PONTOTOC COUNTY

SCHOOLS

Relentlessly Pursuing the Exceptional

Student Handbook

2026-2027

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Parents/Legal Guardians:

The policies and procedures contained in this handbook pertain to all campuses within the Pontotoc County School District; this includes the Pontotoc Ridge Career and Technology Center. **Please read the student handbook carefully, then sign and return the enclosed forms to the school.** Your cooperation will be appreciated.

To the patrons, students, and faculty of the Pontotoc County School System:

Just as it is necessary in our democratic society to observe certain rules and regulations of government, it is also necessary to have rules and regulations in our school system in order to attain our educational goals.

This handbook contains those rules, regulations, and policies, which apply to our school system. It is our desire that it will answer questions you may have and be of assistance in helping avoid school problems.

Our goal is that all students will be successful this school year. We all want our students' performance to show improvement each year. In order to meet the needs of our students, a dedicated and cooperative effort will be required of students, parents, community and faculty.

As a parent, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of your child's teacher. Please contact me or my office if you would like this information.

We are fortunate to have modern school facilities and, although this will be emphasized in our student handbook, we urge each individual to diligently strive at all times to help keep the facilities clean and attractive.

There will be many school activities throughout the year. We encourage and invite your participation in those activities best suited to your interests and abilities.

May we enter this school year with a spirit of cooperation and dedication. If we can be of service in any way, please feel free to call on us.

Sincerely,

Brad Parker, Principal - North Pontotoc Elementary School
Abigail McMillen, Principal - North Pontotoc Upper Elementary School
Jim Matthews, Principal – North Pontotoc Middle School
Brian Sutton, Principal - North Pontotoc High School

Mark Vandiver, Principal - South Pontotoc Elementary School
Jeff Harmon, Principal - South Pontotoc Middle School
Brant Puckett, Principal – South Pontotoc High School

Patricia Ellison, Director – Pontotoc Ridge Career and Technology Center

PONTOTOC COUNTY SCHOOLS

Relentlessly Pursuing the Exceptional

2026-2027 School Year

_____ _____

Student Name **Grade Level**

_____ **Student Handbook/Textbook Parent Agreement Form:** I, the parent/guardian of the above named student, understand that the PCSD student handbook is available on the school's/district's website at www.pcsd.ms. I take responsibility for reading those policies/procedures as well as the responsibility for the textbooks issued to my child during the 2026-2027 school year. If any textbook is lost, damaged, or destroyed, I, by this initial and signature, agree to pay for such loss.

_____ /_____ **Internet Acceptable Use Policy Student and Parent:** By signing this policy I acknowledge that I: (1) understand the rules and regulations of the Acceptable Use Policy in the 2026-2027 Handbook, and (2) understand that applicable discipline measure will be taken for violations, in payment for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, expulsion or other remedies applicable under school policy and/or state and federal law. I have read the Pontotoc County School District Acceptable Use Policy. This constitutes my permission for my child to utilize PCSD computers and internet resources. I understand the PCSD is not liable for any misuse of computer resources by my child.

Library Permission Form. Please initial one of the following (both parent/guardian and student):

_____ /_____ I apply for the right to use the library and agree to abide by the rules for visiting, taking care of books, and paying fines/damages for lost book(s). I understand when I check out a book that I am responsible for it until I return it to the library.

_____ /_____ I do not want my child to check books out of the library.

Student lunch number (for library purposes): _____

COPPA Compliance Form: This form, when completed below and on file with the district, will constitute consent for our schools to provide personal identifying information for your child consisting of first name, last name, an email address, and username. Please select "YES" to give consent for our schools to provide personal identifying information for your child consisting of first name, last name, an email address, and username. This consent will give your child, under the age of 13 years old, permission to use Chromebooks, and to access Google applications and similar educational programs. Please select "NO" if you **do not** want your child, under the age of 13 years old, to participate.

_____ YES

_____ NO

I agree, as signed above, to the terms, agreements, and regulations of each of the categories/policies/procedures listed above.

_____ _____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature **Student Signature** **Date**

PONTOTOC COUNTY SCHOOLS

Relentlessly Pursuing the Exceptional

2026-2027 School Year

_____ _____

Student Name **Grade Level**

Corporal Punishment Form:

_____ **- I DO** want my child paddled if he/she breaks a school rule that warrants a paddling.

_____ **- I DO NOT** want my child paddled if he/she breaks a school rule that warrants a paddling. I have read the Student Handbook and I understand that if my child should break a school rule that has a consequence of a paddling, other appropriate punishment will be used.

Over The Counter Medication Permission Form:

All medication **must be** brought to the school by a parent/guardian and must be in the original packaging.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

_____ - I hereby request and authorize you to allow my son/daughter to take acetaminophen, antacids, and ibuprofen. All medications will be administered according to the manufacturer's recommendations. I release school personnel from liability should reactions result from this medication.

Please list any allergies: _____

Abstinence Education Form (<u>Middle and High School Students ONLY</u>):

Sex-related education is part of the health education curriculum, which includes topics such as puberty, dating, relationships and communication skills, pregnancy, contraceptives, prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and prevention of sexual abuse. If you would like to review these materials at the school, you are welcome to do so. Please call the school office or email your child's principal to arrange a meeting.

During the course, students will be able to ask questions, which will be answered factually and in an age appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be asked to reveal personal information.

Under Mississippi law HB 999 you may exempt your child from any portion of the curriculum that involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. No student who is exempted will be penalized.

_____ **-** I **give** permission for my child to participate in the abstinence training provided by the school.

_____ **-** I **do not give** permission for my child to participate in the abstinence training provided by the school.

I agree, as signed above, to the terms, agreements, and regulations of each of the categories/policies/procedures listed above.

_____ _____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature **Student Signature** **Date**

Pontotoc County School District Calendar
2026-2027

JULY
30 First Day for Teachers & Assistants
30-31 Professional Development
AUGUST
3 Professional Development
4 First Day for Students
SEPTEMBER
3 Progress Reports
7 Labor Day Holiday
OCTOBER
6 End First Nine Weeks
8 Report Cards
9 Professional Development (Teachers)
9 - 18 Fall Break (Students & Assistants)
12 - 18 Fall Break (Teachers)
NOVEMBER
12 Progress Reports
23 - 27 Thanksgiving Holiday
DECEMBER
17 - 18 Exams
21 - 31 Christmas Holiday
Revised May 19, 2026

JANUARY
1 - 4 Christmas Holiday (Students & Assistants)
1 Christmas Holiday (Teachers)
4 Professional Development (Teachers)
5 Classes Resume for Students
7 Report Cards / End Second Nine Weeks
18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
FEBRUARY
11 Progress Reports
15 Presidents' Day Holiday
MARCH
8 - 12 Spring Break
22 End Third Nine Weeks
25 Report Cards
26 Good Friday (Students, Teachers, & Assistants)
29 Easter Monday (Students & Assistants)
29 Professional Development (Teachers)
APRIL
22 Progress Reports
MAY
20 Graduation (South Pontotoc)
21 Graduation (North Pontotoc)
25 - 26 Exams
26 Report Cards / End Fourth Nine Weeks
27 Professional Development (Teachers)
31 Memorial Day Holiday

Student Excuse Form

Student's Name: _____ Date of Absence(s): From _____ Through _____

Grade _____ Homeroom Teacher _____

Please excuse my child's absence(s) for the following reason:

- ☐ Medical or dental appointment
- ☐ Approved pre-arranged special circumstances or other extenuating circumstances
- ☐ Valid educational opportunity approved in advance by the school board
- ☐ School sponsored activity with prior approval by principal
- ☐ Isolation ordered by the county health officer of State Board of Health
- ☐ Illness or injury of the student
- ☐ Death or serious illness in the family
- ☐ Subpoena by a court
- ☐ Event required by student's or parent's religion

Parent's Signature _____ Date: _____ Daytime phone: _____

Student Excuse Form

Student's Name: _____ Date of Absence(s): From _____ Through _____

Grade _____ Homeroom Teacher _____

Please excuse my child's absence(s) for the following reason:

- ☐ Medical or dental appointment
- ☐ Approved pre-arranged special circumstances or other extenuating circumstances
- ☐ Valid educational opportunity approved in advance by the school board
- ☐ School sponsored activity with prior approval by principal
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- ☐ Event required by student's or parent's religion

Parent's Signature _____ Date: _____ Daytime phone: _____

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- ☐ Illness or injury of the student
- ☐ Death or serious illness in the family
- ☐ Subpoena by a court
- ☐ Event required by student's or parent's religion

Parent's Signature _____ Date: _____ Daytime phone: _____

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The Pontotoc County School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, handicap, or National Origin. The Pontotoc County School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Brock Puckett	Superintendent
Danny Robbins	1st District
Rodney Robbins	2nd District
Jim Sappington	3rd District
Randy Tutor	4th District
Allen Roye	5th District

COUNTY-WIDE PERSONNEL

Matthew Stringer	489-3932	Safety Coordinator
Matthew Stringer	489-3932	Grounds/Maintenance Supervisor
Jimmy Flake	489-3932	Assistant Superintendent
Hillery Wise	489-3932	Data Coach/Testing Coordinator
Jessica Cox	489-3932	ELA District Lead Teacher
Jason Ritchie	489-2042	Technology Director
Tami Harrell	489-3902	Special Education Director
Ellen Hill	489-3902	Assistant Special Education Director
Loretta Hartfield	489-4812	Federal Programs Director
Travis Little	489-4855	Transportation Director
Kevin Ball	489-2011	Food Service Director
Ben Moore	489-3932	Foster Care Point of Contact
Ben Moore	489-3932	Homeless Liaison
Ben Moore	489-3932	Section 504 Coordinator
Ben Moore	489-3932	Title IX Coordinator
Leslie Riddle	489-6892	Pontotoc County Attendance Officer
Jason Varnon	489-0700	Alternative Program Director

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE PONTOTOC COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

The Pontotoc County School District is determined to serve the community by providing students with a safe environment, exceptional programs and educational opportunities under the leadership of a highly qualified staff that is selfless, professional and collegial.

