall constitute a separate offense. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian or other person who has charge of the student, the school system shall send written notice via certified mail with return receipt requested.

The Thomas County School System will provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in public school a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance.

By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the school system, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1 shall sign a statement indicating receipt of written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to the local policy.

The superintendent or designee will use his/her best efforts including first class mail to notify a student age 14 and older when the student has only three absences remaining before violating the state's attendance requirements pursuant to O.C.G.A. 40-5-22 regarding the denial of driver's permits and licenses.

Excessive Absences:

The following provisions apply to consecutive and non-consecutive absences during one academic year.

After Three Unexcused Absences: The attendance office or the principal's designee will contact the parent/guardian by telephone, letter, email, parental conference, or any other means of communication deemed necessary. All contacts made will be documented.

After Five Unexcused Absences: The attendance office or principal's designee will notify the parent/guardian by mail, **and** by any other means of communication deemed necessary. The mailed letter and/or contact will serve as the required notification that outlines

the penalty and consequences of the student's unexcused absences and that each subsequent absence shall constitute a separate offence. All contacts made will be documented.

After Seven Unexcused Absences: The attendance office or principal's designee will notify the parent/guardian by mail, **and** by any other means of communication deemed necessary. This mailed letter is to serve as the notification to the parent/guardian and student that he/she has three unexcused absences remaining before violating the state's attendance requirements regarding the denial of driver's permits and licenses. All contacts made will be documented.

After Seven Unexcused Absences: The Counselor/Parent Coordinator will meet or make contact with the parent/guardian and the student. The parent/guardian and student will be informed of the consequences of excessive unexcused absences. Strategies will be discussed to help improve the student's attendance. An attendance plan and contract will be signed and implemented. The Counselor/Parent Coordinator will continue to monitor the student's attendance. The parent/guardian and student will be contacted for non-compliance of the plan and contract. All contacts made will be documented.

After Ten Unexcused Absences: A mandatory attendance meeting will be scheduled between the parent/guardian, the student, and the grade level Asst. Principal. A plan that contains specific strategies to help improve the student's attendance will be created and signed. The parent and the student will also be reminded of the consequences for continued unexcused absences. The student's attendance will continue to be monitored. The parent/guardian and student will be contacted for non-compliance of the plan and contract. All contacts made will be documented.

Each additional Unexcused Absence after Ten: A Non-Compliance letter will be filed with the Georgia Department of Transportation, if age applicable, causing the student to lose driving privileges for one year from the date of the last unexcused absence.

After Thirteen Unexcused Absences: The parent/guardian and/or student may be referred to the Thomas County School System's Coordinator of Student Services/Truant Officer if the student continues to accrue unexcused absences.

After the student has been referred to the Coordinator of Student Services/Truant Officer, the school will continue to monitor the student's attendance and continue to use school-based interventions to help prevent continued unexcused absences. The school will also continue to inform the parent/guardian, the student, and the Coordinator of Student Services/Truant Officer of any continued unexcused absences by any means of communication deemed necessary. All contacts will be documented.

Based upon the determination of the Coordinator of Student Services/Truant Officer, the parent/guardian and/or student may be referred to the Community Based Risk Reduction Team (CBRRT).

Community Based Risk Reduction Team

The Thomas County Board of Education has adopted the Community Based Risk Reduction Team (CBRRT) as a sub-committee of the Thomas County Schools/Thomasville City Schools Student Attendance Protocol Committee. The CBRRT was created in an effort to help improve school attendance and to provide early community intervention for students who are at risk of becoming delinquent, unruly, or deprived. The CBRRT includes representatives from the following community agencies: the District Attorney's Office, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Family and Children Services, GA Pines Mental Health, the Vashti Center, the Thomas County Sheriff's Department, the Thomasville Police Department, the Thomas County School System, and the Thomasville City School System.

Upon encountering chronic absences and/or tardies, along with other matters which may constitute educational deprivation, the Thomas County School System's designee may refer a student to the CBRRT. The team of school and community agency representatives will hold a scheduled mandatory meeting for the parent/legal guardian to attend. The student is also mandated to attend the CBRRT meeting if he/she is in grades 4th-12th. The meeting will be held in the Thomas County Judicial Center located at 325 N. Madison St. in Thomasville, GA, and the parent/legal guardian will receive prior notification of the meeting's scheduled date and time.

The CBRRT will prepare a multi-agency intervention plan with the parent and student that will address factors which may be negatively impacting the student's education. If the parent and/or student fail(s) to attend the mandatory CBRRT meeting, or if the parent and/or student continue(s) to be non-compliant,

then the CBRRT may recommend that the District Attorney's Office proceed with an educational deprivation petition in the Thomas County Juvenile Court or criminal prosecution in the Thomas County State Court for the parent/legal guardian and/or prosecution in the Thomas County Juvenile Court or any other court having jurisdiction for the student.

Withdrawals

The Thomas County School Board authorizes the schools to withdraw a student who:

1. has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences;
2. is not subject to compulsory school attendance;
3. is not receiving instructional services from the local school system through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
4. is subject to compulsory attendance if the local superintendent or designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program.

Students shall be withdrawn retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

BULLYING

Bullying is defined as follows: An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, system, computer network, or other electronic technology of the Thomas County School System that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
 - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.4;
 - b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that

- it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

A student shall not bully, harass, or intimidate another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes but is not limited to: direct physical contact as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults such as teasing or name-calling; the use of electronic methods to harass, threaten or humiliate, and social isolation and/or manipulation.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. Such consequences shall include, at a minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling, as appropriate under the circumstances. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to the alternative school.

GANGS

The Thomas County Board of Education establishes this policy to eliminate or prevent the influence and activities of gangs in schools. For the purposes of this policy a "gang" is defined as any group or association, whether formal or informal, which encourages, solicits, promotes, urges, counsels, furthers, advocates, condones, assists, causes, advises, procures, or abets any illegal or disruptive activity or behavior of any kind, whether on school campuses, during school-related events, or in the community. A gang member is defined as any individual who, as a representative of or on behalf of, participates in any of the activities associated with gangs. Gangs which initiate, advocate, or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property is harmful to the education process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, tattoos, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group, disrupts the school environment. Such behaviors are contrary to educational objectives and promote an atmosphere where unlawful acts or violations of school regulations may occur.

