



**Clarke County
School District**
Better Together



Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning
Centers
for Elementary School Students
PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

Through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, the Clarke County School District provides after school enrichment opportunities for students in elementary and middle school. Our programs focus on academic areas as well as the arts, recreation, and life skills. To find out more about what your child’s school offers at this time, please visit the Clarke County School District web page.

I have received the 21st CCLC Parent Handbook.

Date

Parent/ Guardian’s Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian’s Signature

Student’s Name (Print)

Student’s Signature

It is the policy of the Clarke County School District not to discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, disability or any other legally protected status in its educational programs, activities or employment practices. Para información en español, llame al 706-546-7721 ext. 20728.

***Programming for the 21-22 school year may be virtual, in-person, or a combination of both due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Activities and program times may be modified. Check the schedule of the school your child attends.**

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21st Century Community Learning Centers Fostering Future Success Program (FFSP) PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

This handbook offers information about 21st Century Community Learning Centers for parents, families, and students.

What is the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program?

Purpose, Goals and Outcomes of the 21st CCLC Program

Purpose: The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. After-school and out-of-school programs provide a safe out-of-school environment for academics, particularly for reading, math, and enrichment.

Goals: These are the goals that we have for our students, families, and programs in the elementary schools:

- Students meet/exceed performance levels in math and reading, while reducing achievement gaps between student groups
- Students demonstrate improved social and behavioral skills
- Parents/ guardians become better informed and more actively involved in their children's efforts to succeed academically and behaviorally.

Outcomes: These are the expected outcomes that we have for our students, families, and programs in the elementary schools:

- Children participate in a variety of organized learning activities in safe well-supervised facilities during out-of-school time
- As behavioral expectations and positive, healthy behaviors are reinforced by the 21st Century staff and peers, negative behaviors diminish
- Parents learn how to support their children's education at school and at the Boys & Girls Clubs through parent-selected family engagement sessions

Registration and Enrollment

Students and parents can obtain application/registration information as well as application/registration forms from the front desk of your child's elementary school or from the front desk of both locations of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Athens. All students must have a completed 21st CCLC registration form with a parent or guardian signature.

Location	Site Information
The Club at H.T. Edwards	440-4 Dearing Ext. Athens, GA 30606 706-357-5368 Site Coordinator: Cherene Williams
Joel E. Smilow Boys and Girls Club	750 Fourth Street Athens, GA 30601 706-546-5913 Site Coordinator: Dedra Evans

How is the 21st CCLC Program Different from the Regular School Day Activities?

21st CCLC is offered after the regular school day. The enrichment activities offered in 21st CCLC programming are real-world based activities that require students to apply the skills they have learned during the school day. Oftentimes enrichment activities use academic skills from multiple subject areas. Enrichment activities also broaden students' experiences by including the arts, dance, recreation, life skills, and cultural activities.

Communication with Regular Day Teachers

Ongoing communication through written communication, email, phone calls and conversations between the 21st CCLC teachers and coordinators and the regular day teachers of 21st CCLC students will ensure that the after school activities are reinforcing and enhancing the students' day time academic performance, behavior, attendance, etc. Periodic progress reports will be requested from the day time teacher(s) of 21st CCLC students to check on progress and achievement. Likewise, periodic questionnaires will be sent to regular day teachers and shared with 21st CCLC teachers. 21st CCLC teachers will also report to regular day teachers if students are struggling with any aspects of after school programming and to individualize instruction for students who need more focused academic or enrichment instruction to meet needs or fill gaps.

Program Duration

Each Boys and Girls Club site will have their own calendars for programming. They are available in hard copy at the front desk of the site. They may also be available on the CCSD web

page. Generally, programming will operate from September 2021 - May 2022. For specific dates, times, and any alterations in schedules due to events (such as holidays, parent teacher conferences, etc.) please refer to your site's programming calendar or contact your site's coordinator. Times of programming are Monday-Friday 3:00-6:00 pm.

Attendance Requirements

Students are expected to attend the 21st CCLC program daily. Regular attendance is considered to be 4 or more days per week. If a student is unable to attend at least 4 days per week, that student is at risk of losing eligibility in the program.

Schedules

Schedules will be created for each individual student. Parents can obtain a copy of the student's daily schedule by contacting the site's 21st CCLC coordinator.

School Holidays, Early Release Days, Inclement Weather

- **School Holidays**- 21st CCLC will generally not operate on school holidays. Sites may have program opportunities during the week of spring break and potentially other school holidays. Please check with the Boys and Girls Club of Athens for these schedules.
- **Early Release Days**- 21st CCLC at these sites will not operate on early release days.
- **Inclement Weather**- 21st CCLC programming will follow the Clarke County School District's guidance in operating after school programs if inclement weather occurs. If school is dismissed early or cancelled, all 21st CCLC programs will be cancelled as well. Should inclement weather arrive after the regular day dismissal and a situation arises that warrants early dismissal from 21st CCLC programming, families will be notified by phone of the program's plan to abbreviate the day.

