

**Standards of Conduct and General Information  
A Handbook for Parents and Students  
2017-2018**

**David A. Harrison Elementary**



*Home of the Bears*

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

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Number \_\_\_\_\_ Stop Number \_\_\_\_\_

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Prince George County School System  
Student Handbook can also be viewed at <http://pgs.k12.va.us.harrison>

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# WELCOME TO DAVID A. HARRISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## Mission Statement

Prince George County Public Schools, in partnership with parents and the community, will provide a meaningful and challenging educational program in a safe environment that prepares all students for post-secondary education, the workforce, and to be responsible, productive citizens in a global society.

## Strategic Goal

To provide students with the knowledge and skills to exceed state, national and international standards.

## Guiding Principles

- Students learn best in a safe, secure, and positive learning environment.
- Student achievement and continuous growth are the core priorities of our school division.
- Student achievement is excelling academically to one's highest potential.
- Recruiting and retaining a highly qualified and diverse staff are essential to the success of our students.
- Staff are committed to understanding and meeting the needs of our school community.

## HARRISON PHILOSOPHY

The staff of Harrison Elementary School believes that a quality education encompasses experiences which merge social understandings, cultural influences, academic achievement, and individual needs within the framework of a strong educational structure. The acquisition of the basic skills, language arts and mathematics, is a priority and emphasized by the staff as well as the development of self-control, responsibility, and a positive self-image. The responsibility of a quality education should be assumed jointly by the home, school, and community. All must work together to provide opportunities for the intellectual, physical, and social growth of all students.

## HARRISON ORIENTATION INFORMATION/IMPORTANT DATES

### ORIENTATION - THURSDAY, AUGUST 31, 2017

9:00 AM	Kindergarten (cafeteria) and 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade (classrooms)
10:00 AM	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade - <b>NEW</b> students to Harrison (report to cafeteria)
11:00 AM	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade <b>RETURNING</b> students to Harrison (classroom)

### IMPORTANT DATES

#### Holidays

September 4	Labor Day
November 10	Veteran's Day
Nov. 22-24	Fall Break
Dec. 20-Jan. 2	Winter Break
Jan. 15	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
April 2-6	Spring Break
May 28	Memorial Day

#### Interim Reports

October 4
December 13
February 28
May 9

#### Report Card

November 14
February 2
April 13
June 15

#### NO SCHOOL for Students

November 7
January 29
April 9

#### Early Release Days (Dismissal- 12:45pm)

June 13, 14, & 15
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#### Fall Picture Day

November 2 (Make-up day December 7)
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#### Spring Picture Day

March 8
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## HARRISON EVENTS

<b>Donuts and Watch DOGS</b>	Thursday, September 21, 2017 @ 8:00AM
<b>Fall Fundraiser Kick-Off</b>	Thursday, September 28, 2017
<b>Harvest Festival</b> (Book Fair will be open)	Thursday, October 19, 2017 @ 5:30PM
<b>Fall Book Fair</b>	Monday, October 23 through Friday, October 27, 2017
<b>Winter Choir Concert</b>	Monday, December 11, 2017 @ 6:30PM
<b>Father/Daughter Dance</b>	Friday, February 9, 2018 @ 6:00PM
<b>Spring Festival</b> (Book Fair will be open)	Thursday, March 22, 2018 @ 5:30PM
<b>Mother/Son Dance</b>	Friday, May 4, 2018 @ 6:00PM
<b>SOL Testing</b>	May 7, 2018 through June 8, 2018
<b>Field Day</b>	Friday, June 1, 2018

## AWARDS ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, June 12	Kindergarten Assembly 9:10 Grade 1 Assembly 10:00
Wednesday, June 13	Grade 2 Assembly – 9:10 Grades 3 Assembly – 10:00 <b><i>EARLY RELEASE AT 12:45</i></b>
Thursday, June 14	Grade 4 Assembly – 9:10 <b><i>EARLY RELEASE AT 12:45</i></b>
Friday, June 15	Grade 5 Assembly – 9:10 <b><i>EARLY RELEASE AT 12:45</i></b>

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT/VOLUNTEERS

The staff at Harrison Elementary collaborates with parents and guardians in building a community spirit for the academic growth and well-being of all students. Strong parental involvement provides a foundation in developing a partnership between parents, students, community, teachers and staff.

Funds raised through school projects are used to enhance educational experiences and school environment. Please note that students are not allowed to engage in door-to-door solicitation and are not allowed to sell products or services at school or on the bus for fund raising.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES

### Purpose

The central purpose of having parent involvement policies and practices is to improve student academic achievement and school performance. They are based on the belief that parents, and all members of the community, share with the school both the concern and responsibility for meeting the educational needs of children. Its intent is to **forge a partnership** between parents and teachers in support of the State's challenging achievement standards.

### Goals

The goals of parental involvement policies and practices include the following:

- To involve parents in school review and improvement. (Parent Leadership)
- To ensure that the parental written policy is distributed to the parents of students in a uniform language and format that parents can understand. (Communication, Awareness, and Improving Parent Capacity.)
- To increase the parents' capacity for strong parental involvement and thus improve the academic quality of the school and of each student which includes identifying and making an attempt to remove barriers for all parents including economically disadvantaged, disabled, and non-English speaking parents, as well as parents of every ethnicity. (Improving School and Parent Capacity.)
- To establish procedures for coordination and integrating the school's parental involvement policies and practices with those of other existing programs, such as the pre-school at-risk parental involvement

program. (Coordination)

- To establish procedures for establishing other effective strategies, programs, and procedures, such as parent resource centers, in order to encourage and support parents to more fully participate in their child's education. (Continuous Improvement.)
- To establish a procedure for evaluating the effectiveness of the school's parental involvement policies, practices, and procedures and a plan for using those findings to continuously improve parental involvement. (Continuous Improvement.)
- To provide assistance to parents in understanding the following topics and other topics of importance: the State's academic content standards, the State's student academic achievement standards, other State and/or local academic assessments of importance to their child's academic success, the monitoring of their child's progress to improve achievement, and how to work with educators to improve achievement. (Communication and Improving Parent Capacity.)
- To establish procedures to assure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to parents of participating students in a practical format in a language that parents can understand. (Communication and Improving Parent Capacity.)
- To foster parental involvement by providing materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve academic achievement. (Improving Parent Capacity.)
- To educate, with the help of parents, school personnel on the value of parent contributions, ways to reach, communicate, and work with parents as equal partners, how to implement and coordinate parent programs, and how to build ties between parents and schools. (Parent Leadership and Improving School Capacity.)
- To increase home-school communications and cooperation and to develop a sense of partnership through such strategies as a fall orientation meeting, a parent-teacher conference opportunity, frequent progress reports, reasonable access to faculty, and opportunities to volunteer. (Communication and Improving School and Parent Capacity.)

#### Procedures

1. Annual school events:
  - Before the opening of school, orientation meetings for new and returning students
  - One to two workshops: school and division-wide.
  - Opportunities to volunteer.
  - Opportunities to request parent/teacher conferences as needed.
  - One to two family evening events (Harvest Festival, Math/Reading Festival, etc...
2. A copy of this policy will be provided to the parents of each student annually.
3. A school newsletter will be published each semester describing:
  - The school's responsibilities for providing high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment.
  - The parent's responsibilities such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, volunteering, and use of extracurricular time.
  - The school is responsible for upkeep of the web-based monthly calendar to communicate upcoming events.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER

The importance of keeping the school informed of an address change and/or telephone number change is of the utmost importance. This information must be kept **CURRENT** as it is placed on file in the office and used for emergency situations and communication needs. Please contact us when these changes occur.

## VISITORS

Parents of Harrison students are always welcome. When arriving at school come to the office before proceeding to any other area of the school grounds. **Visitors will present their picture identification (ID) to sign-in. The visitor's badge must be worn while in the building and visible to staff. Sign-out before departing the building and return your visitor's badge.** These procedures are designed to make our school safe. It is extremely important that a visitor does NOT report to a classroom unannounced and/or unexpected. The same procedure is used for lunch visitors. **ONLY PARENTS OR GRANDPARENTS may eat lunch at the designated lunch visitors' table with their child/grandchild.**

## DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00 AM	Office Opens
8:30 AM	Teacher Arrival
8:30 AM	Buses Begin Unloading
9:00 AM	Instruction Begins
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Lunch Periods
3:30 PM	Student Dismissal
3:45 PM	Teacher Dismissal
4:00 PM	Office Closes

## STUDENT ARRIVAL

Each student is expected to be in his or her classroom by 9:00 A.M. We encourage parents to drop off students in the Bear Hug Loop between 8:30AM and 8:50AM. SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS IS NOT PROVIDED BEFORE 8:30AM unless your child is registered with CHAMPIONS. Parents that request to walk their child to the classroom must receive a morning visitor's pass, and will be asked to leave the building at 9:00AM in order for proper instruction to begin. Students arriving late will be counted as tardy. **A parent must sign in his/her child at the office.** This rule will not apply when buses are late. When a student arrives late, he/she misses initial instruction and transition to the daily routine. A pattern of this behavior inhibits students from doing their very best at school.