No student will be allowed to wear, display, or carry any type of clothing, apparel, tattoos, article, or manner of grooming which indicates or implies membership/affiliation with a gang or gang activities.

No student will be allowed to exhibit behavior or gestures which symbolize gang membership, or cause and/or participate in activities which intimidate or seek to cause bodily harm or affect the attendance of another student.

School officials reserve the right to punish any other gang-related behavior that is subversive to the good order and discipline in the schools, even though such behavior is not specifically identified in the preceding rules.

Students who violate this policy may be subject to suspension, arrest, and/or disciplinary hearing referral, which could result in expulsion.

GRADING POLICY

A Grading Task Force representative of all schools in the Thomas County School System met in 2005 and determined that the following grading practices unduly impact the reported accuracy of academic achievement and, therefore, will not be used in Thomas County Schools:

- Extra credit/ penalty for nonacademic purposes (i.e. contributing to food drives, participating in fundraisers or dress-up days, returning school-related forms, attending school functions, etc.)
- Extra credit or make-up assignments that are not directly related to the state curriculum
- Extra credit/ penalty for spelling, handwriting, or not following directions *unless* directly related to the state curriculum (i.e. using wrong writing utensil, having no name on paper, being unprepared, etc. - School Specific)
- Extra credit/ penalty for disciplinary issues (i.e. dress code, sleeping, tardiness, etc. - School Specific)
- Any grade above 100
- A zero for work not completed or not turned in to the teacher
- An average below 60 on report card (actual average will be recorded on progress reports)

Please note that since the examples listed are not inclusive, any questions with regards to grading should be addressed with a school administrator.

*All assignments are graded. At the end of each nine weeks, students have five days to complete missing assignments. Standards-based assignments may be reattempted for improvement. At the high school level, this applies to first nine weeks for all courses and second nine weeks for year-long courses only.

HB 1321 – FALSE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST AN EDUCATOR

The Georgia Legislature enacted a law, which became effective July 1, 2008, addressing falsified, omitted, or erroneous reports of inappropriate behavior by educators towards students. The following procedure will be followed:

1. Student will provide a written statement of complaint to the school principal.
2. The school principal will notify the parent/guardian and the Superintendent the day the written statement is received.
3. The school principal and the school resource officer will begin to investigate the accusation the day the written statement is received, keeping the teacher, parent/guardian, the Superintendent, and law enforcement apprised of all developments.
4. A ruling will be determined within three working days of the receipt of the student's written complaint.
5. If the allegation is substantiated, school system procedures will take place for the discipline of the educator and the reporting to the Professional Standards Commission.
6. If the allegation is deemed unsubstantiated, the student will be suspended for a minimum of five days and can be expelled if deemed necessary by school and system officials. In addition, court ordered community service or any other court sanction may occur for students over ten years of age. Students under ten years of age can be suspended up to ten days.

HOMELESS STUDENTS POLICY

To the extent practical and as required by federal law through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the Thomas County School System will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, programs for students with limited English proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including children who experience one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations, or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples;
9. Unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Homeless children and unaccompanied youth will be identified through three main sources:

1. School personnel will be trained to inquire about homelessness upon enrollment and withdrawal of students. School personnel will notify the homeless liaison of any students determined to be homeless.
2. School staff will be trained on the identification of children in class who may be experiencing homelessness and appropriate procedures to follow.
3. Partnerships will be created between community agencies and the school system to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness. Outreach material will be provided to partner agencies by the homeless liaison to provide public notice of the rights of homeless students.

Each homeless student has the right to remain at his or her school of origin, to the extent feasible, or to attend school in the attendance area in which they are currently residing. Students identified as homeless have the right to immediate enrollment in school. Homeless students are also entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If transportation is requested by the parent/guardian, the school shall notify the district liaison.

If a dispute arises over any issue related to the rights of any homeless student, then the student shall be immediately enrolled and provided all services until the dispute is resolved in accordance with federal law. The school must provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and inform him/her of his/her right to appeal with

the district homeless liaison. The liaison shall ensure enrollment and appropriate services until the dispute is resolved. All records of disputes shall be kept. The state level appeals process will also be provided following the district level appeal.

Homeless students shall be provided comparable services to other students including the following: transportation, Title I, education services where they meet eligibility criteria, vocation and technical education program, gifted and talented program, and school nutrition. Upon being identified as homeless, students automatically qualify for free school meals. Title I services should also be made available to all homeless students regardless of the school of enrollment's Title I status.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. The district's liaison will also review and seek revisions to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

For any concerns regarding the rights of homeless students, please contact Lisa Williams, the Thomas County School District's Homeless Liaison, at 225-4380.

SECLUSION OR RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and staff are safe in school, and that students who may have a behavior crisis are free from inappropriate use of physical restraint or seclusion. Thomas County Schools authorizes staff members to use physical restraint in limited situations. As part of the emergency procedures in place in our schools, any student who poses an imminent risk of injury to him/herself or others may be physically restrained by school staff in accordance with Thomas County Board of Education policy. Restraint may be used only under the circumstances specified in this policy. For a complete explanation of this policy, please go to the web address below.