Eligible Students

The goal of the 21st CCLC program is to serve up to 125 students in afterschool academic and enrichment opportunities. Students in 21st CCLC are encouraged, referred and registered by teachers, counselors and additional school personnel. If your student has not been invited to participate in 21st CCLC and you desire more information, please contact your child's elementary school or the site coordinator at the Boys and Girls Club.

Student Selection and Recruitment

Prior to the start of the 21st CCLC activities each year, site coordinators will compile a list of students eligible for afterschool services according to 21st CCLC eligibility criteria. Students targeted for the 21st CCLC program will be high-risk students in grades 1-5 who struggle with reading and/or mathematics in their regular-day program as measured by Milestones and/or benchmark assessments. Students with academic, behavioral, or social-adjustment issues may also be referred by their teachers or principals. A rubric of high need indicators will be used to

ensure that students with the highest academic, behavioral, and social needs are served first. The selection rubric includes state and local assessment data, as well as subgroup data and teacher/staff/parent recommendations. Students will be given points based on assessments and high need subgroups (e.g., special education, migrant, ELL, homeless, and other subgroups according to district data). A formal teacher/staff/parent recommendation form will be made available through counselors and family engagement offices to help with the recruitment of high-need students. Private school students will also be recruited to participate in the program.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

21st CCLC, as a part of the LEA Clarke County School District, will follow the same policy set forth by the CCSD BOE (found below) with regard to reporting of suspected child abuse. If staff members have questions, contact your site coordinator. Staff **should immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to site coordinators.**

In order to provide for the protection of children whose health and welfare is adversely affected and threatened by those responsible for their care and protection, the Superintendent or his or her designee shall serve as the Board of Education's representative on the Athens-Clarke County Abuse Protocol Committee.

The Clarke County Board of Education, in accordance with Georgia law, requires that all school employees and volunteers having reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen has been abused report such incidents. In accordance with the procedures outlined in Administrative Regulation JGI-R.

Reports of suspected **child abuse** shall be made in compliance with Georgia law OCGA 19-7-5 and the Athens-Clarke County **Child Abuse** Protocol.

Confidentiality of Student Information

21st CCLC will follow CCSD's policy (Student Records included).

Complaint Procedure

If a parent has a complaint, he/she should speak to the site coordinator. If the site coordinator does not resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction, then the Parent may speak to the 21st CCLC Program Manager. In the event a satisfactory resolution is not reached with the Program Manager, the parent may speak with the Director of Academic Support, Special Projects, & Title I.

Fee Structure

There are no fees to parents or students associated with 21st CCLC programming.

Code of Conduct

Students are expected to meet the behavioral expectations of the Boys and Girls Club. The Boys and Girls Club has rules and expectations for conduct and behavior. These same rules apply to students participating in the 21st CCLC program. Misbehavior on the bus may result in a discipline referral as well. Students that are not successful in meeting the behavioral expectations of 21st CCLC programming will go through the following process to ensure that they receive the services they need.

The following is the procedure for students that are not meeting our behavioral expectations.

1. Incident I – Parent is notified by phone and documentation of call is made and kept on file with 21st CCLC.
2. Incident II – Parent is called and a plan for improving the behavior is discussed. The plan is implemented.
3. Incident III – The 21st CCLC Coordinator provides support with behavioral strategies.
4. Incident IV – Student will be dismissed from 21st CCLC.

Student Leadership, Development Opportunities, & Social Skills

All 21st CCLC programs in Clarke County offer opportunities for students to grow as leaders. All 21st CCLC programs offer a variety of service learning opportunities, volunteer and school improvement/service organizations and activities, as well as opportunities to develop leadership skills. Students have opportunities in 21st CCLC programming to enhance their communication and social skills by meeting new people, experiencing new activities, and having opportunities to try new things in a safe environment.

Encouraging Positive Behavior In Students

1. Interact with students
2. Praise students
3. Teach them morals
4. Don't always blow bad situations out of proportion
5. Encourage and develop leadership skills
6. Implement service learning activities

Consequences for Poor Choices

Students will be made aware of behavioral and procedural expectations while participating in 21st CCLC programming. If students make poor choices that compromise the safety or security of themselves or other 21st CCLC participants, that student may be asked to leave the program. These incidents will be handled on a case-by-case basis, but all students are expected to follow site rules and policies at all times.