## SIGNING STUDENTS OUT EARLY

Students **should not** be taken out before 3:30 PM on a regular basis. Standards of Quality mandate a full day of attendance for all students. Requests to change a child's normal means of dismissal must be made in writing by the parents and sent to the teacher on the morning the change is to take place. The request should contain the name of the student and the time the student is to be picked up. Please come into the office with your **picture ID** and sign out the student. School personnel reserve the right to ask for picture identification in order to verify the identity of individuals signing out students. This is for your child's safety!

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR STUDENTS

### I. Student Attendance Policy

Regular school attendance is valuable and relevant for academic achievement. It promotes the development of good habits for punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility. In accord with the State of Virginia Compulsory School Attendance Laws, any child who will have reached the fifth birthday on or before September thirtieth of any school year and who has not passed the eighteenth birthday is obligated to attend school on a regular basis. School attendance by students is the legal responsibility of parents.

#### *The following regulations will govern attendance for all students:*

1. Every student is expected to be in school every day. There are no allowable days given to students for absences by the school division. It is understood that some absences will occur due to illness, medical appointments, court appointments, religious holidays, and funerals. For such instances, proper documentation must be provided to the attendance office/teacher upon the student's return to school/class. Documentation must include the appropriate signature, date of absences and reason for absences to ensure that a student is not deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, which he/she by reason of such absence, if the absence is verified in an acceptable manner.
2. Whenever a student is absent, the parent should notify the school to eliminate unnecessary concern.
3. Students are allowed to make up work missed because of absences except those explained below. All arrangements must be made by the student and/or parent within five (5) school days upon return to school or class.

Suspended students are allowed to make up work for a maximum of ten (10) out-of-school suspension days in the school year. All makeup work must be completed within five (5) days of return. Makeup work for out-of-school suspensions will not be permitted beyond the tenth (10th) out-of-school suspension day in the school year. Students will receive a grade of "zero" for all graded assignments during suspension periods exceeding ten (10) school days

within a school year. Students suspended until a School Board hearing are allowed to keep up with their assignments pending the outcome of the hearing.

Makeup work for absences resulting from truancy, skipping school, or cutting class will not be permitted. A grade of "zero" will be recorded.

Appeals for exception to the provision of the make-up policy will be heard by the principal or designee.

4. Parents should be notified when students have excessive absences. School personnel should contact parents by phone in an effort to determine the reasons for the excessive absences from school. Parents and students are encouraged and responsible for monitoring student attendance as reported on the report card issued each nine weeks period. Poor attendance will also be reported to parents on interim reports sent to parents at the mid-point of each nine weeks grading period.

## **II. Compulsory Attendance Procedures**

Whenever a student fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no information has been received by school personnel that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence, the school principal, principal's designee, attendance officer or other school personnel or volunteer notifies the parent by phone, email, or other electronic means of student's absence.

### ***A. Upon Fifth Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support***

If (1) a student fails to report to school for a total of five scheduled school days for the school year, and (2) there is no indication that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence; and (3) reasonable efforts to notify the parent of the absences have failed, then the Principal or his designee or the attendance officer shall make a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the parent, either in person or through telephone conversation, to obtain an explanation for the pupil's absence and to explain to the parent the consequences of continued nonattendance. The school principal, principal's designee or the attendance officer, the pupil, and the pupil's parent shall jointly develop a plan to resolve the pupil's nonattendance. Such plan shall include documentation of the reasons for the pupil's nonattendance.

### ***B. Upon Sixth Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support***

If the pupil is absent an additional day after direct contact with the pupil's parent and the attendance officer has received no indication that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, the school principal, principal's designee or the attendance officer shall schedule a conference within ten school days, which must take place no later than the fifteenth school day after the sixth absence. At the conference, the pupil, his parent, and school personnel, shall meet to resolve issues related to the pupil's nonattendance. Other community service providers may also be included in the conference.

### ***C. Upon Additional Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support***

Upon the next absence after the conference without indication to the attendance officer that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, the principal or principal's designee shall notify the attendance officer or superintendent or superintendent's designee who shall enforce the compulsory attendance rules by either or both of the following: (i) filing a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations court alleging the pupil is a child in need of supervision as defined in VA Code § 16.1-228 or (ii) instituting proceedings against the parent pursuant to VA Code §§ 18.2-371 or 22.1-262. In filing a complaint against the student, the attendance officer shall provide written documentation of the efforts already undertaken to resolve the pupil's absence. If the student's parents have joint physical custody of the student and the school has notice of the custody arrangement, then both parents shall be notified at their last known addresses.

### ***D. Parental Cooperation in Remediating Excessive Unexcused Absences***

It is expected that parents will cooperate with the attendance officer and other school officials to remedy the student's attendance problem. Where direct contact with a parent cannot be made, despite reasonable efforts, or where parents otherwise fail to cooperate in remediating the student's attendance problem, the superintendent or the superintendent's designee may seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance laws. The attendance officer, with the knowledge and approval of the Superintendent, shall institute proceedings against any parent who fails to comply with the requirements of the compulsory attendance laws. Where the complaint arises out of the parent's failure to comply with the requirements of § 22.1-258, the attendance officer shall document the school division's compliance with this Code section.



1. Students who bring parental notes but display a pattern of excessive absence as enumerated above, tardiness, or early dismissal, will be referred to the principal or designee who shall investigate the absences and recommend appropriate corrective action. For this purpose, each instance of a total of three (3) tardies or early dismissals or a combination thereof shall be considered the equivalent of one (1) day of absence.
2. Skipping school/class will result in disciplinary action being taken by the school which shall include, but is not limited to, after school detention, attendance in Saturday school, loss of parking privileges, or community service. Community service shall be on school property, before or after school hours, and supervised by school personnel. Repeat offenders increase the risk of losing credit for classes and additional consequences.
3. TARDINESS - students are expected to be on time for the beginning of classes. Documentation must be provided for tardies, as well as absences. Unexcused tardies will result in disciplinary action being taken by the principal. This action does not exclude loss of parking privileges or riding privileges with other student drivers.

### **III. Report for Suspension of Driver's License**

In addition to any other actions taken pursuant to this policy, if a student who is under 18 years of age has 10 or more unexcused absences from school on consecutive school days, the principal may notify the juvenile and domestic relations court, which may take action to suspend the student's driver's license.

### **IV. Attendance Reporting**

Student attendance shall be monitored and reported as required by state law and regulations. At the end of each school year, each public school principal reports to the Superintendent the number of pupils by grade level for whom a conference was scheduled pursuant to Part II (B) above. The Superintendent compiles this information and provides it annually to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

### **V. Dismissal Precautions**

Principals do not release a student during the school day to any person not authorized by the student's parent/guardian to assume responsibility for the pupil. Students are released only on request and authorization of parent or guardian. The superintendent establishes procedures for release of pupils who are not residing with or under the supervision of a parent/guardian. The burden of proof on the authority of the person to receive the student is on the requesting party. A formal check-out system is maintained in each school.

**In the case of marital difficulty where one parent provides evidence of legal custody granted by the court and has requested that the student not be permitted to leave with the other parent, the request is to be enforced.**

Students dismissed early for any reason are expected to leave the school grounds promptly (within five minutes).

Adopted: June 13, 2005

Revised: July 13, 2009; August 9, 2010 (administratively); August 12, 2013; June 29, 2017.

## **INSURANCE**

Accident and Dental Insurance is offered to each student. Notices will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. These notices will show cost and other information of importance.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The Lost and Found Box is located in a corner of the cafeteria. Students and parents are urged to check it periodically. Please label your children's clothing, lunch boxes, and backpacks.

## **CAFETERIA MEALS AND LUNCH PROCEDURES**

The purpose of Prince George Food and Nutrition Department is to promote and improve children's physical, psychological, and scholastic well-being through healthy school meals serviced in a positive, cheerful manner and through sound nutrition education.

All schools in Prince George County participate in the National School Breakfast/Lunch Program. Your child(ren) may be eligible for free meals or meals at a reduced price if your household income is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.

To locate menus go to the county web site <http://pgs.k12.va.us> and click on the “Parent” icon and select “Cafeterias” on the drop down. Once the tab is open you can view menus, meal applications, policies and nutritional information. We also offer a mobile app that can be downloaded from the cafeteria webpage. Breakfast and lunch will be served each day. Breakfast will *not be served* if school opens **two hours late**, however, it will be **served** if school opens **less than two hours late**.

Good Nutrition and learning go hand in hand! The Nutrition Services department is made up of a team of food and nutrition professionals that are dedicated to student’s health, well-being and their ability to learn. We support learning by promoting healthy habits for lifelong nutrition fitness practices.

**Student prices for the 2017-2018 school year are:**

Breakfast: Full Price = \$1.35; Reduced Price = \$0.30                                  Parents/Guest Price = \$3.25  
Lunch: Full Price = \$2.65; Reduced Price = \$0.40

Meals, foods, and beverages sold or served at schools meet state and federal requirements which are based on USDA Dietary Guidelines. We provide students with access to a variety of affordable and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students.

Prince George County Schools Food and Nutrition serves convenient, economical, and healthy school meals, because we believe that education should always be at the top of the menu. We look forward to serving your children breakfast and lunch.