[https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/policy.aspx?PC=JGF\(2\)&Sch=4154&S=4154&RevNo=1.08&C=J&Z=P](https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/policy.aspx?PC=JGF(2)&Sch=4154&S=4154&RevNo=1.08&C=J&Z=P)

(3) Informing Parents and Guardians

(a) All student handbooks, beginning in 2011, will contain this statement:

As part of the emergency procedures in place in our schools, any student who poses an imminent risk of injury to him/herself or others may be physically restrained by school staff in accordance with Thomas County Board of Education policies. This restraint could occur along with other emergency actions such as contacting law enforcement. Significant violations of the law including assaults on students and staff will be reported to law enforcement. Within a reasonable time, not to exceed one school day, parents or guardians will be informed in writing when any of these actions occur.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT POLICY

Accepting Students from Other Systems

Students residing within the corporate limits of Thomasville or in Georgia counties other than Thomas County shall be allowed to attend the Thomas County School System upon:

1. applying to the Board of Education for admission and providing all school records, including discipline, grades, and test scores
2. acceptance by the Superintendent after review of records and acceptance by principal based on space available
3. paying a required tuition fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per school year per family.

No student who is under suspension or expulsion from another school system will be accepted for enrollment in the Thomas County School System.

Accepting Students from Out of State

Students from out of state will have to apply and provide all records. Upon acceptance, parents will be required to pay an annual tuition fee per child determined by the Finance Director and Superintendent based on the average FTE cost for that school year.

Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, for students currently enrolled who live out of state, the parents will be required to pay half of the FTE cost per child. These students will be grandfathered in at half the cost per year per child for the remainder of the child's school career.

Continuing enrollment of Non-resident Students

The Thomas County Board of Education reserves the right to withdraw and rescind its permission for a nonresident student to be enrolled in and to attend Thomas County Schools. Such withdrawal and rescission may be done without cause or reason. Thirty days written notice will be given to the student and/or parent or legal guardian or other custodian of the student, whichever is applicable, prior to the effective date of the withdrawal and rescission of

permission to continue enrollment in the Thomas County Schools.

TITLE IIA - PARENT NOTIFICATION

In compliance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind statute, the Thomas County School System informs you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- certification
- college major/graduate certification or degree held by teacher
- qualifications of the paraprofessional, if paraprofessional services are provided

If you request information concerning your child's teacher's qualifications, please contact the principal at your child's school.

WEAPONS IN SCHOOL

The presence of weapons on school property is a threat to the safety of students and school personnel, and is a violation of state and federal law.

No person shall carry, possess, or have under his/her control any weapon or explosive compound within a school safety zone, in any school building, on school premises, at any school sponsored function or activity (including football games, basketball games, track contests, and other similar or related functions), or in any school vehicle or bus, in a private vehicle parked on school property, or on public or private property in proximity to school property while attending school or a school sponsored related function. For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

1. A "school safety zone" is defined as the area in or within 1000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public school, or the board of education and used for public education.
2. "Weapon" means and includes:
 - a. Any firearm, defined as having the meaning set forth in 18 USC 921 (a) (3,4), i.e. any weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed to or may be readily converted to expelling a projectile by the action of an explosive, or any other destructive device, defined to include:
 - (1) Any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas
 - (a) Bomb
 - (b) Grenade
 - (c) Rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces
 - (d) Missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one quarter ounce
 - (e) Mine

- (f) Device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses
Any type of weapon, by whatever name known, which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosion or other propellant.
Any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device described in subparagraph (1) or (2) and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.
The term "destructive device" shall not include any device which is neither designed nor redesigned for use as a weapon; any device, although originally designed for use as a weapon, which is redesigned for use as a signaling, pyrotechnic, line throwing, safety, or similar device; surplus ordnance sold, loaned, or given by the Secretary of the Army pursuant to the provision of sections 4684(2), 4684, or 4686 or Title X; or any other device which the Secretary of the Treasury finds is not likely to be used as a weapon, or is an antique.
- b. Any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, or other knife having a blade of two or more inches.
- c. Straight-edge razor, razor blade.
- d. Spring stick, metal, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nunchaku, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, fighting chain, etc.
- e. Any disc, of whatever configuration, having one or more pointed blades, which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind.
- f. Any stun gun or laser as defined in O.C.G.A. 16-11-106(a).
- b. Persons participating in school sponsored military training programs conducted by or on behalf of the armed forces of the United States or the Georgia Department of Defense.
- c. Persons participating in law enforcement training conducted by the Police Academy and certified by the Peace Officers Standards and Training Council, or by a law enforcement agency of the state or the United States or any political subdivision thereof.
- d. The following person, when acting in the performance of their official duties or when enroute to or from their official duties:
- (1) A peace officer as defined by Georgia Law.
 - (2) A law enforcement officer of the United States government
 - (3) A prosecuting attorney of this state or of the United States.
 - (4) An employee of the Georgia Department of Corrections or a correctional facility operated by a political subdivision of this state or the United States who is authorized by the head of such correctional agency or facility to carry a firearm.
 - (5) A person employed as a campus police resource or school security officer and duly authorized to carry a weapon.
- e. A person who has been authorized in writing by the Superintendent or Board of Education to have in his/her possession or use a weapon to be used as a part of a school sponsored activity or for security purposes.
- f. Those employees of the State Board of Pardons and Paroles when specifically designated and authorized in writing by the State Board of Pardons and Paroles to carry a weapon.
- g. The Attorney General and those members of his staff whom he specifically authorizes in writing to carry a weapon.
- h. Probation supervisors employed by and under the authority of the Department of Corrections when specifically designated and authorized in writing by the directory of the Division of Probation.
- i. Public safety directors of municipal corporations.
- j. Trial judges.
- k. Medical examiners, coroners, and their investigators who are employed by the state or any political subdivision thereof.
- l. Persons, other than students, licensed or having permits under O.C.G.A. 16-111-29 or 43-38-10, when
 - (1) Such person carries or picks up a student at a school building or school function, on school property.

Exceptions

Georgia law provides the following exceptions to this policy:

- a. Competitors while participating in organized sport shooting events, or firearms training courses.

(2) Such person has a weapon legally kept within the vehicle while in transit through designated school property.

(3) Such person has a weapon which is in a locked compartment of a motor vehicle or in a locked container or rack which is in or on the vehicle and the vehicle is being used by an adult over 21 years of age to bring a student to or pick up a student at a school building, school function, school property, or a location for boarding or disembarking from a bus or other transportation furnished by the school or school system.