Appropriate Internet and Computer Usage

The 21st CCLC program, operating as a part of the Clarke County School District, will adhere to the CCSD district policy on internet and computer usage by students while in the program. The appropriate usage policy is summarized below.

Student Internet Use

Student access to information via school district computers and computer systems has the potential to support the school district's curricular objectives: to promote innovation, collaboration, and communication; and to prepare students for their roles in a technical society. Such access to information, including access to the Internet, is, therefore, to be encouraged within guidelines that protect students and the rights of others.

Students

Student use of school owned equipment or access to electronic information resources on school owned equipment shall be limited as follows:

- Students shall not access material that is obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors or that the school district otherwise declares to be inappropriate.
- Students shall not engage in "hacking" or any other attempt to compromise the security of any computer system including the use of proxy servers and other filter avoidance measures.
- Students shall not engage in illegal activities.
- Students shall not publish any material that is derogatory or offensive to others.
- Students shall not inappropriately use hardware or software to disrupt instruction.
- Students shall use electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications during instructional time only for specifically approved instructional purposes under the direct supervision of a Clarke County staff member.

Technology protection measures shall be installed in the district's computer system(s) to limit student and adult access to content on the Internet. Such measures shall protect against access by any system user to visual depictions of obscenity or child pornography and additionally shall protect against access by minors to visual depictions that are harmful to minors. Additionally, technology protection measures may be configured to protect against other material judged under this policy and supporting regulations to be inappropriate.

The school system shall have in operation procedures or guidelines concerning online activities of students to be developed by the Superintendent and/or his designee. Such guidelines or procedures shall be designed to provide for students age-appropriate instruction regarding safe and appropriate online behavior, including interacting with others on social networking sites and in chat rooms; behaviors that may constitute cyber bullying; and how to respond when subjected to cyber bullying.

Dress Code

Students are expected to follow the same dress code rules and regulations that are in place during the regular school day. If a student participates in a 21st CCLC class/activity which requires that a specific type of dress be worn, (example: dance, recreation, intramural sports, etc.) the instructor of that course/activity will notify participants in writing of the necessary dress requirements. Students will not be required to purchase any additional clothing or special clothing for participation in 21st CCLC activities. A summary of the district guidelines for appropriate general dress is below.

A. Philosophy.

The Clarke County Board of Education recognizes that students desire to dress in a manner which suits their personal preferences and tastes or those of their parents. However, the Board also recognizes that the manner in which students dress can have a disruptive effect on the educational environment in a school, adversely affect student learning, and present risks which threaten the health, safety, security, and well-being of students and faculty alike. Therefore, the Board establishes this student dress code policy as a means of providing an environment that enables all students to maximize their educational opportunities.

B. Applicability.

1. This policy is applicable to all students of the Clarke County School District. It is applicable during the school day, during any before-school and after-school activities, while on any school bus or other transportation provided by the District, during any school-sponsored activity or event wherever located, and during any other activity sponsored by or associated with any school or the school District.
2. Consistent and uniform enforcement of this policy is essential and is required of all schools and all District and school officials.

C. General Criteria.

1. Students are expected to be clean, neat, and appropriately dressed at all times. Students (and parents) are expected to use good judgment in choice of dress and ensure that the student's attire conforms to the guidelines of this policy. A student's dress and appearance shall always adhere to commonly accepted standards of decency, decorum, and good taste.
2. The student's clothing and appearance must not be a distraction, immodest, inflammatory, offensive, or pose a health, safety, or security hazard. Prohibited clothing and articles of clothing include, but are not limited to, those which contain any word, phrase, message, symbol, photo, reference, or anything else which:

- a. is offensive, lewd, profane or sexually suggestive;
 - b. promotes or advertises use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, or any illegal substance;
 - c. promotes or advertises participation in criminal street gang activity as defined by O.C.G.A. 16-15-4;
 - d. advocates or indicates discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, religion, handicap, disability, or sexual orientation; or,
 - e. promotes or advertises illegal conduct or any violation of Board Policy or the Code of Student Conduct.
3. Any article of clothing or manner of dress or appearance which causes or has the potential to cause a disruption in a school, or which is considered to be a health, safety, or security hazard is prohibited, whether specifically mentioned in this policy or not.
 4. The Superintendent, Principals, and Site Administrators have the authority to interpret this dress code and make a case-by-case determination of the appropriateness of dress and appearance in cases which may or may not be covered by the standards contained in this policy. In addition, the Superintendent may make District, school-wide, or site-specific exceptions to these standards when appropriate for medical reasons and for such events as “spirit days” and “hat days.” However, when such exceptions are made, they shall conform to the general criteria outlined in paragraphs **C1**, **C2**, and **C3**, above.
 5. Schools, at their discretion, and with the approval of the Superintendent and the Board, may adopt more stringent dress codes, to include a requirement for school uniforms.

