

# **Towns County High School Student Handbook 2024 – 2025**



**Bryan Thomason, Principal  
Rollie Thomas, Assistant Principal  
Dr. Darren Berrong, Superintendent**

**400 U.S. Highway 76 East  
Hiawassee, Georgia 30546  
(706) 896-4131  
[www.townscountyschools.org](http://www.townscountyschools.org)  
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**Towns County Schools**  
**Vision Statement**

**Towns County School shall provide an exceptional education for all students in a safe, caring environment that develops lifelong learners who become responsible, independent thinkers, and productive citizens.**

**Towns County Schools**  
**Belief Statements**

**We Believe:**

**Students require a safe environment in which to learn.**

**Students learn best when provided challenging, rigorous educational opportunities utilizing current best practices.**

**Extra-curricular activities are important for the development of well-rounded students.**

**Effective teaching strategies guide students to actively engage in problem solving and higher order thinking skills that energize and maximize learning for all students.**

**The educational process involves shared responsibilities, communication, and collaboration among home, school, and community.**

**Towns County High School**  
**Mission Statement**

**The mission of Towns County High School is to ensure that every student has the opportunity to experience educational success.**

**Excellence, Resilience, and Family. Three qualities that embody what it means to be at Towns County High School.**

## **Towns County High School Information**

### **ADDRESS:**

**1400 U.S. Highway 76 East  
Hiawassee, Georgia 30546  
Phone: (706) 896-4131  
FAX: (706) 896-6628**

### **ADMINISTRATION:**

**Bryan Thomason, Principal  
Rollie Thomas, Assistant Principal  
Brooke Whitt, CTAE Director/WBL Coordinator  
Jim Melton, Athletic Director  
Phyllis Clemons, Bookkeeper  
Sherri Livingston Receptionist/Attendance Clerk  
Beatrice Thurman, Registrar**

### **GUIDANCE OFFICE:**

**Dionne Berrong, Counselor  
Phone: (706) 896 – 4131 Ext. 1230**

### **MEDIA CENTER:**

**Kerry Rogers, Media Specialist**

### **OTHER DIRECT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:**

**Board of Education..... (706) 896-2279  
Board of Education FAX..... (706) 896-2632  
Bus Shop..... (706) 896-3843**

## **NONDISCRIMINATION**

In the operation of the Towns County School System no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, handicap, disability, or sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in educational programs, activities, or employment practices. The following staff persons have been designated to field questions, comments, and complaints regarding instances of alleged discrimination:

Title II Coordinator	Stephanie Moss	896-2279
Title VI Coordinator	Erica Chastain	896-4131
Title IX Coordinator	Dr. Darren Berrong	896-2279
Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator	Dr. Victoria Stroud	896-4131
Carl Perkins Act Coordinator	Brooke Whitt	896-4131
Section 504 Coordinator	Dionne Berrong	896-4131

## **PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW**

At Towns County High School, we are very proud of our teachers and feel they are ready for the coming school year and are prepared to give your child a high-quality education. By law, Local Education Agencies are required to notify parents of their “Right to Know” the professional qualifications of the student’s classroom teachers. These regulations allow you to learn more about your child’s teachers’ training and credentials. We are happy to provide this information to you. At any time, you may ask:

Whether the student’s teacher-

- has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- is teaching under emergency or provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
- is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.

You may also ask whether your child receives help from a paraprofessional. If your child receives this assistance, we can provide you with information about the paraprofessional’s qualifications.

Our staff is committed to helping your child develop the academic knowledge and critical thinking he/she needs to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are highly skilled.

If you have any questions about your child’s assignment to a teacher or paraprofessional, please contact Bryan Thomason at Towns County High School at (706) 896-4131 ext. 1015 or by email at [bthomason@townscountyschools.org](mailto:bthomason@townscountyschools.org).

## **NOTICE TO PARENT/GUARDIANS AND ELIGIBLE STUDENTS OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days after the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal or designee will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records can be inspected.
2. The rights to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. To request amendment of a student record, parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request, specifying the part of the record they want changed and why it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. If the school decides not to amend the record, it will notify the parents or eligible students of the decision and inform

them of their right to a hearing. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided with the notification of the right to a hearing.

- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that disclosure without prior written consent is authorized by FERPA and its implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R § 99.31. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. A school official is a person employed by the school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including school nurses and school resource officers); a member of the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a specific task (such as attorney, auditor, medical consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom the school district has out-sourced services, such as electronic data storage; or a parent or student serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee) or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. The district allows school officials to access only student records in which they have a legitimate educational interest. School officials remain under the district's control with regard to the use and maintenance of PII, which may be used only for the purpose for which disclosure was made, and cannot be released to other parties without authorization.

Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

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

2. **Towns County Schools has designated the following information as directory information:**

- a. Student's name, address and telephone number;
- b. Student's date and place of birth;
- c. Student's participation in official school clubs and sports;
- d. Weight and height of student if he/she is a member of an athletic team;
- e. Dates of attendance at schools within the school district;
- f. Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in the district's schools
- g. Photograph
- h. Grade level

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. In addition, two federal laws require school districts receiving federal financial assistance to provide military recruiters, upon request, with students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers unless parents have advised the school district that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. You have the right to refuse to allow all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to refuse to allow it to be disclosed to the public upon request without your prior written consent. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the principal of the school at which the student is enrolled in writing within 10 days after officially enrolling in school or within 10 days of the date of the release of this notice.

3. You are also notified that from time to time students may be photographed, videoed, or interviewed by the news media at school or at some school activity or event. The principal will take reasonable steps to control access to students by the media or other individuals not affiliated with the school district. However, your submission of a written objection does not constitute a guarantee that your student will not be photographed, videoed, or interviewed, or that such information will not be posted on websites or social media sites not affiliated with the school or district, or in circumstances which are not within the knowledge or control of the principal.

4. You have the right to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

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

5. The Georgia Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act affords parents and eligible students the right to file a complaint with the school district regarding a possible violation of rights under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-667 or under other federal or state student data privacy and security laws.

Such complaints may be filed with:

Trena Stroud, Technology Director  
Towns County Schools  
1400 US Hwy 76 E  
Hiawassee, GA 30546

## **TITLE I SCHOOL DESIGNATION**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 requires that parents or guardians who have children attending a Title I school be notified of how well their school is preparing its students for college and/or a career, as well as the school's designation status under Georgia's ESEA Flexibility Waiver. Under Georgia's ESEA Flexibility Waiver, certain Title I schools are designated as Reward, Priority, Focus, or Alert schools.

Towns County High School has not been given a school designation this year, which means we are continuing to provide a quality education to all of our students.

### **SECTION 504 PARENTAL RIGHTS**

Any student, parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing relating to the school system's actions or inactions regarding their 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, Erica Chastain. An oral request does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator shall assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing if needed or requested. The Section 504 Coordinator, Erica Chastain, may be contacted by phone at (706) 896-4131 ext. 1525 or by e-mail at [echastain@townscountyschools.org](mailto:echastain@townscountyschools.org). Copies of the 504 Procedural Safeguards and Notice of Rights of Students and Parents under Section 504 may be found at the system website or may be picked up at the central office or at any of the school offices.

### **TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL**

In an effort to promote a healthy lifestyle for our young people, Towns County School System has banned the use of tobacco on campus. Towns County Schools is a 100% Tobacco Free School System. This includes the use of tobacco products during all school functions by students and adults. We appreciate everyone's help in setting a positive example for the students of Towns County. This includes the use of vaping devices.

### **MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Towns County Schools adhere to the guiding principle that all eligible children and youth who reside within Towns County are entitled to a free, appropriate public education. Students identified as "homeless" or "in transition" will be given a full opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards and will be included in state- and district-wide assessments and accountability systems. Towns County Schools will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment. School and system personnel shall handle any information regarding each student's homeless status in a confidential and professional manner.

#### **Definitions:**

**Homeless Child and Youth**-In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act and State Board Rule 160-5-1-.28 (JBC), the term "Homeless Child and Youth" is defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:



- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons;
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodation;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Abandoned in hospitals;
- Awaiting foster care placement;
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- Sleeping in primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations; and,
- Migratory or living in the circumstances described above.

A child or youth shall be considered to be experiencing homelessness for as long as he or she is in a living situation described above.

**Unaccompanied Youth** - a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who is in transition as defined above.

Towns County Schools shall request proof of residency of all students enrolling in Towns County Schools. If a student is identified as homeless by definition, the school will enroll the student immediately. School personnel will contact the Homeless Liaison immediately upon enrollment of any student experiencing homelessness. Homeless students may be enrolled by a parent or the district's liaison. Enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to lack of any document normally required for enrollment including, but not limited to, the following:

- Proof of residency
- Transcripts/school records
- Immunization or immunization/health/medical/physical records
- Proof of guardianship
- Birth Certificate
- Any other document requirements
- Unpaid school fees
- Lack of uniforms or clothing that conforms to dress codes
- Any factor related to the student's living situation

### **Services:**

The Towns County Schools Homeless Liaison shall coordinate with any/all local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other local school systems on the transfer of student records; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. Children and youth experiencing homelessness shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including:

- Transportation - Homeless students are entitled to transportation to his/her school of origin or the school where he/she is to be enrolled.
- Title I Services- Educational services for which the student meeting eligibility criteria, including special education and related services and programs for English language learners:

- CTAE education programs and extracurricular activities
- Gifted and talented programs
- School nutrition programs and automatic eligibility for free meals
- Before-school and after-school program when applicable
- Parental Involvement Activities

If a dispute arises over any issue regarding homeless students, the child or youth in transition shall be enrolled immediately to the school in which enrollment is sought pending resolution of the dispute. The student shall also have the same rights to all appropriate educational services, transportation, free meals, and Title I services while the dispute is pending. The parent or guardian shall be informed of Towns County Schools' decision and the appeal rights in writing. The System's liaison will carry out dispute resolutions as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute. If the matter is not resolved at the local level, the parent may request to exercise the right for a review of the dispute and decision by the Georgia Department of Education in accordance with Dispute Resolution Guidelines and Procedures provided by the Georgia Department of Education, which are available on the Georgia Department of Education's web site.

Contact information:

Erica Chastain

Homeless Liaison

Towns County Schools

1400 Hwy 76 East

Hiawassee, GA 30546

(706) 896-4131 ext. 1525

[echastain@townscountyschools.org](mailto:echastain@townscountyschools.org)

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES UNDER ELEMENTARY SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESEA)**

#### **Grounds for a Complaint:**

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

#### **Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed**

- a. Title I, Part A
- b. Title I, Part C
- c. Title II, Part A
- d. Title IV, Part A
- e. Title V, Part B
- f. McKinney-Vento Act

**Complaints Originating at the Local Level:**

As part of its Assurances within ESEA program grant applications and pursuant to Section 9306 of ESEA, an LEA accepting federal funds must have local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore, a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education until every effort has been made to resolve through local written complaint procedures. If the complainant has tried to file a complaint with Towns County Schools to no avail, the complainant must provide the Georgia Department of Education written proof of their attempt to resolve the issue with Towns County Schools.

**Filing a Complaint:**

A formal complaint must be filed in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

1. A statement that Towns County Schools has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program;
2. The date on which the violation occurred;
3. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation);
4. A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information;
5. Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency;
6. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position; and
7. The address of the complainant.