- m. Persons who reside in, or work in a business located within a school safety zone or who are in the ordinary course of transacting lawful business.
- n. Any person who is a visitor of a resident located within a school safety zone.

Notice

It shall be unlawful for any person to carry to or to possess or have under control any weapon within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school.

The term "weapon" means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind, and any stun gun or laser as defined in O.C.G.A. 16-11-106.

Punishment: A fine of not more than \$10,000; imprisonment for not less than two or more than ten years, or both. A juvenile who violates this shall be subject to the provision of O.C.G.A. 15-11-37.

Penalties

Any employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a student or other person is in

violation of this policy shall report that fact and the name of the person suspected, if known, to the principal of the school or the principal's designee.

All principals or other school officials or employees responsible at the school level for investigations of alleged violations of this policy shall, as soon as possible, report any offense defined under this policy to the Superintendent or other person designed by the Superintendent to receive such reports.

The principal, upon making reasonable determination that the reported violation is true, shall make an oral and written report to the Superintendent, the appropriate police authority, and the district attorney.

The penalty for violation of this policy as it pertains to firearms as defined above shall be expulsion from school for one calendar year, except that the Superintendent may modify the expulsion requirement for good cause on a case by case basis.

The penalty for violation of this policy as it pertains to weapons other than firearms shall be as provided in student disciplinary policies and may result in criminal prosecution.

Student with Disabilities: 45 Day Interim Alternative Placement

a. Any child with a disability who is determined to have violated this policy as it pertains to firearms may be placed in an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days, as determined and ordered by a special education committee qualified to make special education decisions under 20 USC 1401 (a)(20). If a parent or guardian requests a due process hearing under IDEA, the child shall nevertheless remain in the alternative educational setting above referred to during the pendency of any proceeding conducted in connection therewith, unless parents or guardian and duly authorized school system representatives agree otherwise.

b. Students Whose Disability is Unrelated to the Misbehavior - Any student with a disability whose misbehavior is unrelated to the disability shall be subject to the one calendar year expulsion requirement for a firearms violation as defined above, the same as a student without such a disability, except to the extent that such expulsion is inconsistent with the Department of Education's final guidance concerning state and local responsibilities under the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, as amended.

Hand-In-Hand Primary School

4687 U.S. Hwy 84 Bypass
Thomasville, GA 31792
225-3908 Fax 225-3982

Grades Pre-K and Kindergarten

Hand-In-Hand Primary School houses three distinct special programs. Our kindergarten program operates under the Georgia Department of Education. The Child Development Program operates under the Thomas County School System. The Child Development/ 3 year old program is for students with identified developmental delays and for children of Thomas County School System employees. Our preschool program operates under Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning: Bright From the Start. Our calendar is the same for all three programs, but many policies vary according to the agency that funds the program.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL:

For many of our students, this is their very first experience away from home. Some children will cry and often will trigger others that don't usually cry to cry also. We will do everything that we can to make your child feel secure and loved. If you walk your child in to the classroom, please kiss your child, reassure him/her, and leave. We have had a lot of experience with handling crying and it is much easier for your child to adjust if you reassure him/her and go. On the first day of school, we will have a parent "boo-hoo" room set up in the media center for you to go and get yourself together before leaving. We will provide you with coffee, tissue, and some comfort before you leave. We can check on your child for you to help you feel better. Most often, parents cry more than the kids. We'll pamper and baby you in the "boo-hoo" room.

BUS TAGS:

All Hand-In-Hand students are required to wear a bus badge *every time* they ride the bus. Badges will be distributed at orientation, open house, or may be picked up in the office. This helps the drivers know the students and helps ensure their safety.

Hand-In-Hand students will not be allowed to ride the Thomas County School buses without this badge. **We will provide the first badge and one replacement. A charge of \$1.00 per badge will be applied for additional badges.** Clear and complete directions to your home are required on our application forms.



CAR RIDERS:

Morning Drop-Off:

Please do not park in the left lane until staff arrives at 7:15 a.m. to begin unloading cars. This lane must be open and moving at all times.

From 7:15 a.m. until 8:00 a.m., we have staff available to take children from cars in the front circle. You may drive through and a friendly face will greet your child and assist him/her from the car to the front entrance of each hallway where staff members will supervise him/her until classrooms open at 7:30 a.m. You may also park in the front parking lot and walk your child inside the building.

Please remember that teachers are NOT on duty until 7:30 a.m. You must wait in the front hallways until the 7:30 bell. At 8:00 a.m., staff members must leave the

stations and report to their class. For the safety of students and employees on duty, the front circle will be closed at 8:00 a.m., requiring parents to park in the parking lot and walk their child to class. **Absolutely no one should ever drop a child off in the front circle or parking lot without giving the child to a school employee.** Remember, leave home early. The earlier you arrive, the less traffic. If you walk your child to class, please make sure that you see your child's teacher before leaving him/her. Sometimes the class is in the bathroom and your child will enter an empty room. If you do not hand your child to an employee, we cannot be responsible for his/her safety. **Do not leave unattended children in parked vehicles.** Infractions will be reported. The school cannot be held responsible for items stolen from an unattended vehicle. It is our recommendation that valuables not be left in unattended vehicles.



Afternoon Pick-Up:
Please do not park in the left lane until staff arrives at 2:45 p.m. to begin loading cars. This lane must be open and moving at all times.
 Everyone will follow this policy. We will supply two car rider signs. If you need additional signs, you can request them in the office and we will charge \$.05 for each additional sign. ALL Pre-K and kindergarten children *must* be picked up by 3:30 p.m. Car riders will be brought to the front hallway areas at 2:40 to be delivered to your car.

