

**Upson-Lee High School  
Student Handbook  
2023-2024**



Thomaston, GA 30286  
706-647-8171

**School Website:** <http://ulhs.upson.k12.ga.us>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/UpsonLeeHighSchool/>

**This agenda belongs to:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student No. \_\_\_\_\_

# THOMASTON-UPSON COUNTY SCHOOLS

## Upton-Lee High School

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**UPSON-LEE HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

The Thomaston-Upson County School System provides equal opportunity to students and staff and does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. The school system has designated Dr. Jeff Kelly, Title IX Coordinator, and Sports Equity Coordinator. Dr. Derico can be contacted at the Thomaston-Upson School System, 205 Civic Center Drive, Thomaston, GA-Phone (706)647-9621.

**UPSON-LEE HIGH SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Excellence in Education... Every Individual, Every Day.

- All students can learn with appropriate support
- All students should be held to high standards
- Effective teaching makes a difference in student success
- Parent engagement and involvement greatly contribute to student success
- Meaningful communication among all stakeholders greatly improves student success
- All students should take ownership of their own learning
- School practices, policies, and experiences should promote respect for individual differences

**School Administration**

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# I. ATTENDANCE MATRIX:

	<b>All Absences</b> Excused and Unexcused	<b>5</b> Unexcused Absences	<b>7</b> Unexcused Absences	<b>10+</b> Unexcused Absences
<b>Unexcused Absences</b>	Parents will receive an automated (school reach message) or personal call when the student is absent from school.	Parents will receive a truancy letter detailing unexcused absences and next steps. The letter must be signed by parent, If letter is not signed and returned, an additional letter will be sent via first class mail  The student will be referred to the school attendance support team.	School counselors will contact parents to discuss student truancy and next steps.	The student may be referred to the district social worker at 10 or more unexcused absences. The district social worker may refer students and parents to the Upson County Attendance Task Force*.  Students with 15 or more unexcused absences may be retained by a retention committee.
	<b>All</b> Unexcused Tardies/ Unexcused Early Dismissals			<b>10</b> Unexcused Tardies/ Unexcused Early Dismissals
<b>Unexcused Tardies/ Unexcused Early Dismissals</b>	Parents will receive an automated (school reach message) or personal call when the student is tardy to school.			The school attendance support team will meet to discuss the educational impact of tardies. Administration will be notified of excessive tardies. Students with 15 or more unexcused tardies/unexcused early dismissals are not eligible for perfect attendance.

\* Students accruing 10 or More unexcused absences may be referred to the Attendance Task Force for further action. The attendance task force is a committee with members from the following stakeholders: Upson County DFCS, Upson County Department of Juvenile Justice, Upson Collaborative, Upson Mental Health, TUCS schools, Upson County Sheriff's Office, and Thomaston Police Department. The attendance task force will provide recommendations for improved attendance. If recommendations are not met by both the parent and student, both parties will be referred to local law enforcement.

The Thomaston-Upson School District operates under the authority of the State Board of Education Rules and laws set forth in the state of Georgia. Punctual and regular attendance is important and expected. Regular attendance in school is the joint responsibility of the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s). The responsibility of our district and schools is to provide each student with quality instruction and inform parents if their child is absent from school. Upon enrollment and registration each school year, parents and guardians will be given notice of State Compulsory Attendance Law pursuant to O.C.G.A. Code 20-2-690.1. The guidelines also note the location of the system website of the local Board of Education school attendance policy JB. The school will make reasonable efforts to ensure receipt and comprehension of the policy by requesting signatures from parents/guardians that this notice was received and understood. Regular attendance is essential if students are to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided for them.

After an absence, a parental note or doctor's excuse is required on the date of return stating the dates and reasons for the absence, and the signature of the parent or of the doctor who treated the student. If a parental note or doctor's excuse is not

provided within five days of absence/tardy/early dismissal, the student's absence will be marked as an unexcused absence in Infinite Campus. Handwritten parent notes for sickness should state the type of sickness and not just the words "was sick". If students are frequently absent and tardy, the principal may ask the parent to provide more information, such as medical documentation, about the absences, tardies, and early check-outs. The school will excuse only five (5) days per semester with a written parent note. After this point, a doctor's note will be required for excused absences.

A student, who has been absent more than five (5) consecutive days for illness, must present a physician's statement for the absences to be excused.

Children may be excused from school who are (1) personally ill and whose attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others; (2) in whose immediate family there is serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school; (3) who are by court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre induction physical examinations for service; (4) on special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith; (5) prevented from attendance when due to conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety; (6) registering to vote or voting in a public election - not to exceed one day; (7) serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly; (8) two days of college visitation for juniors and seniors; (9) whose parent is in the military service and who has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, to be granted up to 5 excused absences per school year to visit with a parent prior to deployment or during such leave. Per board policy: (10) School days missed as a result of out-of-school suspension shall not be counted as unexcused for the purpose of determining student truancy, but shall be counted as unexcused for other purposes.

Students will be allowed to make up missed work from an absence. Work must be made-up within five (5) days, or by the next two available Saturday school days after returning to school. Students with unexcused absences must make up their missed work during Saturday school, unless there are circumstances that would cause an administrator to allow other opportunities to make up work.

Long term assignments such as term papers, projects, etc. will be due on the date established by the assigning teacher, unless approved by Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction.