The complaint must be addressed to:  
Erica Chastain, Director of Federal Programs  
Towns County Schools  
67 Lakeview Circle, Suite C  
Hiawassee, GA 30546

**Investigation of Complaint:**

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, Towns County Schools will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

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

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the school system will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings. If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included. The 60-day timelines may be

extended, if exceptional circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant.

**Right of Appeal:**

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the local level, the complainant has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. For complaints filed pursuant to Section 9503 (20 U.S.C. 7883, complaint process for participation of private school children), a complainant may appeal to the Georgia Department of Education no later than thirty (30) days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the school system's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

**TOWNS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY AND STAFF**

<b><u>NAME</u></b>	<b><u>POSITION</u></b>
Dionne Berrong	Counselor
Stacy Calhoun	English
Ken Camp	Science
Art Cartee	Science
Shane Casey	Math
Phyllis Clemons	Bookkeeper
Libby Dayton	Science
Robyn Donaldson	Special Education
Sarah Ewing	Art Education
Rebecca Flanagan	School Nurse
Todd Flanagan	Agriculture Education
Alysha Floyd	Math
Shannon Floyd	Social Studies
Bryan Forsyth	School Resource Officer
Holly Garrett	Paraprofessional
Sabrina Garrett	Agriculture Education
Ezekiel Gribble	Paraprofessional
Jenni Harper	Math/Success Academy
Scott Hamilton	Transportation Director
Christa Houser	English
Brian Hunnicutt	Social Studies
Luke Kough	Math
Cole Ledford	Technology
Clay Livingston	Weight Training
Sherri Livingston	Receptionist/Attendance Clerk
Maureen McClure	Spanish, Teacher Education
Nick McDonald	Technology
Jim Melton	Athletic Director
Becky Mullins	School Nutrition Manager/Supervisor
Rachel Pietz	Special Education
Christie Melton	Business Education, Computer Science

Kerry Rogers	Media Specialist
Jason Roquemore	Health & Physical Education
Amy Rosser	Family Connections Director
Erin Schuette	Community Based Vocational Instruction
Timothy Skinner	Band Director
Trena Stroud	Technology Director
Victoria Stroud	Special Education Director
Rachel Surles	English, Yearbook
Diane Taylor	ISS, Student Support
Ruth Taylor	Business Education
Rollie Thomas	Assistant Principal
Bryan Thomason	Principal
Beatrice Thurman	Registrar
Adam Trotman	Chorus/Drama
Chris Vardo	Social Studies
Sarah Vardo	Health Care Science
Brooke Whitt	CTAE Director, WBL Coordinator
Cynthia Wood	Media Clerk

## **GUIDE FOR STUDENTS**

### **IF YOU NEED:**

Academic Advisement  
Apprenticeship Program  
Athletics Information  
Check In/Out  
Driver's License  
Parking Permit  
Scholarship, Counseling  
Discipline Information  
Attendance  
Fees and Fines  
Grievance  
Lost and Found  
Lunch Room  
Medical Attention  
Sports Equity  
Transcript Request  
Vocational Guidance  
Work Study Program

### **GO TO:**

Dionne Berrong, Guidance Office  
Brooke Whitt, 123  
Jim Melton,  
Sherri Livingston, Main Office  
Beatrice Thurman, Tim Rosser, Main Office  
Bryan Forsyth  
Dionne Berrong, Guidance Office  
Rollie Thomas, Main Office  
Sherri Livingston, Dianne Taylor, Main Office  
Phyllis Clemons, Main Office  
Teacher, Administrator  
Main Office, Cafeteria  
Becky Mullins, Cafeteria  
Rebecca Flanagan, RN, Elementary School Clinic  
Dr. Darren Berrong, BOE Office  
Beatrice Thurman, Main Office  
Dionne Berrong, Guidance Office  
Brooke Whitt, 123

## **TOWNS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE**

8:00 - 9:35	1 <sup>st</sup> Block
9:35 - 9:47	Break
9:50-11:20	2 <sup>nd</sup> Block

11:25-1:25	3 <sup>rd</sup> Block
11:20-11:45	1st Lunch
1:00-1:25	2nd Lunch
1:30-3:00	4 <sup>th</sup> Block

## **TOWNS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The Towns County School System encourages students to participate in their educational experience by attending school regularly and participating in class activities on a daily basis. Regular and punctual attendance is a desirable work habit in school and in all career choices; therefore, we expect students to be at school and on time for all classes unless circumstances arise which make it unsafe or unwise to do so. School attendance is very important; therefore, the faculty encourages students to be in school every day. Students shall not have more than 5 unexcused absences during the school year. At the 6<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence, students may receive no credit for work missed during the unexcused absence. Parent notes are acceptable to excuse up to 5 absences. After 5 absences a doctor's note will be required to excuse future absences.

## **CRIMINAL PROSECUTION FOR VIOLATION OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAW**

O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1 requires any person in this State who has control or charge of a child between the ages of six (6) or sixteen (16) to enroll and send that child to school, including public, private and home schooling.

A child is responsible to attend school and is subject to adjudication in Towns County Juvenile Court as an unruly child for violation of the statute. If a parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the child causes the child's absence, then that person, and not the child, is in violation of this statute. Such a violation is a misdemeanor and carries a penalty of up to \$100 fine and 30 days in jail for each violation. The law specifies that each day's absence constitutes a separate offense.

## **DRIVER'S LICENSE**

Georgia's Teenagers are required to obtain a Certificate of School Enrollment from our school registrar to meet their requirements in obtaining a Learner's Permit or Driver's License.

## **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

It is the policy of the Towns County Board of Education that students must attend each school day, in its entirety, each day school is in session, unless the student is absent due to one or more of the reasons as follows:

In order for a student to have an excused absence, a written excuse from the parent or **original** doctor's excuse must be presented to the attendance clerk in the main office within **five days** after the absence. These excuses will be maintained in the student's folder for the remainder of the school year.

Excused absences include:

1. Personal illnesses or attendance in school endangering a student's health or the health of others. The principal may require a doctor's excuse after 5 excused absences.
2. A serious illness, death or emergency in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. Celebrating religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. A period not to exceed one day is allowed for registering to vote or voting in a public election.
7. Excused status can be obtained for special circumstances at the discretion of the principal. Such approval should be obtained prior to the date of absence.
  - One college visit during the school year will be excused for seniors. The senior must submit the College Visit Permission Form (see the HS Counselor for this form) to an administrator at least one week prior to the scheduled absence for this visit to be excused. The form must also be signed by a college official and returned with a pamphlet/brochure from the college, upon returning to school.
  - Students shall be counted present when they are serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly and/or while representing the school in an activity approved by the school and/or the Towns County Board of Education.
  - The student must submit to the attendance clerk documentation of the reason for each absence in the form required by the principal **within 5 days after returning to school**. All such documentation will be evaluated to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. If the required documentation is not furnished or the reason for the absence is other than stated above, the absence shall be considered as unexcused. **A student has at least five days from the day he/she returns to school to make up work missed as a result of an excused absence.** The teacher or an administrator may give a student more than 5 days to make up missing work, as special circumstances arise.

## **GRADES AND ABSENCES**

Final course grades of students shall not be penalized because of excused absences if all schoolwork or assignments during each excused absence, including tests, are made up within the time prescribed by the student's teacher or principal. If the student fails to make up work within the prescribed time, the student will be denied credit for all work not completed.

## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

A student is absent any time he or she is missing from school or from any assigned class or school activity for reasons other than those stated above.

The principal shall use the following guidelines in determining whether to allow a student with excessive absences to receive credit for coursework in which passing grades are earned:

If a student has no more than 5 unexcused absences in a class during a semester, the student shall not be denied credit for the semester for that class based on excessive absences.

If more than 5 absences are unexcused for a class during a semester, the principal shall determine

whether there exists an unusual condition or extenuating circumstances relating to the student's personal life or family situation which would require that the provisions of the attendance policy be waived. If so, the student shall be allowed to make up missed work and seat time and shall not be denied credit for the semester based on excessive absences. Students with excessive absences will be asked to make up work and seat time in Lunch Detention and will be granted Attendance Recovery.

If the student or student's parent/guardian desires to appeal the decision of the principal, the principal shall hear the appeal and determine if there are unusual conditions or extenuating circumstances as specified above which would justify allowing the student to make up missed work and seat time and to receive credit for coursework in which passing grades were earned. If the decision of the principal is not satisfactory to the student, the student may appeal to the Superintendent. The appeal must be made within two weeks after the student has been furnished a decision by the principal, either in mail or in person. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO REDUCE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

The school system requires its schools to provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in 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 will be asked to sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age 10 or older by September 1, must sign a statement indicating receipt of written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to the local Board policy; and

At three (3) unexcused absences, the principal or his/her designee will contact the parent either by phone (automated system) or in writing. This serves to notify the parent(s) of attendance to date.

At four (4) absences, the principal or his/her designee will contact the parent/student concerning required "seat time" make up in Lunch Detention.

At five (5) unexcused absences, the principal or his/her designee will send a letter to the parent(s) along with a copy of the attendance law mandated by the state. This letter will request the parent to contact the principal or his designee to arrange an Attendance Support Team (AST) meeting and will require a signature of receipt.

At seven (7) unexcused absences and/or ten (10) total absences, the principal or his/her designee will call the parent(s) to investigate and request an AST meeting to review the case and consider making a referral.

At ten (10) unexcused absences, the principal or his/her designee will make a referral if one has not been made previously.

### **HOSPITAL/HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**



Hospital/Homebound Instruction is provided for students whose absences qualify students for such services in accordance with State Board Policy IDDC.

The principal has the authority to enact and carry out rules and/or procedures consistent with this policy and to administer discretion as necessary.

The Superintendent of Schools shall promulgate administrative regulations and procedures to implement the provisions of this policy.

Hospital/homebound instruction is a teaching service provided to students having a medically diagnosed physical condition that prevents school attendance for a period of ten (10) days or more. Students eligible must be absent for a minimum of ten (10) consecutive days unless a physician certifies that the student has a chronic health condition causing the student to be absent for intermittent periods during the school year. Hospital/homebound services are not available for students with communicable diseases, pregnant students except when a physician certifies that complications exist, or in cases of expulsion or out of school suspension.

### **UNIFORM WITHDRAWAL CRITERIA**

For the purpose of accurately measuring the academic performance of students continuously enrolled in public schools, the Board adopts the following uniform criteria for withdrawing students.

Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student who:

- a. Has missed more than ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absences;
- b. Is not subject to compulsory school attendance; and
- c. Is not receiving instructional services through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- d. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall use his or her best efforts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of a student if the school system plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance if the Superintendent or the Superintendent's 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. Appropriate school personnel shall withdraw students retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

### **TARDINESS**

Upon late arrival to school, **after 8 AM**, students must sign-in at the front office with Mrs. Sherri Livingston, or any other front office personnel, receive an admittance slip to class, and report directly to class. A student is tardy when he or she arrives unexcused at an assigned place after the designated time. Repeated or habitual tardiness is disruptive to the orderly instructional process. Teachers or Principals will have the discretion to take corrective action such as loss of privilege, ISS, etc. In an effort to address the concerns of industry and employers, the Towns County School System is trying to teach students the importance of being punctual. Students are required to be at school and in class each day **at 8 AM**. Towns County High School realizes

students may occasionally have unforeseen circumstances that make them late to school. For this reason, each semester the student will have 3 tardy passes that may be used to enter first period without penalty. No excuses will be required and each of these tardies will be classified as excused.