Please complete an application for free and reduced meals each year. If you do not receive one at the beginning of the year, please contact the Food & Nutrition Office at 733-2710. Free and reduced meal applications are available on our school web site and one will be sent home with your child/ren at the beginning of the year. You may reapply for free and reduced price meals any time during the school year. If you are not eligible now but have a change, such as a decrease in household income, an increase in household size, become unemployed or get SNAP or TANF for your child(ren), fill out an application at that time.

Students in grades 8-12 are not allowed to charge. We will offer a reimbursable alternate meal two times to students. Children in K-7, will only be allowed to charge an amount equal to two breakfast and two lunches and then an alternate breakfast and lunch will be provided and the charges are to be paid by the parent/guardian. An alternate breakfast and lunch can only be allowed two times. An alternate breakfast “granola or toast”, fruit, and milk. An alternate lunch will consist of a cheese sandwich, vegetable or fruit, and milk. Parents will be notified by the School Phone Messenger when a student has a low balance at school on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If a student has a negative balance a school phone messenger will go out on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. If a student wants to purchase “snack” items, and has a negative balance the money will be applied to what is owed and no “snack” item will be given until the balance is satisfied. Beginning the second week in May we will no longer allow any charges for K-7.

All refund requests over \$5.00 will need to be refunded through our accounts payable department. Refund request need to be submitted in writing, e-mail, or refund form. A refund form is located on the school district’s website under cafeteria. Parents that have students graduating may request a refund or a transfer of funds to another child’s account in our district.

Prince George County School Food & Nutrition Department has enrolled in an internet-based service called mySchoolBucks. This service is a website where you can pay for your child(ren’s) meals using your Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express credit card for a small fee. MySchoolBucks enables parents to keep track of their child(ren’s) account balance. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to place money on your child(ren’s) account in order to check balances. You will need to know your child(ren’s) student ID number, this is obtained through the school office or contact the Food & Nutrition Department. Encourage your student to avoid sharing his/her ID number with others. All students will be required to enter their ID number regardless of meal status or payment method, thus insuring your child’s(ren) privacy. To get started, parents have to first enroll at mySchoolBucks.com. Please contact our Food & Nutrition Department at 804-733-2710 if you have any questions.

**Enrollment is easy!**

- 1. Go to [www.mySchoolBucks.com](http://www.mySchoolBucks.com) and register for a free account. A confirmation email will be sent to the email address you provide; click on the link included in the email to activate your account.**
- 2. Activate your account and begin adding your students. You will need their school name and student ID.**

### 3. Add funds to your students' accounts with your Visa, MasterCard, or Discover Card.

Please note that as you make payments, your school's cafeteria will download them to your student's cafeteria account at set times throughout the day. As of this writing, our district downloads payments at approximately:

**5:15 AM, 10:00 AM and 2:45 PM, Monday-Thursday**  
**5:15 AM and 10:00 AM Friday**  
**2:45PM Sunday**

Once the school downloads your payment, the funds are available for your student to use. There is typically, however, a lag between the time that the payment is applied to your student's account and the information is uploaded to and reflected in the Current Balance link online. Money deposited into lunch accounts can take up to 12 hours to post.

If you have any questions, you can email [support@myschoolbucks.com](mailto:support@myschoolbucks.com) or call 1-855-832-5226.

#### **CAFETERIA RETURNED CHECK INFORMATION**

Envision Payment Solutions™ was selected by Prince George County Schools/Nutrition as its check service provider. Please be aware that if your check is returned, it may be re-presented electronically. Also, in presenting a check for payment, you authorize service charges and processing fees to be debited from the same account should the check be dishonored. These fees, as permitted by state law, may be debited as a paper draft or an electronic funds transfer, at our option. Each dishonored item is subject to the applicable state returned check fees.

Specifically, per *Virginia Code Annotated § 8.01-27.1*, the service fee for returned checks is as follows: *\$50, plus legal interest from the date of the check and the bad check return fee charged to the holder by its bank.* (Note that the fee structure will change according to any amendments made to VA law during a school year.)

If you wish to inquire about a returned check written to Prince George County Schools/Nutrition, please contact Envision Payment Solutions™ directly at Phone # 877-290-5460 or 770-709-3013. Fax # 770-709-3007 or P.O. Box 157, Suwanee, GA 30024-0157.

Please our schools web site or our district web site @ <http://pgs.k12.va.us/> for further information.

#### **TRAFFIC PATTERN**

**No cars** should enter the school bus loading zone in front of the school. The parking area is located at the side of the school next to the cafeteria. This area provides easy access to the office for signing children in and out. Parents needing to come into the building **MUST** use the parking lot.

When using the Bear Hug Parent Pick-Up/Drop-Off remain in the vehicle while duty teachers open the car door, assist your child out of the car, and close the car door. **Please be patient in waiting your turn in the Bear Hug loop. This is a service that is intended to be convenient and safe for your child.**

#### **FIELD TRIPS**

A student is not allowed to accompany his/her class on a field trip without **WRITTEN PERMISSION** from the parent(s) or legal guardian. Permission request forms are sent home at the appropriate time for this purpose. Please sign and return field trip permission forms in a timely manner paying particular attention to deadlines for returned permission slips and/or payment for the field trip. Field trips are school sponsored functions and are provided with school division approval.

Field trips may be paid by cash, personal check, money order, or cashier's check. Because many field trip sites do not provide refunds for no-shows, **the school cannot guarantee refunds for students who do not attend the field trip.** Late field trip permission slips or late payment for a field trip **will not** be accepted. **No siblings may accompany students or chaperones on field trips.** All students and **chaperones** attending field trips will use the transportation provided for by the school.

## TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are the property of the Prince George County Public School System, and are on loan to the students. It must be understood that the **PARENT AND CHILD ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE BOOKS BEING LOANED. If the books are lost or damaged, fees established by the school will be charged for repair or replacement of the books.** Unpaid fees or monies owed such as lost or damaged books, pictures, or fund raisers must be paid. Failure to do so could result in your child being excluded from non-educational activities.

## HARRISON CHECK POLICY

Checks are to be made out to Harrison Elementary School. Checks returned because of Non- Sufficient Funds (NSF) will be charged a fee. The fee and amount of check will need to be paid to Harrison Elementary in the form of cash, money order or cashier's check. **No checks will be accepted after Friday May 25, 2018.**

## HOMEWORK

The Prince George County School Board believes that homework is an important part of the education process and that it is valid if it has the following objectives:

- To promote growth in self-responsibility and self-direction in learning.
- To direct students toward good work habits.
- To enrich and extend school research experiences.
- To bring pupils into contact with out-of-school learning resources.
- To help children learn to budget time.
- To provide essential practice in developing skills.

All homework has a specific purpose. It is suggested that homework assignments given to elementary school students should NOT exceed one hour. Study and review of class assignments each evening is important.

### Homework Guidelines for Parents:

- Provide a quiet place for study.
- Help your child budget his/her time.
- Encourage your child to work independently.
- DO NOT DO THE HOMEWORK YOURSELF.
- Compliment good work or improvement.
- Use constructive suggestions. A positive attitude will encourage your child to do their best.

## PARENT PORTAL

Parent Portal gives you access to your child's grades and attendance. If you do not have a Portal login/password, please contact the school office and they will help you obtain one. Portal login/passwords carry over from year to year. Remember to update your e-mail address with the school if it changes.

## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE

Students' responsibility in transporting notes, notices, and bulletins between school and home **should be encouraged.** The parent/teacher conference is considered an effective vehicle for communication concerning a child's life at school, and can be scheduled at the request of either parent or teacher. Parents may schedule conferences by calling the school or sending a note to the teacher.

Arrangements for conferences between parents and teachers should be made **in advance.** Each teacher has scheduled periods during school hours which may be used for parent conferences as well as before or after school hours. Instructional time is protected; therefore, teachers are unable to leave their classes for impromptu telephone conferences and unscheduled parent visits.

## ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT

The building was inspected on June 30, 1992. No further inspection is required for this building. The inspection report is filed in the principal's office.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Each morning, during announcements the school will be lead in the pledge of our flag. Any student who desires not to participate may remain seated and silent as the others participate.

## MOMENT OF SILENCE

The Prince George County Board, acting under the provisions of state law, passed a policy, which provides for the daily observance of a minute of silence in each classroom of the Prince George School Division. In order to carry out this policy, each homeroom teacher shall take care that pupils remain seated and silent, making no distracting display to the end that each pupil, may, in the exercise of his or her individual choice, meditate or emerge in any other silent activity which does not interfere with, distract, or impede other pupils in the exercise of individual choice.

## CLOSING OF SCHOOL - INCLEMENT WEATHER

When the schools in Prince George County are closed because of snow and/or ice, high water on the roads or emergencies, an announcement is made on all local radio and TV stations. You may go to [www.pgs.k12.va.us](http://www.pgs.k12.va.us). It is very important to have current **telephone numbers** so that you can be notified by the automated school messenger system. **It is very important that your child knows where to go in case of early dismissal due to an emergency.** School closing announcements, if necessary, will be made over the following stations:

<u>Radio Stations</u>		<u>Local TV Stations</u>
WRVA 1140 AM	WCVE 88.9 FM	WTVR Channel 6
WKHK 95.3 FM	WBTJ 106.5 FM	WRIC Channel 8
WRVQ 94.5 FM	SPIRIT FM 89.5 FM	WWBT Channel 12
WRXL 102.1 FM		

At times schools may be operated on a delayed schedule. The division superintendent has the authority to open schools either one or two hours later than the regular starting time. This means that school buses will run their routes, and individual schools will start the school day one or two hours late. Schools will close at the regular time on a delayed opening day unless there is a need for an early closing.