Students will receive credit for makeup work and may make up all missed work including daily grades and tests. Absences due to out of school suspension shall be unexcused. Work missed due to a student's suspension may be made up at the first available Saturday school date after completion of disciplinary consequence.

#### **A. Absences:**

If a student misses school to attend a non-school function, the absence will be considered as unexcused unless he/she has received prior approval from the principal. Students participating in a contest/event will attend school at least half the day to participate. Exceptions can only be made by the principal/designee. **At the high school, a student will be considered absent for a whole day if the student misses over half of the instructional day.** Daily attempts will be made to contact parents/guardians of absent students by using the school's automated call system.

#### **B. Drop-offs/Pick-ups and leaving early:**

All morning drop-offs before school should take place in front of the school around the circle or in the parking lot adjacent to the 500 hall (in front of the tennis courts). Parents should drop students off and keep moving with the flow of traffic. Students are not allowed to sit in a vehicle before school. No drop-offs in the staff parking lot adjacent to the bus ramp. No drop-offs in the student parking areas. No drop-offs at the bus ramp. No drop-offs at the field house.

Pick-ups should take place in the parking lot adjacent to the 500 hall (in front of the tennis courts). No after school pick-ups allowed in front of the building before 3:25. No pick-ups in the staff parking lot adjacent to the bus ramp are allowed.

If you become ill during the school day, go to the nurse's office for assistance. No student may leave the school grounds during the school day without checking out through the attendance office and without the knowledge of both school officials and guardians, including leaving for/during lunch.

Students 16 years and older who drive to school may ask their parents/guardians to come to the attendance office to sign a student release form so that the student may be dismissed on the authority of a phone call to the guardian(s) in the event of an emergency. **The Student Release Forms are NOT sent home; parents must come to the attendance office at ULHS during the school day to complete the Student Release Form.** If you or other authorized persons are unable to be reached the student will not be released from school. An authorized person is defined as a primary household guardian(s) as identified in Infinite Campus. A student can be dismissed on the authority of a phone call from the guardian(s) in the event of an emergency a maximum of five times. If the student must leave during the school day, the student must present a note from home to the attendance office before 8:00 a.m. telling the time and reason the student must leave. This note must have



the daytime number for the guardian(s) to be reached and the number provided must be listed in Infinite Campus and associated with a primary household guardian(s) as identified in Infinite Campus. After the fifth EDM due to an emergency or parental request, the guardian will have to physically visit ULHS to have the student released early from ULHS for each EDM after the fifth release. The Student Release Form will be revoked after the fifth EDM due to guardian(s) request; the Student Release Form can be revoked at the discretion of the principal or his designee. (Medically documented EDM will not count toward the five EDM; the medical documentation must be provided to the attendance office within 24 hours of EDM.)

To limit classroom interruptions and to maximize your child's learning, we ask that you try to schedule early release times around the bell schedule. (See front) The attendance clerks are instructed not to call students from class after five minutes from the beginning or five minutes before it ends.

### **C. Tardy Procedures:**

- i. Students are tardy if they enter the front doors after 8:00 a.m.. If a student arrives at school after 8:00 a.m., he/she must check in at the attendance desk and the student will be given a tardy slip to class. A student arriving on a late bus will not be counted tardy. Proper documentation is required for a tardy to be considered as an excuse. Excused tardiness could include doctor appointments, court, unexpected car trouble. In the case of bad weather or a traffic issue near the school, no student will be considered tardy.
- ii. Any student who is tardy to school or must leave school prior to regular dismissal time MUST check in and/or out with the attendance office. Otherwise, the student will be considered truant, skipping, and/or cut/leave school.
- iii. Students have FIVE (5) minutes to change class. A tardy is defined as any student who is **not in the archway** of the classroom door when the last bell rings. This time is more than adequate so students should not be late to class. When the last tardy bell rings, all students should be inside the classroom. To be otherwise without prior approval of your teacher is to be tardy to class. See Matrix for consequences regarding tardiness.

### **D. Early Dismissal:**

Proper documentation is required for the early dismissal to be considered as excused. Excused early dismissals could include doctor appointment, funeral, court, etc. Leaving early the day before a holiday is not considered an excused early dismissal. A student is expected to be in school for a full day's session. To be counted present, a pupil must be in school a minimum of one-half the school day or remain at school until 11:30 am or two block periods.

### **E. Perfect Attendance:**

Perfect attendance certificates are given at the end of each school year to students who have been present each school day and not accumulated 10 or more unexcused tardies to school or unexcused early dismissals or a combination of both.

## **II. ATHLETICS:**

### **A. Information:**

Athletics is an important facet of a student's educational experience. Upson-Lee High School offers athletic programs for students. The Georgia High School Association governs high school athletics in Georgia. To participate in athletics, the GHSA requires that students be academically eligible.

Athletes at ULHS represent their school and community; therefore, athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which will bring a positive light on our school and community.

Policies for the Athletic Department are in the ULHS Athletic handbook.

Upson-Lee High School is in full compliance with the Gender Equity in Athletics Law. Any questions relating to Gender Equity in Athletics should be referred to the Athletic Director. The Gender Equity Policy is available in the Athletic Director's Office.

### **B. Student Conduct at ALL school sponsored activities:**

School rules apply to students at all school sponsored activities. Loitering will not be tolerated at ULHS sporting events. Book bags and coolers are not allowed at any event in the stadium. No pets are allowed at any school sponsored events with the exception of service pets. Law Enforcement will strictly enforce this policy. Failure to comply with this policy will mean that you will be escorted out of the stadium. Skateboards are not allowed to be brought into any TUBOE facility.