Definition: Whenever parent appears in the handbook, it means parent/legal guardian.

Terms and Conditions for Use of the Pontotoc County School District Network

Please read the following section carefully before signing the **STUDENT INTERNET USE CONTRACT**. The contract is a legally binding document.

All users of the Pontotoc County School District's network and Internet access are required to adhere to the district's Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). The attached policy describes in detail the purpose of the district's network and the rules governing its use. All users **(Grades 4 – 12)** and the parents of **all** student users are required by the Pontotoc County School District AUP to sign a contract stating that they will abide by the policy while using the district's computer network resources.

All users, including faculty and staff, must be aware that misuse of the network facilities could result in disciplinary action by the Pontotoc County School District officials including termination of employment or legal action by local, state and/or federal law enforcement officials. It is, therefore, incumbent upon all who sign the Internet Use Contract to carefully read the district AUP and understand what is expected and the penalty for non-compliance.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Pontotoc County School District (PCSD) recognizes the value of computer and other electronic resources to improve student learning, teaching, instruction, research and communication to enhance the administration and operation of its schools.

To this end, PCSD provides Intranet (internal) and Internet (external) connections for staff, students, and faculty. PCSD encourages the responsible use of computers, computer networks, including the Internet, email, and other electronic resources in support of the mission and goals of PCSD and its schools. In order to access district services such as the Intranet and Internet via the District Network, each user must sign a Statement of Assurance (SOA) to acknowledge agreement with this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) stating that they are aware of and acknowledge agreement with all the sections below. The operation of the PCSD network is guided by policy set forth by the Pontotoc County School Board, district administration, the Mississippi Department of Education, and all applicable local, state, and federal laws. This AUP does not list every applicable policy or law, but sets forth some specific policies particular to PCSD.

MONITORING OF NETWORK USE

All data transferred and/or transmitted over the PCSD network can be monitored and recorded at any time. All data transferred or transmitted over the network can be tracked and identified, and originating users can be held liable if their use of the network violates any established policy, regulation, or law. Any data stored on district owned equipment may be archived and preserved by the district for an indefinite period. Such data includes, but is not limited to email, text documents, digital photographs, music, and other digital or electronic files.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OWNERSHIP

All data transferred over the district network or stored on any district owned equipment/media is property of PCSD.

CONSEQUENCES OF POLICY VIOLATION(S)

The use of the District Network is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Any student or district staff, including contract services (outside parties) who violate any policy, regulation, or law regarding use of the District Network will be identified and corrective and/or punitive actions will be taken.

All users of the PCSD network are charged with reporting violations or misconduct to their teachers, supervisors, or the Network administrator. Users who fail to report violations are subject to the same disciplinary actions as those who violate the policy. Violations of these procedures may result in, but is not limited to, a loss of access privileges, disciplinary action by the school and/or district administration, and/or contact of law enforcement agencies.

DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

PCSD disclaims all liability for the content of materials to which a student or staff may have access on the Internet and for any damages suffered as a result of the student or staff member's Internet use.

Because the Internet and email is an unregulated, worldwide vehicle for communication, information available to staff and students is impossible to control. Therefore, PCSD shall not be responsible for:

- Any damages a student or staff member may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruption of services,
- The accuracy or quality of information obtained from or stored on any of its network or client systems,
- Financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the systems, theft, loss, or damage to personal electronic devices,
- Any actions or obligations of a student or staff member while accessing the Internet outside the public school system for any purpose.

While PCSD takes steps to protect users from inappropriate material, to intercept unlawful and malicious actions from affecting users, to safeguard users, no system is completely perfect. Those risks must be recognized and accepted by users who sign the AUP.

FILTERING

PCSD uses an aggressive Content Filter. PCSD complies with the regulations of CIPA, the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)], to provide Internet content filtering services for staff and students. Filtering services are a means of protection from objectionable sites but cannot provide a 100% guarantee. Therefore, Pontotoc County School District provides no guarantees but will diligently attempt to protect staff and students from accessing such objectionable Internet sites. In the event that inappropriate material is accessible, PCSD will not be held liable.

EMAIL AND ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT RETENTION

All district employees and students will be issued a district e-mail account. Any official communications, e.g. teacher to parent, teacher to student, student to teacher, staff to staff, must be via the district's email system. District staff who generate newsletters, memoranda, slide shows, graphics, etc. with their workstations, laptops, or other district equipment, should organize their computer's workspace (storage) using folders to store electronic documentation. Use of "Internet Mail" by students, staff, and faculty such as Yahoo mail, personal Gmail, and POP3 accounts provided by their "home" Internet services providers is prohibited.

PROHIBITED ACTIONS

The following actions on the District Network are specifically prohibited, but are not limited to:

- Creating, downloading, storing, sending, or displaying offensive messages or pictures including but not limited to pornographic or other sexually explicit material;
- Using obscene, profane, or vulgar language;
- Harassing, insulting, intimidating, or attacking others;
- Giving out personal information about another person, including home address or phone number;
- Engaging in any practice(s) that threatens the network and other technological tools;
- Violating copyright laws;
- Downloading entertainment/music/video/movie software or other files for transfer to a user's home computer, other personal computer, DVD, or any music/movie device.
- This prohibition pertains to freeware, shareware, copyrighted commercial and noncommercial software, and all other forms of software and files not directly related to the instructional and administrative purposes of PCSD. Software, files, and/or licenses owned by PCSD cannot be transferred to staff or students' personal or home computers.
- Using the password of others to access the network or any other electronic information or telecommunication services;
- Accessing the documents, files, folders, or directories of others without permission from the owner of the files;
- Using the network and telecommunication services for commercial promotion, product endorsement, or advertisement not previously approved by the PCSD Board of Education.
- Using the network, electronic information, computer-driven software and telecommunication services for personal gain or convenience;
- Conducting business other than that deemed academic in nature over the Network;
- Misusing the resources of the district's network, electronic information, computer-driven software, or telecommunications service equipment and supplies;

- Promoting causes that are religious in nature, with no apparent educational or instructional value; and/or violating this or other procedures and guidelines established and set forth by PCSD;
- Attempt to bypass network controls and filters.

The above list is not all inclusive. The list will be amended from time to time. Use of Non-District web sites to present information, classrooms, clubs, or any other officially sponsored activities of PCSD is prohibited. Any sanctioned activity must be hosted on the District website, http://www.pcsd.ms.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism will result in immediate, severe disciplinary action by the Administration. Plagiarism is an act of literary theft, an act of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is defined as the act or instance of using or closely imitating the language, work product and/or thoughts of another author without authorization obtained or credit given. It involves the passing off or submission of another author's work as one's own. This includes, but is not limited to, submitting assignments digitally or via hard copy. All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- Turning in someone else's work as your own.
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- Changing words by copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up a majority of your work whether you give credit or not

All web publications will abide by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for the dissemination of student information.

ADMISSIONS/FEES/PRICES

Activity Fee	$20.00 NPE and SPE
Agendas	$5.00 replacement fee for lost agendas
Art/Fine Art Fees	$5.00 - Elementary, $20.00 - High School
Chromebook Fee	$25.00 - K-12 If issued for home use
Dances	It is policy of the Pontotoc County School District that the schools will not sponsor dances.
Drivers Education	$15.00 per semester
Science Lab Fee	$10.00 - High School
STEM/ECS Classes	$10.00 lab fee
Textbook Fines	Based on fair market value

Please note, school fees may be adjusted

AHERA COMPLIANCE NOTIFICATION

In accordance with AHERA regulations, school districts are required to perform several activities with regards to asbestos in schools. These activities include an initial asbestos inspection and development of a Management Plan. The Management Plan addresses how identified asbestos containing materials (ACM) will be handled (abated or managed in place).

As part of the Management Plan, schools are also required to provide notification to all parents, teachers, and employees of our ongoing management of ACM's.

To provide continuing management of the asbestos in our schools, all asbestos containing materials (ACM) are inspected every six months by an environmental consulting firm from Jackson, Mississippi. Any changes in the ACM are being recorded in a surveillance report as part of the management plan.

A copy of this surveillance report, along with a copy of the management plan, and all supplementary information is located in the Local Education Agency (LEA) designee office at each school. In addition, a copy of all management plans for all district schools is maintained in the LEA's office located at 354 Center Ridge Drive. These documents are available for review at either of these locations

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ALERT SYSTEM

Messages concerning school closings due to weather conditions or other emergency situations will be announced by several methods such as automated phone system/social media/local television stations.

In the event of an emergency situation or school cancellation, parents **may** be notified by an electronic telephone call. When prompted, the district's alert system automatically calls the primary telephone number linked to each student in the school database.

Parents need to remember the importance of notifying the school when telephone numbers change and request that their child's information record be updated by providing the new telephone number(s) to the school.

AMNESTY POLICY

A student who voluntarily reports to a teacher, principal, school bus driver, or other school employee that he/she has accidentally, through no fault of his/hers, brought to school a controlled substance, a knife, or other object prohibited by state or federal law or school district policy may be exempt from the penalties required by school district policy for possession of such substance or such object. The phrase "voluntarily reports" means that:

1. The student immediately reports the possession to a school employee; and
2. No other student has knowledge of the possession.

If both of the above two factors are not present, the student does not come under the provisions of the Amnesty Policy.

ATTENDANCE RULES AND REGULATIONS

There are high expectations on the part of the community, the world of work, and colleges and universities regarding attendance. The Pontotoc County School System supports the idea that good attendance and promptness to classes are important to prepare the student for future pursuits. Time on task is essential if students are to succeed in their educational efforts. Because funds for schools are allocated on the basis of the students' average daily attendance (ADA), an absence, whether excused or unexcused, results in a loss of operating funds. Schools, and therefore students, benefit from the money allocated for ADA. It is the responsibility of the parent, students, and the school system to strive for perfect attendance.

ABSENCES

Beginning July 1, 2013, when a student is absent more than 37% of the instructional day, the student must be considered absent the entire day.

