

Board Policy DIE: Fraud Prevention

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 04/21/2016 | **Last Revised Date:** 04/16/2020 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 04/16/2020

Fraud Prevention

The Gilmer County Charter School District (“District”) shall not tolerate fraud of any kind and has an established system for the reporting of suspicious activities.

“Fraud” is defined as a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, that is used for the purpose of misappropriating property and/or monetary funds from federal, state, or local grants and funds.

Employees and parties maintaining a business relationship with the District who suspect fraud, whether it pertains to federal, state, or local programs, should report their concerns to the Superintendent or his/her designee. If fraud is suspected by the Superintendent, such allegations should be reported to the Chair of the Board of Education.

All reports of suspected fraud shall be handled under the strictest confidentiality allowed under the law. Informants may remain anonymous as allowed by law but are encouraged to cooperate with investigators and to provide as much detail and evidence of the alleged fraudulent act as possible.

Any and all reports of suspicious activity and/or suspected fraud will be investigated. Results of an investigation shall not be disclosed to or discussed with anyone other than those individuals with a legitimate need to know until the results become subject to public disclosure in accordance with state and/or federal law.

Board Policy EBBF: Safety Inspections

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 05/12/2009 | **Last Revised Date:** 04/16/2020 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 04/16/2020

Safety Inspections

It is the policy of the Gilmer County Board of Education to provide and to maintain a safe and healthy working environment and to follow operating practices that will safeguard all employees and students. The result of said policy shall be safer working conditions and more efficient operations.

In support of this policy, it is declared that:

1. Safety of employees and pupils in school operation is paramount,
2. Safety will take precedent over expedience or short cuts,
3. Every attempt will be made to reduce the possibility of accident occurrence,
4. The school district intends to comply with all safety laws and ordinances,
5. Each person who conducts the affairs of the Gilmer County School System, no matter in what capacity he or she may function, must accept the responsibility to make safety a priority concern.

The Superintendent is charged with the responsibility to develop and maintain an effective safety inspection and accident prevention program. The objectives of this program are:

1. To prevent accidents among employees and students,
2. To involve system employees in developing and maintaining safety procedures,
3. Ensure safe working conditions,
4. Ensure safe working practices,
5. Reduce operating cost,
6. Provide a safe school environment.

The following is an overview of the Gilmer County School System Safety Inspection and Accident Prevention Program (Safety Program).

Safety Coordinator: The Superintendent or his or her designee will serve as the safety coordinator. The coordinator will carry out the day to day aspects of the school safety program. The safety coordinator will have the responsibility for coordinating and implementing all of the components of the safety program. He or she will be responsible for coordinating safety training for all school system personnel.

Administrative Support: Prevention of accidents and implementation of safe operating procedures and practices is a management priority for all administrative and supervisory personnel. Administrative and supervisory personnel are expected to set a good example by supporting and adhering to safety procedures.

System-wide Safety Advisory Committee: A system-wide safety advisory committee will be appointed annually by the safety coordinator. The committee will have the responsibility for advising the safety coordinator in implementing and monitoring the safety program. This committee will meet quarterly (and as the need arises) with the safety coordinator and discuss loss claims and all components of the safety program, safe school environment, and other school safety matters.

School-level Safety Committee: Each school will have a safety committee with an administrator serving as chairperson. The school Principal will annually select 6-12 members to include representatives from food service, custodial, physical education and other areas representative of the school. The safety committee will discuss school safety to include the gymnasium, hallways, classrooms, restrooms, cafeteria, kitchen, teacher work areas, offices, bus loading zones, parent pickup zones, playgrounds, athletic facilities and outdoor education areas. When needed, the committee will make recommendations to the Principal. The committee will assist with quarterly safety inspections.