### III. SCHEDULING:

#### A. Graduation Requirements:

Our goal in the ULHS guidance department is to ensure that each student is scheduled into the courses needed for successful completion of their graduation requirements within four years. Priority will be given to academic requirements and remediation classes before electives.

#### B. Secondary School Credentials:

The High School Diploma – the document awarded to students certifying that they have satisfied attendance requirements, Carnegie unit requirements and the state assessment requirements, or the document awarded to student with disabilities assigned to a special education program who have met the state assessment requirements referenced in State Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-07. (Testing Programs – Student Assessment), or who have not completed all the requirements for a high school diploma but who have nevertheless completed their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

*There are four diplomas available to students with disabilities:*

DIPLOMA TYPE	WHO IS ELIGIBLE?	REQUIREMENTS
High School Diploma	All students	Awarded to students certifying that they have satisfied attendance requirements, unit requirements and the state assessment requirements
State-Defined Alternate Diploma	Students with significant cognitive disabilities	Awarded to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who were assessed using the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA 2.0) and meet other requirements of the State Board Rule
Special Education Diploma	All students with disabilities assigned to a special education program	Awarded to students with disabilities who have not met the requirements for the High School Diploma, or the State-Defined Alternate Diploma but have completed their IEP goals
High School Certificate	All students	Awarded to students who have not met the requirements of a diploma

Only the high school diploma is a full credential. The other available credentials (the special education diploma, the high school certificate, and the state defined alternate diploma) are not full credentials and allow a student with an IEP the right to return to school until such time as his or her eligibility for FAPE ends, which in GA is the 22nd birthday.

#### C. Schedule Changes:

Student schedules may be changed for the following reasons only:

- The student is scheduled for a class that he or she has already passed.
- The student is scheduled for a class without having passed the pre-requisite course.
- The student must have a change to meet specific program requirements.
- A student cannot request to be removed from Honors/AP courses after the first two weeks of the course(s). Any student who is performing below a 70 at the two weeks' mark may be removed from an Honors/AP course(s). If the parent and student elect not to be removed from an Honors/AP course (s), the student will remain in the course for the remainder of the semester and will not be removed for any reason, unless approved by the principal. A student electing to be dropped or removed from an Honors/AP course(s) due to academic performance or personal choice, will have all grades transferred over to the new course after the removal from the Honors/AP course(s).
- The student must complete a schedule change form, stating the problem and the requested change. This form must be filled out and turned in NO LATER THAN the end of the 2nd DAY of classes. Any schedule requests after the 2nd day, will require administrative approval.
- All necessary schedule changes will be accomplished within 6 school days after a school year begins. No other changes will be made other than the ones listed above.

#### D. Honors/AP Courses

Students who wish to enroll in Honors/AP courses must make their request to their school counselor prior to the start of the academic school year and spring semester.

#### IV. GRADING:

##### A. Grading System:

ULHS Grading Categories:

Daily Grades:	35%
Formative Grades:	35%
Summative Grades:	30%

ULHS firmly believes that communication between teachers and parents is a key component for student achievement. Parents may sign up for Parent Portal. This convenient home-to-school confidential web site allows parents to easily communicate with teachers via email. They can access information on grades, attendance, and discipline.

Grades should be recorded as follows:

Class work/quizzes:	posted 3 to 4 days after assigned
Test:	posted 4 to 5 days after assigned
Projects:	4 to 5 days after assigned

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each nine weeks. Progress reports will be sent midway between each nine weeks' grading period.

Parental contact will be made for students who are failing. Seniors who are in danger of not graduating due to failing grades will be notified by teachers and/or counselors as soon as the problem is evident. Attempts will be made to notify parents of these students by phone or mail and documented into Infinite Campus.

At the end of the semester, students will take a final exam in each course. Seniors who have not completed all requirements will be allowed to come back during the last week to redo and/or make-up any assignments needed to graduate.

All grades will be recorded as actual numerical averages on report cards and on permanent records, per law. Any grade 70 or above is considered passing.

The State Board of Education has designated certain courses as Milestone subjects. Students enrolled in these courses for credit toward graduation are required to take the state mandated Milestone exam. All students who are enrolled in a Milestone course, regardless of grade level, must be administered the Milestone to be eligible to receive credit for that course. Milestones will count as 20% toward the final grade. Dual Enrollment students and AP students (AP Language included) enrolled in a Milestone course will be required to take the Milestone exam.

The grading scale for Upson-Lee High School is:

90-100----	A	80-89----	B	70-79----	C	69 & below----	F
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Auditing classes is not permitted during regular school term.

##### B. Exam Exemptions:

Students will be able to exempt end of semester final exams if the following criteria are met:

1. **Seniors:** Seniors may exempt all classes if they meet the following criteria.

**Option A:** *(both unexcused and excused absences/tardies will be used to determine eligibility)*

1. A 90-final average or higher in the course they wish to exempt.
2. No more than 3 absences in the course they wish to exempt.
3. No more than 12 cumulative class period absences for the semester.
4. No more than 5 tardies in the course they wish to exempt.
5. No more than 10 cumulative tardies for all classes.
6. Any student who receives OSS is not eligible for exam exemptions.