**All tardies after the first three covered by the passes will result in a corrective action such as loss of privilege, Lunch Detention, etc.**

1. At (1 - 3) tardies, the student will be warned.
2. At (4\*) tardies, the student will be assigned lunch detention and will receive a warning that his/her parking privileges may be revoked.
3. At (6\*) tardies, the student will be assigned 2 days lunch detention and his/her parking privileges will be revoked for two weeks.
4. At (10\*) tardies, the student will be assigned 3 days lunch detention or 1 day of ISS and his/her parking privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the semester.
5. At (14\*) tardies, the student will be assigned 4 days lunch detention or 2 days of ISS and his/her parking privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the year.

\*This is each semester; the policy will start over at beginning of each semester.

Students who are late for 1<sup>st</sup> Block and wait until the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> Block to “Sign-In” will be considered absent from 1<sup>st</sup> Block. Students must check in! Habitual check-in’s after 1<sup>st</sup> block will be treated as tardies and follow the above responses.

Students tardy for other classes during the day will be marked in IC by the teacher. Students with three or more tardies in any combination of classes or arrival to school will receive lunch detention. Students must be in class for at-least half of the class to be counted present. Students should carefully consider the effects of arriving to class late more than three times.

## **SIGN OUT**

Parents who want to sign a student out early must do so through the front office – parents/guardians should never check a student out by going to their classroom. In order for a student to check out without a parent being present, the student **must bring a parent note by 8:30am to Ms. Sherri Livingston (front office)** that gives permission for their child to check out early. Please include a number where the parent can be reached during the day on notes authorizing students to leave the campus. **Students may sign back in only if the reason for leaving was an excused absence.**

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

A student must attend school for at least one-half of the school day on the day he/she participates in an extracurricular activity. The principal or his designee may make an exception to this policy in emergency situations. Students under suspension (in school or out) are ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities.

## **LUNCH PERIOD**

Students are required to stay in the lunchroom during their lunch period. They are not allowed to leave the cafeteria without permission from an administrator.

## **AUTOMOBILE USE**

Cooperation from all students who drive is required in order to maintain a safe parking area. Students who register to park on campus during the school year do so with the understanding and willingness to follow the rules listed below:

Acceptance of a parking permit is under the condition and consent by the student/parents that his/her vehicle may be searched.

Students must not remain in the vehicle upon arrival in the morning, or go to the vehicle during the day without administrative approval.

Once a student arrives by automobile on campus he/she or any riders may not leave without following the proper checkout procedures. **Doing so may result in the loss of parking privileges.**

Students are reminded to drive carefully in and out of the parking area.

The parking lot area is considered school property. Therefore, the use and possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and/or related paraphernalia is prohibited and may result in suspension/expulsion from school.

In case of an accident on campus, all students involved are not to move their vehicles and are to notify an administrator or campus police, immediately. Parents will be notified and the Sheriff's department will be called to the scene to investigate.

**A student's vehicle can be towed and the student may be fined \$150.00 for parking illegally in a handicapped space.**

**Students must have a drug screening form signed by both student and parent before a parking permit will be issued.**

**A student's vehicle can be towed and the student may be fined \$25.00 for parking on campus without a permit.**

Parking permits may be obtained in SRO's office for a fee of \$20 per year. Students will be assigned a parking permit tag that coordinates numerically with a parking spot. Students must visibly display this parking permit from the inside mirror of the vehicle and park in the correct parking spot. Students who do not follow these rules are at risk for serving in ISS and/or losing their driving privileges. Permits must be purchased within the first 2 weeks of school or within 2 weeks of student receiving their drivers permit.

**NOTE: The Towns County School System is not responsible for the damage or loss of property of any vehicle parked on school grounds.**

## **DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONE ACT**

It is illegal to engage in drug activity in, on, or within 1000 feet of any school property. An individual convicted will be guilty of a felony and imprisoned for up to 20 years and/or fined up to \$20,000 for a first offense.

## **DRUG SCREENING POLICY**

The Towns County Board of Education firmly believes that the use and abuse of drugs that are not prescribed or used as prescribed are detrimental to the physical, emotional and mental well

being of its students. The Board further believes that this abuse seriously interferes with the academic and athletic performance of students and creates an unhealthy learning environment. These concerns have prompted the Board to authorize the Superintendent and his staff to develop and implement drug-screening procedures for all students who wish to participate in any interscholastic athletic activity or any interscholastic extra-curricular activity, or any student who applies for a parking permit and intends to park a vehicle on school grounds at Towns County High School.

## **DRUG SCREENING PROCEDURES**

### **Definitions:**

Alcohol shall mean any beverage, mixture, or preparation, including any medication or other products, containing alcohol or ethanol.

Chain of Custody refers to the procedures for maintaining control and accountability from initial collection to final disposition for all such materials or substances and providing for accountability at each stage in handling, testing, and storing specimens and reporting test results.

Drugs shall mean any substance screened for under the policy and shall include, without limitation, alcohol, amphetamines, anabolic steroids, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, methaqualone, opiates, phencyclidine, and propoxyphene.

Specimen means urine, tissue, hair, or a product of the human body capable of revealing the presence of drugs or their metabolites, as approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration or the Agency for Health Care Association.

A Participating Student is any student enrolled in Towns County High School or Towns County Middle School who participates in or applies for participation in any interscholastic athletic program or extracurricular activity, or who parks a vehicle on school property.

Privileged Activity encompasses all high school and middle school interscholastic sports, extracurricular activities, and parking a vehicle on school property.

### **Drug Screening Procedures:**

**Consent:** Each participating student and his or her parents are required to sign a written consent for drug testing form prior to being allowed to participate in any privileged activity. Any random drug testing done throughout the course of the school year will be paid for by the school. Any refusal by a participating student to be tested shall constitute a violation of this policy.

**Medication:** Participating students who have been selected for drug testing and who are or have been taking prescription or non-prescription medication should disclose that fact at the time of drug testing and, upon request, provide verification. This verification may be done by either submitting a copy of the prescription or by the physician's written authorization.

**Selection Process:** Drug testing of participating students shall occur at various times throughout

the school year. Individuals will be selected at random using a numerical selection process where each participating student's name and identity remain unknown until the random selections are completed. The random selection will occur monthly throughout the school year. The random drawing of participating students will be performed by the contracting body and provided to the Towns County High School or Towns County Middle School administration. This method is to ensure fairness and confidentiality for students. Retesting of participating students following a first offense or first positive drug test will occur at times not previously disclosed to the participating student to deter the participating student from committing a subsequent violation.

**Specimen Collection Procedures:** Procedures for the collections, testing and result verification of specimens will be set forth by the testing facility contracted with to perform such services and will be distributed to all the students. The testing for our students will be conducted in private under the supervision of the school nurse. The method of testing for our students will utilize an oral fluid test, which involves the student's collection of saliva on a collection pad (swab). The collection pad (swab) will be placed into a sealed vial by the student and sent by the nurse to the testing company laboratory for analysis.

**Guidance Counselor:** The designated counselor will receive all reports of positive drug test results and will be supplied with information to determine the correct name of each participating student whose identifying number appears on a positive test result report.

**Appeal:** A participating student who has tested positive and whose test results the Guidance Counselor has forwarded to the school principal or his or her designee for the imposition of action provided under policy IDF shall be entitled to appeal such a decision to the school principal. The principal's decision can be appealed only to the Towns County Board of Education.

#### **General Provisions and Penalties:**

**Standard of Conduct for Participating Students:** The use or possession of a drug, as defined herein, by a participating student is both dangerous and detrimental to a student's ability to drive and participate in athletics or extracurricular activities and is hereby prohibited.

**Penalties:** Any participating student whose drug test administered according to this policy renders a positive test result as indicated by the test or any participating student who otherwise violates this policy shall be subject to the following consequences.

**First Offense or First Positive Drug Test Result:** The participating student and his or her parents will be required to attend a conference held with one or more of the following staff members as determined by the Principal, Counselor, Athletic Director, or Principal's designee. If the student participates in extra-curricular activities including athletics, the student will be banned from 10% of the teams or groups games and activities beginning with the next scheduled contest. Student athletes may remain part of the team and will be expected to participate in the team practices and conditioning sessions. The student may not attend any overnight trips with the team or group during the suspension. If a student driver, the student will lose driving privileges for 15 school days. The participating student will be required to offer evidence of participation in a drug assessment/counseling program within 30 days of a positive test result. The participating student

will be subject to recurring drug tests at times not be previously disclosed to the participating student to deter the participating student from committing a subsequent violation of this policy.

**Second Offense or Second Positive Test Result:** The participating student will be suspended from participating in privileged activities for 45 days. The participating student may reapply to the athletic director or principal for reinstatement of his/her eligibility to participate in privileged activities only after a negative test result is obtained and successful completion of an appropriate drug assessment/counseling program.

**Subsequent Offense or Subsequent Positive Drug Test Results:**

Upon determination of a third or subsequent positive drug test result, the participating student shall be prohibited from participation in all privileged activities for one full calendar year. At the end of the year in order for a student to be allowed to resume participation in privileged activities, the student must provide evidence of the successful completion of an appropriate drug assessment/counseling program and a negative test result from the school's testing program that was obtained after the year's prohibition.

Violations of the drug testing policy are accumulative during a student's entire career at Towns County Middle School or Towns County High School; therefore, penalties will increase in severity for each violation that occurs while a student is enrolled at either of the schools.

Note: Violations are not carried over from the Middle School to the High School.

### **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Appropriate dress is essential to success in school and in the work-place; however, students are allowed a measure of freedom in choosing appropriate clothing to wear in school. Clothing should not be distracting or disruptive to the orderly and professional operation of the school. Students with inappropriate apparel will be sent to the office to correct the dress code violation. Appropriate dress includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Dresses, skirts and shorts should be at a length below your fingertips while standing.
2. All wearing apparel with obscene or suggestive language, pictures or language that promote alcohol, drugs, tobacco, racism or hatred are not permitted
3. Tank tops or cutoff t-shirts are not permitted.
4. Students must wear shoes.
5. Hoods, stocking caps, bandannas, sunglasses and may not be worn. Baseball style caps are allowed **BUT** students must follow individual classroom teachers' expectations.
6. Blankets are not allowed to be used during the school day or worn at school.
7. No student should dress in such a way that his/her undergarments are partially or totally visible. The waist and top portions of boxer shorts and briefs, panties, bra straps and bra sides may not be shown.
8. No student may wear clothes with holes anywhere above fingertip length.
9. Blouses, dresses, skirts, or shirts which expose areas of the stomach, side, or back are not permitted.
10. Low cut, see through, strapless, off the shoulder, or backless dresses/shirts may not be worn.
11. Girl's sleeveless tops must be as wide as your palm at a shoulder.