A. An **excused absence** will only be given for a lawful absence as defined by the Mississippi Code, Section 37-13-91, paragraph 4. A lawful absence is defined as:
   1. Illness or injury of the student
   2. Death or serious illness in the family
   3. School sponsored activity with prior approval by the principal
   4. Isolation ordered by the county health officer or State Board of Health
   5. Medical or dental appointment
   6. Subpoena by a court
   7. Event required by student's or parent's religion
   8. Valid educational opportunity approved in advance by the school board
   9. Approved pre-arranged special circumstances or other extenuating circumstances.

A maximum of three (3) days per semester will be accepted as an excused absence with a parent note for the Lawful Absences listed above. All additional absences require satisfactory documentation or satisfactory evidence that the absence is a lawful absence.

The student must present a proper written excuse to the school official within three (3) days from the day the student returns to school. Attendance Forms are located at the front of the handbook. For an absence to be excused, the following information must be included in the parent note:

- Student's Name
- Date(s) of absence
- Reason for absence
- Parent signature
- Date of parent signature

  Phone number where the parent can be reached during the day

Students that participate in 4-H events will be allowed no more than five (5) excused absences per year for official organized events. The excuse for the 4-H event must be provided in writing from the Extension Service agent and presented to the school office. Any additional days required for 4H events must be requested in writing (prior to the event) and approved by the school board.

B. An **unexcused** absence will be defined as any absence, which does not meet the requirements listed in this policy. After excessive unexcused absences, referrals will be made to the attendance officer.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Riding the school bus is a privilege. This privilege can be taken away for improper conduct and violation of safety rules. Bus students are under the supervision of the bus driver according to **same regulations** as those imposed by a classroom teacher. The following regulations should be adhered to at all times:

1. Habitual misbehavior can lead to permanent suspension from riding the bus. The parent or guardian will be notified in writing by the school each time the student is disciplined by the principal or his designee for a violation of bus discipline. For a fourth or subsequent disciplinary report, the student will be subject to suspension from the bus for up to the remainder of the year. For behavior which endangers the life or safety of bus passengers, a student may be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the school year for the first offense.
2. Students who ride to school by bus must return home by bus or with parents or guardians. **Exceptions must be by special permission and approved by the principal and parents.** Parents must send a note if a child's transportation is different, otherwise, the child will be put on his/her normal bus.
1. Only authorized school personnel are to ride school buses.
2. School buses will **not** stop along the route except to load and unload students.
3. Seats will be assigned by the driver.

Loading and Unloading the Bus:

1. Be at your assigned loading zone on time.
2. If you must walk to the bus stop where there are no sidewalks, face the traffic so that drivers can see you and you can see them.
3. Do not play on or near the road while waiting for the bus to arrive.
4. If you must cross the road to enter the bus, don't cross until the bus arrives and the driver flags you across. Look both ways before crossing.
5. When you must cross the road, always cross in front of the bus.
6. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before trying to load and unload.
7. Use the hand rail while loading and unloading.
8. When leaving the bus after arriving at school move away from the unloading zone to your assigned place as quickly as possible, but do not run.
9. When students are placed on the school bus after school they should not leave the bus except in emergency situations.

While on the Bus:

1. Stay in assigned seat.
2. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
3. Always face the front of the bus.
4. Do not talk to or distract the driver's attention except in an emergency. Your life depends on his/her full attention to his/her duties.
5. Do not talk or make unnecessary noise when the bus approaches and crosses the railroad.
6. Keep head, hands, and articles inside the bus.
7. Do not bring unauthorized articles on the bus (i.e. pets, combustibles, large articles, weapons).
8. Do not smoke or use tobacco in any form.
9. Do not fight or scuffle on the bus. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
10. Remain behind the stanchions and guard rails until the bus stops.
11. Talk to your friends in a normal tone and do not shout.
12. Be courteous to your driver and others. Disrespect to the bus driver will not be tolerated.
13. Follow the driver's instructions.
14. Do not throw objects while on the bus. Projectiles of any sort are unacceptable.
15. Do not use profane language.

ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN FOR BUSES

Habitual misbehavior can lead to permanent suspension from riding the school bus. The parent/legal guardian will be notified in writing by the school each time the student is disciplined by the principal or his designee for a violation of bus discipline. The principal or his designee shall use the following **POSSIBLE ACTIONS** when there is a violation of bus discipline:

First Offense

Warning, Corporal Punishment, ISS, Saturday Detention, Conference with the parent, and/or Suspension from the bus for one or more school days.

Second Offense

Corporal Punishment, ISS, Saturday Detention, Conference with the parent, and/or Suspension from the bus for three or more school days.

Third Offense

Corporal Punishment, ISS, Saturday Detention, Conference with the parent, and/or Suspension from the bus for five or more school days.

Fourth or Subsequent Offense

Suspension from the bus for up to the remainder of the school year.

For serious offences, especially (but not limited to) behavior which endangers the life or safety of bus passengers, a student may be suspended from the bus for up to the remainder of the school year for the first or any subsequent offense. The school bus is an extension of the school campus, and all school rules, regulations and consequences apply while riding the bus. Serious discipline infractions on the bus may include discipline actions listed in the disciplinary code along with suspension from the bus.

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria is operated each school day to provide a nourishing and enjoyable breakfast and lunch. The breakfast and lunch program is supported by payment, donated food from the USDA, and government financial assistance according to participation. The charge for lunches is the amount necessary to pay the actual expense of operation. Present charges are:

Meal	Student (K–12)	Reduced	Adult	2nd Tray (All Students)
Breakfast	$1.30	$0.30	$1.75	$1.75
Biscuit with meat	$1.00			
Lunch	$2.75	$0.40	$3.50	$3.50
Vegetable or Fruit	$0.75			

Extras				
Entrée	$1.50	Water	$0.75	
Bread	$0.25	Milk	$0.50	
Chips	$0.75	Ice cream	Small: $0.75, Large: $1.00	

***Milk, milk products and water may be purchased without buying a tray. In order to buy any other extra food item, a tray must be purchased. Second tray prices apply regardless of Free, Reduced, or Paid status.*

Students are expected to practice common courtesies during the breakfast and lunch period. Keeping place in line, tables clean, and carrying empty plates and milk cartons to the clean-up window makes a more enjoyable meal for all.

Parents are strongly encouraged to see to it that their children participate in the cafeteria program.

No food purchased from outside vendors may be brought into the cafeteria for students. No outside logos will be allowed. Students must bring his/her lunch from home or eat in the cafeteria.

Students entering the Pontotoc County School District from another district will be considered "paid" students until a Free/Reduced Lunch Application Form is approved in the Pontotoc County School District.

A new Free/Reduced Lunch Application must be submitted at the beginning of each school year.

All students who do not submit a new Free/Reduced Lunch Application and were free or reduced the prior year in our district will roll over to "**paid**" status at the end of the first 30 days of school.

Breakfast will be served from 7:20 to 7:40 unless buses are late or any unforeseen circumstances arise. Car riders must be in the cafeteria by 7:35 in order to eat breakfast.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL FOR BAD WEATHER

If the situation warrants, the Superintendent's Office will issue messages concerning school closings due to weather conditions or other emergency situations. The messages will be announced by several methods such as automated phone system/social media/local television stations.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

After the school day has begun, only the Superintendent's Office shall have the authority to dismiss school before the regularly scheduled time for dismissal.

If school is dismissed before the regularly scheduled dismissal time, the Superintendent's Office will issue messages concerning school closings due to weather conditions or other emergency situations. The messages will be announced by several methods such as automated phone system/social media/local television stations. If the Superintendent is out of the district, the Superintendent shall designate a school official to dismiss school in his absence.

No student from North Elementary, North Middle, North High, South Elementary, South Middle, or South High shall be released from school once a tornado warning has been issued for Pontotoc County or for an area near North or South campuses. Students will be moved to the tornado shelters on each campus. Students will be released to a parent/guardian only when the tornado warning has been cancelled.

Students at North Upper Elementary or the Career Center may be released to a custodial parent/guardian only due to the lack of tornado shelters on those campuses.

If there is concern about student safety, danger on school campus or a rumor, the following phone numbers should be called in the following order

1. School:

North Pontotoc Elementary	(K-4th)	489-5613
North Upper Elementary	(5th-6th)	489-2295
North Pontotoc Middle	(7th-8th)	489-2479
North Pontotoc High	(9th-12th)	489-5612
South Pontotoc Elementary	(K-5th)	489-5941
South Pontotoc Middle	(6th-8th)	489-3476
South Pontotoc High	(9th-12th)	489-5925
Alternative		489-0700
Career and Technology Center		489-1826

2. Superintendent's Office 489-3932
3. Curriculum Coordinator's Office 489-3932
4. Transportation Director's Office 489-4855

CHANGING OF CLASSES

The teacher, not the bell, dismisses the class. The new class begins on the second bell. Students are cautioned not to run or congregate in the corridor, so as to impede the flow of traffic. Students are urged to keep right when passing through the corridors - **KEEP RIGHT**!

CHANGE OF CLASS SCHEDULE

Thoughtful planning of course selection with the help of teachers and guidance counselors should make schedule changes unnecessary. However, if needed, schedule changes may only be requested during the first five (5) class meetings.

To request a schedule change within this timeframe, students must obtain a "Change of Schedule" form from the counselor. This form must be signed by the student and the parent. Once the signed form is returned, the counselor will meet with the student to discuss the requested change. Any change to a student's schedule within the allowed timeframe may be made for the following reasons:

- An error occurred during the scheduling process
- Teacher recommendation. As an example, a teacher may initiate a schedule change if the level of the course is inappropriate for the student; the request will require administrative and/or counselor approval.
- Counselor review. For example, upon review of a student's academic record, a counselor may initiate a schedule change in order to satisfy graduation requirements or to allow a student to repeat a class.
- Advancement. For example, a student may advance to a more rigorous course such as Advanced Placement.

Schedule changes will not be allowed for the following reason:

- Changing to have a specific teacher or lunch period.
- Moving from a smaller to a larger class. No class will be overloaded due to a request for a change in schedule.
- An unjustified move to a less rigorous class.