**Option B:** *(both unexcused and excused absences/tardies will be used to determine eligibility)*

1. An 85-89 final average or higher in the course they wish to exempt.
2. No more than 3 absences in the course they wish to exempt.
3. No more than 7 cumulative class period absences for the semester.
4. No more than 4 tardies in the course they wish to exempt.
5. No more than 8 cumulative tardies for all classes.
6. Any student who receives OSS is not eligible for exam exemptions.

2. **Students in Grades 9-11\*:** A student may exempt if they meet the following criteria:

*(both unexcused and excused absences/tardies will be used to determine eligibility)*

1. A 90-final average or higher in the course they wish to exempt.
2. No more than 3 absences in the course they wish to exempt.
3. No more than 12 cumulative class period absences for the semester.
4. No more than 5 tardies in the course they wish to exempt.
5. No more than 10 cumulative tardies for all classes.
6. Any student who receives OSS is not eligible for exam exemptions.

\*9th Grade students may exempt only 1 exam

\*10th Grade students may exempt only 2 exams

\*11th Grade students may exempt only 3 exams

*Students who fail to meet the exemption policy, but they have had extenuating medical circumstances during the school year may have their case reviewed by the administrative team on a case-by-case basis.*

### **C. Knights of Academic Distinction:**

Students at each grade level who are meeting the requirements to be on Valedictorian and Salutatorian track (see selection of Valedictorian and Salutatorian) and who achieve a numerical average of 95.0 or above (as calculated by the school/student information system in December) will be considered Knights of Academic Distinction. Grades are not rounded. All high school courses shall be included in determining students' numeric averages. These students will be recognized at a special event.

### **D. Honor Roll/Goal Card:**

Students who make All A's at the semester mark (Dec. and May) will be placed on the honor roll. These students will receive a goal card that will entitle them to free admission to ULHS home athletic activities; excluding play-offs and sell out games.

Principal's All A list will be recognized at the Honors Program. To earn this award a student must have all A's for the final average in each course taken for high school credit.

Current Year All A: Given each year to students in grades 9-12 at Honors Program; the semester one final grades and N3 grades for the current school year are examined for all A's **in each course**.

Current Year A/B: Given each year to students in grades 9-12 at Honors Program; the semester one final grades and N3 grades for the current school year are examined for all A's or B's in each course.

### **E. Promotion Requirements:**

To be promoted or to graduate, a student must earn the following:

<b>Enrollment Year (first time enrolled in high school)</b>	<b># of Credits needed to advance to 10<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b># of Credits needed to advance to 11<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b># of Credits needed to advance to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b># of Credits needed to graduate</b>
2018 - 2019 or beyond	6 and entering 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of high school	12 and entering 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of high school	18 and entering 4 <sup>th</sup> year of high school	24 and have completed at least 4 years of high school

### **F. Graduation:**

Transfer students from other school systems must follow all graduation requirements applicable to their enrollment in the Thomaston-Upson School System.

During the Fall semester of a student's senior year (12<sup>th</sup> grade) all students and parents are encouraged to establish communication with the guidance counselor for reviewing the student's graduation plan and determining exactly which requirements must be met within the remaining year to graduate on schedule. Parents and students will receive a senior review explaining the remaining requirements needed for graduation. Students will sign a statement verifying they understand that failure to meet these requirements by graduation makes them ineligible to participate in the graduation ceremonies.

*No senior will be presented his/her diploma before the actual scheduled graduation ceremony.*

*Senior students who are assigned to the Alternative School on the day of graduation may not participate in the graduation exercises. However, upon successful completion of all graduation requirements the student will be awarded their high school diploma. Also, students assigned to the Alternative School are not allowed to participate or attend any school sponsored events or activities.*

## **G. Seniors:**

### **1. Honor Seniors:**

- A. All seniors who achieve a numerical average of 93.0 or above (as calculated by school/student Information System) will be considered honor graduates. Valedictorian, Salutatorian, followed by Knights of Academic Distinction in alphabetical order, and honor graduates will be seated on the front rows at graduation. When determining an honor graduate, grades are not rounded.
- B. Honor students will be selected at the end of Fall semester (August - December) and must be enrolled and attending full time during the Spring semester.
- C. All courses shall be included in determining students' numeric averages. Grades from college courses or technical school courses will be included through the end of fall semester of the student's senior year.

### **2. Principal's A Average Graduates:**

- A. Seniors with a 90 to 92.99 numeric average at the end of the Fall semester (August-December) of the senior year.

### **3. Selection of Valedictorian and Salutatorian**

- A. Overall numeric grade point averages (as calculated by school/student information system) will be determined for all students. All courses shall be included in determining students' numeric averages.
- B. The Valedictorian shall be the honor graduate with the highest overall numeric average who has also completed four (4) Honors, Dual Enrollment, and/or Advanced Placement courses in each of the core content areas (E/LA, Math, Science, Social Studies). Three of the above-mentioned courses must be Advanced Placement (AP) and/or Dual Enrollment (DE) courses in at least three different core content areas. A student is not eligible to be Valedictorian or Salutatorian if the student has taken Honors level courses only.  
The Salutatorian shall be the honor graduate with the second highest overall numeric average who has completed the same courses described for eligibility of the Valedictorian. A student must be enrolled in the junior year before the 2<sup>nd</sup> 9 weeks begins and the entire senior year to be considered for either honor. The Valedictorian and Salutatorian shall be asked to speak at graduation ceremonies. Any exception to this procedure shall be approved by the Board of Education.