Parents may also park in the front parking lot and come to the front doors to pick up children. No parent will be allowed to enter the building during pick-up without going through the office. No one will be allowed to park in the circle in front of the school during drop-off (7-8 a.m.) or pick-up times (2:30-3:30 p.m.) If the office staff is not able to contact the parent or a responsible adult to pick up a child by 3:30, the Sheriff's Department or the Department of Family and Children's Services will be notified. This action is always a last resort. Every effort is made to contact the people you listed at registration to pick up your child. Make sure that all contact information is kept current in the front office.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

- ★ **EIP** – Early Intervention Program – Program offered to kindergarten students who are not meeting kindergarten standards.
- ★ **Enrichment Fridays** – Special Fridays where students rotate to different teachers within their wings to explore science, social studies, and math standards through experiments. On Enrichment Friday, TCMS science students partner with Hand-In-Hand to provide more one-on-one and small group assistance to carry out projects and experiments.
- ★ **Book Give-A-Ways** – Three times a year RIF and the Thomasville Junior Service League give each child a free book for home.
- ★ **EXPLO** – Eligible kindergarten students receive gifted services beginning the winter semester of the kindergarten year. Eligibility is determined through multiple standardized assessments.
- ★ **Computer Lab** – All pre-k and kindergarten classes spend 30 minutes per week in the computer lab receiving academic instruction through the use of a variety of instructional programs.
- ★ **All Terrain Trikes** – All classes spend 30 minutes per week riding all-terrain trikes. Parents are encouraged to send a helmet. Helmets are provided for those who do not have one. On inclement weather days, trikes are ridden inside the building.
- ★ **Art/Music** – Art and music are provided daily in the pre-k and kindergarten classrooms.

- ★ **P.E.** – All pre-k and kindergarten classes attend P.E. in the multi-purpose room once per week. Lesson plans and materials are provided and implemented by the classroom teachers and/or support staff.
- ★ **Media Center** – All classes spend 30 minutes per week in the media center engaged in an active story-time with the media specialist. Students check out a book during this time. Book check-out is not limited to this time.

SPECIAL DAYS AT HAND-IN-HAND

Multiple special events are provided at Hand-In-Hand for parents to participate in with their child. Please refer to the calendar to determine dates of events. Some events may change due to weather conditions or availability of community helpers. Notice of changes will be provided as soon as the change is determined.

- ★ Cultural Center Field Trips
- ★ Mother Goose Grandparent's Day
- ★ Chick-Fil-A Night (Evening event)
- ★ Dairy Queen Night (Evening event)
- ★ Healthy Habit's Day
- ★ Veteran's Day Parade
- ★ March of the Cans
- ★ Student-led Conference Nights (Evening event)
- ★ Winter Family Fun Day (Saturday event)

- ★ Snow Day
- ★ February Fathers
- ★ Pre-K Multicultural Day
- ★ March Moms
- ★ Transportation Day
- ★ Pre-K and Kindergarten Field Trips
- ★ Pre-k Mother Goose Field Day
- ★ Kindergarten Graduation



Garrison-Pilcher Elementary School

277 Hall Road

Thomasville, GA 31757

225-4387 Fax 227-2428

Grades 1st and 2nd

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

In an attempt to reach and teach the “whole” child, the following programs and activities are offered at Garrison:

- ❖ **EIP**- Early Intervention Program - Program offered to First and Second grade students who are not meeting state required benchmark standards (CCGPS, CRCT and GKIDS)
- ❖ **Achievement Series** – Quarterly evaluation/reporting of student performance. The results of the “Benchmark Tests” provide information to assist the teacher in planning instructional strategies to meet students’ needs.
- ❖ **Book Buddies** – Students pair up to read with other GP students, TCCHS students, Bishop Hall students, and Business/Committee Leaders.
- ❖ **RIF** – “ Reading is Fun” -- Reading promotional program
- ❖ **Accelerated Reader** – Motivation and Enrichment reading program
- ❖ **Accelerated Math** – Motivation and Enrichment math program.
- ❖ **Star Reading** - Diagnostic Assessment used to measure Instructional Level in reading.
- ❖ **Star Math** – Diagnostic Assessment used to measure Instructional Level in math.
- ❖ **Reading Plus** – Computer Program for developing cognitive skills
- ❖ **Visa-graph** - Diagnostic computer program to help with reading and tracking difficulties
- ❖ **Music** - All students receive 45 minutes of Music each week.
- ❖ **Art** - All students receive 45 minutes of Art each week.
- ❖ **P.E.** – All students receive 90 minutes of Physical Education each week.
- ❖ **Science** – All students receive 45 minutes of Science each week.
- ❖ **EXPLO** - Program for the gifted student
- ❖ **Internet** - Access to the Internet by students is closely monitored. A signed permission form is required for a student to access the Internet.
- ❖ **Enrichment/Intervention** – Students are given the opportunity to receive additional support in the areas they are experiencing difficulty or to excel in the areas in which they are performing at or above grade level on a daily basis.
- ❖ **Roller Coasters** – Counseling Program for families experiencing change.



Special Days at Garrison-Pilcher include:

- Red Ribbon Week
- Grandparents Day
- Dr. Seuss' Birthday
- Olympic Field Days
- Santa Shop
- Pioneer Day
- Donuts for Dads & Dudes
- K-1 Visitation
- Character Kid
- Wee Bee Fundraiser
- Celebration Days
- 2nd Grade Visitation to Cross Creek
- Jump Rope for Heart
- Career Day
- Family Dance
- Accelerated Reader Celebrations

School Store

Pencils, paper and erasers are sold each day as students enter the building. School t-shirts and other small items will be available on a regular basis through the school store. All necessary school supplies are furnished except for pencils. Please see your child's teacher for any special needs.

Parent Drop-off and Pick-up

Students who do not ride a bus may be dropped off and picked up in front of the school between Hall Road and the faculty parking lot under the canopy. Staff is available to assist with drop-off in the morning next to Hall Road from 7:15-8:00, but not during afternoon dismissal.



GARRISON-PILCHER RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

- ❖ **BEE RESPECTFUL** by using kind words and thinking of yourself and others
- ❖ **BEE RESPONSIBLE** by taking care of your belongings and being safe
- ❖ **BEE READY** by being prepared at all times and putting your best foot forward



GARRISON-PILCHER PLEDGE:

I WILL...