Any change requested AFTER the five (5) day window—only due to extreme, extenuating circumstances—must be preceded by a student/teacher/counselor/administrator conference and notification of the parent. Courses approved to be dropped after five (5) class

meetings could result in the loss of a Carnegie unit credit for the semester and will be recorded in the computer as, WP (withdraw with passing grade); WF (withdraw with failing grade).

CLASS ORGANIZATION

Grades 7-12 have an annual election at which time the class president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and student council representative are chosen, as well as other officers which may be needed. These officers preside over the class at certain grade levels and they perform various functions and duties as designated by the homeroom teacher. The term of office for each grade office is for the school year. All officers must have earned a minimum of four units of work the previous session with an "80" average, have satisfactory conduct and have regular school attendance.

CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS

Students in the High School (Grades 9-12) are classified according to units earned:
10th grade - Completed six (6) Carnegie units or more, one of which must be English I.
11th grade - Completed twelve (12) Carnegie units or more, one of which must be English II.
12th grade - Completed eighteen (18) Carnegie units or more, one of which must be English II.

The classification of senior does not necessarily qualify the pupil as a candidate for graduation.

CLUB MEETINGS and/or ACTIVITIES

Between 7:30 a.m. and 7:40 a.m. or during any other regularly scheduled non-instructional times during the school day, or after the close of the school day, between 3:15 p.m. and 3:30 p.m., any school organization or club that is properly organized pursuant to school policy may meet on school premises for purposes of meetings and/or other club activities. In order to insure the safety, order and discipline of students in such meetings, and/or activities, sufficient school personnel will be present.

CONTAGIOUS/INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Any child found with a temperature, contagious or infectious disease will be sent home. Parent or guardian will be called to come and pick the child up immediately. *Updated medical guidelines for Covid-19 will be posted on the PCSD website.*

DISCIPLINARY CODE

North Pontotoc K-6th
South Pontotoc K-5th

Offense/Possible Actions

1. **Possession of Guns/Weapons/ Dangerous Items**
   Recommendation to be determined based on circumstances, but shall include expulsion if incident is a clear threat to safety of students. Law enforcement may be notified. The School Violence/Criminal Act reporting form will be filed with local law enforcement and the youth court. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder.
2. **Possession/Consumption/Under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol**
   From out-of-school suspension to expulsion, depending on the circumstances. A student may be required to participate in an appropriate drug education program. Law enforcement will be notified. The School Violence/Criminal Act reporting form will be filed with local law enforcement and the youth court. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder.
3. **Over-the-counter drugs misuse**
   From Saturday School or corporal punishment to out-of-school suspension or expulsion depending on the circumstances. The School Violence/Criminal Act reporting form will be filed with local law enforcement and the youth court. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder.
4. **Stealing**
   1st Offense - Restitution and conference with parent
   2nd Offense - Restitution and corporal punishment or other non-instructional time as assigned by the administrator.
5. **Fighting/acts of violence/harassing students/threatening students (any involvement)**
   From corporal punishment, ISS, OSS, or expulsion depending on the circumstances. Principal's discretion based on the severity of the incident.
6. **Cutting class/school leaving campus without properly checking out through the office**
   Corporal punishment, ISS, Loss of non-instructional time, or Saturday Detention. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.
7. **Refusal to write or stay in during break**
   Corporal punishment, ISS, Loss of non-instructional time, or Saturday Detention. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.

8. Out of place

Corporal punishment, ISS, Loss of non-instructional time, or Saturday Detention. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.

9. Tobacco Usage and/or Possession

OSS, ISS, Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident

10. Electronic Cigarettes/Vaping Usage /Possession and/or Distribution

OSS, ISS, Principal's discretion

11. Rude/Disrespectful behavior/Dishonesty

Corporal punishment, ISS, Loss of non-instructional time, or Saturday Detention. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.

12. Disturbing class/Horseplay

Corporal punishment, ISS, Loss of non-instructional time, or Saturday Detention. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.

13. Profanity/cursing

Corporal punishment, ISS, Loss of non-instructional time, or Saturday Detention. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.

14. Excessive talking

Corporal punishment, ISS, Loss of non-instructional time, or Saturday Detention. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.

15. Inappropriate public display of affection

Corporal punishment, ISS, Loss of non-instructional time, or Saturday Detention. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.

16. Electronic Devices

Electronic devices will be taken by an administrator/teacher and released at their discretion. All electronic devices are prohibited in the restrooms.

17. Insubordination/disrespect/willful disobedience/cursing a teacher

Example: Not relinquishing cell phone/electronic device when asked to do so by teacher/staff. From corporal punishment to out-of-school suspension or expulsion depending on the circumstances. The School Violence/Criminal Act reporting form will be filed with local law enforcement and the youth court. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder.

18. Failure to attend Saturday School

1st Offense - 3 days ISS

2nd Offense - 5 days ISS

19. Unexcused late arrival to school/Unexcused early checkout (per semester)

At the third unexcused tardy, principal or designee will conference with the parent. At the fifth unexcused tardy, principal will contact the appropriate authorities.

20. Inappropriate School Behavior

Corporal Punishment, Suspension, Principal's discretion

DISCIPLINARY CODE

North Pontotoc 7th-12th

South Pontotoc 6th-12th

Offense/Possible Actions

1. Possession of Guns/Weapons/ Dangerous Items

Recommendation to the Alternative Program or Expulsion. Law enforcement may be notified. The School Violence/Criminal Act reporting form will be filed with local law enforcement and the youth court. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder.

2. Possession/Consumption/Under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol

Recommendation to the Alternative Program or Expulsion. A student may be required to participate in an appropriate drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state, local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency. Law enforcement will be notified. The School Violence/Criminal Act reporting form will be filed with local law enforcement and the youth court. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder.

3. Over-the-counter drugs misuse

From ISS and/or out-of-school suspension up to recommendation for the Alternative Program or expulsion, depending on the situation. Principal may require parents/guardian to immediately pick up students who are involved, while a decision is being made. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder.

4. **3rd Unexcused Tardy to Class (per semester)**
   Saturday Detention, ISS or corporal punishment, and/or loss of driving privileges. Each tardy thereafter will result in Saturday Detention, ISS, corporal punishment, or Loss of non-instructional time. Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.
5. **Stealing or buying stolen property**
   1st Offense - Restitution and/or 5 days ISS and/or out-of-school suspension
   2nd Offense - Restitution and Alternative Program
6. **Fighting (Any Involvement)**
   Out-of-School Suspension or Alternative Program depending on the situation. Principal may request parent to pick up student until decision is made. **In grades 5-12**, except in cases where the student had no part in initiating the fight, students involved in the fight **may** be transported to the Juvenile Detention Center by the School Resource Officer. The School Resource Officer shall appropriately restrain any student who is transported to the Juvenile Detention Center under the provisions of this policy. The student shall be released from the Juvenile Detention Center only to the custody of the parent or legal guardian.
7. **Assault/Act of Violence resulting in serious physical injury/Sexual Assault**
   Recommendation to the Alternative Program or Expulsion, depending on the situation. Law Enforcement will be notified. The School Violence/Criminal Act reporting form will be filed with local law enforcement and the youth court. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder. Principal may request parent to pick up student until decision is made. The school Resource Officer shall be contacted.
   In grades 5-12, except in cases where the student had no part in initiating the assault, students involved in the assault **may** be transported to the Juvenile Detention Center by the School Resource Officer.
8. **Harassing or Threatening Students (Any Involvement)**
   Parent conference and from ISS and/or Out-of-School Suspension up to Alternative Program or Expulsion, depending on the situation. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder. Principal may request parent to pick up student until decision is made.
9. **Cutting Class/School or leaving campus without properly checking out through the office**
   1st Offense - Saturday Detention or corporal punishment, ISS, OSS, Loss of driving privileges
   2nd Offense - 2 Saturday Detention, ISS, OSS, Loss of driving privileges
   3rd Offense - Recommendation to the Alternative Program
10. **Refusal to write or stay in during break**
    Saturday Detention, ISS or corporal punishment
11. **Out of Place**
    Saturday Detention, ISS or corporal punishment
12. **Tobacco Usage and/or Possession**
    ISS, OSS, Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident
13. **Electronic Cigarettes/ Vaping Usage /Possession and/or Distribution**
    ISS, OSS, Principal's discretion
14. **Rude/Disrespectful Behavior**
    Saturday Detention, ISS or corporal punishment
15. **Disturbing Class/Horseplay**
    Saturday Detention, ISS or corporal punishment
16. **Profanity/cursing**
    Saturday Detention, ISS or corporal punishment
17. **Excessive talking**
    Saturday Detention, ISS or corporal punishment
18. **Inappropriate public display of affection**
    Saturday Detention, ISS or corporal punishment.
    Principal discretion based on the severity of the incident.
19. **Vehicle Misuse/Unauthorized Driving or riding in a vehicle**
    1st Offense - Saturday Detention or ISS (all parties involved). Students may lose vehicle privileges if offense is serious enough.
    2nd Offense - Saturday Detention or ISS and loss of vehicle privileges (all parties involved)
20. **Inappropriate and/or Unauthorized Use of Electronic Devices**
    1st Offense - Electronic device will be taken by administration and released to a parent and student will be given a warning.
    2nd and subsequent Offenses - Electronic device will be taken by administration and released to a parent, and student will be disciplined according to the nature and severity of the offense. Discipline option could be but not limited to revocation of device privileges and/or corporal punishment, Saturday Detention, ISS, OSS, or placement into the Alternative Education Program.
21. **Insubordination/Disrespect/Willful Disobedience/Cursing a Teacher/Threatening a Teacher**
    Example: Not relinquishing cell phone/electronic device when asked to do so by teacher/staff.
    1st Offense - ISS, OSS, Recommendation to the Alternative Program
    2nd Offense - ISS or 10 days Out-of-School suspension or recommendation to the Alternative Program or recommendation for expulsion. Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder. Principal may request parent to pick up student until decision is made.