### **4. Criteria for STAR Student:**

The student with the highest SAT combined scores submitted for competition. Scores must be from one sitting on one test date. Acceptable test dates will be those from the student's junior year and the October and November test dates of the senior year. In addition to having the highest SAT score, the STAR student must be in the top ten percent of the graduating class.

### **5. Scholarship Information:**

Scholarship information is provided to seniors in a monthly newsletter. Scholarship information is available from your counselor or on the ULHS website.

The Hope Scholarship Program provides tuition assistance to GA state colleges and universities for students who achieve a certain minimum GPA throughout high school in core courses. Benefits apply to private colleges and technical schools. This rule is set by State Legislatures.

## **V. Testing Information:**

1. **Milestones** - The courses requiring Milestones are-American Literature, U.S. History, Algebra 1, Biology.. These tests are required by the State of Georgia and represent 20% of a student's final grade.. Dual Enrollment students and AP students (AP Language included) enrolled in a Milestone course will be required to take the Milestone exam.
2. **PSAT** – The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) is offered to ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students. Students in the eleventh grade must take the PSAT in order to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program even if they have taken it in a previous grade. All students must sign up in guidance by an announced deadline.
3. **SAT** – The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and its achievement batteries will be administered at Upson-Lee High School at least twice a year. Students must register through Educational Testing Service. Information website: [www.sat.org](http://www.sat.org)
4. **Advanced Placement Exams** - are rigorous, multiple-component tests that are administered at high schools each May. High school students can earn college credit, placement, or both for qualifying AP Exam scores.

Each AP Exam has a corresponding AP course and provides a standardized measure of what students have learned in the AP classroom. If a student wishes to take an AP exam, there is a fee for each AP exam.

5. **ACT** – The American College Test (ACT) is administered at Upson-Lee High School twice a year. Information website: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)
6. **ASVAB** – Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery is taken by students who register for a career skills inventory. Although facilitated by Military personnel students have no obligation to enroll in a military program

The following is the State policy and our school rules regarding **cell phones during testing**: The Georgia Department of Education has issued a policy regarding cell phone use on Georgia Standardized Assessments. Students are not permitted to use or bring into the testing environment any electronic device that could allow students access to information (e.g. cell phone, PDA, electronic recording or playback device, etc.). Such items brought into the testing environment must be collected by the examiner prior to testing and returned only after students have turned in all testing materials. If a student does not turn in the electronic device prior to testing, the Department of Education may invalidate the student's test.

To follow the state mandate and to eliminate the possibility of such an incident occurring, ULHS has established the following rules regarding cell phones and other related electronic devices during all state-mandated assessments as well as the SAT, ACT, and AP Exams.

No cell phones or other electronic devices are allowed in the testing rooms. Failure to comply with this rule will result in having the electronic device confiscated and turned over to an administrator to be picked up by a parent. ULHS will not be liable for any devices taken up by an administrator because of the student's failure to comply with this testing rule.

## VI. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. Gifted Program:

The Thomaston-Upson County School recognizes the need to provide gifted education services to eligible students who have the potential for exceptional achievement. A student may be referred for consideration for gifted education services (the Gifted Program) by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. Contact a school administrator, counselor or Gifted Program teacher for additional information.

### B. Elections:

Students will be nominated by their peers (class officer, Miss/Mr. Upson-Lee High, Senior favorites, student council, and homecoming court). After all nominations have been submitted, an election will be held to decide on officers or winners. In order to be nominated and to remain in office, students must meet the criteria below:

1. Students must have an overall 80 average or higher for high school grades and be on track for graduation.
2. Students must have no serious disciplinary record for the current school year (spring election) or previous school year (fall elections). (No suspensions and no more than three days ISS)
3. Students must have no more than 10 unexcused absences or 40 unexcused class periods for a school year.
4. Students must have previously participated in club or school related activities that promote school spirit or community involvement.
5. Students may be removed from an elected/selected position at the discretion of the principal and sponsor.
6. Students who wish to be elected officers must attend class on ULHS campus at least part time.
7. Description of Elected Positions:
  - a. **Best All Around Senior** – This is a senior who is voted by the entire faculty.
  - b. **Miss/Mr. Upson-Lee High / Senior Favorites** – Senior students who meet election/selection qualifications. (Voted by senior class)
  - c. **ULHS Homecoming Court** – Girls from their respective grade levels at ULHS who meet election/selection qualifications. The queen will be a qualifying senior.
  - d. **Student Council**
    - i. **Purpose:** to develop attitudes of, and practice in, good citizenship; promote harmonious relations throughout the school; provide orderly direction of school activities; and promote the general welfare of the school.
    - ii. **Membership:** consists of Student Council Officers and all Class Officers – elected by the student body. Membership also consists of Class Representatives determined through application evaluation. All members are required to pay \$20.00 dues.
    - iii. **Qualifications/Requirements** – In addition to meeting election requirements listed above, the following must be met:

1. The President of Student Council must be a next year Senior only and may not be the president of any other club or class. The President of the Student Council must have at least one (1) year of experience as a Student Council member. The Vice-President must be a Junior or Senior with at least one (1) year experience on the Student Council. Other officers may be any grade level.
2. All officers and representatives must be willing to attend meetings and do their assigned duties. Junior class officers' assigned duties specifically include Prom committee, working with the junior class sponsor as needed to coordinate prom. If more than two (2) meetings/activities are missed without prior notification and approval of sponsors, the student may be removed from his/her position. Other duties range from organizing work groups for homecoming, planning senior week, participating or contributing to organized events.
3. In order to earn a Student Council Cord for graduation, Senior Student Council members must have at least two (2) years of active participation in Student Council.
4. If a person has been removed from Student Council duties, he/she may not seek election again.
5. Student Council President and Senior Class President must enroll in the Youth Apprenticeship work program spending one or two class periods with sponsors or be able to spend at least three (3) afternoons a week with sponsor to carry out duties.