Facility Inspections: All facilities will be inspected by the safety teams on a regular basis. The purpose of the inspection will be to identify physical hazards and/or unsafe operations and work procedures. Reports of inspections findings will be reported to the building administrator. The principal will initiate corrective actions to eliminate or control physical hazards and unsafe practices. Inspection reports will be reviewed by the System-wide Safety Advisory Committee who will make recommendations to enhance safe operations and a safe school environment.

Accident Investigations: Accidents of a catastrophic nature, as well as all reported incidents where students have been injured or an employee has filed for workers' compensation, will be investigated by the safety coordinator. The purpose of the investigation will be to find out the cause of the accident and identify solutions to prevent the same accident from happening in the future. The investigation will involve looking at procedures implemented, equipment, material, and the environment.

Employee Safety Training: Accident prevention principles will be incorporated in new employee orientation programs and employee-in-service training programs. Principals and program directors will ensure that employees are trained and encouraged to use safe working practices. The safety coordinator will work with administrators in identifying specific training needs and is responsible for setting up training sessions.

Accident Reports: The employee's supervisor, or principal of the school where a student has been injured, will make an immediate report of all accidents using the system approved accident reporting form. In incidents involving worker's compensation claims the supervisor will notify the system worker's compensation clerk by phone. The phone call will be followed by a written copy of the report to the insurance clerk.

Panel of Physicians: Principals and program directors are responsible for posting a list of approved physicians which are to be utilized when an employee visits a doctor due to a work-related injury. This list is to be updated annually and is to comply with all laws governing its implementation.

Personal Protective Equipment: For their safety, employees will use personal protective equipment as specified by the safety program director and/or supervisor. Proper use of safety equipment will be included on the classified employee evaluation instrument.

Involve, Inform, and Educate All Employees on Safety: This will be achieved through safety meetings, administrator meetings, newsletters, memorandums, and all components of the safety program.

Violations of Safety Procedures: The Gilmer County School System is aware that our schools and work places have to be as safe as possible. We are asking our students and employees to be safety-conscious during their school day/ work day. Good safety practices not only prevent accidents, but they also can prevent a catastrophe from occurring. The more safety-conscious we are, the fewer accidents we will have.

Board Policy JB: Student Attendance

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 01/01/1975 | **Last Revised Date:** 04/16/2020 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 04/16/2020

Student Attendance

Regular school attendance is essential if students are to master the complex skills and knowledge they must have to live successful lives. Attendance at school should be the rule; absences should be few and for sound reasons. The Gilmer County Charter Schools Board of Education believes that regular attendance and promptness are habits which should be developed early, adhered to through a student's school life, and carried over into adulthood.

In responding to student attendance issues, the school system shall comply with all requirements of state law, applicable State Board of Education rules, and the attendance protocol developed by the Student Attendance Protocol Committee.

Excused Absences:

1. When personally ill to the extent that school attendance would endanger their health or the health of others;
2. When in their immediate family there is a serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school;(immediate family is limited to the student's father, mother, sister, brother, child, spouse, grandparent, legal guardian, or other relative living in the residence of the student);
3. On special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith, upon written verification by their church leader to the principal of the local school prior to the religious holiday;
4. When mandated by order of governmental agencies, i.e.; pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces, court order, detention by law enforcement officials;
5. When prevented from attendance due to conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety;
6. When a student registers to vote (not to exceed one day);
7. When a student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave.
8. Other absences in extenuating circumstances approved by the Superintendent or designee.
9. The principal may in certain circumstances require students to present appropriate medical or other documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused.
10. All other absences shall be considered unexcused.

In keeping with the regulations set forth in State Law, students shall be marked present at school when the following conditions are met:

When a student is serving as a page in the Georgia General Assembly, that student shall be credited as present by the school in which he/she is enrolled for days missed from school for this purpose.

1. A foster care student who attends court proceedings relating to the student's foster care shall be credited as present by the school and shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused, for any day, portion of a day, or days missed from school.
2. A student who successfully participates in the Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) program shall be counted present and given full credit for the school day in which he or she served as a volunteer poll worker, up to two days per school year.