- Treat people kindly.
- Do what is fair.
- Work with all people.
- Show that I care.
- Change what is wrong.
- Be peaceful and quiet.
- Show respect to all people and do what is right.

CROSS CREEK ELEMENTARY

324 CLARK ROAD
THOMASVILLE, GA 31757
225-3900 FAX 225-3904

GRADES 3 AND 4

Parent Drop-off (Mornings)

Students who do not ride a bus may be dropped-off in the school driveway on the Clark Road crosswalk or in the two designated lanes on Hall Road side of the school. Cars should YIELD to BUSES at all times. Supervisors are on duty 7:15-7:55 a.m. and 3:00-3:30 p.m. **For safety reasons, students should not be dropped off or picked up on Clark or Hall roads. Please use the appropriate zones for loading and unloading.** These are public roads with high traffic volume before and after school each day. Traffic on Clark Road is one-way, U.S. 19 to Hall Road, 7:00-8:00 a.m. and 2:30-3:30 p.m., on school days.

Parent Pick-up (During School)

Please use a parking space when picking up your child during the school day and please **do not leave unattended vehicles in the driveway. Parking in traffic lanes to wait for dismissal time should not begin before 2:30** in the afternoons. Please use a parking space prior to this time to avoid blocking traffic.

Parent Pick-up (Dismissal)

All afternoon parent pick-ups MUST be made on the Clark Road side of the school. Parent pick-up begins at 3:00pm.

Students will not be allowed to leave the campus and walk to cars parked on the road or to get into cars on the road without a parent escort. Parents must park and come to the crosswalk to receive student(s). All students should be picked up by 3:30 each day unless they are involved in an after school activity.

Special Days at Cross Creek

- ✦ Grandparents Days
- ✦ Cross Creek Chorus Concerts
- ✦ Quarterly Open Houses
- ✦ Red Ribbon Week
- ✦ Book Fair (twice per year)
- ✦ March Moms Breakfast
- ✦ December Dads Breakfast
- ✦ Dr. Seuss' Birthday
- ✦ Quarterly Accelerated Reader Celebrations
- ✦ Field Days
- ✦ YMCA Picnics
- ✦ 4th grade visits to TCMS
- ✦ Learning Celebrations with 2nd and 3rd grades
- ✦ Cultural Center Field Trips
- ✦ Science Field Trips
- ✦ Jump Rope for Heart
- ✦ Honors Days

Programs and Activities

- ✦ **EIP-** Early Intervention Program
- ✦ **Achievement Series** – Also known as “benchmark tests,” these assessments provide information about a student’s level of understanding at the end of each 9 week grading period.
- ✦ **EasyCBM** (Curriculum-Based Measure). Web-based assessment used to progress monitor students.

- ✦ **Accelerated Reader** – Motivation and Enrichment reading program
- ✦ **Accelerated Math** – Motivation and Enrichment math program.
- ✦ **Star Reading** - Diagnostic Assessment used to measure Instructional Level in reading.
- ✦ **Star Math** – Diagnostic Assessment used to measure Instructional Level in math.
- ✦ **Reading Plus** – Computer Program for developing cognitive skills
- ✦ **Music** – Each student attends music class for 1 hour each specials rotation.
- ✦ **Art** – Each student attends music class for 1 hour each specials
- ✦ **P.E.** – Each student attends PE for 2 hours each specials rotation
- ✦ **Hands-On Science Lab** – Each student attends the science lab for 1 hour each specials rotation. Additionally, each class receives instruction from the science teacher and classroom teacher each week.
- ✦ **EXPLO** - Program for the gifted student
- ✦ **Internet** - Access to the Internet by students is closely monitored. A signed permission form is required for a student to access the Internet.
- ✦ **Enrichment/Intervention** – Students are given the opportunity to receive additional support in the areas they are experiencing difficulty or to excel in the areas in which they are performing at or above grade level on a daily basis.
- ✦ **After-School Tutoring** – This program is available for students requiring additional support for success.



Thomas County Schools

2012-2013 School Calendar

Event	Day(s) of the Week	Date
First Day for Students	Monday	August 6, 2012
Labor Day Holiday	Monday	September 3, 2012
Fall Break	Monday-Friday	October 8-12, 2012
Teacher/Student Holiday	Monday	October 15, 2012
44 days in first nine weeks		
First Day Second Nine Weeks	Tuesday	October 16, 2012
Thanksgiving Holiday	Monday-Friday	November 19-23, 2012
Winter Holiday	Friday-Friday	December 21-January 4, 2013
43 days in second nine weeks		
Teacher Work Day	Monday	January 7, 2013
First Day Third Nine Weeks	Tuesday	January 8, 2013
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	Monday	January 21, 2013
Teacher/Student Holiday	Friday & Monday	March 15 & 18, 2013
47 days in third nine weeks		
First Day Fourth Nine Weeks	Tuesday	March 19, 2013
Spring Break	Monday-Friday	April 1-5, 2013
Last Day for Students	Friday	May 24, 2013
44 days in fourth nine weeks		

APPENDIX I

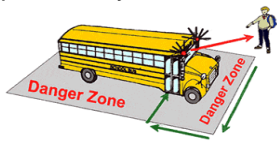
School Bus Safety Information

Smarts

- Stay out of the danger zone at all times!
- Remember — if you can't see the driver, the driver can't see you!
- Never go near the bus unless the driver has given you the signal to come!
- Never, walk or play behind a vehicle!
- When you go near the bus always be sure you can see the bus driver!
- If you drop anything in the danger zone leave it. Never stop to pick it up!

Know the Danger Zones

- Every child must know the DANGER ZONES around the school bus.
- Children should never enter the DANGER ZONE unless the driver has given them permission.
- If a child can touch the bus, he or she is too close.
- If a child must cross the street, know all the rules to cross safely.
- The 10 Giant Step rule is a good measurement for children to identify the DANGER ZONE around the school bus, particularly when crossing in front of the bus.