### C. Clubs:

Clubs have one monthly meeting. All clubs and organizations must be connected to an academic, career technical or extracurricular activity. A list of clubs is available in your homeroom. Join a club. Get involved with your friends and teachers through extracurricular activities. Besides being fun, clubs give students an opportunity to develop leadership skills that will be important in life. Club and organization officers are selected or elected per the bylaws or organizational regulations of each club. In addition, the following requirements for being a club officer outline what is expected of any effective leader:

1. Any club officer must be a club member in good standing with that club's by-laws or organizational regulations and must REGULARLY attend the club meetings.
2. Any student may hold the presidency or highest office of only ONE club each year, but may hold a lower office in another club.
3. No student may hold a club office if she or he has been suspended from school the previous school year or prior to elections being held. If after a one-year probation time a student has shown marked improvement in behavior, the student will be able to run for and hold a club office. (excluding student council)
  - o Club offices should not be popularity contests; they ALL require work and commitment if a club is to function properly.
  - o Students who wish to join academic clubs such as the Beta Club and the National Honor Society must meet the academic requirements of that club. Numerical averages will not be rounded. (An 84.9 is not equal to 85 and will not be rounded up to an 85.) Any student who is placed at Upson-Lee Alternative School will automatically be removed from membership in the National Honor Society and the BETA Club.

#### Club Listings:

- **Academic Team:** The Academic Team is designed to give students the opportunity to match their wits to students in other schools. (*Sponsor: Josh Herrin*)
- **Art Club:** Inspiring students to create artwork outside the classroom, encourages school spirit and supports classroom activities. (*Sponsor: Ms. Alex Garrard*)
- **Beta Club:** Service based organization that participates in activities within the school and community that promotes character and leadership. Students must obtain a numeric GPA of 85.0 or higher, averages will not be rounded. (*Sponsor: Mr. Will Smith*)
- **Chess Club:** Students are provided with an opportunity for fun, recreational chess. Students will develop self-confidence, mental focus, logic, discipline & analytical abilities. (*Sponsor: Mr. Alan Hendrick*)
- **DECA:** A co-curricular organization of Marketing Education students. DECA activities and competitions reinforce the competencies taught in the Marketing classroom. (*Sponsor: Mr. Edward Peyton*)
- **Drama Club/International Thespian Club:** Drama Club plans and assists with the high school and community arts events. International Thespian Society serves as an honor society for students who excel in the dramatic arts. (*Sponsor: Mr. Jacob Sapp*)
- **Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA):** a student-run club which provides a safe place for students to meet, support each other, talk about issues related to gender identity and expression. (*Sponsor: TBD*)

- **FCCLA:** to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences education. Focusing on the multiple roles of family member, wage earner and community leader, members develop skills for life through: character development, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal communication, practical knowledge, and career preparation. (*Sponsor: Mrs. Shirley Cotney*)
- **Fellowship of Christian Athletes:** An interdenominational Christian sports ministry to see the world impacted for Jesus Christ through the influence of coaches and athletes. (*Sponsor: Mr. Bosworth*)
- **Future Business Leaders of America:** FBLA is an educational club for students enrolled in a business class preparing for a career in business and related fields. (*Sponsor: Mrs. Katherine Williams*)
- **Future Farmers of America:** FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. (*Sponsor: Mr. Josh Rabalais*)
- **Key Club:** International student-led organization providing its members with opportunities to perform service, build character and develop leadership through community service. (*Sponsor: Mrs. Kelly Riney*)
- **National Honor Society:** is an organization established to recognize outstanding high school students. More than just an honor roll, the NHS serves to recognize those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Students must obtain a numeric GPA of 90.0 or higher, averages will not be rounded. (*Sponsor: Mrs. Bethany Norris*)
- **Prom Council:** Juniors make up the Prom Council to plan and organize an unforgettable prom. (*Sponsor: Mrs. Judy VanHouten and Mrs. Alex Garrad*)
- **Skills USA:** Helps students become world-class workers and responsible American citizens. This organization is divided into three chapters: (*Sponsor: Mr. Charlie Canady, Mrs. Jennifer Chandler, Mr. Randy Holliday, Mr. Brent Wells, Mr. Nath Legg*)
- **Student Council:** Plans and coordinates all Homecoming Activities, service projects and coordinates school elections. (*Sponsor: Ms. Marci Gilbert and Mrs. Kim Waller*)
- **Tri-M National Music Honor Society:** Designed to recognize students for their academic and musical achievements, reward them for their accomplishments and service activities and to inspire other students to excel at music and leadership. Tri-M members represent ULHS in local, regional and state musical events. (*Sponsor: Mr. Jeremy Rooks*)
- **TSA - The Technology Student Association** enhances personal development, leadership, and career opportunities in STEM, whereby members apply and integrate these concepts through intracurricular activities, competitions, and related programs. (*Sponsor: Mr. Kyle Gooden*).