Grades and Absences:

Students who have excused absences will be allowed to make up all work missed during such absences. It is each student's responsibility and obligation to obtain the assignments and complete the work as directed by the teacher. Completion of make up work must not exceed a reasonable time from the date of the missed work.

Policies and Procedures to Reduce Unexcused Absences: Notification

1. The school system shall provide to the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student (hereinafter referred to as "parent") when the student has five unexcused absences. The notice will outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, the school system will send written notice via first class mail or via certified mail, return receipt requested; and
2. Prior to any action to commence judicial proceedings to impose a penalty on the parent for failing to comply with compulsory attendance law, the school system will notify the parent by certified mail, return receipt requested; and
3. Each school shall provide to the parent of each student enrolled 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, the parent will be asked to sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1 must sign a statement indicating receipt of written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance with the local Board policy.

Tardies and Early Dismissals

Excused reasons for tardies and early dismissals are the same as those for absences. In order to be included in the daily count, students must be present at school for a portion of the school day equal to or greater than one-half of the school day as measured from the morning tardy time to the first dismissal time.

The Superintendent shall develop procedures to carry out this policy. He/she will appoint a System Attendance Officer. Each school shall have a designated attendance officer and an attendance committee.

Board Policy JBC(1): Homeless Students

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 11/06/2000 | **Last Revised Date:** 04/16/2020 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 04/16/2020

Homeless Students

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the school district will identify homeless children and youth and work with their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths not currently attending school in a manner that will not stigmatize or segregate them on the basis of their status as homeless. Homeless students, including unaccompanied youth, will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, educational programs for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs. Appropriate secondary education and support services will be provided to ensure that homeless youths receive appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school.

The Superintendent shall appoint a liaison for homeless children, who shall assist with the enrollment process for homeless children and youth. A "homeless child" is defined as provided in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Identification: The School System is committed to identifying homeless students in the school district. Every reasonable effort will be made to identify, educate, and provide appropriate services to homeless students including students who are considered unaccompanied youth. Unaccompanied youth are defined as youth in homeless situations who are not in physical custody of a parent or guardian.

The homeless liaison designated by the superintendent shall oversee the identification process on a system-wide level. Each school principal shall designate a staff member to oversee the process at the building level in an effort to make sure that homeless students are identified. The school system will display posters in the schools and county agencies to inform parents and children of the rights of homeless children. Also, the school system will work closely with all county agencies, including the Department of Family and Children's Services and the county Health Department in an effort to ensure homeless children are identified.

Enrollment: If a homeless student attempts to enroll in the School System, he/she will be allowed to do so immediately. The School System will not deny or delay enrollment of homeless children due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment including: proof of residency, school records, immunization and health records. Once enrolled, the homeless students are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services and free meals.

School Selection: Each student experiencing homelessness in the school district has the right to attend school in the district where the family is currently residing or remain at his or her school of origin.

Transportation: The School System will ensure that transportation services will be provided for homeless children in accordance with requirements in the Handbook for Title I Directors.

Disputes: If issues arise over providing appropriate services for homeless students, every effort will be made to resolve the issues at the building level. If this is not possible, a committee comprised of the superintendent or designee, the system-wide homeless liaison, the appropriate principal and his/her school's homeless liaison and the system's transportation director, if necessary, will meet to resolve any problems.

If a dispute arises over any issue covered in this policy while the homeless student is seeking enrollment, the homeless student shall immediately be admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute. While the dispute is being resolved, the student shall be granted all the rights of a student experiencing homelessness.

The school where the dispute arises shall provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal and shall immediately refer the parent or youth to the homeless liaison, who may consult with the Superintendent as needed. If the dispute remains unresolved at the district level, the parent may request a review of the dispute and the school district's decision by the Georgia Department of Education (Department), in accordance with the dispute resolution guidelines and procedures outlined in the Department's Handbook for Title I Directors, which is available on its web site.