D. Dress Code Violations.

1. Enforcement of this dress code shall begin on the first day of each school year.
2. During the first five days of each school year, students in violation of the dress code shall be advised of the violation and asked to make the correction.
3. After the first five days of school, students in violation of the dress code will be required to make corrections on the spot. Students who fail to do so will be removed from the classroom immediately and referred to the school administration for appropriate disciplinary action.

Students unable to correct the violation because they require a change of clothing shall be referred immediately to the school administration, which shall contact the parents to bring in a

change of clothing. If parents fail to do so, the student will be placed in in-school-suspension until the violation is corrected.

4. Students who consistently violate the dress code policy will be subject to progressive disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.

Nutritional Snacks and Availability of Drinking Water & Proper Nutrition

All students participating in the 21st CCLC program will be served a healthy snack. This snack will be provided by the CCSD school nutrition department, thus meeting the criteria for a healthy and balanced snack. All students in the building will have access to water fountains and be provided various breaks for water and restroom throughout the afternoon. If your student has any food allergies or food related issues that need to be addressed while participating in 21st CCLC programming, please notify your site coordinator to ensure that your child's needs are properly met.

Recreation and Physical Activity

Each 21st CCLC site provides programming for students to address physical fitness and wellness. Those activities are open to all 21st CCLC students and participation is encouraged. Please see your site's monthly calendar or contact your site's coordinator for additional information on recreation and physical activities.

Dental Health, Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Prevention & Resistance Behaviors

Programming will be available as a supplement to the school's 21st CCLC programs that promote and educate students on dental health, tobacco, drug, and alcohol prevention as well as resistance behaviors.

Medicine, Student Illness, and Injuries

All student registration forms should be filled out completely by parents in order to provide contact information should a student become ill or sustain an injury while participating in 21st CCLC programming. If a student becomes ill or sustains an injury during 21st CCLC, parents or other identified guardians will be notified immediately. If students require medication during 21st CCLC programming, parents should communicate that to the site coordinator. A staff member who has been trained in dispensing medications as well as all procedures and protocols surrounding dispensing medication will be on site at all times to handle student's needs. No medications will be dispensed without proper paperwork on file with the site.

Transportation

The 21st CCLC program will provide transportation from the elementary school to the Boys and Girls Club, as well as transportation for planned field trips. Please contact your site coordinator with specific questions about transportation for your student. Parents are required to pick their

child(ren) up from the Boys & Girls Club they attend. Each site will provide parents and students with specific guidelines regarding bus conduct and behavior, as well as locations for bus dismissal, bus numbers, etc.

Field Trip Information and Requirements

Any student wishing to participate in a 21st CCLC field trip must be a regularly participating member of 21st CCLC programming. All students wishing to take part in a 21st CCLC field trip must have parental consent forms signed and returned by appropriate deadlines, indicating transportation needs, and parent contact information for that particular day. No food will be served or purchased for students with 21st CCLC funds on field trips. Depending on the length of their field trip, students may have to provide their own meal or their own money to purchase food while on the trip. There will be no out of state or overnight field trips associated with 21st CCLC.

Check Out Procedures

Each site will provide parents and students with site specific check out procedures. All parents/guardians checking students out from programs will be required to officially check the student out with a 21st CCLC staff member.

To Whom Students are Released and Parent Visitation

Students will only be released to adults who are listed as parents/guardians on the student's 21st CCLC registration form. Any changes in a student's pick-up must be in writing to the site coordinator and parents should expect a phone call confirmation. Parents may visit 21st CCLC programs with prior approval and arrangements with 21st CCLC coordinators, and after officially checking in at the site's front desk. Since the safety of our students is a primary concern of 21st CCLC programs, unscheduled visits by parents requesting to tour or see 21st CCLC programming will not be honored. Please make prior arrangements with the site coordinator if a visit is requested.

Bus Transportation Procedures, Bus Safety Action & Procedures

All students who receive bus transportation services from CCSO 21st CCLC afterschool programs are expected to follow the same bus procedures (behavior, discipline, etc.) as they do during the regular school day. Students are also to follow the same safety guidelines as the regular day. Bus safety procedures for after school transportation are the same as during the school day.