12. Compression pants, tight leggings, or Yoga-type pants may not be worn without shorts, long shirt, or a skirt, **all of finger-tip length covering them.**

**NO APPAREL CAN BE WORN WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION DETERMINES TO BE UNACCEPTABLE BY COMMUNITY STANDARDS OR WHICH IS DISRUPTIVE TO NORMAL SCHOOL OPERATIONS.**

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION OF DRESS CODE**

The student will be asked to modify their attire without leaving campus or will be offered something furnished by the principal to wear to class. If the attire cannot be modified to comply, parents will be notified and asked to bring acceptable clothing to school. The student will wait in the ISS room and complete schoolwork while awaiting the clothing. For repeated offenses, Loss of privileges, ISS, and /or OSS may be necessary.

### **CELL PHONE and SMART DEVICE USE**

Upon entering every classroom, **students are required to place their phone in the cell phone caddy.** Phones must stay in the caddy at all times, unless the teacher is using Bring Your Own Technology at that particular time. It is not the teacher or school's responsibility to provide an opportunity for the student to charge his/her phone. Students who keep their phone in class will be given a warning by the teacher. After being warned, students' phones will be taken up to the front office. **Students caught attempting to use a "burner" phone will automatically receive ISS.** Smart devices (watches) are not to be used in the classroom. Students may continue to wear them, but the use of such devices will be treated like unauthorized phone use.

### **STUDENT REPORTING OF ACTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

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

(b) Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. *If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.*

(c) Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other

employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is the purpose of the Board of Education to operate each school in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with that purpose, the Board of Education has adopted a policy which requires all schools to adopt codes of conduct which require students to conduct themselves at all times in order to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the district.

The school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is effective during the following times and in the following places:

- At school or on school property at any time;
- Off school grounds at any school-related activity, function or event and while traveling to and from such events;
- On school buses and at school bus stops.

In addition, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process.

Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16, Unsafe School Choice Option.

The General Assembly of Georgia requires that this code of conduct include language encouraging parents and guardians to inform their children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community. Parents and students are required to acknowledge receipt of the code of conduct.



## **AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL**

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in this Code, the principal may undertake corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures.

## **TEACHER AUTHORITY**

The Superintendent fully supports the authority of principals and teachers in the school system to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to provisions of state law.

Each teacher shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-737, which requires the filing of a report by a teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior that repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his or her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn, where such behavior is in violation of the student code of conduct. Such report shall be filed with the principal or designee on the school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior, shall not exceed one page, and shall describe the behavior. The principal or designee shall, within one school day after receiving such a report from a teacher, send to the student's parents or guardian a copy of the report and information regarding how the student's parents or guardians may contact the principal or designee.

The principal or designee shall notify in writing the teacher and the student's parents or guardian of the discipline or student support services, which has occurred as a result of the teacher's report within one school day from the imposition of discipline or the utilization of the support services. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable attempt to confirm that the student's parents or guardian has received the written notification, including information as to how the parents or guardian may contact the principal or designee.

## **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will consider the student's discipline history, the age of the student, and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

The following actions may be imposed for any violation of this Code of Conduct:

- Warning and/or conference with a school administrator, counselor, or social worker
- Loss of privileges

- Time out
- Removal from class or activity
- Notification of parents
- Parent conference
- Corporal punishment
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Short-term suspension
- Placement in an alternative education program
- Referral to a disciplinary tribunal for long-term suspension or expulsion
- Suspension or expulsion from the school bus

Referral to law enforcement or juvenile court officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The school will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer as outlined in Code Section 20-2-754.

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved also by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer.

Before a student is suspended for ten days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parents will be notified if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Students' vehicles brought on campus; student book bags, school lockers, desks and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without further notice to students or parents. Cell phones/multi-media/electronic devices taken from students due to possession and/or use in violation of school rules are subject to having their contents searched. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities that occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of administrators.

### **BEHAVIOR THAT WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

The degree of discipline imposed will be in accordance with the progressive discipline process unless otherwise stated.

- **Possession, sale, transmission, use in any amount, distribution, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, drug paraphernalia, or alcoholic beverage, intoxicant, inhalant, prescription drug not currently prescribed, or substance that creates the same effect of the items listed. ALL CBD products are ban from school ground with or without THC.**

- **Possession, distribution, attempted sale or sale of substances represented as drugs or alcohol or any of the other items listed above**

- **Sale, attempted sale, distribution, or being under the influence of a prescription or over the counter drug**

The term drug does not include prescriptions issued to the individual, aspirin or similar medications and/or cold medications that are taken according to product use recommendations and board policy. Caffeine pills are considered drugs. All medications other than those exceptions listed in this policy, whether prescription or over-the-counter, may be administered only in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the principal of each school. All medications must be taken by the student, parent or guardian to the school office immediately upon arrival at school and must be in original pharmaceutical containers, clearly labeled as to the name of the student, the name of the medication, the appropriate dosage, and the times for dosage. Any student possessing prescription or over-the-counter medication not in accordance with these guidelines will be considered in violation of the Towns County School's drug policy and shall be subject to the discipline set forth in the student code of conduct and/or the student/parent handbook.

- **Possession or use of a weapon, as provided for in Code Section 16-11-127.1:**

A student shall not possess, use, handle, or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon. Weapons may include, but are not limited to:

1. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade.

2. Any hazardous object, including 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, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, 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, nunchuck, 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 instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year expulsion. The Superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one-year expulsion under circumstances, where the one-year expulsion appears excessive to

the Superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment.

Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as determined by the principal to be appropriate based on the seriousness of the offense, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

- **Verbal assault, including threats of violence or bodily harm and/or sexual assault or harassment, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions:** Immediate suspension and automatic referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

- **Physical assault or battery, including sexual battery, of other students, or persons attending school-related functions:** possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

- **Physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel:**

1. Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher or other school personnel: Expulsion for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public schools for acts of physical violence found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contact or physical harm was in defense of himself or herself, as provided in Code Section 16-3-21; or the Board may authorize the student to attend alternative school for the period of the expulsion; provided, however, that if such student is in kindergarten through grade six, then the Board upon the recommendation of the tribunal may permit the student to re-enroll in regular programs for grades 9 through 12; and provided further that if the Board does not operate an alternative education program for grades kindergarten through grade six, then the Board may permit the student in kindergarten through grade six who commits such an act to re-enroll in the public school system. The student shall be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior.

2. Possible punishments may include expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension for students found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another.

- **Bus Misbehavior**

The following specific provisions shall govern student conduct and safety on all school buses:

1. All provisions of the Student Code of Conduct apply to behavior on the school bus, including but not limited to, acts of physical violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined by subsection (a) of the Code Section 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior;

2. A meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and appropriate school district officials must be held to form a school bus behavior contract whenever: a) A student is found to have engaged in bullying; or b) A student is found to have engaged in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus.

The school bus behavior contract shall provide for age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Provisions may include, but are not limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus.

These provisions regarding use of a bus behavior contract are not to be construed to limit the instances when other code of conduct violations may require use of a student bus behavior contract.

1. Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; pagers; audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and

2. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

- **Disrespectful conduct, including use of vulgar or profane language, toward teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions**

- **Any behavior based on a student's race, national origin, sex, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient is prohibited, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature, up to and including sexual harassment as used in connection with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**

- **Transmitting sexually explicit or suggestive material to other students at school or circulating such material at school through electronic devices or in any other manner**

- **Violating the school's/school system's acceptable use of the Internet/electronic resources agreement/policy**

- **Possession or use of tobacco in any form, electronic cigarettes, vape, and any paraphernalia related to any of these items**

**Discipline for Vaping Offenses (Cumulative High School Career) :**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: 5 days of In-School Suspension

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: 5 days of Out-of-School Suspension

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Automatic Referral

- **Damaging or defacing personal property, including the property of another student or any person legitimately at the school, or school property (vandalism or graffiti) during school hours or off-school hours**
- **Theft**
- **Extortion or attempted extortion**
- **Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive**
- **Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat**
- **Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives including refusal of search.**
- **Disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff**
- **Classroom and school disturbances**
- **Violation of school dress code**
- **Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words or indecent exposure**
- **Using cell phones or other electronic devices during prohibited times**
- **Inappropriate public displays of affection including kissing, holding hands, or hugging.**
- **Gambling or possession of gambling devices**
- **Driving or parking permit violations**
- **Giving false information to school officials**
- **Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student; Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who believes a student has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor, or administrator at his/her school.**
- **Cheating on school assignments or other academic dishonesty**
- **Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, leaving campus without permission, failure to comply with compulsory attendance law**

- **Bullying:** Georgia law mandates that upon a tribunal finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school
- **Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts**
- **Willful and persistent violations of the student code of conduct**
- **Criminal law violations/Off-campus misconduct:** A student whose conduct off campus could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process may be subject to disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, short-term suspension or referral to a disciplinary tribunal

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Assault:** Any threat or attempt to physically harm another person or any act which reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: threatening language or swinging at someone in an attempt to strike).

**Battery:** Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person.

**Bullying:** An act 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:
4. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
  - a. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - b. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening education environment; or
  - c. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

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

1. is directed specifically at students or school personnel

2. is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and
3. creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose. Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic, or photo optical system.

**Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student:** A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur.

**Corporal Punishment:** Physical punishment of a student by a school official in the presence of another school official.

**Detention:** A requirement that the student report to a specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official to make up work or time missed. Detention may require the student's attendance before school or after school.

**Disciplinary Tribunal:** School officials appointed by the School District to sit as fact finder and judge with respect to student disciplinary matters.

**Dress Code:** Acceptable standards of dress code as explained in the student handbook or through other means.

**Drug:** The term drug does not include prescriptions issued to the individual, aspirin or similar medications and/or cold medications that are taken according to product use recommendations or that are allowed under board policy or school rules. Caffeine pills are considered drugs. All medications other than those exceptions listed in this policy, whether prescription or over-the-counter, may be administered only in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the principal of each school. All medications must be taken by the student, parent or guardian to the school office immediately upon arrival at school and must be in original pharmaceutical containers, clearly labeled as to the name of the student, the name of the medication, the appropriate dosage, and the times for dosage. Any student possessing prescription or over-the-counter medication not in accordance with these guidelines will be considered in violation of the Towns County School's drug policy and shall be subject to the discipline set forth in the student code of conduct and/or the student/parent handbook.

**Expulsion:** Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school quarter or semester. Such action may be taken only by a disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with Code Section 20-2-754.

**Extortion:** Obtaining money or goods from another student by violence, threats, or misuse of authority.

**Fireworks:** Any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by



combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance.

**Gambling:** Engaging in a game or contest in which the outcome is dependent upon chance even though accompanied by some skill, and in which a participant stands to win or lose something of value.

**In-School Suspension:** Removal of a student from class(es) or the regular school program and assignment of that student to an alternative program isolated from peers.

**Physical Violence:** Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another or intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another.

**Suspension:** Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed 10 days (short-term) or for a period greater than 10 days (long-term, which may be imposed only by a disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.

**Theft:** The offense of taking or misappropriating any property, of another with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

**Waiver:** A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the code of conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.

**Weapon:** The term weapon is defined in Georgia's criminal Code Section 16-11-127.1, but for the purpose of this code of conduct includes any object that is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well being.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES**

The Board of Education provides a variety of resources that are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include Student Support Teams, attendance support teams, school counselors, peer mentoring, and chronic disciplinary problem student plans.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student

behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contacts is extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents as well as on-going opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments.

Parents and students should contact the principal of the school if specific questions arise related to the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code which may result in a school staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior.

Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify by telephone call and by mail the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call and by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend the conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

## **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICY**

### **Philosophy**

Participation in athletics is a privilege of interested students. Athletics provides an opportunity for students to build character, set and reach goals, accept discipline, and experience unselfish teamwork. Athletics should work with the other extracurricular and curricular activities of Towns County High School to provide students with a well-rounded education that prepares them to be productive citizens.

### **Athletics Offered**

Towns County High offers a variety of activities for male and female students. The sports offered by season include the following: Fall Sports- Cheerleading, Football, Boys and Girls

Cross Country, and Girls Softball; Winter Sports- Boys and Girls Basketball, Boys and Girls Wrestling; Spring Sports- Boys and Girls Soccer, Baseball, Boys and Girls Golf.

### **Participation Requirements**

1. Academic Eligibility - All students must pass three (3) classes the semester prior to participation. All students must meet the following “On Track” requirements:

Beginning 3rd semester – 5 units

Beginning 5th semester – 11 units

Beginning 7th semester – 18 units

2. Physical examination – A student must have and pass a physical exam given by a Medical Doctor. A copy of the school physical exam form must be on file before a student can participate in any athletic activity (practice or contest). Physical exams are good for one (1) calendar year.

3. Insurance – Each student athlete must be covered by insurance. Parents may purchase school insurance or provide proof of personal insurance coverage. Please see the athletic website for more information in regards to school insurance or contact Jim Melton.

4. Release forms – Each student athlete must have on file a completed medical release form. This form describes the possibility of injury from participation in competitive athletics and releases the coach and/or school official to approve any emergency treatment necessary. All medical release forms must be on file before a student can participate in any activity (practice or contest).

5. Athletic Letters – Student athletes may earn a letter by participation in a varsity sport. Criteria for earning a letter in each sport will be covered by team coaches. Students who meet the criteria for lettering may order a jacket. Letterman jackets will be ordered at least once per semester.

6. Awards – Teams and individual athletes may receive plaques, trophies, and other types of recognition awards at banquets sponsored by TCHS athletics and are based on the coach’s decision.

7. Uniforms and Equipment – All athletes must return all equipment and uniforms at the completion of the season. No student will be allowed to participate in any other activity until responsibility for non-returned uniforms or equipment is settled.

8. Travel – All team members will travel to and from athletic events on school transportation. Team unity is essential to the success of an athletic program, and request for emergency situations may be handled by individual coaches, but must be handled personally between parents and coach. Students will not be released to friends or relatives.

9. Discipline – Disciplinary Action will be based on the infraction and the circumstances of each individual incident. Disciplinary actions may include the following consequences as determined by the coach, athletic director, and administration. The consequences are listed from least to most severe. These are:

- a. Verbal reprimand
- b. Physical activity (extra running, etc.)
- c. Reduction in playing time
- d. Suspension from the team (cannot practice, dress out, or participate; in any team activity. Length of suspension and terms of re-instatement will be determined by coach and A.D.)
- e. Dismissal from the team
- f. Dismissal from participation in athletic program

10. Drug Testing-All student athletes will be eligible for a random drug test to be administered at the High School at designated times. Students selected will be notified on the day of the test.

11. Team Suspension/Dismissal-Acts that may result in suspension or dismissal of an individual from participating on a team or the athletic program, may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- b. Acting in an unsportsmanlike manner when representing the school
- c. Suspension from school by administration
- d. Any act at school or away from school which in the opinion of the coaches or administration reflects on the athletic program in a negative manner
- e. Missing practice without permission
- f. Any act of dishonesty
- g. Flagrant acts of disloyalty to his or her team, coaches, or school
- h. Consistent lack of effort
- i. Refusal to accept the discipline related to the rules of the team

## **SCHOOL SPONSORED CLUBS**

School sponsored clubs (excluding competitive interscholastic activities or events) are those under the sponsorship, direction and control of the school that organize and meet for common goals, objectives, and purposes. State law requires that parents have the right to withhold permission for their students to participate in any school sponsored club or organization designated by them. The following school sponsored clubs, teams, and athletics will be in operation during this school year. You as the parent/guardian, have the right to withhold in writing your permission for your student's participation in any club or organization. For your convenience, a form is included in this handbook, if you do not wish for your student to participate in the organization you have designated on the form. If an organization is added during the school year, you will be provided information on it and your written permission will be required prior to your student's participation.

### **Clubs /Activities Offered**

Towns County High offers a variety of activities for students. The Clubs or Activities offered include the following: Academic Team (by invitation/recommendation), Beta (by invitation), Fellowship of Christian Students, Future Business Leaders of America, Future Farmers of America, HOSA, Marching Band and Color Guard, Student Council, and Yearbook (by invitation/recommendation).

## **GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION**

### **CHANGE IN ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER**

It is critical that the school knows how to contact parents in an emergency. If you change your address or phone number please contact the school immediately.

### **DRIVER'S LICENSE-CERTIFICATES OF SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**

Students between the ages of 15-17 who plan to obtain a driver's license or learner's permit must present a Certificate of School Enrollment. You may request this form from the main office. The certificates will be issued the day following the student's request.

### **ELIGIBILITY RULES**

**Grades 9-12:** A student must be passing or pass three out of four courses each semester and be on track for graduation according to Georgia High School Association requirements to be eligible to participate in any form of school-sponsored competitive activity. Such activities include, but are not limited to, sports, club competitions, and contests. A student will be ineligible for such activities for the entire semester following the student's failure to pass three courses. Eligibility will be determined at the end of each semester. Some extracurricular activities require more stringent guidelines. The student should consult with administration concerning questions related to eligibility.

### **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

School insurance is available for purchase during the first two weeks of the new school year. Students and parents should be aware that the insurance is limited. Work-study students must have 24-hour coverage or adequate family insurance.

### **INSURANCE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Insurance is required for participation in athletic teams and vocational lab classes. School insurance is available for purchase during the first two weeks of the new school year. Personal insurance is acceptable.

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Schedule changes will be handled on an individual basis. Students desiring a schedule change must email Dionne Berrong with their changes they are requesting. Students should not miss class time for the purpose of schedule changes, unless they are called to the office. Teachers are not allowed to make a schedule change for any student. Students must follow the schedule they are given until an official schedule change has been authorized. Teachers will be notified as quickly as official schedule changes are made. Teachers should check with the counselor's office if a student is not reporting to their class or if they have students reporting to their class and have

not been officially notified. **The principal must approve all schedule changes.**

### **FIRST AID/ILLNESS**

Students who require first aid or who become ill during the school day should report to their regularly scheduled class and obtain a hall pass to the nurse's clinic or to phone home in the office.

### **MEDICATION and SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS**

If students need to take prescription or over the counter medications during the school day, the medication must be left with the school nurse with a consent form completed by parents, authorizing the school to administer the medication as prescribed by the doctor. A student health form along with a letter of explanation will be made available to parents.

An auto-injectable epinephrine is defined as a disposable drug delivery device that is easily transportable and contains a premeasured single dose of epinephrine used to treat life-threatening allergic reactions. In order for a student to carry and self-administer prescription auto-injectable epinephrine the student's parent or guardian shall provide: A written statement from a licensed physician detailing the name of the medication, method, amount, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken, and confirming that the student is able to self-administer auto-injectable epinephrine. A written statement by the parent or guardian consenting to the self-administration, providing a release for the school nurse or other designated school personnel to consult with the physician regarding any questions that may arise with regard to the medication, and releasing the school system and its employees and agents from civil liability if the self-administering student suffers an adverse reaction as a result of self-administering auto-injectable epinephrine pursuant to Georgia law. The written statements specified in this subsection shall be provided at least annually and more frequently if the medication, dosage, frequency of administration, or reason for administration changes. Any student who is authorized for self-administration of epinephrine pursuant to this Code section may possess and use auto-injectable epinephrine; while in school; at a school sponsored activity; while under the supervision of school personnel; or while in before-school or after-school care on school operated property. To protect the safety of all students the misuse or abuse of auto-injectable epinephrine will be considered a Level One violation of the Towns County High School Code of Conduct.

**Students with special health needs must make these known to the principal so that a notation can be made in school records.**

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

We have students with severe food, nut, and scent allergies. Students and staff should not bring items into the classrooms containing nuts, nut products, or any other items that the school has been made aware of, that someone is allergic to. Our food service does not serve items containing nuts or nut products and they are not sold in our vending machines. We ask that students not bring these type items to school.

### **EATING IN CLASSROOMS**

Students are not allowed to eat in classrooms. Students may purchase snacks between classes, but they must be eaten in the five minutes between classes or during Break. Students are not allowed to eat their breakfast or lunch in classrooms.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

The cafeteria is operated without profit for the benefit of students. Students are expected to assist in keeping the cafeteria clean; therefore, they are responsible for cleaning up their own tables and spillage. Students are expected to keep the noise level down and maintain reasonable cleanliness of the lunchroom. During the lunch period, students must stay in the lunchroom. To help maintain a safe environment, no student may leave the campus to eat lunch at another location.

### **Lunch will cost \$2.50. Breakfast will cost \$2.00**

Parents are strongly encouraged to submit a free or reduced meal application on or before the first day of school each school year. Parents must reapply each school year. Meal applications will be mailed out in July to every student enrolled in Towns County Schools. Meal applications are also available online at <https://family.titank12.com/>, at each school's front office or you may contact the Nutrition Department for an application.

The charge limit for all meals is \$10.00. Parents are strongly encouraged to prepay for student meals if not approved for free meals. Students are not allowed to charge any extra items, only the meal. Once a student reaches the \$10.00 charge limit and payment has not been provided the student will receive an alternative meal. Students will receive alternative meal until all charges are paid or student has cash to pay daily as meal is provided.

Families will be notified of their student(s) charges weekly or biweekly by phone, email, text message or automated call to your phone number on file with the school. Please make sure to update all phone numbers and addresses each school year so that we may contact you. Parents are strongly encouraged to set up online reminder and payment options at <https://family.titank12.com/> this will prevent your student(s) from acquiring unwanted meal charges at all times. For help with setting up the online account please contact the Nutrition Department.

### **Notice for Language and Disability Assistance for the School Nutrition Program**

If you have difficulty communicating with us or understanding this information because you do not speak English or have a disability, please let us know. Contact (Becky Mullins). Free language assistance or other aids and services are available upon request.

#### **Spanish /Español:**

Si tiene dificultades para comunicarse con nosotros, o para entender esta información porque no habla inglés o tiene alguna discapacidad, por favor infórmenos. Comuníquese con (Becky Mullins). Tenemos disponibilidad de servicios gratuitos de ayuda en otros idiomas y otro tipo de asistencia y servicios cuando lo solicite.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
  2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
  3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).
- \* This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

### **BRINGING IN FOOD FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES**

Students may not have parents or other students drop off outside food to them. This includes WBL students who may be off campus throughout the day. Those students should eat their meals prior to returning to campus and should not bring food for other students.

### **HALL PASS**

In order to leave a class, the student must have a classroom hall pass. The hall pass should include the student name, destination, and time leaving class. The hall pass will be given to the teacher when the student returns to the classroom.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are assigned to student upon request and payment of \$5.00. This prevents students from having to carry their notebooks, textbooks and computer all day long. Students must keep lockers locked at all times and not give combinations to anyone. Student lockers are considered the property of Towns County Schools and may be searched by the principal or designee at any time during the school year. The school does not assume responsibility for the contents of a student's locker if the items are stolen or lost.