**D. Hall Passes:**

Students must have an approved hall pass and must enter the hall pass is EHall Pass program any time they are in the halls during class time. Students will be given three passes per class per nine weeks. Exception: If a student has a doctor's note on file with the school nurse stating the student has permission to go to the restroom as needed. Students are only allowed to go to the restroom on their hallway.

**E. Lockers:**

Lockers are provided for students to use. There is a \$10.00 per year maintenance fee, with no refunds. Lockers must be kept locked. When lockers are left open, two undesirable consequences occur: (1) items are stolen, and (2) locker doors are bent or otherwise vandalized.

All school lockers have built-in locks and cannot be opened without the correct combination. ALL combinations are changed each year.

Administrators may search students' lockers if they have reasonable suspicion to believe policies and rules of the Thomaston-Upson School System have been violated.

Remember that YOU must PAY for school materials assigned to you that get lost (books, uniforms, equipment).

All lockers must be cleaned out by the last day of school. ANY items left in lockers after the last student day become the property of Upson-Lee High School and will be disposed of in any way the school decides. If more than one person is found to be using a locker, the person who rented the locker will be responsible for any items found inside lockers.

**F. Lunchtime Procedures & Cafeteria Policy:**

We have a beautiful eating area and an outstanding menu for your enjoyment. You are requested to exhibit good manners in order that everyone can enjoy a lunch break and good food. Follow these guidelines:

1. Get in line at the end in an orderly fashion; no running, no breaking, and no saving places.
2. Keep voices low.
3. Use only your own lunch I.D. number.
4. If you bring your lunch, you may eat in the Commons Area.



5. Clean off the table you have used before you leave.
6. No hallways are open during lunch. You must go to your locker BEFORE lunch or AFTER lunch. You may only go to the Commons Area, adjacent restrooms, Media Center, and Courtyard during lunch.
7. **Students are not allowed to go to the parking lot or leave campus or the building.**
8. Food from restaurants in its original container is not allowed. (i.e. McDonalds, Hardees, Zaxby's, Big Chic)

**CAFETERIA POLICY:**

The ULHS cafeteria serves delicious, nutritious, homemade meals each day. Breakfast is served from 7:15 a.m. to 7:53 a.m. and lunch during the three designated lunch periods. Students must be in line for breakfast by 7:45. Students arriving after 7:53 am will be provided a grab and go breakfast (exempting late bus passes). There are three lunch lines that will give the students a chance to choose the foods they prefer. This system is called "Offer-Vs-Serve." There is a choice of two meats and a salad bar each day.

1. A-la-Carte items are available when the student obtains one reimbursable meal. Prices for those extra items will be posted. Examples are as follows
  - a. Extra serving of meat or entree, vegetable, fruit or bread.
  - b. Extra milk, ice cream, assorted desserts and cookies. Other items may be introduced during the year at request of students, teachers, or administrators.
2. Students may purchase another complete meal at the price of an adult meal.
3. Money will be collected before the student leaves the serving line. Collection is possible in the following ways
  - a. Before or during breakfast.
  - b. During lunch at a specific area.
4. The student's account will be credited before the time to eat lunch. The money "banked" in the account will be left in the account until the student is ready to eat a meal. If you are absent or choose not to eat, the total will remain in your "banked" account
5. Students must use their I.D number to eat breakfast, lunch, or to purchase an a-la carte item until their account is at a \$0.00 balance. Once a student's account reaches a \$0.00 balance, the student will be required to make a deposit into his/her account.
6. All students who plan to eat in the cafeteria MUST have an I.D. number for the current school year. Student ID numbers will stay the same every year.

**G. Personal Messages:**

Personal messages will be delivered to students only in case of emergency.

**H. Parking:**

Driving your car to school is a privilege, not a right. If you drive to school, park your car only in the designated student parking space and then immediately leave your vehicle. Do not cruise around or through the school grounds in the mornings or afternoons. Students should not loiter in the parking lot before or after school.

Parking spaces will be sold through a designated office. Students will be issued a parking permit when the student turns in a drug consent form properly completed and pays the \$40.00 parking fee. Students must display their parking permit by hanging it from their rear-view mirror. Students may park only in their designated parking space. Students who are in the process of obtaining a parking permit should park in front of the tennis courts until a permit has been issued. The student must complete the permit process within two school days.

Beginning on February 1st parking decals can be purchased for \$25.00.

Temporary parking permits are available for students who forget their permanent permit. Lost permits must be replaced within one week at a cost of \$5.00. Students who allow other students to use their parking permits will have their parking permits seized and be subject to suspensions.

Students violating parking rules by parking in ANY unauthorized area may have their parking privileges revoked.

Students displaying reckless driving behaviors in the school parking lot or on school grounds may have their parking privileges revoked. Students violating parking rules or demonstrating inappropriate behavior in the parking lot -may have their parking privileges revoked and/or be denied the privilege to purchase a parking permit for the 2023-2024 school year. Anyone illegally parking in a handicapped parking space is subject to a fine assessed by law enforcement. A student with 2 or more parking violations without a permit will not be allowed to purchase a parking permit once eligible for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Any parent, guardian or relative of a student who parks on the ULHS campus must check in at the front office to obtain approval from an administrator before entering a student's vehicle for any reason. If permission is not granted by an administrator, no person will be allowed to access the student's vehicle. Anyone making an unauthorized attempt to access a student's vehicle will be denied access and asked to leave the premises.