**Breakfast is not served on 2 hour delayed opening days.**

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Planning for emergencies and unexpected problems is a central component in our efforts to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of our students and staff. Fire drills are held weekly during September and monthly for the remainder of the year. **Drills that address fire, severe weather conditions, earthquakes and/or intruder lockdown will be conducted.** Fifth (5) grade students will be introduced to other security procedures such as metal detection. All students and staff will be instructed in appropriate procedures and the use of the crisis codes.

## CRISIS CODES

<b>Code Red</b>	Lockdown - Intruder/Trespasser	<b>Code Orange</b>	Earthquake Warning
<b>Code Blue</b>	Tornado/Hurricane Watch/Warning	<b>Code Brown</b>	Standard Lockdown
<b>Code Yellow</b>	Bomb Threat	<b>Alarm System</b>	Fire
<b>Code Green</b>	All Clear		

## SAFETY

The safety of students at Harrison Elementary is of utmost importance. We have numerous things in place to keep us all safe.

- A picture ID will be requested when visiting or picking up a student from school. Your ID will be scanned using the Raptor program, so we can print your visitor's pass as well as verify that you are a designated person to pick up the student from school.
- During SOL testing parents/visitors will be limited to non-testing areas to ensure a quiet environment for

student testing

- Different pass colors are used when visiting the school. The different colors determine where in the building you are allowed to visit. White pass – room(s) printed on pass. Colored pass – cafeteria and awards ceremonies.
- Security cameras are throughout the building and grounds.
- Fire, intruder and weather related drills take place throughout the school year.

## WITHDRAWALS

Parents of children who will need to be withdrawn before the end of the school year should notify the school in advance and complete withdrawal paperwork so that transfer papers can be processed. Your child will receive a copy of the withdrawal form, and cumulative record sheet. School records will be released to the new school upon receipt of a record release signed by the parent.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Children who will be five years old on or before September 30<sup>th</sup> may be registered for public school Kindergarten. Any child who is five years old on or before September 30<sup>th</sup> is required to attend school. Those children who will be six years old on or before September 30<sup>th</sup> and will enter Prince George County Schools for the first time must register for and enter Kindergarten.

- **PROOF OF RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS** - A lease, rental agreement, deed of trust, deed, or real estate tax receipt, is required. In those instances where parents say they are living with someone else (i.e., aunt, grandmother, etc), form (SBO-0120-0398) will be completed by both parties and notarized.
- **BIRTH CERTIFICATE** - The child's original state issued legal birth certificate.
- **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENT**
  - Virginia law states that a comprehensive physical examination (Form MCH-213F revised 04/07) performed no earlier than twelve months prior to entering school is required before a child shall be admitted for the first time to any public kindergarten or elementary school in a school division.
- **A Certificate of Immunization (Form MCH-213F)** from a licensed physician stating successful immunization against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, measles (rubeola), German measles (rubella), mumps, hepatitis B, varicella (chicken pox) is required.

The birth certificate, proof of residency, physical examination and documented proof of immunization are **required before a child may be admitted to school**.

## SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY NOTIFICATION

The Prince George County School division receives notification of registered sex offenders according to the procedures established by the Virginia Department of State Police. The Prince George County School division recognizes that it is the responsibility of local law enforcement to notify the community of potential public danger. Therefore, the division will not disseminate registry information to parents. Anyone requesting registry information from the school division shall be referred to State Policy. The complete policy is available in the Prince George County School Policy Manual located in each school office and at the school board office.

## CURRICULUM

### Standards of Learning (SOL)

The Standards of Learning were passed by the Virginia State Board of Education in 1995 in an effort to provide challenging education programs in the public schools. We are encouraged as educators to go beyond the prescribed standards and to enrich the curriculum to meet the needs of all students. The Virginia Board of Education has adopted the Standards of Learning (SOL), which are the core of the curriculum in school divisions throughout the Commonwealth. The Standards of Learning (SOL) are important because they set reasonable targets and expectations for what teachers need to teach and students need to learn. Clear, concise academic standards let parents and teachers know what is expected of students and each student's performance and achievement can be measured against the standards

**Grade 3** tests reading, math

**Grade 5** tests reading, math, science, (VA studies – locality choice)

**Grade 4** tests reading and math

**SOL information is provided on the school division website [www.pgs.k12.va.us](http://www.pgs.k12.va.us) If you do not have access to the internet and would like a hard copy of the SOL's, contact your child's teacher.**

### **Core Subjects**

Language Arts (language, spelling, handwriting, reading, and composition), Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies are taught in K-5.

### **Resource Classes**

Physical Education at Harrison is a fitness-oriented program. Students will participate in physical education five days a week, at least two of which will be with a P. E. teacher. To ensure that your child participates safely, students are required to wear some type of tie-up gym shoe. Failure to wear proper footwear will result in exclusion from the activity. Students are expected to participate actively each day. If your child is unable to participate due to illness or injury, a **written note** must be sent stating the specific reason for non-participation or restriction in activity and the date the note was written. If the problem is long term (three days or more), a doctor's note may be necessary. Students having continuing physical limitations should send a note stating the nature of the limitation and precautions or special care to be taken during physical education to the teacher.

Art is part of a complete education and is offered to all students, PreK-5. A variety of activities are planned to support the core curriculum.

Music is important in all areas of life. Learning to read music, play simple instruments, sing, and move to music will be incorporated in the music curriculum for all students, PreK-5.

### **Additional Areas of Instruction**

Computer Technology is infused within the curriculum on a daily basis through use of four computer labs and three wireless computer labs.

Family Life Non-sensitive areas are taught by the teacher throughout the school year. Sensitive areas are taught by the P.E. teachers in segregated classes. An opt-out form is sent home at the beginning of the year.

Health is taught as part of the science curriculum by the classroom teachers.

Character Education is infused in all aspects of student engagement.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

### **Title I Services**

Remedial Reading is offered to those students identified as having a need for this service. Teachers determine who is to be screened. Permission is obtained from parents. If a student qualifies, reading support strategies are provided by a reading specialist.

### **PALS**

Students in grades K-3 are given the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) in the fall and/or spring as a means of measuring the student's knowledge of important literacy fundamentals. Those who qualify for tutoring receive it during the year.

### **Pre-School Program** (The Virginia Pre-School Initiative)

This program is for at-risk four year olds. Children are selected on the basis of need according to state guidelines. These guidelines include, but are not limited to, family income, parent education and family stress. Further information is available through **James Scruggs** at **733-2700**.

### **Special Education**

Special services are available for those who qualify. Referral processes and identification guidelines are discussed with parents as needed. After identification, the Individual Education Program (IEP) team will determine the level of services to be provided. Resource services, as well as related services such as speech, OT, and PT are available. The length of time for services provided to students that are eligible is determined by the IEP team.

## REPORT CARDS AND GRADING SYSTEM

Report cards for Grades K-5 will be sent home every 9 weeks. They should be signed and returned as quickly as possible. The following grading scale is used to indicate the student's level of achievement:

### KINDERGARTEN

S - Satisfactory

P - Progressing

U - Unsatisfactory

### FIRST - FIFTH GRADES

A - Excellent Work (100-90)

D - Below Average Work (69-60)

B - Above Average Work (89-80)

F - Unsatisfactory Work; Failing (59 and below)

C - Average Work (79-70)

## HONOR ROLL GUIDELINES

In order for a student in grades 3-5 to qualify for Honor Roll recognition, the following criteria must be met:

1. In the normal progress range in reading.
2. No grade below **B**.
3. Music/P.E./Art/Library must be an **S**.
4. Social skills, and citizenship grades are not considered.

## INTERIM REPORTS

In addition to regular report cards, interim reports will be sent home at the midpoint of each nine weeks. Interim reports may point out a particular area in which a student is having difficulty. Interim reports should be signed and returned as soon as possible.

## PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY GRADES K-5

### I. Rationale

The retention of a pupil is always based on a primary concern for what is in the best interests of the child. In addition, the process alerts the parents to the fact that unsatisfactory progress is evident early in the child's school career.

### II. Criteria

#### A. Grades K-5

1. For promotion in Grades K-5 a student must pass math and language arts, which includes reading.
2. Consideration also will be given to:
  - \* achievement in science and social studies
  - \* passing of the core SOL tests in Grades 3, 4 and 5.
3. Reasonable Time
  - (a) No child should remain in grades K-2 more than one additional year for academic reasons.
  - (b) No child should remain in grades 3-5 more than one additional year for academic reasons.

### III. Parent Participation - Grades 1-5

- A. Parents will be notified by a form letter during the third nine weeks grading period of the "likely possibility" of retention.
- B. The teacher will schedule a conference with the parents prior to the beginning of the fourth nine weeks to discuss "possible retention".
- C. A parent-teacher-principal conference, if necessary, will be scheduled in the latter part of the final nine weeks period to discuss the final decision regarding retention of the pupil. In the event that the parents are unable to come to the school for the conference, a form letter will



be sent from the principal to the parents.