22. **Habitual Violations of School Discipline Policies**
    ISS, Recommendation to the Alternative Program, OSS, Principal's discretion
23. **Acts Committed in the Community that affect the safety of students and/or school climate**
    Recommendation to the Alternative Program or Expulsion
    Section 37-15-1, Mississippi Code, requires that an expulsion, with the date and reason, be placed in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder. Principal may request parent to pick up student until decision is made.
24. **Failure to attend Saturday Detention**
    1st Offense - 3 days ISS
    2nd Offense and any subsequent offenses - 5 days ISS
25. **Unexcused Late Arrival/ Unexcused Early Leave (per semester)**
    3rd Offense - Saturday Detention, ISS
    4th Offense - Saturday Detention, ISS
    5th Offense - Saturday Detention, ISS and loss of driving privileges for the rest of the semester and/or referral to the attendance officer.
26. **Defacement or Destruction of School Property**
    Parent notification, restitution and corporal punishment, ISS, OSS, or Alternative Program.
27. **Cheating on Tests**
    1st Offense - Notify Parent or guardian and a zero (0) entered for the grade
    2nd Offense - Corporal punishment or Saturday Detention and a zero (0) for the grade
    3rd Offense - Five days ISS and a zero (0) for the grade
    4th Offense - Assignment to Alternative School and a zero (0) for the grade
28. **Dress Code Violation**
    1st Offense - WARNING and dress code violation corrected (parents called to bring appropriate clothing)
    2nd Offense - Saturday detention, ISS, or Corporal punishment and dress code violation corrected
    3rd Offense - 3 days ISS and dress code violation corrected
    4th Offense - 5 days ISS and dress code violation corrected
    5th Offense - Alternative School and dress code violation corrected

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

- A student or parent may request in writing an alternative type of punishment instead of corporal punishment. The request should be turned in to the student's homeroom teacher who will turn it in to the school office.

- Students who are assigned to In-School Suspension, Alternative School (for disciplinary actions), Out-of-School Suspension, or Expulsion will not be allowed to **participate or attend** extra-curricular activities of any school in the district. Students are disqualified from activities during assigned full and/or partial ISS days. An assigned disciplinary day ends at midnight.

- Any student who has not completed an assigned disciplinary action by the end of the school year, or any student who withdraws from school to avoid an assigned disciplinary action, will be subject to the assigned disciplinary action upon the next enrollment in school.

- **Continuous and/or repeated inappropriate behaviors may result in In-School Suspension from 3 to 5 days or Out-of-School Suspension or Expulsion depending on the circumstances.**

- Students assigned to the Alternative Program for Discipline may not be allowed to ride a school bus or to enter a school campus, other than the campus of the Alternative Program for Discipline.

- Students assigned to the Alternative Program cannot choose virtual classes in lieu of Alternative School.

In a hardship case, an alternative school student's parent/legal guardian may appeal to the school board for permission to ride the school bus. In considering a request for permission to ride the school bus, the school board will base its decision on the following factors:

1. Input from the appropriate school administrator;
2. Nature of the offense;
3. Circumstances of the offense;
4. Safety of students and staff;
5. Prior discipline record of the student;
6. Age of the student;
7. Effect of the waiver on the school as a whole;
8. Precedent established in prior cases;
9. Precedent established by approving the request; and
10. Any other factor the school board deems appropriate in each individual case.

The superintendent is authorized by the school board to allow, in his discretion, the alternative student to ride the school bus until the school board has time to meet and consider the request to ride the school bus.

DRESS AND EXPECTATIONS

Most students conduct themselves in a commendable manner. However, the misconduct of a student reflects unfavorably upon the whole school system. Students are expected to conduct themselves during the school day and at all school-sponsored functions on or off campus in such a manner as to warrant the respect and best wishes of the entire community. Faculty members are expected to assume responsibility for student behavior at all school activities. The following rules will govern the mode of dress and conduct:

1. Students are expected to wear appropriate dress, including shoes. House shoes, slippers, and shoes that convert into roller skates will not be worn at school.
2. Students may wear shorts which come within 4" of the top of the knee when standing. All other clothing must be within 3" of the top of the knee when standing. K-2 are permitted to wear shorts above the knee. Those persons wearing questionable clothing will be subject to appear before an advisor or the principal for discipline.
3. The following items **WILL NOT** be allowed: Running shorts, biker shorts, off-the-shoulder garments, midriffs, cutoffs, halters, tank tops (any type garment which does not cover from neck to edge of shoulder), low-necked, see through, mesh-type clothing, holes in clothing above 4" top of the knee, "sag" clothing (clothing worn low on hips or below hips in which a student's undergarments show). No uniforms are to be worn at school. (Exception: Boy and Girl Scouts and cheerleader uniforms that meet the dress code.) Shirts will not be worn to school that expose bare skin when seated or bent over or when the student's hand is raised. Those persons wearing questionable clothing will be subject to appear before an adult advisor or the principal for discipline.
4. No blankets or other bedding will be allowed at school.
5. Clothing with suggestive or obscene wording will be considered inappropriate for school (ex. beer and liquor ads and obscene logos).
6. Caps, hats, bandannas, sweatbands, toboggans, or any headgear will **not be worn inside school buildings**. Appropriate winter headgear may be worn to school, (i.e. earmuffs, toboggan), but must be removed before entering school buildings. Any items that are used to display gang colors or show gang signs are strictly prohibited.
7. Clothing and/or appearance which disrupts the educational process or causes concern about the safety and welfare of the school community is prohibited.
8. Students shall not wear jewelry, including earrings, which pose a threat to safety (i.e., lobe spacers, spiked or pointed jewelry).
9. Students are to secure permission from the principal and parent/guardian to leave campus for any reason.
10. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance or alcoholic beverage by any student of the district is prohibited. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to the school district Discipline Code and may be required to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency**. A student may be expelled for the first occurrence of any of the above acts.**
11. The Pontotoc County School System endorses a tobacco free environment. Therefore, use or possession of tobacco products (chewing, dipping, or smoking) will not be permitted. Federal law prohibits smoking within any indoor facility utilized for the provision of regular kindergarten, elementary, secondary education or library services to children. There is up to $1,000 penalty for smoking violations on the school campus.
12. Any student, who causes destruction by breaking, cutting on, writing on, drawing on, etc. school property, will be billed for cost of repair or replacement. The student will have 30 days to repay the school and/or face disciplinary actions approved appropriate by administration.
13. Corporal punishment is an option for discipline. In lieu of corporal punishment, alternate disciplinary measures will be taken (i.e. Saturday detention, Alternative School for Discipline, out-of-school suspension). If the parents/guardians do not want their child to receive corporal punishment, the school requests that this be put in writing. The request should then be turned in to the student's homeroom teacher, who will then turn it in to the school office. In accordance with MS Code 37-11-57, no student with an IEP or a Section 504 Plan will receive corporal punishment.
14. All food or drink will need to be consumed at designated places and during designated times.
15. It is the strict policy of Pontotoc County Schools that no student shall bring on the school grounds during school hours or during any school function any weapons or objects, (this includes BB guns and pellet guns, knives, ammunition including empty shell casings, pepper spray); the design of which could inflict bodily harm, pain, or injury to another student or person. Improper use of any flammable items such as matches, cigarette lighters, fireworks, etc., is prohibited. Any student found in possession of such articles will be subject to the school district Discipline Code. **A student may be expelled, including permanent expulsion, for the first occurrence of any of the above acts.** By enrolling, it is implied that a student is willing to display items carried in pocket, purse, or on the person, at any time when requested to do so by the principal or teacher. Failure to comply with such a request would be reason for indefinite suspension.
16. In accordance with the PCSD Board Policy, all personal electronic devices including cell phones, tablets, laptops etc. **will only be used at the discretion and direction of the administration and faculty of each campus**. Any unauthorized use of personal electronic devices will result in the possible loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or confiscation of the device until a parent or guardian can reclaim the device from the school administrator or their designee.
17. There will be no rolling backpacks allowed in grades K-5.

ENROLLMENT

1. All kindergarten and first grade students entering school must have an immunization certificate (Form 121 or 122) and birth certificate.
2. A social security number may be requested.
3. Kindergarten students must be 5 years of age on or before September 1st of the school year.
4. First grade students must be 6 years of age on or before September 1st of the school year.
5. Two items are required for proof of residence for all grades.
6. All 7th graders must have an up-to-date immunization certificate.

EXPULSION OF STUDENT POSSESSING CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE OR WEAPON OR COMMITTING VIOLENT ACT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

State Law requires that any student in any school who possesses any controlled substance in violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Law, a knife, handgun, other firearm or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm or who commits a violent act on educational property as defined in Section 97-37-17, Mississippi Code of 1972, may be subject to automatic expulsion for a calendar year by the superintendent or principal of the school in which the student is enrolled; provided, however, that the superintendent of the school shall be authorized to modify the period of time for such expulsion on a case by case basis.

Such expulsion shall take effect immediately subject to the constitutional rights of due process, which shall include the student's right to appeal to the local school board. (Ref. 37-11-18)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – ELIGIBILITY

1. Eligibility rules set by the Mississippi High School Activities Association will be followed.
2. Students must attend school the day of participation except in case of an emergency or a doctor's excuse. Students cannot participate in school activities during the weekend if absent on Friday, except in case of an emergency or with a doctor's excuse.
3. Students must attend classes 63% of the school day in order to participate in any school activity that day.
4. If a student quits a sport, the student must report to study hall or other assignment, as decided by the principal, each day during that athletic block.

THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

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

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.
- Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
- Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); 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.
- A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education 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, DC 20202-5920

Rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)-
  1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
  2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
  3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
  8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of-*
  1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- *Inspect,* upon request and before administration or use -
  1. Protected information surveys of students;
  2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
  3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

The Pontotoc County School District will protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The School District will directly notify parents and eligible students of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

FIELD TRIPS

School sponsored field trips are a privilege. Attendance on field trips will be based on teacher/principal discretion.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP WAIVER

Parents may request a Financial Hardship Waiver for school fees that are used to supplement the instructional program. Parents that wish to apply for a Financial Hardship Waiver may pick a form up from the Principal's Office. These forms must be picked up, filled out completely and returned to the Principal's Office no later than the third Friday in August. Students that move into the district during the school year will have ten (10) days from their entry date to request a Hardship Waiver and return it to the Principal's Office. After forms are turned into the office, principals will notify parents if they are eligible or if they are not eligible for the Hardship Waiver.