### **LOST AND FOUND**



Found articles are kept in the main office and at the coat rack at the bottom of the stairs leading to the Media Center.

### **MONEY AND OTHER VALUABLES**

Students should leave money and other valuables at home except for that which is necessary for school. The school will not be responsible for money, cell phones, iPods, and other valuables left in clothes, dressing rooms, automobiles, and lockers, or unattended in the classroom or other places on the school grounds.

### **OFF-LIMIT AREAS**

All parking areas, athletic fields, and facilities are off-limits to students unless they are under the direct supervision of a teacher. Students are not allowed to leave the building without permission from an administrator or unless a parent has checked them out with the front office.

### **TELEPHONES**

Telephones in all offices are for school business only, unless an emergency situation arises. Personal business should be taken care of before or after school hours. Personal messages will not be forwarded to the students during school hours.

### **CELL PHONES**

Students are permitted to possess cell phones, smart phones, or other communication devices in purses, pockets, book bags, in vehicles parked on campus, or in their lockers, as long as they are turned OFF. **In the classroom, students must store their cell phone in the Cell Phone Caddy provided. Students are NOT permitted to USE cell phones, or other electronic devices from 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM, unless it is during their lunch, break, or during a teacher-authorized time in the classroom when Bring Your Own Technology is being utilized. According to Georgia state law the use of electronic devices on the school bus is prohibited.** Students who use cell phones, or other communication devices in violation of this procedure, or whose electronic communication devices are turned ON during class and not stored in the Caddy, shall be referred to the office and will receive a disciplinary consequence. Students are not to leave class and use their cell phone. It is not the teacher or school's responsibility to provide an opportunity for students to charge their phone while on campus. First time violators will have their phones taken up to be returned at the end of the school day. Subsequent referrals for cell phone violation will result in discipline such as loss of privilege, ISS, OSS, etc. Students who are in classes that are incorporating BYOT will be allowed to use their technology during class when and how their teacher directs them to.

### **VISITORS**

Parents and other visitors must enter at the front of the school and immediately check in at the reception desk in the office to obtain a visitor's pass before visiting on campus. All visitors are subject to the rules and regulations of the school.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

The records clerk handles all withdrawals. Parents must contact Mrs. Beatrice Thurman before withdrawal procedures can begin.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of emergency drills or an actual emergency, students are to follow the instructions of the teacher. Emergency procedures are posted in every room. Students should familiarize themselves with these procedures.

### **SNOW AND OTHER EMERGENCY CONDITIONS**

When there are snowy or icy conditions, the following radio and television stations will announce school closings:

- The Power Announcement Call System is used to call all student primary contact numbers
- TV and Radio stations:
  - Fox 5 Atlanta News
  - WSB TV 2 News Atlanta
  - 11 Alive News Atlanta
  - WJUL 97.5 FM & 1230am – Young Harris Radio
- Central Office – Recorded Message – (706) 896-2279
- Facebook, LivingTree, and the school website, [www.towncountyschools.org](http://www.towncountyschools.org)

School closing information may also be obtained by connecting to the school's web site at [www.towncountyschools.org](http://www.towncountyschools.org). We will also attempt to contact all student home telephone numbers through our automated system. Students should know what to do and where to go in the event of an early dismissal. Parents should discuss this with their children.

### **LEARNING CENTER**

Students are NOT allowed to sit on the steps leading toward the learning center before school, during break, or at lunchtime to eat. Students are encouraged to go up before school or during break to purchase a coffee and hang out.

The purpose of the Learning Center is to serve the students, faculty and staff as a resource center, supporting and enriching the curriculum with a variety of materials and providing the opportunity for reading and research.

Students may check out materials from the Learning Center at any time during its operating hours.

Students must have a hall pass to visit the Learning Center. They must sign in when entering the center. The staff will sign and records each student's departure time on the hall pass as the student leaves to return to class.

Books at all grade levels are checked out for 1-2 weeks. Notices are given to teachers informing them of students with overdue books. Students are expected to pay full replacement price plus \$2.00 processing fees for books that are lost or not returned to the Learning Center.

Students are expected to be quiet while in the Learning Center, to be respectful to the staff, to take care of property and materials, to return materials on time, and to pay for damaged or lost items. Standard behavior expectations are enforced.

### **GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT**

At the high school level, a great deal more responsibility is placed on both students and parents to make wise choices in planning the student's program of study. However, the staff of Towns County High School is always at the disposal of each student who needs guidance in his/her high school program.

The school counselor works in the office, classrooms and small groups, coordinating classroom guidance, career awareness classes, personalized programs, student placement, new student orientation, and school-wide testing. The counselor consults with parents concerning social, emotional, and educational concerns experienced by their children. Consulting with teachers is necessary to help plan activities and programs for individual growth and classroom policies, curriculum and programs for individual growth and classroom management. The counselor provides support during personal crisis, develops skills for individual growth and classroom problems, helps students set positive goals, exercise self-responsibility, and improve academic progress. Counseling is provided to facilitate discussions that develop communication skills that help students understand themselves and others.

### **APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

Towns County High School Youth Apprenticeship Program offers an opportunity for forward-thinking juniors and seniors to get a head start on their careers. Students who have definite career goals are assisted in securing an apprenticeship job related to those goals or in a specific field.

There are both in-school and on-the-job components with a commitment required from the student and his/her parents to continue training through graduation and into a 1, 2, or 4-year post-secondary phase. Any student having a question concerning this valuable program should contact the front office.

### **GENERAL CURRICULUM INFORMATION**

Towns County High School operates on the semester system. This program provides for two semesters of approximately 90 days each during the regular school year. Progress reports are

given to all students at the end of the first nine-week period and the end of the third nine-week period each semester. Students will receive report cards at the end of each semester.

### **GRADING SCALE**

100 – 90 = A    80 – 89 = B    70 – 79 = C    Grades below 70 = F

I=Incomplete: Students receiving an incomplete for a semester's work will have up to 10 days to make up work after returning to school.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

**Please read this section carefully.** In order to receive a diploma and participate in graduation exercises, all graduation attendance and course requirements must be met.

Below are the graduation requirements for each class.

### **TOWNS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

<b>AREAS OF STUDY</b>	<b>Units Required</b>
(I) English/Language Arts* (Required Courses: Ninth Grade Literature and American Literature)	4
(II) Mathematics* (Required Courses: Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II)	4
(III) Science* (Required Courses: Physical Science or Physics, Biology, Environmental Science or Chemistry or Earth Systems)	4
<i>The 4<sup>th</sup> Science unit may be used to meet both the science and elective requirement.</i>	
(IV) Social Studies* (Required Courses: World History, American Government/Civics, US History, and Economics)	4
(V) CTAE and/or Modern Language/Latin and/or Fine Arts	3
(VI) Health and Physical Education**	1
(VII) Computer Technology Applications (Introduction to Business Technology or Introduction to Digital Technology)	1
(VIII) Electives****	7
<b>TOTAL UNITS****</b>	<b>28</b>

\*Required Courses and/or Core Courses

While Foreign Language is not required, 2 units of a foreign language are required for acceptance to most colleges.

### **HONOR GRADUATE SELECTION**

Honor Graduates will be selected by numerical grade average. All students with at least a 93.00 un-weighted numerical average in all coursework will be named Honor Graduates. All Honor Graduates will be given an honor cord for graduation. High Honor Graduates with at least a 97.00 weighted numerical average in all core content coursework will be named High Honor Graduates. To be considered for this Honor, students must have taken at least 8 courses of rigor

(Honors, Foreign Language, Advanced Academic and/or Dual Enrollment) during High School. High Honor Graduates will be given an honor sash for graduation.

### **DETERMINATION OF VALEDICTORIAN-SALUTATORIAN-HISTORIAN**

To receive the honor of Valedictorian, Salutatorian, or Historian students must have been enrolled at Towns County High School for their entire junior and senior year. In addition, students must have been enrolled in a school that is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its equivalent for their entire secondary school career (Grades 9-12). Selection of the Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Historian will be based upon their numeric grade point average in Math, English, Foreign Language, Science, and Social Studies courses through the end of the senior year, which is the last Friday prior to graduation. Grades will be weighted for calculations to determine Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Historian.

The weights are as follows:

Honors Courses: 5 additional points

AP Courses: 10 additional points

College Courses: 10 additional points

Letter grades reported from colleges will be awarded the following numerical equivalence.

A+:98	
A: 95	C+: 78
A-: 92	C: 75
B+: 88	C-: 72
B: 85	D: 70
B-: 82	F: 59

In the event there is a tie between two or more students weighted GPAs, the student with the highest number of honors or advanced level courses will be named Valedictorian. If there is still a tie, the student with the highest SAT scores will be the determining factor. If two students achieve the same weighted GPA, number of honors or advanced classes, and SAT score they will be named co-Valedictorians and no Salutatorian will be selected. If two students achieve the same second highest senior rank, they will be named co-Salutatorians and no Historian will be selected.

### **GRADUATION CEREMONY**

Unlike a student's right to a diploma upon completion of graduation requirements, participating in the graduation ceremony is a privilege. In order to participate in the graduation ceremony, students must wear the traditional cap and gown ordered through the official vendor for the graduation ceremony. The official vendor for the graduation cap and gown for the Class of 2025 is 3<sup>rd</sup> Ascent. Students must wear appropriate graduation attire in an appropriate manner in order to participate in the graduation ceremony. Students serving In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension may not participate in the graduation ceremony or other school sponsored senior events. In order for any student to walk in the Towns County High School graduation ceremony, they must be enrolled in Towns County High School and meet all of the Towns County High School graduation requirements.

## **HOPE SCHOLARSHIPS**

The HOPE scholarship program will pay tuition for eligible Georgia College students at a rate set by the Georgia Student Finance Commission.

## **HOPE GRANTS**

Hope grants are available to students attending technical colleges.

## **TESTING OUT**

Students may earn course credit by achieving a pre-defined performance level on the State designated EOC as described below:

1. A student may test out of any course that has an associated EOC.
2. A student may only earn up to three credits by testing-out.
3. A student may not be currently or previously enrolled in the course in which they are seeking to “test-out”.
4. The student must have earned a grade of B or better in a content area course that is the same content area of the course for which the student is attempting the EOC.
5. The student must receive teacher recommendation from a teacher in the same content area of the course for which the student is attempting the EOC.
6. The student must receive parent/guardian permission if the student is less than 18 years of age.
7. The student is allowed only one opportunity per course to demonstrate subject area competency.
8. The EOC can only be given during the appropriate state-approved testing window for administration of the EOC.
9. The student must score in the Distinguished level on the EOC to receive credit for the course.
10. If the student does not score in the Distinguished level when attempting to test-out, the student must enroll in and complete the associated course and retake the EOC even if the student made a passing grade on the EOC during the testing-out attempt, if the course is required for graduation.
11. Units earned through “testing-out” will count toward fulfillment of students’ requirements for subject area courses, and towards meeting graduation requirements.
12. Students who are presently enrolled, or who have previously been enrolled, in a higher-level course may not attempt to earn credit by testing-out. For example, a student taking AP Physics may not earn credit for Physical Science by “testing-out”.
13. If the “testing-out” course is one that would normally be included in a student’s GPA, the student’s grade equivalent score on the EOC will be used in the student’s GPA.
14. The Georgia Department of Education will be responsible for the costs of administering the EOC for the purpose of “testing-out” only for those students who reach the performance level

of Distinguished. The student and/or parent will be responsible for the costs associated with administering the EOC for “testing-out” purposes if the distinguished performance level is not achieved.