Emergency Procedures

- **Practice Drills-** All 21st CCLC program students will participate in fire, severe weather, and emergency drills during the after school program. The same protocols and procedures apply as they do during the regular day.
- **Maintaining Emergency Contact Information-** Student information and parent/guardian contact information is collected for all CCSD students. Parents/guardians will be asked to provide additional emergency contact information (to ensure up-to-date information) regarding persons to contact in case of an emergency. If a parent/guardian needs to contact the site in the event of an outside emergency, staff will be available to answer parent phone calls during program operating hours.
- **Inclement Weather Procedures-** CCSD 21st CCLC programs will operate under the same inclement weather procedures as regular day school. If inclement weather causes a shortened school day, all 21st CCLC activities that day will be cancelled. If inclement weather arrives during 21st CCLC (such as a tornado or other severe weather) students will be kept indoors and moved to interior portions of the building if necessary. All students will participate in various severe weather drills through 21st CCLC programming to ensure that all students know how to respond during the event of a weather emergency.

Student Progress

Goals and Objectives- Through participating in the 21st CCLC elementary school program, it is intended that all students will meet or exceed state performance levels, while eliminating the achievement gaps between student groups. We also intend to increase positive parent/school involvement and student engagement in learning.

- 50% of regularly participating students will meet standards or demonstrate growth on report card grades in English Language Arts and Math
 - The percentage of regularly participating students who report positive perceptions will increase 5% from pre to post assessment
 - 65% of regularly students will meet or show growth in teacher assessments of approaches to learning and social behaviors as reflected on report cards
 - 40% of parents who attend events or receive information from an event will report that they have learned additional CCSD curriculum based strategies about how to support their children academically and/or socially/emotionally.
 - 65% of parents of regularly participating students will attend a family engagement event
-
- **Homework and Tutoring-** Opportunities for homework help and academic tutoring are available as part of each site's 21st CCLC program. Please contact your site coordinator for additional information regarding days and times of your site's tutoring sessions or see your site's calendar. Homework help is offered every day.

- **Enrichment Opportunities-** All sites have enrichment opportunities that are a complement to the academic day. Enrichment activities range from academic enrichment to arts, recreation, and service learning. All 21st CCLC students (registered students) may participate in any/all enrichment activities offered through the 21st CCLC program at no charge.
- **Communication on Student Progress with Regular School Day Teacher-** 21st CCLC teachers and site coordinators will communicate on an ongoing basis with the regular day teachers to discuss progress, strengths, weaknesses and needs of individual students. Regular day teachers will be given surveys at various times throughout the year to check student progress on discipline, homework completion, attendance, and academic achievement in the classroom.
- **Communication with Parents and Students on Student Progress-** Instructors of 21st CCLC classes will communicate verbally as well as through written progress reports on the progress and achievement of students attending their sessions. Parents may always contact the 21st CCLC coordinator to ask for additional information on their child's progress or participation.
- **Parent/Guardian Requests to Obtain Grades and Standardized Test Results from Students' School-** Since all sites and programs for the CCSD 21st CCLC programs are operated by the schools and school employees, parents may inquire about their child's standardized test scores by contacting their child's teacher. This information is **NOT** available from 21st CCLC coordinators or staff; however, by contacting the main office of your child's school, parents can obtain that information. Parents may also access student standardized test information through Parent Portal. Please contact your child's school to learn more about Parent Portal.
- **How the Program will be Evaluated-** The 21st CCLC program will be evaluated internally by surveying students, teachers, administrators, parents and stakeholders throughout the year. An outside evaluator, not affiliated with CCSD, will also perform an evaluation of the program to determine the gains our students make as a result of being involved in our programs.
- **Accommodations for Students with IEPs, 504 Plans, and Culturally Diverse Needs** – The 21st CCLC program will not discriminate against your child and all services provided should be consistent with your child's individualized educational program (IEP) or specialized services under Section 504. 21st CCLC services are in addition to, not a substitute for, the instruction and services required under IDEA and Section 504.

Student Discipline Records and Progress- Student discipline records and progress will be communicated to parents via phone calls from 21st CCLC staff, as well as written reports

indicating any issues or problems dealing with discipline. Progress, as well as updates of positive discipline, will be communicated to parents/guardians by 21st CCLC staff.

Attendance

- **Transition from Regular Day School to 21st CCLC Program-** Each School will transition from the regular school day into 21st CCLC programming by assisting registered students to board the Clarke County School District bus for the specific Boys and Girls Club site. Once they arrive at the Boys and Girls Club, attendance will be taken and your child will receive a snack. For more details about your site's specific transition, please contact your Boys and Girls Club site coordinator.
- **Maintaining Enrollment** - Students are expected to regularly participate in the 21st CCLC program. If a student exhibits chronic absences, parents/guardians will be contacted to establish a plan for good attendance. Students who regularly attend less than 4 days per week are at risk of losing his/her eligibility in the program.
- **Benefits of Regular Attendance-** Students who regularly attend the 21st CCLC program have shown gains in both math and reading on the Milestones. Students with regular attendance in the 21st CCLC program will also be eligible to take part in educational field trips through 21st CCLC.