GANG ACTIVITY OR ASSOCIATION

Gangs, which initiate, advocate, or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property on school grounds or which disrupt the environment, are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute which indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger and is prohibited. This is contrary to the school environment and educational objectives and creates an atmosphere where unlawful acts or violations of school regulations may occur. Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidations, and/or related activities of affiliations which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to students are prohibited.

The School District shall enforce the above rule and attempt to ensure that any wearing, carrying, or displaying gang paraphernalia or exhibiting behavior or gestures which symbolize gang membership and/or participating in activities which intimidate or affect the attendance of another student shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, in accordance with the disciplinary ladder.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES AND DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES

The Pontotoc County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability. All section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title VII, and Title IX grievances should be reported to the Building Coordinator or District Coordinator. If you feel you are being discriminated against, all Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title VII and Title IX grievances, inquiries, or complaints should be sent to:

School	Grades	Principal	Address	Phone
North Pontotoc Elementary	K – 4th	Brad Parker	8324 Hwy 15 North, Ecru, MS 38841	662-489-5613
North Pontotoc Upper Elementary	5th – 6th	Abigail McMillen	1620 Old Hwy 15, Ecru, MS 38841	662-489-2295
North Pontotoc Middle	7th – 8th	Jim Matthews	8324 Hwy 15 North, Ecru, MS 38841	662-489-2479
North Pontotoc High	9th – 12th	Brian Sutton	8324 Hwy 15 North, Ecru, MS 38841	662-489-5612
South Pontotoc Elementary	K – 5th	Mark Vandiver	1523 S Pontotoc Rd, Pontotoc, MS 38863	662-489-5941
South Pontotoc Middle	6th – 8th	Jeff Harmon	1523 S Pontotoc Rd, Pontotoc, MS 38863	662-489-3476
South Pontotoc High	9th – 12th	Brant Puckett	1523 S Pontotoc Rd, Pontotoc, MS 38863	662-489-5925
Pontotoc Ridge Career & Tech Center	—	Patricia Ellison	354 Center Ridge Dr, Pontotoc, MS 38863	662-489-1826

Every effort has been made to make this handbook all-inclusive; however, if it becomes necessary, additional rules will be announced in the future. **If there are any problems concerning school-related policies at your child's school, please, follow these procedures in this order:**

1. Contact the teacher;
2. The school principal;
3. The Superintendent of Education;
4. The Board of Education

Please remember, however, that the School Board is a policy-making body and should be contacted as a last resort. The School Board will not arbitrate on school-related policies unless the proper procedures have been followed.

- Student survey(s) and evaluation(s) may be conducted annually. The Pontotoc County School System will conduct the survey(s) and evaluation(s) as required during each school year.

- **Deliveries:** The schools will not accept delivery of any items for students. This includes, but is not limited to, flowers, balloons, and food.

- **Personal Messages**: Please limit the number of personal calls to the office to leave messages for your child unless there is an emergency. **NO STUDENT MESSAGES AFTER 2:30 P.M.**

- **Release of Personal Information:** Federal law requires public schools to release mailing address information on all juniors and seniors to military recruiters. However, a parent/legal guardian may choose not to allow the school to release a child's mailing information to military recruiters by placing on file with the school a written statement that such mailing information should not be released.

- **Transportation:** Any daily transportation changes require a signed and dated note from the parents. No changes to transportation will be allowed after 2:30 p.m. Students cannot check out after 2:30 p.m.

- **Use of Telephone**: Students will not make or receive telephone calls except in case of emergency. Students must get permission from the office before using the phone.

GRADING POLICY

K-12th

- Standards based grading will be used for students in grades K-2.
- Teachers in grades 3-12 will average all recorded grades with equal weight.
- Performance on all recorded grades are to account for 80% of a student's nine-week grade.
- Nine-week tests shall count for 20% of a student's nine-week grade, for those required to take them. Please note, nine weeks tests may not be required.

Progress reports shall be sent by the teacher to the parent or guardian at the end of the fourth week of each nine week grading period.

GRADING SCALE
3rd-12th

Grade	Score Range	Description
A	90–100	Superior
B	80–89	Above Average
C	70–79	Average
D	65–69	Below Average
F	64 and below	Failing
I	—	Incomplete
WP	—	Withdraw Passing
WF	—	Withdraw Failing

HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS GRADES 3rd-12th
for NINE WEEKS, SEMESTER, AND YEARLY

To be on the "Honors" Honor Roll, a student must have an A/B average in each academic subject. To be on the "Special Honors" Honor Roll, a student must have an A average in each academic subject.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION
North Pontotoc Elementary K-4th
South Pontotoc Elementary K-5th

According to state law, the schools will administer a reading test to each third grade student at the close of the school year. As well as having passing grades, each third grade student must perform at or above the third grade reading level on this test for promotion to fourth grade. The Mississippi Department of Education will determine the passing score on this third grade reading test.

A. Kindergarten students will be required to master at least 80% of the math standards and 80% of the ELA standards listed on the report card and at least one of the three indicators of reading progress (STAR EL, Reading Level, and 80% of the sight word list) to be promoted. In addition, kindergarten students will be required to master all of the 100% skills.
B. First grade students will be required to master at least 80% of the math standards and 80% of the ELA standards listed on the report card and at least one of the two indicators of reading progress (Fluency and Reading Level) to be promoted.
C. Second grade students will be required to master at least 80% of the math standards and 80% of the ELA standards listed on the report card and at least one of the two indicators of reading progress (Fluency and Reading Level) to be promoted.
D. To be promoted from third grade to fourth grade, a student must receive a passing yearly average in ELA (Reading and Language Arts), Mathematics, and Science.
E. To be promoted from fourth grade to fifth grade, a student must receive a passing yearly average in ELA (Reading and Language Arts) Mathematics, and Science.
F. To be promoted from fifth grade to sixth grade (SPE), a student must receive a passing yearly average in ELA (Reading and Language Arts), Mathematics, and Science.
G. Any student may be retained by parental request if for reasons other than athletic reasons or other extracurricular purposes.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION
North Pontotoc Upper Elementary 5th-6th
North Pontotoc Middle 7th-8th
South Pontotoc Middle 6th-8th

A. To be promoted from 5th grade to 6th grade (NPUE), a student must receive a passing yearly average in ELA, Math, and Science.
B. To be promoted from 6th grade to 7th grade, a student must receive a passing yearly average in ELA, Math, and Science.
C. To be promoted from 7th grade to 8th grade a student must receive a passing yearly average in ELA, Math, and Science.
D. To be promoted from 8th grade to 9th grade a student must receive a passing yearly average in Math, English, and Science.
E. Any student may be retained by parental request if for reasons other than athletic reasons or other extracurricular purposes.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

North Pontotoc High 9th-12th
South Pontotoc High 9th-12th

A. Students in grades 9-12 will be awarded units of credit when they have earned a passing average in the teacher's evaluation of the student. Semester grades shall be calculated in compliance with the Grading Policy.
B. Any student may be retained by parental request if for reasons other than athletic reasons or other extracurricular purposes.

CLASS RANKING

Policy Code: IHEA Class Ranking

Determination of honors, valedictorian, salutatorian, grade point average and class rankings

A. The following procedures will be followed to determine Honors, Special Honors, Valedictorian, Salutatorian, Grade Point Average, and Class Rankings:

1. The final grade will be used for classes taken in grades 9-12. The final grades in 7th-8thcourses that are used for graduation requirements will also be used.

2. During the senior year, the average of first semester grade, the 3rd nine-week grade, and the mid-point of the 4th nine-week grade will be treated as the final grade for year-long courses for the purposes of this policy only. For one-semester courses taken the spring semester of the senior year, the average of the 3rd nine-week grade and the mid-point of the 4th nine-week grade will be treated as the final grade.

3. All classes shall be used, except the following:
   a. Year 2 and above P.E. classes (including Archery)
   b. Year 2 and above Band classes
   c. Year 2 and above Chorus classes
   d. Year 2 and above Learning Strategies, EL, and Semester classes
   e. Driver's Education
   f. Annual staff

4. The *weighted* numerical average will be used to determine Honors, Special Honors, Valedictorian, Salutatorian, Historian, and Class Rankings. The *unweighted* numerical average will be used in calculating GPA.

B. "Weighted" and "Additional Weighted" Status Courses

The following courses will be considered "weighted" and will have an additional 5 points added to the final numerical average for the purposes of calculating the *weighted* numerical average Pre-AP:

- Advanced or honors classes including Algebra III, Advanced Math Plus, Calculus, Physics, Chemistry, Anatomy & Physiology, Foreign Language, Advanced World Geography, Year 2 Health Science, Year 2 Engineering, Year 2 Drafting, Year 2 Ag. Plants, and Year 2 Ag. Animals

The following courses will be considered "additional weighted" courses and will have an additional 10 points added to the final numerical average for purposes of calculating the *weighted* numerical average:

- AP or dual-credit course

Honors courses must be approved by the principal and curriculum coordinator. Honors courses must have specific, written entrance criteria and an advanced curriculum.

Example: Student earns a final numerical grade of 97 in Algebra III. Since this course meets the "weighted" status, 5 points will be added to the final numerical average for a final *weighted numerical average* of 102 for ranking/honors purposes.

Example: Student earns a final numerical grade of 82 in AP Physics. Since this course meets the "additional weighted" status, 10 points will be added to the final numerical average for a final *weighted numerical average* of 92 for ranking/honors purposes.

C. Four-Year Average

The four-year unweighted numerical average will be determined by dividing the sum of the unweighted grades/averages for all individual courses by the total number of credits completed by the mid-point of the 4th nine weeks of the senior year. Half-Credit courses will have the final grade/average multiplied by 0.5 (or divided by 2) before including this average in the numerator of the four-year unweighted numerical average calculation.