## **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

Dual Enrollment provides opportunities for high school students to enroll in postsecondary institutions to earn both high school and college credits simultaneously. These students must meet all state assessment requirements for those classes that require an EOC. They are eligible to participate in competitive and other extracurricular activities, as long as their schedule can accommodate practices, games, etc. without interfering with their course requirements. Students must complete a Student Participation Agreement form each semester they plan to participate in Dual Enrollment. Communication with the high school counselor is very important for successful implementation of the Dual Enrollment program.

## **PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS-GRADES 9-12**

High school students in grades nine through twelve are promoted under the guidelines as follows:

For all students regardless of date entering 9th grade, 4 of these units must be from the core curriculum areas which are defined as Mathematics, English, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Languages.

### **Promotion Requirements**

10<sup>th</sup> Grade-7 units

11<sup>th</sup> Grade-14 units

12<sup>th</sup> Grade-21 units

To Graduate-28 units

## **TRANSFER CREDIT**

Towns County High School will accept student course credit earned in a school or home study program accredited by Cognia or by one or more of the following regional accreditation agencies: Georgia Accrediting Commission, the Georgia Association of Christian Schools, the Association of Christian Schools International, the Accrediting Commission for Independent Study, the Southern Association of Independent Schools and/or one of the accrediting agencies that is a member of the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council , and/or one of the following regional accrediting agencies.

1. New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
2. Higher Learning Commission
3. Northwest Accreditation Commission
4. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
5. Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions

Any student requesting admission into Towns County High School from a home study program must have his/her parent or guardian provide documentation to the principal that all requirements for operating a home school as specified in Georgia Code 20-2-690 have been met. Subject and

grade transfer must meet the district's requirement for instructional contact hours for the regular academic year. After instructional hours are verified by the principal's designee, Towns County High School personnel will test to determine grades and credit transferred from the student's home school or non-accredited situation. The student will be tentatively scheduled in classes, pending verification, as indicated by record furnished to the school by the parent or guardian.

The maximum number of units accepted from non-accredited institutions and home schools is ten (10), two (2) per area tested. No more than six (6) units can be applied for or awarded from any non-accredited situation in any single academic year. Home study credit may not be applied for or awarded for summer school work. School district personnel will administer standardized and/or instructional placement tests in the areas of language arts, science, social studies, and mathematics.

Non-academic course credit may be accepted from a non-accredited institution or home school, provided the student passes a performance test, portfolio review, and/or interview by school district personnel. Elective courses which rely heavily on group participation, public performances, and social interaction are not eligible for home study credit or credit from a non-accredited situation. Testing for academic and non-academic course credit will be content specific and will include, but not be limited to, course objectives as defined by the state approved curriculum.

If the student passes the tests administered by school district personnel to determine credit accepted, the school will also accept the grades listed on the records provided by the parent or guardian for those specific courses tested. **These grades will not be considered when selecting valedictorian, salutatorian or honor graduates.**

Student who have been enrolled in a home study program or other non-accredited situation must pass the state mandated assessments and meet State of Georgia and Towns County High School graduation requirements before a diploma will be issued.

A student who has enrolled in a home study program or any other non-accredited situation shall be informed by the school guidance office at the time of application to the public school that his/her participation in class is on a credit basis. Auditing of classes is not permitted in the Towns County High School. A student enrolling in a public high school for the first time during a grading period shall be responsible for the content and objectives for the total grading period's work and major grade-bearing activities for the class. Teachers shall be responsible for informing students of their obligation for grade-bearing activities, but teachers shall not be responsible for re-teaching information to students on content that was presented prior to the time of enrollment in school. School district personnel will assess with the student and parents school work done in the non-accredited situation prior to enrollment or re-enrollment.

If a parent or legal guardian disagrees with credit accepted or denied by the school for a student from a non-accredited situation or home school, an appeal may be made to the principal of the school and then, if still dissatisfied, later to the Superintendent of Schools. The appeal should contain all pertinent information, documentation, transcript, attendance record, and state the reasons for the appeal. The decision of the Superintendent is final.



\*Students transferring into Towns County High School must take at least 1 course on campus at Towns County High School in order to receive a diploma from TCHS.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE AND INTERNET SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR THE COMPUTER NETWORK OF THE TOWNS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

The Towns County School System is pleased to make available to students access to interconnected computer systems within the District and to the Internet. In order for the Towns County School System to be able to continue to make its computer network and Internet access available, all students must take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of this access. Students must understand that one student's misuse of the network and Internet access may jeopardize the ability of all students to enjoy such access. While the school's teachers and other staff will make reasonable efforts to supervise student use of network and Internet access, they must have student cooperation in exercising and promoting responsible use of this access.

Below are the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Guidelines of the Towns County School System and the Data Acquisition Site that provides Internet access to the school district. Upon reading the guidelines, signing, and returning the Student's Agreement as the students have been directed, each student will be given the opportunity to enjoy Internet access at school and is agreeing to follow the guidelines. If a student is under 18 years of age, he or she also must have his or her parents or guardians read the guidelines and sign the agreement. The Towns County School System will not provide access to any student who, if 18 or older, fails to sign and submit the agreement to the school as directed or, if under 18, does not return the agreement as directed with the signatures of the student and his/her parents or guardians.

Listed below are the provisions of your agreement regarding computer network and Internet use. If you have any questions about these provisions, you should contact the Technology Director, Trena Stroud and/or the Principal of the school in which your child attends. If any user violates the guidelines, the student's access will be denied, if not already provided, or withdrawn and he or she may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

### **I. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

By signing this agreement, you are agreeing not only to follow the rules in these guidelines, but are agreeing to refrain from any other misuse of the network that is not included in the guidelines, but has the effect of harming another or his or her property.

### **II. TERM OF PERMITTED USE**

A student who submits to the school, as directed a properly signed agreement and follows the guidelines to which she or he has agreed will have computer network and Internet access during the course of the student's enrollment in the school.

### **III. ACCEPTABLE USES**

A. Education Purposes Only. The Towns County School System is providing access to its computer networks and the Internet for only educational purposes. If you have any doubt about

whether a contemplated activity is educational, you may consult with Technology Director; Larry Shook and/or the Principal of the school in which your child attends to help you decide if a use is appropriate.

Unacceptable Uses of Network. Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of the guidelines are the following:

Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law. Do not transmit offensive or harassing messages; offer or sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by the school system student code of conduct; view, transmit or download pornographic materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; intrude into the networks or computers of others; and download or transmit confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, you should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.

Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property. For example, do not engage in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); employ another's password or some other user identifier that misleads message recipients into believing that someone other than you is communicating or otherwise using his/her access to the network or the Internet; upload a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb," or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participate in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.

Uses that jeopardize the security of student access and of the computer network or other networks on the Internet. For example, do not disclose or share your password with others; do not impersonate another user.

Uses that are commercial transactions. Students and other users may not sell or buy anything over the Internet. You should not give others private information about you or others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers.

**Netiquette-** All users must abide by rules of network etiquette, which include the following:

Be polite. Use appropriate language. No swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or threatening language.

Avoid language and uses which may be offensive to other users. Do not use access to make, distribute, or redistribute jokes, stories, or other material which is based upon slurs or stereotypes relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.

Do not assume that a sender of e-mail is giving his or her permission for you to forward or redistribute the message to third parties or to give his/her e-mail address to third parties. This should only be done with permission or when you know that the individual would have no objection.

Be considerate when sending attachments with e-mail (where this is permitted). Be sure that the file is not too large to be accommodated by the recipient's system and is in a format which the recipient can open.

#### IV. INTERNET SAFETY

General Warning: Individual Responsibility of Parents and Users. All users and their parents/guardians are advised that access to the electronic network may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school-aged students. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the computer network or Internet and stay away from these sites. Parents of minors are the best guide to materials to shun. If a student finds that other users are visiting offensive or harmful sites, he or she should report such use to Technology Director, Larry Shook, and/or the Principal of the school in which your child attends.

Personal Safety. Be safe. In using the computer network and Internet, do not reveal personal information such as your home address or telephone number. Do not use your real last name or any other information which might allow a person to locate you without first obtaining the permission of a supervising teacher. Do not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you “meet” on the computer network or Internet without your parent’s permission (if you are under 18). Regardless of your age, you should never agree to meet a person you have only communicated with on the Internet in a secluded place or in a private setting.

“Hacking” and Other Illegal Activities. It is a violation of these guidelines to use the school’s computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.

Confidentiality of Student Information. Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without the permission of a parent or guardian or, if the student is 18 or over, the permission of the student himself/herself. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet such as home addresses, home telephone numbers, or particularly credit card numbers or Social Security numbers.

Active Restriction Measures. The school, either by itself or in combination with the Data Acquisition Site providing Internet access, will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are (i) obscene, (ii) child pornography, or (iii) harmful to minors. The school will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that students are not accessing such depictions or any other material which is inappropriate for minors.



## 2024 – 2025 School Calendar

<b>Teacher Pre-Planning</b>	<b>August 5-8, 2024</b>
<b>Open House</b>	<b>August 6, 2024</b>
<b>First Day of School</b>	<b>August 9, 2024</b>
<b>Labor Day Holiday</b>	<b>September 2, 2024</b>
<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>September 11, 2024</b>
<b>Teacher Work Day</b>	<b>September 20, 2024</b>
<b>End of 1st Nine Weeks</b>	<b>October 9, 2024</b>
<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>October 15, 2024</b>
<b>Fall Break</b>	<b>October 16-18, 2024</b>
<b>Teacher Work Day</b>	<b>November 11, 2024</b>
<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>November 13, 2024</b>
<b>Thanksgiving Holidays</b>	<b>November 25-29, 2024</b>
<b>End of 2nd Nine Weeks</b>	<b>December 20, 2024</b>
<b>End of 1st Semester/Early Release</b>	<b>December 20, 2024</b>
<b>Christmas Holidays</b>	<b>Dec 23, 2023 - Jan 2, 2025</b>
<b>Teacher Work Day</b>	<b>January 3, 2025</b>
<b>Students Return</b>	<b>January 6, 2025</b>
<b>MLK Day</b>	<b>January 20, 2025</b>
<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>February 5, 2025</b>
<b>Teacher Work Day</b>	<b>February 14, 2025</b>
<b>President's Day/Winter Break</b>	<b>February 17-18, 2025</b>
<b>End of 3rd 9 Weeks</b>	<b>March 12, 2025</b>
<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>March 19, 2025</b>
<b>Teacher Work Day</b>	<b>March 21, 2025</b>
<b>Spring Break</b>	<b>April 7 - 11, 2025</b>
<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>April 16, 2025</b>
<b>End of 4th Nine Weeks</b>	<b>May 23, 2025</b>
<b>End of 2nd Semester/Early Release</b>	<b>May 23, 2025</b>
<b>Graduation</b>	<b>May 23, 2025</b>
<b>Memorial Day Holiday</b>	<b>May 26, 2025</b>
<b>Teacher Post-Planning</b>	<b>May 27-28, 2025</b>

**TOWNS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL  
1600 HWY. 76 EAST  
HIAWASSEE, GA 30546**

## **HANDBOOK RECEIPT FORM**

Thank you for taking the time to read the 2024 - 2025 Towns County High School Student Handbook. It is important that you are aware of the rules, regulations, procedures and services at Towns County High School.