- D. Hopefully, parents and school personnel will agree that retention provides a positive alternative for meeting the child's needs. However, if agreement cannot be reached the final decision will be made by the school personnel.

#### **IV. Parent Participation - Kindergarten**

If it appears that it may be in the child's best interest for him/her to remain in kindergarten a second year, the following procedure will be used:

- A. Parents will be notified by a form letter during the third nine weeks grading period of the "likely possibility".
- B. A parent-teacher-principal conference, if necessary, will be scheduled during the final reporting period to discuss the final decision regarding retention of the pupil. In the event that the parents are unable to come to the school for the conference, a form letter will be sent from the principal to the parents.
- C. Hopefully, parents and school personnel will agree that retention provides a positive alternative for meeting the child's needs. However, if agreement cannot be reached, the final decision will be made by the school personnel.

#### **V. Placement Policy**

- A. A pupil who is not making satisfactory progress may be placed in the next highest grade at the discretion of the principal in consultation with the teacher and parents.
- B. Placement will not ordinarily be considered unless the pupil has been retained previously.
- C. In all cases of placement, the report card shall indicate placement rather than promotion.

#### **VI. General Factors**

- A. A pupil who is retained in a grade shall be assigned to a different teacher for the second year unless there is mutual agreement between the parent, teacher, and principal that she/he should have the same teacher.
- B. Attendance in summer school or special tutoring during the summer may not be a consideration for promotion.
- C. An official year-end promotion or retention decision cannot be issued to a student until the last week of school.

### **THREATS AGAINST PERSONS OR PROPERTY**

Virginia Code Ann. 18.2-60 - Students are not to threaten individuals, members of their family or any school employee through written (signed or unsigned) or verbal communication. Punishment of offenses such as these ranges from Class 1 misdemeanor to a Class 6 felony.

### **WEAPONS POLICY**

Any elementary student who possesses or transmits any weapon or other dangerous object on school property at any time will be suspended immediately by the Principal pending a hearing with the Superintendent. Such weapons include, but are not limited to, any pistol, shotgun, stun gun, taser, revolver, or other firearm designed or intended to propel a projectile of any kind, including toy guns and look-alike guns, rifle, knife (including bowie and switchblade), razor, slingshot, brass or metal knuckles, blackjacks, explosives, or other dangerous articles. Expulsion may be recommended to the School Board by the Superintendent of Schools.

### **STUDENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

#### **Search and Seizure**

Recognizing that the use and abuse of harmful drugs by students has become a local, state, and national problem, the Prince George County School Board adopted the following policy concerning the sale, possession, dispensing, and/or use of drugs on school property and at ALL school sponsored activities.

The Principal or designated person in his absence may search a student's locker or desk under the following circumstances:

- When the student has been informed IN ADVANCE that under School Board regulations desks and lockers may be inspected if the administration has reason to suspect the presence of articles or materials are injurious to the best interest of the school.
- When the Principal suspects the presence of drugs or other harmful substances, which are likely to pose a threat to the maintenance of discipline and order in the school.
- When a witness is present.

## DRESS CODE

Students shall be dressed and groomed in a manner that is clean and neat and that will not present a health or safety hazard to themselves or others. Clothing will be worn as it is designed to be worn. All dress code issues will be subject to the school administrator's judgment.

Students who are considered to be in violation of the dress code shall be advised by the school administrator and shall be given an opportunity to comply. The opportunity to comply may take a variety of forms. In most cases the student will be allowed to call parents for a change of clothes. While awaiting the change of clothes, the student may be required to (a) wait in the office, (b) go to class (if not a severe violation), or (c) any other option deemed necessary or appropriate by the administrator. Those who then fail to comply or who repeatedly violate the code shall be subject to disciplinary action. In order to implement the School Board policy pertaining to dress and grooming, the following provides a general list of regulations that are stipulated for students. This list is not all inclusive. The following are regulations and stipulations for students:

- Shoulders must be completely covered.
- The bottom of the shirt, blouse, or other top must overlap or be tucked into the pants, shorts, skirts, etc., worn so that the midriff, belly, and/or undergarments are not exposed.
- Pants will be worn at the waist.
- Shorts and dresses/skirts may be worn at a length no shorter than mid-thigh.
- Students are not allowed to wear dresses or skirts with splits which go higher than mid-thigh.
- A principal or his/her designee may require a student to remove any item or outer clothing that could readily conceal a weapon while in school.
- Shoes or sandals must be worn for health and safety reasons.

The following items are **NOT** considered to be appropriate and are prohibited:

- Sunglasses
- Head coverings (i.e., sweat bands, bandanas, doo rags, hats)
- Rakes, combs, picks, curlers, rollers, and other grooming articles
- Pajamas and bedroom slippers
- See-through/sheer clothing
- Tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, muscle shirts, oversized armholes, spaghetti straps, and plunging necklines or those that otherwise reveal excessive cleavage
- Exposed undergarments
- Clothing bearing profane, obscene, lewd, vulgar, illegal, and racially/ethnically offensive illustrations, emblems, or statements
- Garments promoting the use of illegal substances, including alcohol and tobacco
- Tears or holes in clothing above the knees
- Items of clothing which may be considered as weapons including studded jewelry and wallet chains of more than 12 inches
- Clothing associated with gangs or gang membership
- Bottoms that are excessively long and/or not hemmed poses a safety hazard
- **Flip flops/shower shoes, heellies**

## ITEMS NOT TO BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Students are not to bring the following articles to school: knives, firearms, blank guns, starter guns, pellet guns, air guns, toy guns, guns (weapons of any type) or look alike weapons, radios, CD players, beepers, cell phones, electronic games of any type, bats, balls, matches, lighters, glass bottles, or other personal items not needed at school.

## SCHOOL RULES

- Respect others and their property.
- Follow directions by an adult.
- No hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting or fighting.
- No throwing of inappropriate objects.
- Report problems to staff members.
- **Chewing gum** is NOT permitted on the bus or at school.
- Follow the district dress code

Refer to the Prince George County Public Schools "Encouraging Positive Student Conduct & Safety Handbook" for more information related to school rules and discipline.

## PLAYGROUND RULES

- Respect others and their property.
- Follow directions by an adult.
- No hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting or fighting.
- No throwing of inappropriate objects.
- Use all equipment properly.
- Off limits: pavilion, storage buildings, playing near building and classroom windows
- Report problems to staff members.

## CONSEQUENCES

- Verbal warning
- Time-out
- Walk the blacktop
- Silent lunch
- Letter/call home to parents
- Referral to administration

## RIDING A DIFFERENT BUS

Should it be necessary for a child to ride a different bus than he/she normally rides or to be picked up by the parent, the **parents must send a note** to the teacher indicating the change. Bus changes will only be permitted in emergency or child care situations. Otherwise the child will be placed on his/her regular bus.

- The student must show the note to the teacher before 11 a.m. Notification after that time will be considered on an emergency basis only.
- Approval by transportation department is needed for bus changes.
- Upon approval, office personnel will issue a bus pass to student. If not approved, parent will be contacted.
- Please make certain that a note as described above is sent to the school each time it is necessary for your child to make a change. **Please include the name and address of where the child will be going.**

## BUS TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

All students in the Prince George School System that ride the school buses are subject to Bus Rules and Regulations established by the school board. They are subject to these rules and regulations until they get off the bus at school or the bus stop near their homes. Each student should learn his /her bus number and driver's name. Fort Lee students should also learn their bus stop numbers. Any behavior which distracts the driver is a **VERY SERIOUS HAZARD** to safe operation of the vehicle, and as such, jeopardizes the safety of all passengers. Students that consistently break the bus rules will be **suspended** from the bus for a specific number of days. Every school is supplied with School Bus Incident Reports which reflect the rules of student conduct. These reports will be used to cite violations of rules and regulations.

If your child is reported for any violation of the School Bus Rules and Regulations, the Administration may take one of the following disciplinary measures:

- Speak to the student and give verbal reprimand.
- Speak to the student and send a warning letter home stating what has taken place on the bus.
- Suspend the student from riding the bus.

It is up to the discretion of the Administration as to the action taken. The number of days a student is suspended from riding the bus is determined by the seriousness of the infraction, and the student's past discipline bus record. Parents will be notified by phone and letter when a student is suspended from the bus. The letter will be given to the student for the parents. Serious offenses such as fighting, possession of weapons, and gross use of profanity will result in a bus suspension on the first offense.

## RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS RIDING PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY SCHOOL BUSES

- The number of students who may ride the school bus is determined by the total number who can be seated. (BUSES ARE DESIGNED TO SEAT THREE STUDENTS PER SEAT.)
- The bus driver is the only person permitted to open and close the entrance door.
- Posters, stickers, or advertising materials of any kind are prohibited in or on school buses.
- No object shall be placed in the bus that will restrict passageway to entrance or emergency door.
- ALL students are under the jurisdiction of the driver while they are on the school bus. **DRIVERS HAVE THE SAME AUTHORITY AS A TEACHER IN THE CLASSROOM.**
- ALL students are to get on the bus and take a seat and remain there until they reach their destination. Moving from seat to seat **WILL NOT** be permitted.
- Misconduct such as: hitting, slapping, fighting, talking loud, screaming, yelling, use of profane words or gestures, or any conduct that is distracting to the driver will **NOT** be tolerated.
- No smoking is permitted on the bus.
- No drinks are permitted on the bus.
- No food may be eaten on the bus.
- No objects are to be thrown out of the bus window.
- No objects are to be thrown or tossed on the bus.
- Drivers will not make a habit of waiting for students who are late getting to the bus stop.
- ALL students are to ride their assigned bus at their assigned bus stop, morning and afternoon.
- Postcards are mailed before each school year with bus information. Times are subject to change throughout the school year based on ridership.
- Students are not permitted to get off at stops other than their own, unless they have a bus pass that has been authorized by Transportation.
- Any student found guilty of destroying any part of a school bus WILL pay for the damage and is also subject to suspension.
- At no time will students be allowed to stick their hands, arms, and head out of the open window.
  - No pets will be allowed on the bus.
  - Students are not permitted to play radios, CD players, and musical instruments on the bus.
  - No buying or selling will be permitted on the bus.
  - Parents should notify the school nurse if a child has a history of seizures, uncontrolled bleeding, or other medical problems.
  - Any student who does NOT abide by the rules stated above, will be disciplined or suspended from riding the bus.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN REQUIREMENT AT BUS STOP

Prince George County Public Schools Requires of the parent or guardian of children in grades **Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade** to be present at the AM bus stop for loading and PM for unloading. This requirement has insured the safety of students while waiting for buses and safe arrival home with a caregiver.

The School Board approved in November of 2013 and implemented, starting February 2014, a penalty of \$110 cost (hourly rate with benefits of Transportation, Administrative, and Support staff) be imposed upon the parent or guardian when the Transportation Department must return a child to school for pick-up.

- **1<sup>st</sup> Offense** – A warning letter from the principal or assistant principal sharing the penalty cost for returning a child to school and supervision. No charge for first offense.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Offense** – The student is suspended from the bus until the penalty rate of \$110 is paid to the school district. The parent or guardian may transport the child to/from school; however, the child cannot ride the bus again until the penalty is paid in full.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Offense** – The student loses his/her bus privileges for the remainder of the semester and the parent or guardian must pay the penalty rate of \$110 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> offense before student continues to ride. Any outstanding penalty from the previous school year must be paid prior to the start of the next school year; otherwise, the student will not be allowed to ride the bus.

This is a reminder that the penalty is imposed **ONLY** if the Transportation Department returns the child to the

school for pick-up. Communicate with the school in advance of your child boarding the bus in the PM if you will not be at the bus stop. You must make arrangements to have a caregiver on the approved list to pick-up your child from school/bus stop.

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

A grievance is a means by which a person may seek redress to a situation that has arisen from the lack of compliance with the application or the misapplication of written rules, laws, regulations, or policies. A student or his parents or guardian may initiate a grievance. If a person decides to initiate a grievance, the established grievance procedure must be followed. Failure to follow the procedure shall result in no action being taken to resolve the grievance. A complete grievance procedure policy is provided in the school and is available for review during school operational hours.

## **GUIDANCE**

The Prince George County School Board affirms that parents are the students' first teachers and that the public schools should serve to strengthen family and parental support. No student will be required to participate in any counseling program to which the student's parents object.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- Academic Guidance - Guidance that assists students and their parents to acquire knowledge of the curricula choices available to students, to plan a program of studies, to arrange and interpret academic testing, and to seek post-secondary academic opportunities.
- Career Guidance - Guidance that helps students to acquire information and plan action about work, jobs, apprenticeships, and post-secondary educational and career opportunities.
- Personal/Social Counseling - Counseling that assists a student to develop an understanding of themselves, the rights and needs of others, how to resolve conflict and to define individual goals, reflecting their interests, abilities and aptitudes. Such counseling may be provided either (i) in groups in which generic issues of social development are addressed or (ii) through structured individual or small group multi-session counseling which focuses on the specific concerns of the participant(s).

At least annually, parents shall be notified in writing about the academic and career guidance programs, and the personal/social counseling programs which are available to students within the school division. Parents will be advised concerning the purpose, general description of the programs, how parents may review materials to be used in the programs, and procedures by which parents may limit the students' participation in the program. Information and records of personal/social counseling shall be kept confidential and separate and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental consent or as otherwise provided by law. It shall be the policy of the Prince George County School Board with respect to personal/social counseling that parents will notify the school division in writing if the student is not to participate in the personal/social counseling program. In no event shall affirmative parental consent for short duration personal/social counseling, that is needed to maintain order, discipline or a productive learning environment, be required. Counseling techniques that are beyond the scope of the professional certification or training of counselors, including hypnosis, or other psychotherapeutic techniques that are normally employed in medical or clinical settings and focus on mental illness or psychopathology are prohibited.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

The Prince George School Board shall maintain accurate and complete individual, permanent and cumulative records for every student enrolled in the public schools. These records shall include cumulative and confidential information and shall be the student's official school record. Discipline records are also included.

In each school the Principal or his designee is responsible for the collection maintenance, and security of scholastic records. Scholastic records are maintained in a secure location accessible to school officials who have legitimate educational interest in the student information contained therein. The Principal is responsible for providing to professional personnel the opportunity for periodic evaluation of scholastic records. Prince George County School Policy requires the superintendent or designee to be present for scholastic records interpretation and explanation. The only exceptions to this are for professional personnel employed by Prince George Schools and for adult clerical personnel who need access for maintenance purposes. A current listing of names and positions of employees within

Prince George County Schools who have access to personally identifiable data in scholastic records can be reviewed at the School Board Office. In addition, a copy of Prince George County's policy and procedure on the management of scholastic records may be obtained at the School Board Office.

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS REGARDING STUDENTS' EDUCATION RECORDS**

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

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 5 days of the Division receiving the request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents of eligible students may ask Prince George County School division to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
- If the Division decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the Division 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 authorized 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 Division 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 Division has contacted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, 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.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failure by the Division 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, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-605.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Directory information is personally identifiable information which may include name of student in or no longer in attendance, address, telephone listing, grades, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight (if member of athletic team), attendance records, classes completed, grade level completed and year of completion, degrees, awards, honors received, photographs/pictures taken for school publications and press releases to the media.

**Within two weeks of enrollment, parents may request, in writing, to have directory information excluded from publications by the school division.**

## **HONOR CODE FOR PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY SCHOOLS**

An honor code is a system that operates under the simple premise of trust. Under the honor system, it is assumed that every student has an expressed interest in preserving the integrity of the school. The primary function of an honor code is to instill a common sense of honor and morality in each student and adult at a school. This system revolves around the concept of respect: the self-respect one has for his own word, his work, and his own possessions, and the respect he has for the words, the work, and the possession of others.

Therefore, it is imperative that no students commit an act of lying, cheating, or stealing. It is equally important that no student should tolerate such behavior by his fellow students. Since the basis of this system relies on each student's acceptance of his responsibility to uphold the code, it is imperative that each student acknowledge that he will abide by the code and encourage other students to accept the responsibility for living up to the honor code.

Listed below are the general activities that would undermine and violate the honor code and are, therefore, prohibited.

- **Cheating:** Cheating includes the actual giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work.
- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism includes the copying of the language, structure, idea and/or thought of another and representing it as one's own original work.
- **Lying/Falsification:** This includes the verbal or written statement of any untruth.
- **Stealing:** Stealing includes the acquiring of another's possessions without right or permission.

Students in Prince George County Schools are expected to uphold the Honor Code as follows:

- The student will neither give nor receive aid on tests, quizzes, and examinations. Examples of receiving aid would be using cheat sheets or looking on someone else's paper. Examples of giving aid would be telling other students what is on a test, allowing other students to copy answers from your test paper. It should be stressed that the above list includes examples and does not constitute a complete list of the only activities, which will be punished. Other activities not listed above involving the giving or receiving of aid may be construed as cheating and will be dealt with accordingly.
- Work for reports, term papers, theses, and other written work must be done in the student's own words, not copied from any other source. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the work not being accepted and an office referral.
- Any classroom or homework assignment to be handed in for a grade should be the student's own work. Copied work will receive no credit.
- Testing procedures set up by each teacher will be followed. Failure to follow these procedures will result in the issuing of a discipline referral.
- Violation of the Honor Code will result in a zero for the assigned task. Depending on the severity of the incident, suspension may occur.
- Violation of the Honor Code at Prince George High School (example - cheating) may result in a student not being permitted membership in clubs such as the National Honor Society, Beta Club, or S.C.A.

## CHEATING POLICY – PRINCE GEORGE

If during the time of testing, you are discovered cheating, you will not be permitted to continue. You will receive a score of "0" and your test record will note that you cheated. If your test is an EOC SOL test, you will not be able to retest until the next regularly scheduled SOL test administration (Fall, Spring, Summer).