Parent Engagement

- **Opportunities for Parents or Parents with Students-** Each site will offer opportunities throughout the school year for parents to view student work and progress through the 21st CCLC program. In addition, each site will be offering programming for parents/family members of regularly participating students in the 21st CCLC program. To find out more about specific programming offered at your child's Boys and Girls Club site, please contact your site coordinator.
- **Communication in Various Languages-** All written communications to parents/guardians regarding 21st CCLC programming will be in both English and Spanish when possible. Additional provisions and translations will be made based on need and a case-by-case basis regarding languages other than English and Spanish. 21st CCLC also provides interpreters at meetings with parents (when needed) as well as at family events.
- **Opportunities for Parent Feedback and Input-** Parents will be surveyed at various times throughout the year to gain feedback about programming and gain input about any changes, additions, etc. that parents would like to see in the 21st CCLC program. Although there are scheduled and planned surveys to administer to parents during the year, feedback is always welcome. Please contact your site coordinator with any feedback (positive or negative) regarding your student's experience in the 21st CCLC program.

- **Resources for Parents** - 21st CCLC sites can provide parents with a list of outside agencies and community resources to meet a variety of needs that families may have. The Clarke County School District Title I Family Engagement Specialist in your child's school can also provide information and contacts regarding resources and services from outside agencies.

Process for reporting fraud, waste and abuse

Reporting Suspicion of Fraudulent Activities

Purpose:

To promote and ensure the reporting of suspicion of fraudulent activity, the Clarke County Board of Education provides employees, clients, vendors, and individuals with confidential channels to report suspicious activities. The Clarke County School System shall not tolerate fraud of any kind, and has an established system for the reporting of suspicious activities.

Definitions:

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

Statement of Administrative Regulations:

Any and all reports of suspicious activity and/or suspected fraud shall be investigated. The Clarke County School System shall not tolerate fraud of any kind. The Clarke County Board of Education thoroughly and expeditiously investigates any reported cases of suspected fraud to determine if disciplinary, financial recovery, and/or criminal action should be taken.

Confidentiality:

All reports of suspected fraud shall be handled under the strictest confidentiality. Only those administrators directly involved in the investigation should be given any information. Informants may remain anonymous but should be encouraged to cooperate with the investigators and should provide as much detail and evidence of the alleged fraudulent act as possible.

Procedures and Responsibilities:

*Anyone suspecting fraud, whether it pertains to Federal, State, or Local programs, should report their concerns to the **Director of Academic Support & Special Programs/Title I: Erin Buckley**. Any employee with the Clarke County Board of Education (temporary staff, full-time staff, and contractors) who receives a report of suspected fraudulent activity **MUST** report this information within the next business day. Employees have the responsibility to report suspected fraud. All reports can be made in confidence.*

Student Records

Clarke County School District student records shall be collected, created, maintained, and disclosed in a manner that supports the following objectives:

- To safeguard student and family privacy rights and the rights of students and family members to control information about themselves
- To guard student safety by safeguarding their identities and by strictly limiting what is revealed about them outside the district
- To comply with state and federal law and with other applicable school district policies
- To promote effective teaching and learning
- To support efficient school district administration

Parents, as well as students who have reached the age of 18, shall be effectively informed about their rights with regard to student records. They shall be given generous opportunity to participate in the control of information about their children and about themselves, including:

- Opportunities to consent to the collection of information
- Opportunities to consent to information disclosure
- Opportunities to inspect the records of their children
- Opportunities to challenge information in records that they believe is inaccurate or misleading

Definitions

The term *record* shall mean information collected or maintained by the school district in tangible form, regardless of form, including but not limited to handwriting, print, computer and other electronic media, video and audio tape, film, microfilm, and microfiche.

Education record shall refer to personally identifiable student information protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Personally identifiable student information shall mean any information about a student or the student's family that makes their identity recognizable. It shall include:

- Information attached to a name, address, telephone number, student likeness, family identifier, Social Security number, or permanent school district identification number
- Information that can be matched with other information so as to establish the student's identity
- Information about small groups when the identification of group members is commonly known

Parent shall mean a natural or adoptive parent, a legal guardian, an individual acting as a parent in the absence of the parent or guardian, or an *eligible student* as defined by FERPA.

Disclosure shall include permitting access to, revealing, releasing, transferring, disseminating, or otherwise communicating all or any part of a record orally, in writing, or by electronic or any other means to any person or entity.