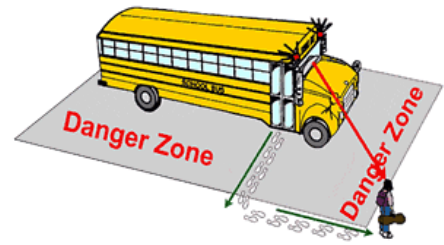


- When near a bus, the children must have the attention of the school bus driver.
- Children should never play around or near school bus vehicles.
- When leaving the bus, children must walk directly home.

Getting

On and Off the Safe Way

- Always be on time with your school things tucked safely away.
- Never run to or from the bus.
- Wait for the bus at a safe place away from the road.
- Wait for the bus to stop before approaching to get on.
- Remember if you can touch the bus, YOU ARE TOO CLOSE!
- Your driver will tell you when to get on.
- Walk up the steps, one at a time, using the hand rail.
- Never push or shove.
- IF YOU DROP ANYTHING IN THE DANGER ZONE LEAVE IT. STOP TO PICK IT UP!
- Sit facing the driver, feet in front of you.
- Keep the aisle clear at all times.
- ALWAYS LISTEN TO AND OBEY YOUR SCHOOL BUS DRIVER!



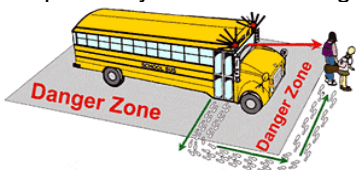
NEVER

Getting Off the Bus

- Use the handrail.
- Do not push or shove.
- Walk, don't run away from the bus.
- Never go behind the bus.
- Go right home.

Crossing the Street After Getting Off the Bus

- If you must cross the road after getting off the bus, use the 10 GIANT STEPS as a guide to take you out of the DANGER ZONE at the front of the bus.
- Be sure you can see the driver and that the driver sees you.
- Watch for the driver's signal that it is safe to cross.
- Stop when you reach the edge of the bus.



- Look and listen both ways to be sure it is safe before you cross.
- IF YOU DROP ANYTHING IN THE DANGER ZONE LEAVE IT. NEVER STOP TO PICK IT UP!
- Walk across the street.
- Go right home.

Crossing the Street to the Bus

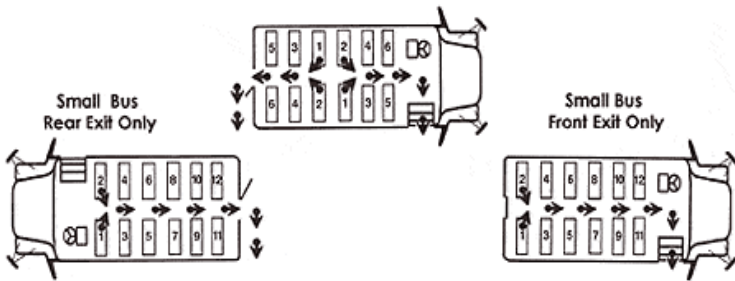
- If possible, have an adult help you cross the road.
- Before crossing, be sure you can see the stop arm and lights flashing.

- Wait for the driver's signal before you start to cross.
- Look and Listen both ways to be sure it is safe before you cross.
- Walk across the street.
- STAY OUT OF THE DANGER ZONE AT ALL TIMES!
- IF YOU DROP ANYTHING IN THE DANGER ZONE LEAVE IT. NEVER STOP TO PICK IT UP!

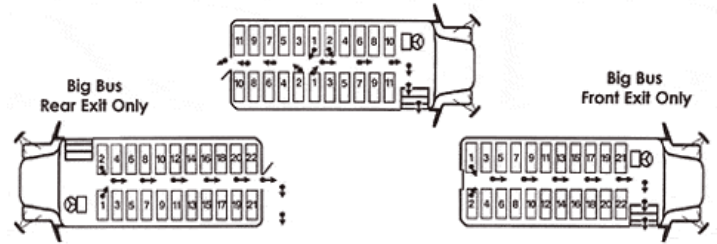
Emergency Evacuation the Safe Way

- Listen to the driver's instructions for the correct exit.
- Be calm, quiet and don't panic.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Exit seat by seat alternating rows.
- Leave the bus quickly without pushing, or shouting.
- Walk to a safe place and stay together.

Using available exits on a Small Bus

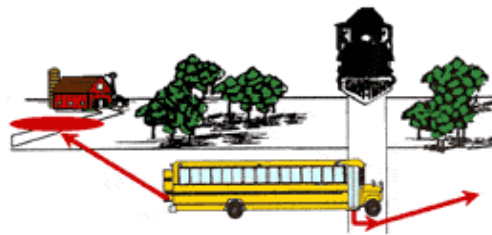


Using available exits on a Big Bus



Railway Crossing Evacuation

- Listen to the driver's instructions for the correct exit.
- Go away from the tracks as far as possible in a angle) toward the train to avoid being hit by
- Go to a safe place and stay together.



direction (at a 45 degree debris from the crash.

APPENDIX II

System Accelerated Reader (AR) Policy

Glossary of Terms

AR	Accelerated Reader is a collection of quizzes on student books. To become better readers, students need time to practice their new skills. AR quizzes give some accountability and guidance to this reading practice time. After students have finished a book they take a quick multiple choice test on the computer.
STAR	A computerized reading test designed to help find the reading level at which a student will be most successful. The student reads a sentence and then fills in the blank with the correct word. The difficulty level of the test changes with correct or incorrect answers, depending on student response. After the test, the program will suggest an independent reading level and range for the student.
On Target	When the percentage of the AR goal is at or above the percentage of the scoring period that has elapsed.
Reading Level	A number to help guide students in selecting books that are on their level. For example, a reading level of 3.5 would be an ability level of a third grader in the fifth month of the school year.
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development is the range of books in which a child will be challenged while reading, but should be successful.

The Accelerated Reader is a curriculum-based assessment tool that provides a summary and analysis of results to enable teachers to monitor both the quantity and quality of reading practice engaged in by their students. It helps facilitate:

- more frequent and more detailed assessment in less time and with greater consistency.
- formative feedback for the student.
- student development of metacognitive awareness.
- increased student motivation to read more.
- formative feedback for the teacher.
- class-wide diagnostic information, including alerts regarding students who are at risk.
- teacher promotion and management of effective reading practice.