Any violation of the SOL Test Security Policy will result in disciplinary measures which may include suspension. This is a Prince George school HONOR CODE violation.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY – PRINCE GEORGE

Any cell phones, e-readers or other electronic devices with camera features, text messaging functions, voice activated recording capabilities or internet access must be turned off and placed at the front of the room. Failure to comply with this request will result in your dismissal from the testing session immediately. If one of these devices belonging to you goes off during testing, your testing materials will be collected, you will be dismissed from the testing session, your test will not be scored and you will face disciplinary actions. Pending the results of the investigation you may receive a score of "0" and/or be suspended.

## GIFTED PROGRAMS

**PACE** (Program for Advanced and Creative Experiences) is a program for students identified as gifted in the area of general intellectual ability. Identified students are grouped together with a teacher trained in gifted education for differentiated instruction in all core subjects. In schools served by the resource program, students also receive two hours of pull-out instruction (grades 1-5), and exploratory (grades 6-8), or a series of seminars (grades 8-12). Instruction emphasizes advanced higher-order thinking skills within an interdisciplinary unit. Advanced, honors, and/or AP classes are available in grades 8-12 to all students who qualify. Small group guidance sessions are provided. Independent study for credit is available in grades 9-12.

**SAGE** (Specific Academic Gifted Experiences) is a program for students who are identified as gifted in one or more academic subject(s). These students are grouped with teachers trained in gifted education and received differentiated classroom instruction in their identified area(s).

**K-SOAR** (Kindergarten - Studies of Advanced Reasoning) is a program designed for kindergarten students who demonstrate many of the characteristics of giftedness. Classroom teachers provide differentiated instruction in core subject areas. In schools served by the resource program a series of Demonstration/Shared Lessons are taught using complex content and advanced creative and critical thinking. Students are referred for the more formalized programs at the end of the year.

**SOAR** is also a program for students whose test scores and/or classroom performance show indications of giftedness but as yet their need for special services is inconsistent or unclear. They too are grouped with a teacher trained in gifted education for differentiated instruction in all core areas.

#### **Referrals and Evaluation of Services:**

Teachers, parents, community members and peers can refer students for gifted services. Self-referrals are also possible. Data is collected in the following areas: ability testing, achievement testing, characteristic checklists, grades, classroom products, and honors. A very high level of performance is expected. No one criterion gets a student into nor keeps a student out of the programs for the gifted. Following an annual screening procedure a school committee identifies most students in the spring. Referrals are accepted year round. All placements are reviewed annually.

#### **Services:**

All students who are identified are placed with teachers trained in gifted education for differentiated instruction in the classroom. They are challenged with advanced assignments that allow them to stretch their thinking in order to reach their full potential. In addition, PACE students are offered opportunities in grades 1-7 for group investigative studies across disciplines. In grades 9-12, PACE and SAGE students may choose to do an independent study for credit. These opportunities are offered under the direction of a resource teacher.

## **POLICY MANUAL STATEMENT**

A complete Prince George County Public Schools Policy Manual is located on the district website ([www.pgs.k12.va.us](http://www.pgs.k12.va.us)) and can be made available upon request.

## **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

#### **Library Media Center Loan and Fine Policy**

“The Library Media Center exists within and for the educational program of a school. It is the responsibility of the Library Media Center to provide materials and services to support this program. It is the responsibility of its patrons to return borrowed items, on time, and in good condition. In order to assure availability of materials for patron use in the educational program, it is necessary to have rules and regulations governing the use and abuse of those materials housed in the Library Media Center.” (PG School Board Policy)

#### **Book Check Out**

Kindergarten and first grade students may check out one (1) book each week. The book is due one week from the day it was checked out. Second graders may check out two (2) books a week. The books are due one week from the day they were checked out. Third, fourth, and fifth graders may check out two (2) books at a time. Due dates will vary once they begin library classes and open checkout. All students will be notified verbally and/or in writing of any overdue books. Before other books can be checked out, the overdue ones must be returned. The child is not cleared with the library until the book has been returned to the library. **“Parents of student patrons will be notified by phone and/or in writing when materials have been overdue one month or more. If necessary, building principals may be asked to assist Library Media Centers with the return of these materials.”** (PG School Board Policy)

#### **Lost or Damaged Books**

Books checked out of the library are the responsibility of the child. Any loss of or damage to library books is the responsibility of the child who checked out the book(s). Students who damage books beyond reasonable repair will be charged the replacement cost or a \$15.00 flat fee for out-of-print items. Damaged or lost books should be reported, in writing, to the librarian by the child’s parent. A refund will be made if the lost book is found in good, usable condition. NO REFUNDS will be issued after the last day of school. Failure to pay for lost or damaged books will result in the loss of borrowing privileges in following years until payment is made. **“Suspension of**



**borrowing privileges may run from one school year into the next if library media center obligations have not been fulfilled.”** (PG School Board Policy)

Damage to books or magazines must not be repaired outside of the library. Damage should be brought to the attention of the librarian when the item is returned so that proper repair may be made in the library. A replacement fee of \$1.00 will be charged for damage to any labels on the front or side of a book.

## **VIRGINIA’S STANDARDS OF ACCREDITATION**

“Higher student achievement is the goal of the Virginia Board of Education’s efforts to improve public education. What matters most to the public are results and accountability. With these two priorities as its central focus, the Board has adopted comprehensive revisions to the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia.”

“The standards of accreditation place emphasis on raising achievement standards for students, increasing the requirements for graduation from high school, increasing instructional time, linking statewide accountability tests to Virginia’s nationally acclaimed Standards of Learning, and establishing a school report card for parents and the school community.”

## **SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES**

The mission of our school health services program is to promote health and wellness for our students and their families, our staff and our community. Our goals are to:

- Provide students with first aid and emergency care for illness and injury;
- Provide nursing care to students with health needs;
- Ensure access or referral to primary health care services and community resources;
- Prevent and control communicable disease and other health problems;
- Promote a safe and healthy school environment;
- Provide educational and counseling opportunities for promoting individual, family, and community health.

### **Vision and Hearing Screening:**

Vision and hearing screenings shall be conducted for students in grades kindergarten, 3, 7, and 10 during the months of September, October, and November. Students in these grade levels who enroll after their school’s screening date shall receive screenings within 60 administrative days of enrollment. The purpose of the screenings is to identify and refer children with potential vision or hearing problems to a healthcare provider. Early intervention is critical in promoting health and academic success. Parents shall receive written notification if abnormal findings are detected during the screening process. Parents should contact their child’s school nurse if they wish for their child to opt-out of the screening. The school nurse can provide parents with the appropriate opt-out form.

### **Scoliosis Educational Information:**

Parent educational information on scoliosis shall be provided to parents of students in grades 5 through 10 within 60 business days after the opening of school each year. Scoliosis is a curving of the spine or backbone from side to side which cannot be corrected by simply learning to stand up straight. The curve may or may not be noticed by others. Early detection is important to ensure that the curve does not progress.

### **Health Conditions and Health Care Plans:**

Parents are encouraged to communicate with the school nurse if their child has a health condition such as diabetes, seizures, asthma, heart condition, bleeding disorder, anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction), sickle cell disease, or any other potentially life threatening condition. The school nurse shall assist in developing an appropriate health care plan specifically for your child. The health care plan provides guidelines for care of child’s health needs during the school day and in an emergency. It is expected that parents keep the school nurse informed of any changes in their child’s health status. Parents must supply medications and any equipment required to administer medications or provide special medical care at school.

### **Illness:**

To protect all children from communicable disease, we request that parents keep their children at home for fever 100 degrees or higher, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained skin rash, difficulty breathing, persistent cough, or red draining eye. Readmission to school for some diseases or conditions may require a statement from the physician affirming a child has been appropriately treated and/or is not contagious.

### **Sick or Injured Children:**

Students who become ill or are injured at school or on a school bus shall be granted permission to leave class and report to the clinic. The student's parent or guardian will be contacted should the nurse feel it is warranted. Space is limited in the school clinic; therefore, parents are requested to make arrangements to pick up sick or injured children immediately. Except for unusual circumstances, students will be returned to class within 30 minutes of resting in the clinic.

### **Pediculosis (Head Lice):**

Each year we have a few cases of head lice detected within our student population. To help prevent this problem, parents should instruct their children not to share personal items such as hats, scarves, coats, combs, brushes, hair accessories, and towels. Parents are encouraged to examine their children periodically for signs of head lice: intense itching of the scalp, tickling feeling of something moving in the hair, presence of small grayish-brown insects on the scalp, or tiny white oval shaped eggs (nits) which stick firmly to the hair shaft. If parents suspect their child has head lice, keep child at home and contact the school nurse who can provide detailed information on treatment.

### **Health Insurance:**

Children who do not have health insurance may qualify for health care coverage under the new Affordable Care Act. For more information visit the [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov) website or call 1-800 318-2596. Information and assistance may also be provided by contacting the Prince George County Department of Social Services at 733-2650 or the school nurse.