Information Collection

Unnecessary collection of student information represents a potential threat to privacy, it is potentially intrusive, and it wastes school district resources. Thus, the collection and maintenance of information about students and their families shall be limited to data that are necessary to support a specific school district objective.

No education record shall be created or maintained that does not advance at least one of the following purposes:

- Efficient school and/or school district operations and management
- Instruction
- Student welfare
- Research and evaluation
- Accountability
- Required state and/or federal reporting

Written parental consent shall be obtained before students are required to participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and that reveals information concerning the following:

- Political affiliation
- Mental and psychological problems
- Sexual behavior and attitudes
- Illegal or self-incriminating behavior
- Critical assessments of other individuals or family members
- Privileged information given to lawyers, physicians, or ministers
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs
- Income other than what is required by law for program eligibility

For any such survey, analysis, or evaluation not funded by the U.S. Department of Education, parents shall be notified of the district's intent to administer the instrument and of their rights to review the instrument and to opt their children out of participation.

Information Disclosure in General

Education records shall be safeguarded, and their disclosure, both within the district and to persons and entities outside the district, shall be strictly controlled. State and federal law shall be regarded as minimum standards for handling such information.

Except as otherwise permitted by policy or law and except as detailed in this policy, education records shall not be disclosed without prior written parental consent to any person or entity, including school district staff members. Education records shall not be disclosed except by school officials acting in accordance with their responsibilities.

Disclosure to School Officials

Education records may be disclosed to school officials with a legitimate educational interest. The term *school official* shall be limited to the following:

- A Clarke County School District administrator, supervisor, teacher, or support staff person
- A Clarke County School District Board of Education member
- A person or entity with whom the district has contracted, including an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist
- A parent, community volunteer, or student serving inside the school or in a district office, either serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting school district staff. A principal or director must approve all such parents, community volunteers, and students for access to education records prior to granting access. In no case, for example, shall an office helper be given access and retrospectively be claimed to have been acting as a school official.

A school official may be found to have a legitimate educational interest in a student record only if the information is both:

- Necessary for performing tasks within the official's area of responsibility. School officials acting outside the responsibilities of their position do not have a legitimate educational interest, even though their aim may be to provide a service or benefit to a student. For example, a teacher does not have a legitimate educational interest in information about a neighbor's child, even though the intent is to help the neighbor and child.
- Consistent with the purposes for which the data are collected, created, and/or maintained.

In determining whether a legitimate educational interest exists, school officials shall exercise professional discretion in weighing the specific need to know and the sensitivity of the

information. In no case shall this policy be interpreted so narrowly as to prohibit school officials from exercising their responsibilities.

Disclosure to Other School Districts

Education records may be disclosed routinely without parental consent to school districts in which the student has enrolled or intends to enroll, upon the written request of the receiving school district. In all such cases the Clarke County School District shall retain the original copy of the record. Information that routinely may be disclosed includes:

- Enrollment information, including schools and grades attended and dates of enrollment
- Attendance
- Academic performance
- Standardized test scores
- Disciplinary records with respect to a suspension or expulsion, as mandated by the ESSA.
- Records of students with disabilities that are necessary for providing special education or related services

Education records shall not be disclosed to other school districts without parental consent if the records are judged to be sensitive, unless the disclosure is required by policy or law. Information that shall be considered sensitive includes discipline transaction details, counselors' and social workers' records of service intervention, and protocols of psychological testing.

Disclosure of Directory Information

The following types of student information shall be considered to be *directory information* as governed by FERPA:

- Student name, address, and telephone number
- School and grade level
- Date and place of birth
- Participation in official school clubs and sports
- Weight and height of students who are members of athletic teams
- Dates of attendance in the school district
- Awards and honors received

Public notice shall be given of the types of information considered to be directory information. Parents shall be notified of their rights to prohibit the disclosure of any or all types of directory information. Procedures shall be instituted whereby parents can exercise such rights and whereby all such information is protected from unauthorized disclosure.

Disclosure of Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education

Parents and high school students shall be notified that student names, addresses, and telephone numbers routinely can be released to military recruiters and institutions of higher education without consent unless a parent or high school student exercises their right to prohibit such disclosure. In the event that a parent elects to prohibit the disclosure of names, addresses, and/or telephone numbers under the provisions of *Directory Information*, above, then that election shall apply also to the disclosure of that information to military recruiters and institutions of higher education. In the event that a parent elects to allow the disclosure of names, addresses, and telephone numbers under the provisions of *Directory Information*, above, then the parent and/or high school student nonetheless may prohibit the disclosure of such information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education or both.