The procedure for calculating the four-year *weighted* numerical average will be the same as the procedure listed above with the only exception being that the weighted grade/average will be used for any courses qualifying as "weighted" or "additional weighted" status. 5 points will be added to the final numerical average for any courses meeting "weighted" status and 10 points will be added to the final numerical average for any courses meeting "additional weighted" status.

D. Grade Point Average (GPA)

Quality points will be awarded for determining GPA based on the following scale:

Letter Grade	Unweighted Numerical Grade Range	Quality Points Awarded
A	90-100	4
B	80-89	3
C	70-79	2
D	65-69	1
F	64 and below	0

Total quality points for each individual course will be determined by multiplying the quality point for the unweighted numerical grade by the credit for the course (factor of 1 or 0.5). In other words, half-credit courses will be divided by 2 before being included in GPA calculations. GPA will be determined by dividing the sum of the total quality points awarded for all individual courses by the total number of credits received.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A printout of Graduation Requirements is available from the high school counselor.

A. At least two units of the last four units of work shall be earned in residence at the high school. Freshmen and sophomore students should concentrate upon completion of the required subjects for graduation; whereas junior and senior students should select courses that meet their needs for future college or occupational training. It is important to plan your four years of high school upon entering the ninth grade.

B. In order to participate in graduation exercises, a student must meet all graduation requirements. Students that meet graduation requirements at the end of first semester will be allowed to participate in graduation exercises. Furthermore, a student must attend activities; (i.e., graduation rehearsal) and pay dues, fines, etc., prior to graduation. A graduation fee is required for cap and gown and diploma.

C. Permission to enroll in a correspondence course or summer school course must be granted by the High School Principal. A maximum of one (1) approved correspondence course may be taken toward graduation.

D. The following subjects cannot be taken by summer school or by correspondence course the first time: **Algebra I, English II, Biology I**.

E. In order to earn a regular high school diploma, all students must meet MDE requirements in the following subject area tests: **Algebra I, English II, Biology I.**

English Learner (EL) students will be tested yearly with a standardized test to determine English proficiency. In order to earn a regular high school diploma, all students must meet MDE requirements in the following subject area tests: **Algebra I, English II, Biology I.**

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Every effort is made to provide for the academic and personal needs of the students. Each teacher is available to give you help with your class work.

A Guidance Counselor is available throughout the day for individual conferences pertaining to your courses of study, vocational and occupational information, and any personal problem which you may wish to discuss. Teachers are expected to refer students to the Counselor, and students are urged to ask for guidance.

HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Pontotoc County School District that no student shall suffer harassment of any type, including sexual harassment. If a student knows of any type of student harassment including sexual harassment, this harassment should be reported immediately to a teacher, a guidance counselor, a principal, or other responsible adult. **(The identity of the student making such report shall be kept in the strictest confidence.)**

Pontotoc County School District has a "tip line" link through the District websites below. All tips submitted through these links will be anonymous.

NPE:	www.pcsd.ms/o/npe	SPE:	www.pcsd.ms/o/spe
NPUE:	www.pcsd.ms/o/npue	SPM:	www.pcsd.ms/o/spms
NPM:	www.pcsd.ms/o/npms	SPH:	www.pcsd.ms/o/sphs
NPH:	www.pcsd.ms/o/nphs	PRCTC:	www.pcsd.ms/o/prctc

HOME SCHOOLING

Any transfer student from a school or program (correspondence, tutorial, or home study) not accredited regionally or by a state board of education [or its designee(s)] is given either a standardized achievement test(s) or teacher-made special subject test(s) to determine the appropriate classification of the student within 30 days after filing for transfer. Notice of the administering of such test(s) shall be given to the applicant not less than five days prior to the date of the administration of such test. {MS Code 37-15-33} (SB Policy IHF-2)

HOMELESS STUDENT INFORMATION

The McKinney-Vento Acts defines "homeless children and youth" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youth who are:
  - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (*sometimes referred to as "doubled-up")*;
  - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
  - Abandoned in hospital
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Students who meet the above criteria should contact their school counselor or the district homeless liaison at 662-489-4812.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework should fit into the total school program and should be purposeful. Time suggestions concerning homework:

- 1st and 2nd grade - 10 to 30 minutes
- 3rd and 4th grade - 30 to 45 minutes
- 5th grade - one hour

HONOR CODE

All students are expected to practice high ethical standards. No student will give or receive information intended to improve a grade during the administration of a test or examination. It is expected no student will engage in cheating, plagiarism or other dishonest acts. Disciplinary action will be taken when the Honor Code is violated.

INSURANCE

The school makes available a school day accident insurance plan at a nominal cost. A school day or 24-hour accident plan is available. The settlement of a claim is a private transaction between parents and the insurance company.

Students who enroll in an Occupational CTE Program, must be insured by an insurance plan that pays expenses for injuries resulting from accidents while at school.

Proof of school day or other accident insurance coverage must be presented to the teacher for documentation. This must be presented by the Friday of the first full week of school.

LIBRARY

The purpose of the school library is to provide books and other resources to students to support and advance their learning. Students are encouraged to develop respect and appreciation for the library, and to learn to use its facilities effectively.

When books are checked out, it is for 14 days. However, checkouts may be renewed for extra time. List price will be charged for all lost or severely damaged books regardless of age or condition. If a lost book is returned within 30 days of being paid for, the money can be refunded. End of the year report cards will be held at the office until lost books have been paid for or are returned.

MAKE-UP WORK

A. It is the responsibility of the student to ask his/her teacher(s) for **make-up work**. Failure to submit make-up work will result in a zero being recorded.
B. The student will have the number of days missed plus one day to submit all make-up work (weekends and holidays excluded). For example, if a student misses two days, he/she will have three days to make it up. All make-up work must be submitted before Final Exams begin.
C. Make-up work for excused absences will receive full credit.
D. Make-up work for unexcused absences will receive 65% credit.

MEDICATION

Immediately upon arrival at school, students must turn into the school nurse/office all over-the-counter and prescription medication. Medication shall be provided or administered to a student by school personnel ONLY with the written request and consent of the student's parent/custodian/legal guardian, and by following Policy JGCD-R – Administration of Prescription Medicine.

Non-prescription medicines can be given at school only if absolutely necessary. If a non-prescription medicine is to be given at school for more than a week, a doctor's note or prescription must be obtained and turned in to the nurse or main office. Examples of non-prescription medicines include:

1. All over-the-counter medicines
2. Cough medicines
3. Sinus medicines

All other medicine needs will be addressed on an individual basis.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A law passed by the 1990 Mississippi Legislature requires that:

A. Parents have financial responsibility for the child's destructive acts against school property or persons;
B. Parents may be requested to appear at school for a conference on the student's destructive acts; and
C. Parents shall be required to attend scheduled discipline conferences.

Parents or legal guardians who do not perform any of the duties required are subject to a misdemeanor.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

A. Every student is expected to be personally clean, to practice good personal hygiene, and to be well groomed.
B. A student may be removed from the classroom setting for failure to abide by the health and hygiene rules if confirmed by the teacher, principal and the school nurse.

The following steps will be followed in order to address head lice/scabies:

1. Children will be checked periodically for head lice/scabies. Any child found to have head lice/scabies will be sent home. Parent or guardian will be called to pick the child up immediately.
1. The child will be reexamined upon returning to school and again seven (7) days later by the teacher.
2. The child may be readmitted to school the following day with an accompanying letter from the parent explaining treatment unless head lice/scabies have been found on the child three or more times during the school year.
3. Any child having head lice/scabies three or more times will be readmitted to class only after being checked by the school nurse, teacher, principal, or designee and found to be free of lice and nits. The principal shall notify the county health department of the recurring problem of head lice with that student.
4. A student may be suspended for failure to abide by the health and hygiene rules, including head lice/scabies, if confirmed by the school nurse, teacher and/or principal. The suspension would be until the child was checked by the school nurse or teacher and found to be free of both head lice & nits.

Please help us eliminate head lice/scabies by checking your children and supporting our efforts to rid your schools of this problem. Notices will be provided to parents and teachers.

PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION

1. Students are encouraged not to use private transportation because of the danger and the cost of energy.
1. Private transportation to and from school shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian.
2. **Students must not drive or ride in private vehicles to and from the Career and Technology Center.**
3. Driving a car is a responsibility and reckless driving around the school will result in the offender being asked not to bring the car onto school property again.

4. Vehicles driven to school by students **must** be registered in the office and a $20.00 parking decal attached to the vehicle. To obtain a decal, a copy of valid driver's license shall be on file in the principal's office. There will be a $10.00 fine for failing to register a vehicle.
5. Students will not sit in cars after arrival at school. Students shall lock their vehicle.
6. Violations of numbers 3, 4, 5, and 6 shall result in the loss of driving privileges.
7. Student driving privileges may be revoked as part of disciplinary action.
8. Middle School students are not allowed to drive on campus.

PROM

Pontotoc County School District will no longer provide or sponsor a junior/senior prom or banquet.

RETURNED CHECK POLICY

Your check is welcome at all schools in the Pontotoc County School District. The Pontotoc County School District recognizes that occasionally a parent may inadvertently overdraw a checking account and a check may be returned by your bank. In order to recover these funds in a private and professional manner, the Pontotoc County School District has contracted with Nexcheck, LLC, for collection of returned checks.

Each person writing a check to a school or the School District should write on a commercially printed check with your name, address, and **one phone number**. Counter or starter checks will not be accepted. When a person write a check to a school or the School District, the person writing the check agrees that, if the check is returned that it may be represented electronically on the same account, and that the fee established by law, may be debited from the same account.

If the check and fee are not collected electronically, then Nexcheck will contact you by mail and by telephone in order for you to make arrangements to pay. All payments need to be made directly through Nexcheck P. O. Box 19688, Birmingham, AL 35219. For a convenience fee, payments of both check and fee may be made electronically at www.nexcheck.com or over the phone using a credit card, debit card or electronic check.