### **Medication Policy:**

1. Medication will be administered to students by qualified school personnel. Qualified school personnel shall be defined as nurses currently licensed in the State of Virginia and school employees (designated by the principal) who receive medication administration training by a registered professional nurse.
2. Before any medication may be administered to any student during school hours, written authorization shall be required as follows, with the exception of No. 3 below.
  - ❖ All medication (with the exception of acetaminophen, ibuprofen and naproxen) shall require written authorization of student's licensed prescriber (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) and parent or guardian.
  - ❖ Acetaminophen, ibuprofen and naproxen shall require only written authorization of student's parent or guardian, unless any of the following situations exist, at which time licensed prescriber's authorization is required:
    - student requires medication for more than three consecutive school days;
    - dosage exceeds recommended amount for age and/or weight;
    - medication is contraindicated according to student's health condition and/or other medication being taken;
    - personnel administering medication, at his/her discretion, determines that the medication should not be administered.
3. Auto-injectable epinephrine (called "stock epinephrine") shall be provided in each school, to be administered by a school nurse or employee of the school board who is authorized and trained in the administration of epinephrine to any student believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction on school premises, during the academic day.
  - ❖ Stock epinephrine does not extend to activities off school grounds (including transportation to and from school, field trips, etc.) or outside of the academic day (sporting events, extra-curricular activities, etc.). Stock epinephrine is intended for use on school premises and shall not be carried offsite.
  - ❖ It is expected that parents of students with known life threatening allergies and/or anaphylaxis provide the school with written instructions from the students' health care provider for handling anaphylaxis and all necessary medications for implementing the student specific order on an annual basis.
  - ❖ Stock epinephrine is not intended to replace student specific orders or parent provided individual medications.
4. All medication to be administered at school, with the exception of No. 3 above, requires written medication authorization be renewed annually each school year
5. "Medication" shall be defined as all medications including over-the-counter nonprescription medications, vitamins, herbal products, dietary supplements, and those prescribed by a physician.
6. Parent or guardian must bring medication into school. All medication brought to school must be delivered to the office or clinic immediately. Medication cannot be transported on buses or by students.
7. With the exception of insulin, asthma medication and/or auto-injectable epinephrine, (as discussed below in No. 15) the possession, self-administration, sharing, borrowing, distributing, manufacturing or selling of any medication is prohibited for students.
8. Prescription medication must be in the originally labeled prescription bottle that clearly indicates name of student, name of medication, dosage and hour to be given, and name of prescriber. Over-the-counter medication must be in the original, unopened container, labeled with student's name.

9. Medication shall not be received or accepted by school personnel without the accompanying written medication authorization of parent or guardian and/or licensed prescriber, as according to No. 2 above.
10. It is recommended that the first dose of a new medication be given at home.
11. Any changes in an original medication authorization require a new written authorization and corresponding change in the prescription label.
12. Antibiotics prescribed 3 times a day will not be given at school. These can be administered at home before school, after school and at bed time. Where antibiotics are prescribed 4 times a day, one dose will be given at lunch time.
13. Medication that is to be given in the morning should be administered at home prior to arrival to school, if at all possible.
14. Parent or guardian may give medication to their child during the school day if they so desire. Parent or guardian should check in at the school office first when coming into the school for this purpose.
15. Students with a diagnosis of diabetes, asthma and/or anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction) may possess and self-administer insulin, inhaled asthma medications and/or auto-injectable epinephrine during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, and while on the bus or other school property provided the following conditions are met: The student must have written consent from a parent; written notice from a licensed prescriber that identifies the name, dosage and frequency of medication and circumstances which warrant such medication to be self-administered; physician confirmation that student demonstrates ability to safely and effectively self-administer medication; and an individualized health care plan including emergency procedures for any life-threatening conditions. The permission to possess and self-administer inhaled asthma medications and/or auto-injectable epinephrine shall be effective for one year, defined as 365 calendar days, and must be renewed annually. Permission granted to a student to possess and self-administer insulin must be renewed annually at the beginning of each school year. Parent or guardian will be notified by a school official before any limitations or restrictions are imposed upon a student's possession and self-administration of insulin, inhaled asthma medications and/or auto-injectable epinephrine.
16. Parent or guardian is responsible for supplying medications and any equipment required to administer medications or provide special medical care, such as, but not limited to lancets, needles, and syringes; glucometer; testing strips; supplemental snacks; and nebulizer tubing and mouthpiece.
17. Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet or secured area, not accessible to students.
18. Expired medication will not be administered to students. Parent or guardian is responsible to replace expired medication immediately. Expired medication that has not been picked up by parent or guardian within 2 (two) weeks of notification will be discarded.
19. Discontinued medication that has not been picked up by parent or guardian within 2 (two) weeks will be discarded.
20. Left over medication that has not been picked up by parent or guardian at the end of the school year will be discarded.
21. School personnel will dispose of medication according to the U. S. Food and Drug Administration guidelines for drug disposal.

Copies of health care plans and medication authorization forms can be obtained from the school nurse or downloaded from the Prince George County School webpage: [www.pgs.k12.va.us](http://www.pgs.k12.va.us).

### **Guidelines for the Safe Transport of Students**

In order to promote the safe transport of students, the following guidelines are established as recommendations for situations in which students should NOT board the bus for dismissal.

1. Blood sugar reading above 300 **with** symptoms or ketones
2. Blood sugar reading 400 and above **without** symptoms or ketones
3. Blood sugar reading below 70 that has not been corrected
4. Same day injury causing problems with mobility or balance
5. Wheezing or difficulty breathing
6. Chest pain, tightness, or pressure
7. Sudden onset severe headache, weakness, slurred speech, and/or dizziness
8. Bleeding that cannot be controlled
9. Change in usual level of consciousness
10. Seizure with no known history
11. Moderate to severe pain of sudden or acute onset

12. Vomiting that occurs within 30 minutes of dismissal time at the secondary school level
13. Vomiting that occurs within 1 hour of dismissal time at the elementary school level
14. Appears to be in distress
15. Vital signs unstable
16. Temperature 100 or above
17. Student remains drowsy or disoriented following a seizure
18. Any head injury that occurs within 30 minutes of dismissal time, regardless of symptoms
19. Signs of suspected concussion following a head injury
20. Clothing soiled with feces or wet body fluids
21. Evidence of pediculosis (head lice)
22. Any situation deemed by the school nurse to be potentially life threatening, unsafe, or inappropriate for transport by bus
23. The following occurrences within 1 hour of dismissal time:
  - a. Tonic-clonic (convulsive type) seizure
  - b. Any bee sting, regardless of allergy history
  - c. Ingestion of a known food allergen

### **Scoliosis:**

People of all ages can have scoliosis. The following focuses on children and adolescents.

#### **What is Scoliosis?**

The normal spine naturally curves outward in the chest area and forward in the waist area when looking at a person from the side. Scoliosis is a curving of the spine or backbone from side to side which cannot be corrected by simply learning to stand up straight. Scoliosis may cause the back to curve like an “S” or a “C.” The curve may or may not be noticed by others.

#### **Who gets Scoliosis?**

Most scoliosis is found in perfectly healthy children. Approximately 3 to 5 of every 1000 children develop spinal curves considered significant enough to require treatment. The most common type is idiopathic scoliosis of unknown cause and occurs after the age of 10. Girls have a higher incidence than boys of developing this type of scoliosis. Because scoliosis can run in families, it is recommended that a child who has a parent or sibling with scoliosis have regular checkups by the family doctor. Early detection is important to ensure that the curve does not progress. If allowed to progress, severe cases can result in chronic severe back pain, deformity, and difficulty in breathing.

#### **How is Scoliosis identified?**

Oftentimes the first indication of scoliosis is that clothes do not fit properly. The hemline of a dress or the length of pant legs may appear uneven. One of the easiest ways to detect scoliosis is by using the forward bending test. The test involves bending over, with straight knees, arms hanging loosely and fingertips reaching toward the floor. If a hump is noticed in the rib area or lumbar region (near the waist), it is advised that the child be evaluated by a family physician, pediatrician, or orthopedist. Parents should begin to watch for the following warning signs of scoliosis when their child is about 8 years of age and continue until the spine has fully matured:

- Uneven shoulders or one shoulder higher than the other
- Prominent shoulder blade
- Uneven waist
- One hip higher or more prominent than the other
- Leaning to one side

#### **How is Scoliosis diagnosed?**

Only a physician can accurately diagnose scoliosis. The physician will gather data such as family history of scoliosis, age of child when curve was noticed, location and severity of the curve, and possibility of any associated birth defects, trauma, or other disorders. Physical examination may include evaluation of the back, chest, pelvis, legs, feet, and skin. The physician may request x-ray examination particularly for individuals with significant spinal curves, unusual back pain, or signs of neurological involvement. Based on x-ray report, the curve of the spine is measured to determine angle of the curve or degrees of severity.

#### **How is Scoliosis treated?**

The physician will determine appropriate treatment based on the child's age, the amount of growth still expected, and the degree and pattern of the curve. Someone with a mild curve might only require regular check-ups to ensure that the curve is not getting worse. Other recommendations may include wearing a brace or surgery.

**Where can I obtain more information about Scoliosis?**

- National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) [www.niams.nih.gov](http://www.niams.nih.gov)
- American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons [www.aaos.org](http://www.aaos.org)
- National Scoliosis Foundation [www.scoliosis-assoc.org](http://www.scoliosis-assoc.org)
- Scoliosis Association, Inc. [www.scoliosis.org](http://www.scoliosis.org)