Disclosure of Student Images

The term *student image* shall include any photograph, picture, portrait, likeness, videotape, or sound recording on which one or more students are personally identifiable.

Disclosure of Information to Researchers outside the School District

Education records may be disclosed without parental consent to persons and entities outside the school district to conduct studies that concern the development or administration of tests, the administration of student aid programs, or the improvement of instruction. Disclosures of education records to researchers for all other purposes shall require parental consent.

Researchers' requests for education records shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, with consideration being given to the following factors:

- Anticipated benefits of the research weighed against costs of gathering the data
- Purpose, methodology, and duration of the research
- Sensitivity of the requested data and the potential for invading student privacy
- Reputation of the researcher
- Availability of school district staff to monitor the research activities

Prior to disclosing education records to a researcher, a written agreement shall be executed in which the researcher provides assurance that the information will be appropriately safeguarded. The agreement shall specify at a minimum:

- Researcher's consent to maintain the privacy of the data
- Arrangements whereby the data are either returned or destroyed after completion of the study
- Researcher's consent to unannounced, unscheduled inspections of the data site

- Either researcher's consent not to re-release the data to a third party or the precise terms and conditions of re-release
- Special provisions for handling the data
- Researcher's assurance that all persons handling personally identifiable student information will be instructed on, and agree to, the terms of the researcher's agreement with the school district

Disclosure to Other Education Agencies and Service Agencies

Education records may be disclosed to other education agencies and to service agencies in order to develop coordinated data systems that aid the school district and such agencies in serving children and their families. Such disclosure shall be made only in accordance with a written memorandum of understanding or legal agreement between the school district and the agency. The memorandum shall be executed by the Superintendent and minimally shall prescribe:

- Types of information to be exchanged
- Purposes for which the information may be used
- Mechanisms for exchange
- Provisions for handling and safeguarding the information
- Conditions of re-release, if any
- Procedures for obtaining informed parental consent, if necessary

Disclosure of Information Protected under the National School Lunch Act

Information collected under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) shall be protected as required by the act. Specific safeguards shall include the following:

- No education records collected under NSLA shall be disclosed, either publicly or to school officials unless disclosure has been approved by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. Such approval shall be required despite the fact that parental permission has been obtained.
- Students' names and eligibility status for free and reduced-price meals may be disclosed without parental consent to school officials when they are directly connected with and have a need to know such status in order to administer NSLA or programs authorized by NSLA.
- Aggregate data on eligibility status shall be used in lieu of personally identifiable information whenever possible.

Other Disclosure of Education Records

Education records may be disclosed without parental consent to the following persons and entities:

- The U.S. Secretary of Education, authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, and state and designated local education authorities for audit and evaluation of educational programs
- Institutions to which students apply to receive financial aid to determine eligibility, amount of aid, conditions of aid award, and enforcement of award terms and conditions
- Accrediting organizations to carry out their functions
- Appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency

Parental Consent to Disclose Education Records

All parental consent to disclose education records, including student images, shall be gathered on approved school district forms. Non-specific, encompassing, or long-term parental consent shall be avoided. All such forms shall include at a minimum:

- The individuals or entities to whom the information will be disclosed
- The specific information to be disclosed
- The purpose for disclosure
- The date on which consent expires
- Printed name of the signer
- The signer's authorization to sign the form (parent, legal guardian, eligible student, etc.)
- Signature
- Date

Parental Inspection of Records

Parents exercising their FERPA rights to inspect the education records of their children shall be required to make their request to the information custodian. Information custodians shall insure that parents are permitted to make such inspection within 45 days of the parent's request and shall insure that parents are provided an explanation or interpretation of the information. Requests shall be on an approved school district form, which shall provide for documenting the date and other details of the actual inspection and which shall be filed in the student's permanent folder.

Parental Challenges to Record Contents

Parents petitioning for an amendment of a student record shall, upon request, be granted a hearing with the student's school principal and at least one other school representative

selected by the principal. In the event that the petitioner is unsuccessful at the school hearing, the petitioner shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. Appeals shall be required in writing within ten school days of the school hearing. In the event that the petitioner is unsuccessful at appeal, the petitioner shall have the right to attach to the contested record a statement disputing the contents. Records documenting the request to amend, subsequent appeals, if any, and actions taken shall be filed in the student's permanent folder.

Notices to Parents

Annual notice shall be given to parents that shall include:

- Parental rights to inspect and review their child's education records
- Parental rights to seek amendment of records that they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of their child's rights
- Parental rights to prohibit disclosure of education records
- All instances in which the school district intends routinely to disclose education records without parental consent
- Parental rights to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning school district failure to comply with FERPA.