With the purpose of the Accelerated Reader program being to encourage reading and improve reading comprehension skills, an AR Committee representative of all schools in the Thomas County School System met in the summer of 2008 and determined the following guidelines:

All Schools:

- STAR test December and May
- Celebration at the end of each nine weeks
 - Cut-off for points is the day before the end of the nine weeks
 - 80% overall comprehension required
 - Parent/Guardian will receive updates on child's progress
- AR will not be used in a punitive manner

Garrison Pilcher:

- 1st grade students - 1st semester
 - Inform parents about AR
 - Complete "practice" tests with students
- At or Above Grade Level Students (based on STAR)
 - Use the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to determine points goal
 - Allow for free choice after meeting goal
- Below Grade Level Students (based on STAR)
 - Use the ZPD to determine points goal
 - Have buddy readers
 - Read test and/or book to student – making sure it is not developing into a crutch for student

Cross Creek:

- At or Above Grade Level Students (based on STAR)
 - Use the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to determine points goal
 - Allow for free choice after meeting goal
 - Cap of 20 points
- Below Grade Level Students (based on STAR)
 - Use the ZPD to determine points goal

- Read test and/or book to student – making sure it is not developing into a crutch for student
- Allow student to use book on test
- Delete and allow for retake of tests below 40

Thomas County Middle:

- At or Above Grade Level Students
 - Identified by ALL of the following:
 - Meets or Exceeds on Reading CRCT
 - Passing Reading Benchmarks
 - At or Above Grade Level on STAR
 - No AR required
 - Free choice
 - Reading integrated throughout content areas
- Below Grade Level Students
 - Identified by ANY of the following:
 - Did not Meets on Reading CRCT
 - Not passing Reading Benchmark(s)
 - Below Grade Level on STAR
 - Take two tests per nine weeks
 - Book must be within two grade levels of Grade Equivalent on STAR
 - Counts as one test grade in Language Arts

Thomas County Central High:

- At or Above Grade Level Students
 - Identified by the following:
 - 9th Grade - At or Above Grade Level on STAR AND Meets or Exceeds on 8th grade CRCT
 - 10th Grade - At or Above Grade Level on STAR AND Passing the 9th Grade Literature/Composition EOCT
 - 11th Grade - At or Above Grade Level on STAR AND 50th percentile and above on PSAT (if taken)
 - 12th Grade - At or Above Grade Level on STAR AND Passing the American Literature/Composition EOCT
 - No AR required
- Below Grade Level Students
 - Identified by the following:
 - 9th Grade - Below Grade Level on STAR OR Did not Meets on 8th grade CRCT
 - 10th Grade - Below Grade Level on STAR OR Did Not Pass the 9th Grade Literature/Composition EOCT
 - 11th Grade - Below Grade Level on STAR OR Below the 50th percentile on PSAT
 - 12th Grade - Below Grade Level on STAR OR Did Not Pass the American Literature/Composition EOCT
 - Take two tests per nine weeks
 - Book must be within two grade levels of Grade Equivalent on STAR
 - Counts as one test grade in Language Arts

APPENDIX III
Thomas County
2012-2013 Testing Calendar

2012

SCHOOL(s)	DATE(s)	TEST
TCCHS & BH	July 16 - 20	Summer GHSGT
TCCHS & BH	July 18	Summer GHSWT
TCMS (6th)	Sept. 24 - Oct 5	ITBS, CogAT
TCCHS & BH	Sept. 10 - 14	Fall GHSGT
TCCHS & BH	Oct. 3 - 4	Fall GHSWT
TCCHS & BH	Oct. 12	PSAT
CC (3rd)	Nov. 5- 16	ITBS, CogAT
TCCHS & BH	Nov. 12- 16	Winter GHSGT
TCCHS & BH	Dec. 18 - 19	EOCT Economics & Make-up

2013

SCHOOL(s)	DATE(s)	TEST
GP(1st)	Jan. 14 - 25	ITBS, CogAT
TCMS	Jan. 23 - 24	Grade 8 Writing Assessment
HH, GP, CC, TCMS, TCCHS	Jan. 22 - Mar. 5	ACCESS for ELLs
TCCHS & BH	Feb. 27 - 28	Spring GHSWT
TCMS	Mar. 6 - 7	Grade 5 Writing Assessment
CC, TCMS, TCCHS	Mar. 14 -29	GAA Portfolios returned to Querstar
TCCHS & BH	Mar. 25 - 29	Spring GHSGT
CC	Mar. 18 - 29	Grade 3 Writing Evaluations
CC & TCMS	Apr. 15 - 25	Grades 3-8 CRCT & Makeup
CC & TCMS	Apr. 29 - May 3	Grades 3-8 CRCT-M & Makeup
TCCHS	May 6	AP Chemistry, AP Psychology & AP Environmental Science
TCCHS	May 7	AP Spanish
TCCHS	May 8	AP Calculus AB
TCCHS	May 9	AP Literature
HH	May 10	GKIDS (last day to submit data)
TCCHS	May 10	AP Language & AP Statistics *Last day to submit Studio Art
TCCHS	May 13	AP Biology & AP Music Theory
TCCHS	May 15	AP U.S. History
TCCHS	May 16	AP World History
TCCHS, BH & <u>TCMS</u>	May 17	EOCT Econ & <u>Phy Science</u>
TCCHS, BH & <u>TCMS</u>	May 20	EOCT <u>9th Lit</u> & U.S. History
TCCHS & BH	May 21	EOCT Biology & Math II
TCCHS & BH	May 23	EOCT Math I & American Lit
TCCHS & BH	June 17 - July 19	EOCT Summer School
TCCHS & BH	July 15-19 (Tentative)	GHSGT Summer
TCCHS & BH	July 17 (Tentative)	GHSWT Summer