Please indicate your permission and/or acknowledgment of reading this handbook by placing a check on the line next to each statement. Please sign, date, and return the forms to your child's first block teacher. The remainder of the handbook is yours to keep and use as a reference. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask a teacher, counselor or principal. Thank you for your continued cooperation and assistance.

Mr. Bryan Thomason  
Towns County High School Principal

Circle One:

Yes / No      I have read and understand the State Compulsory Attendance Law and the School Attendance Protocol.

Yes / No      I have read the handbook and I am aware of the rules, regulations and services.

Yes / No      I give the Towns County School system permission to use my child's picture or video containing my child in any school related publication, resource, advertisement, website, and or brochure.

Yes / No      I give Towns County High School permission to print my child's portrait and name in the yearbook.

Print Parent/Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parents may request that their student not participate in a particular school club or organization. If you wish to decline permission for your student to participate in a club or organization, please complete below.

My student MAY NOT participate in the following school club(s) and/or organization(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please remove and return to your child's First Block Teacher by August 23, 2024.**

**TOWNS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL ACCEPTABLE USE AND INTERNET SAFETY**  
**GUIDELINES STUDENT'S AND PARENT/GUARDIAN'S AGREEMENT**

**Every student, regardless of age, must read and sign below:**

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the terms of the foregoing Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Guidelines. Should I commit any violation or in any way misuse my access to the Towns County School System's computer network and the Internet, I understand and agree that my access privilege may be revoked and school disciplinary action may be taken against me.

Print Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

User (place an "X" in the correct blank):    I am 18 or older \_\_\_\_\_ I am under 18 \_\_\_\_\_.

If I am signing this agreement when I am under 18, I understand that when I turn 18, this agreement will continue to be in full force and effect, and agree to abide by this agreement.

To be read and signed by parents or guardians of students who are under 18:

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read, understand and agree that my child or ward shall comply with the terms of the Towns County School System's Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Guidelines for the student's access to the school system's computer network and the Internet.

Print Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please remove and return to your child's First Block Teacher by August 23, 2024.**

**TOWNS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL**  
**DRUG SCREENING PROGRAM FORM**

I have read the Towns County Schools Drug Screening Policy and Procedures. I understand that in order for my child to participate in extracurricular activities and to receive a parking permit, my child must participate in the program. I give my consent for my child to participate in the Towns County Schools Drug Screening Program.

Print Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Towns County Schools Drug Screening Policy and Procedures. I understand that in order to participate in extracurricular activities and to receive a parking permit, I must participate in the program.

Print Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please remove and return to your child's First Block Teacher by August 23, 2024.**

## TOWNS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

### Health Information for School Year 2024 - 2025

(Pg.1 of 2)

☐ High School   ☐ Middle School   ☐ Elementary School   ☐ Head Start

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher/Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ male   ☐ female   DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Allergies: explain what kind of reaction and how to treat, such as Epi-pen or Benadryl\*\*\*

☐☐☐ no drug, food, seasonal or any known allergies

☐☐☐ Drug or Medication allergies \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐☐ Food allergies \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐☐ Seasonal allergies \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐☐ Bee or Insect allergies \_\_\_\_\_

### Health / Medical Issues

☐☐☐ Physical Handicaps (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐☐ Diabetes

☐☐☐ Seizure Disorder

☐☐☐ Hemophilia Disorder

☐☐☐ Asthma (Has your child ever needed **inhalers or breathing treatments**? Explain how often and possible triggers, like exercise, grasses, smoke, and such.) \_\_\_\_\_

---

Any other health concerns \_\_\_\_\_

Medications: (taken daily or frequently, dosage & why) \_\_\_\_\_

### EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Father/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_



## Health Information

(pg. 2 of 2)

*If parents cannot be reached, list two nearby persons who will assume care of your child.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Student's Doctor/Healthcare Provider \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*School clinic personnel have my permission to contact my child's physician for further medical information. In case of serious illness / injury, the school will telephone **911 / Emergency Medical Services** for immediate transportation to the closest hospital. I, the parent / legal guardian, authorize the transport of and treatment by the hospital emergency staff for my child, (as named above).*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name / Grade \_\_\_\_\_

In preparation for the 2022 - 2023 school year, it is important to have accurate health information in order to best serve your child. It is crucial that it is filled out completely and accurately. Accurate phone numbers allow the clinic to be able to contact you in case your child is ill or in case of an emergency. If phone numbers change, please send in an update.

If your child needs to take any special medication while at school, you will need to come to the clinic to sign a special form and give specific information. **Students may not transport medication to school. Medicine** must be in the **original labeled container (no baggies, foil, etc.)**. The Pharmacy can duplicate prescription bottles, request one for school and home.

Below is a check list of over the counter medication (we administer generic brands) that we may provide for your child during the school day, if needed. This will save time and prevent phone calls to you. The goal of the clinic is to take the best possible care of your child.

Please indicate **YES** or **NO** to the following medications: **Be sure to fill out both sides of this form and return to the Teacher as soon as possible!**

Tylenol \_\_\_\_\_ Tums \_\_\_\_\_ Ibuprofen \_\_\_\_\_

Oragel (tooth pain) \_\_\_\_\_ Benadryl \_\_\_\_\_ Cough Drops \_\_\_\_\_

Topical Antibiotic Ointment \_\_\_\_\_ Topical Burn Cream \_\_\_\_\_

Topical Caladryl / Skin Lotion for itching \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent / Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Georgia Department of Education

Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"

School District: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Occupational Survey

Please complete this form to determine if your child(ren) qualify to receive additional services under Title 1, Part C

Has your family moved in order to work in another city, county, or state, in the last three (3) years? Yes No

If so, what is the date your family arrived in the city/town you reside? \_\_\_\_\_

Has anyone in your immediate family been involved in one of the following occupations either full or part-time or temporarily during the last three (3) years? (Check all that apply)

- 1.) Agriculture; planting/picking vegetables or fruits such as tomatoes, squash, grapes, onions, strawberries, blueberries, etc.
- 2.) Planting, growing, or cutting trees (pulpwood)/raking pine straw
- 3) Processing/packing agricultural products
- 4) Dairy/Poultry/Livestock
- 5) Meatpacking/Meat processing/Seafood
- 6) Fishing or fish farms
- 7) Other (Please specify occupation): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student(s)	Name of School	Grade
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Names of Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please remove and return to your child's Homeroom Teacher by August 23, 2024**

**Medical Plan of Care for School Nutrition Program**  
**(Students with Disabilities and Non-Disabling Special Dietary Needs)**

The following child is a participant in one of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) school nutrition programs.

- USDA regulations 7CFR Part 15B require substitutions or modifications in school nutrition program meals for children whose **disability** restricts their diet and is supported by a statement signed by a **licensed physician**. Food allergies which may result in a severe, life-threatening (anaphylactic) reaction may meet the definition of "disability."
- The school food authority may choose to accommodate a student with a **non-disabling special dietary need** that is supported by a statement signed by a **recognized medical authority** (physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner).
- The school food authority may choose to make a milk substitution available for students with a **non-disabling special dietary need**, such as milk intolerance or for cultural or religious beliefs. If the school food authority makes these substitutions available, the milk substitute must meet nutrient standards identified in regulations. If available, this will be indicated in Part 2. A parent/guardian or **recognized medical authority** (physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner) may complete this section. If this is the only substitution being requested, complete Part 1 and 2 only.

**Part 1: To be completed by Parent/Guardian (all requests for special dietary needs)**

Child's Name		Date of Birth	M    F
Name of School/Center/Program		Grade Level/Classroom	
Parent's/Guardian's Name		Address, City, State, Zip Code	
( )	( )		
Home Phone	Work Phone		

**Part 2: Request for milk substitution for non-disabling special dietary needs only**

☐ School/school district does not make milk substitutes available to students with non-disabling special dietary needs. Do not complete Part 2. Water is available for all students.

☐ School/school district provides \_\_\_\_\_ as a milk substitute to students with non-disabling or other special dietary needs when Part 2 is completed by Medical Authority or Parent/Guardian and approved by the school/school district. Water is available for all students.

Does the child have a non-disabling medical or special dietary need that restricts intake of fluid milk?    Yes ☐    No ☐

List medical or special dietary need (e.g., lactose intolerance or for cultural or religious beliefs): \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical Authority or Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 3: To be completed by Physician/Medical Authority**

**Disability/Special Dietary Needs**

Does the child have a **disability**?    Yes ☐    No ☐

**If Yes,**  
Please identify the disability and describe the major life activities affected by the disability.  
Does the child's disability affect their nutritional or feeding needs?    Yes ☐    No ☐

If the child **does not have a disability\***, does the child have special nutritional or feeding needs?    Yes ☐    No ☐

(\*These accommodations are optional for schools to make)  
**If Yes**, please identify the medical or other special dietary condition which restricts the diet.

**If the child has a disability or special dietary/feeding need, please complete Part 4 of this form and have it signed and stamped with the office name and address of a licensed physician/recognized medical authority.**

**Part 4: To be completed by Physician/Medical Authority**

**Diet Order**

List any dietary restrictions, such as food allergies or intolerances (list specific foods to be omitted):		
List specific foods to be substituted (substitution cannot be made unless section is completed):		
List foods that need the following change in texture. If all foods need to be prepared in this manner, indicate "All."  Cut up/chopped into bite sized pieces:   Finely Ground:  Pureed:		
List any special equipment or utensils needed:		
Indicate any other comments about the child's eating or feeding patterns:		
Physician/Medical Authority Printed Name and Office Phone Number	Address or Office Stamp	
<b>Physician/Medical Authority's Signature</b>	Date	
<b>Part 5: Parent Signature</b>	Date	
<b>Part 6: School Nutrition Program Director Signature</b>	Date	
<b><u>Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Waiver</u></b> In accordance with the provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, I hereby authorize _____ (medical authority) to release such protected health information of my child as is necessary for the specific purpose of Special Diet information to _____ (school/program) and I consent to allow the physician/medical authority to freely exchange the information listed on this form and in their records concerning my child with the school program as necessary. I understand that I may refuse to sign this authorization without impact on the eligibility of my request for a special diet for my child. I understand that permission to release this information may be rescinded at any time except when the information has already been released. My permission to release this information will expire on _____ (date). This information is to be released for the specific purpose of Special Diet information.  The undersigned certifies that he/she is the parent, guardian or official representative of the person listed on this document and has the legal authority to sign on behalf of that person.  <b>Parent/Guardian Signature:</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> _____ (Signing this section is optional, but may prevent delays by allowing us to speak with the physician)		

Please have parent/guardian review form annually and initial/date if no changes are required. Any changes require submission of a new form signed by the Physician/Medical Authority.

Parent confirmed no change in diet order. Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**A copy of this form should be kept by the School Nutrition Manager and the Nurse. FERPA allows school nurses to share student's medical information regarding dietary needs with school nutrition services.**  
**Please remove and return to your child's First Block Teacher by August 23, 2024**