REWARD FOR ATTENDANCE

Students in grades 6-12 with a semester average of an "A", and have no unexcused absences to school or class, shall be eligible for exemption from end of course exams. Students eligible for exemption may elect to take the semester examination in order to improve their grade point average.

Students who transfer into the district with verification of attendance records from previous school(s) will follow the same exemption procedures as all other students. Transfer students who do not provide documentation of attendance records from previous school(s) will not be eligible for exemption from end of course exams.
A student who achieves exceptional attendance (only one (1) excused absence per semester) is eligible for exemption from end of course exams if the student has an average of at least an 80 for the course.

Note: Upon parental or student request, an exempt student may take his/her end of course exam(s).

Educational field trips and school activities approved by the school administrator will not be recorded as absences.

Students who have been referred to ISS for discipline will not be exempt from end of course exams.

Students who have been suspended from school or who have been referred to the alternative program will not be exempt from end of course exams.

SAFETY

It is the policy of the Pontotoc County School District that the schools have a safe and orderly environment. If a student knows of anything that poses a threat (for example: weapons, fight, etc.) to the safety of students, this threat should be reported to a teacher, a guidance counselor, a principal, or other responsible adult. **(The identity of the student making such report shall be kept in the strictest confidence.)**

SALES

NO sale of items, except for those sponsored by the school, is allowed.

Sales/School Provided Service: The school provides the sale of pictures as a service to the students. The purchase of these items is on a voluntary basis and is not required of any student.

SCHOOL SEARCHES

- Student lockers and desks are the property of the school. However, students are responsible for items placed by them in the lockers and desks. Searches of desks, lockers and other school property may be conducted at any time, with or without reasonable suspicion of a violation.

- Searches of a student's person and possessions may be conducted if a school employee has prior individualized reasonable suspicion that a student has violated or is violating school district policy, school rules or regulations, or the law and that the search will result in discovery of evidence of such violation.
- All vehicles on school campus may be searched by visual inspection, with or without reasonable suspicion of a violation. If school authorities have individualized reasonable suspicion as a result of a visual inspection or as a result of other means, a more intrusive search of the vehicle may be conducted at the direction of the principal.
- School authorities may conduct a random search of persons, possessions, desks, lockers and other school property for weapons using a hand-held metal detector if the principal has reasonable suspicion there is a weapon on campus.
- The school shall periodically utilize canines to search vehicles, possessions not on the student's person, desks, lockers and other school property, with or without reasonable suspicion of a violation.
- If a search reveals grounds for a reasonable belief that a violation of district policy, school rules or regulations, or the law has occurred, the student will be subject to disciplinary action as provided by district policy.

STUDENT VISITS TO COLLEGE/UNIVERSITIES OR WORK PLACES

Juniors and Seniors are encouraged to visit prospective colleges and universities or personnel offices of work places before making a final selection. Since some college/universities sponsor events during the week for prospective students, juniors and seniors will be allowed a total of five (5) pre-approved official visits to a college/university campus or workplace, over the course of 2 years, during the regular school year. These pre-approved visits will not count against the student's attendance record. Prior approval of the counselor and proof of attendance is required. Work missed must be made-up.

STATE TESTING PROGRAM

The State of Mississippi requires all school districts to participate in several testing endeavors for the purpose of instructional improvement. The Mississippi Curriculum Content Assessment System is designed to measure what students are actually learning in Mississippi classrooms.

- **Kindergarten** students will take the K-Readiness test.
- Students in **grades K – 3** will take a universal screener test.
- Students in **grades 3 – 8** will take criterion-referenced tests that are tailored to Mississippi's reading, math, and language arts.
- Students in **grades 5 and 8** will participate in a science assessment.
- Students in **grades 9-12** are required to take subject area tests (Algebra I, English II, U.S. History, and Biology I) in order to earn a regular high school diploma.
- Students in the **11th grade** will take the ACT and Workkeys.
- All students who attend **Pontotoc Ridge Career & Technology Center** will be required to take a National Certification test. The test taken will depend on if they are a first year or second year student, and what class they are enrolled in.
- All **juniors and seniors**, and any **sophomores** who are in the **Gateway program**, will be required to take the WorkKeys assessment and score silver or higher to meet CTE graduation requirements.
- **English Learner (EL) students** will be tested yearly with a standardized test to determine English proficiency.
- The Board of Trustees of the Pontotoc County School District recognizes the rights of parents/guardians to choose to opt-out of designated state-mandated assessments/testing. Policy IIAAA

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

In a democratic society, it is important that students learn:

A. To practice effective means of resolving differences that may arise among students and between students, teachers, and administrators;
B. To reduce potential areas of complaints and grievances; and
C. To establish and maintain channels of communication between other students, staff, administration, and Board.

When a disagreement develops in which an individual student, group of students, or a student organization believes that an injustice has been done because of lack of policy, because of a policy that is unfair, or because of deviation from or misapplication/interpretation of a policy, the following procedures and timelines shall be followed:

Step One

A. A student with a grievance shall present it in writing to his principal, who shall discuss it with him as soon as possible and attempt to work out a satisfactory solution within the policies and regulations of the district. This hearing shall be held within five days of the request and a written decision shall be given within another five days.
B. If such hearing is not held within five days, or if a decision is not given within five days of the hearing, the aggrieved student may proceed to step two.

Step Two

A. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student in step one, or if a condition mentioned in A-2 above exists, the student may file in writing the grievance with the Superintendent.
B. If the grievance is not filed with the Superintendent within ten days of the hearing at level one, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
C. Within ten days after receipt of the grievance, the Superintendent shall meet with the student in an effort to resolve the grievance. He shall give his decision within ten days of the hearing.
D. If such hearing is not held within ten days, or if a decision is not given within ten days of the hearing, the aggrieved student may proceed to step three.

Step Three

A. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student at step two, or if a condition mentioned in B-4 exists, the student may file in writing the grievance with the secretary of the Board.
B. If the grievance is not filed with the secretary of the Board within ten days of the hearing at level two, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
C. Within ten days after receipt of the grievance, the Board secretary, in concert with the chairman and superintendent, shall schedule a hearing before the Board on the grievance.
D. The Board shall render its decision within fifteen days of the hearing.

SUSPENSION

The number of days a student will be suspended will be set according to the severity of the offense. Parent or guardian may be requested to accompany student to re-entry after suspension. Days under suspension will count toward number of days missed from school. Suspension days will be counted as unexcused absences.

ARRIVAL/TARDIES/EARLY DISMISSALS

Students shall not arrive on campus before 7:20 a.m. except upon written request by parent or legal guardian releasing the school district from any legal liability in regard to the student's safety. Students who receive permission to arrive on campus before 7:20 a.m. must report to the school office.

Adult supervision begins at 7:20 a.m. The school day begins when students board the school bus or if a car rider, when the student arrives on campus. The school day ends when the school bus returns the student home or when a car rider leaves the school campus. Students may be disciplined for misbehavior committed while waiting for the bus to pick them up or for misbehavior while exiting the bus stop area.

A maximum of three (3) tardy/early dismissals per semester will be excused with a parent note.

A. An **excused tardy/early dismissal** will be defined as:
1. Medical appointments with doctors, dentists, or other medical staff
2. Special circumstances acceptable to the school administrator
3. Illness of the student, if accompanied by a valid parental statement/note

The school requests that students bring doctor/dentist notes back to the schools office the next day.

B. Late arrivals/early dismissals must report to the office immediately upon arrival/dismissal.

C. A student is not permitted to leave school grounds during the regular school day without a written note from the parent/guardian stating the reason. The note, which will be kept in the office, should contain a phone number where the parent can be reached by the proper office personnel. A violator shall be subject to disciplinary action. A student excused from school shall be in the custody of a parent/guardian or excused according to specific instructions from parent/guardian.

D. An **unexcused tardy/early dismissal** will be defined as any tardy/early check-out which does not meet the requirements listed in this policy.

E. At the third unexcused tardy, principal or designee will conference with the parent.

F. All tardies/early dismissals count against the student's attendance record. Students who leave school on a regular basis because of previously scheduled work, and have a work permit on file, will not have the dismissal counted against their attendance record.

G. Students may not check in or out from the Career & Technology Center, unless, accompanied by a parent, guardian, or school official. Consequence: In School Suspension or Saturday Detention

Other measures may be taken if there are an excessive number of unexcused tardies/early dismissals in one (1) semester.

TORNADO AND FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES

TORNADO:
The signal for a tornado is an announcement over the school intercom system. Students should remain calm, listen to the teacher, and move to the designated area.

FIRE:
The signal for a fire is an announcement over the school intercom system. Students should follow instructions of their teacher as to where to exit the building. Remain outside the building with your teacher until the "all clear" signal is given.
During drills, or an actual emergency, students are to walk quietly and calmly, keeping always to the right without taking time to gather any personal belongings before leaving the classroom. Always listen to the teacher's instructions.

TRUANCY LAWS

The school is warranted to contact the attendance officer after a student has five (5) unexcused absences. The parent will be contacted by the attendance officer and will also receive written notification outlining the consequences for the absences.

After twelve (12) unexcused absences, the attendance officer will petition the court for excessive absences.

Any student above compulsory attendance age who accrues twelve or more unexcused absences is subject to expulsion from Pontotoc County Schools. The student may be referred to Alternative School for academic recovery, for a period of time designated by the principal.

VALUABLES/PERSONAL ITEMS

The school cannot be responsible for valuables or personal items brought from home which may be lost or stolen.

VISITORS

Limited visitors will be allowed on the school campus during school hours. All visitors must report to the front office upon arrival, and provide a State issued photo ID.

WEBPAGE PICTURES

Pontotoc County School District (PCSD) may post pictures of PCSD students and/or student's school work on the PCSD webpage, Individual School webpage, Individual Teacher webpage, and/or District Social Media Pages. At no point will student grades, individually or by group, be displayed on the webpages. Any parent that objects to their child's picture being posted on any PCSD webpage, will need to submit a written request to the school within ten (10) days of the student's enrollment date.