**Parking and/or Driving Violation: (with parking permit)**

- First Offense: Administrative warning
- Second Offense: Administrative warning and phone call
- Third Offense: Loss of parking permit for 20 school days
- Fourth Offense: Loss of parking permit for 40 school days
- Fifth Offense: Revoked

**Parking and/or Driving Violation: (without parking permit)**

- First Offense: Verbal warning and written warning
- Second Offense: Written Referral, Parents Notified by Administrator
- Third Offense: Written Referral, Consequences for Parents notified

**a. Super Senior Parking:**

Seniors who have all A's throughout their high school career, seniors who have perfect attendance throughout their high school careers, seniors who are presidents of school clubs or organizations and seniors who are captains of their athletic or academic teams will be issued tags for designated Super Senior parking. These students must adhere to our extra-curricular code of conduct.

Super seniors will be assigned parking space in the Super Senior parking area and must park in that space only. They must purchase a school parking permit with the Super Senior marking. The Super Senior tag must only be used by the student who received the Super Senior designation. This tag may not be transferred to anyone else. If the Super Senior does not abide by the above regulations, their Super Senior parking privilege may be revoked.

If a Super Senior is removed or resigns from his/her leadership position, he/she must relinquish their Super Senior tag and parking privilege.

**I. Dual Enrollment:**

Students planning to enroll in Dual Enrollment must have met the post secondary school's specified criteria..

Students must complete an online funding application at [gafutures.org](http://gafutures.org). Students are not allowed to enroll in non-traditional semesters such as mini-mesters. Students who choose to participate in this program are responsible for keeping up with ULHS information.

Students who are participating in the Dual Enrollment programs are responsible for meeting Georgia High School Association requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.

Students who drop or unenroll from dual enrollment course(s) without approval from their designated school counselor and principal will not be eligible for dual enrollment participation the next college semester. If the next scheduled college semester is summer, the student will not be eligible for dual enrollment participation during the Summer semester nor Fall semester at the college level. (This includes exclusion from participating in non-traditional academic semesters such as mini-mesters and half terms.) Dual enrollment letter grades will be entered into Infinite Campus as the following numerical grades: A=95, B=85, C=75, D=70, and F=65.

**J. School/Personal Property**

Students are expected to take care of all school property, not limited to textbooks, equipment, or facilities. Failure to take proper care of textbooks or not returning the books will result in fines being levied for book repair or replacement. Students who damage school property or equipment will be responsible for the repair of said property.

**a. LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and Found is located at the front office.

Students are directed not to bring expensive jewelry, or excessive cash

Students are cautioned about taking pocketbooks, jewelry, and other valuables to the gym during physical education class, athletic practices, or other events.

ULHS and its employees will not be responsible for such items nor guarantee their safety.

**K. Selective Service Registration:**

Upson-Lee High School male students who are within 30 days of becoming 18 years old must register with the Selective Service. The student may register online ([www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)) or through the Post Office. It's the law.

**L. Sex and AIDS Education:**

As a part of the Georgia Performance Standards both Sex Education and AIDS Education are taught through various courses at Upson-Lee High. If a parent does not wish for a child to receive instruction in Sex Education, AIDS Education, or both, the parent must write a letter to the principal requesting that the child not participate in any Sex Education instruction or AIDS Education instruction. No child will be academically penalized for not participating in this instruction if the parent has filed a written request with the principal.

**M. Voter Registration:**

Upson-Lee High School encourages all students not only to register but also to vote in all elections. If you are 17 ½ or older and would like to register to vote, contact your principal. Voter registration announcements will also be made periodically during the school year.

**N. Senior Fees:**

Each senior student is required to pay senior and graduation fees. Graduation fees will purchase the following items: Cap, gown, tassel, diploma and diploma cover. Diplomas will be held after graduation until graduation and senior fees are paid. Graduation fees will be paid directly to the company that distributes these items. Additional senior fees will also be required.

**O. Student Dress Code:**

Upson-Lee High School Students Dress Code begins before you walk in the main doors and includes the Courtyard. (Hats may be worn in the courtyard only.)

Students should be following the dress code before walking through the school doors. This will also include the courtyard. Students at Upson-Lee High School are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for school. Student dress should not have the effect of attracting the unreasonable attention of other students or otherwise cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school. The principal or other duly authorized school official shall determine whether any mode of dress results in such interference or disruption. All students shall attend school dressed in the following required attire. Violation of dress code may result in ISS or OSS.

**a. PANTS AND SLACKS:**

- Jeans/pants must be worn at the student's natural waist.
- Jean/pants must be of appropriate length and waist size to fit the student.
- Pants worn with holes or frays can be worn provided the top garment extends beyond the fingertips when arms are held loosely by their side. (*Anything above the fingertips need to be covered. Paper or tape can not be used to cover holes or exposed areas above fingertips.*)
- No coveralls can be worn.
- Leggings can be worn provided the student's bottom portion, both front and back, are covered with a top garment.

**b. SHORTS:**

- Shorts can be no shorter than six (6) inches above the knee cap. This includes athletic shorts, such as Nike, Under Armour, and others that are above the 6-inch rule.
- No spandex, biking shorts, or cut-offs.

**c. SKIRTS, DRESSES AND JUMPERS:**

- No shorter than six (6) inches above the knee cap. The 6-inch rule applies to the entire hem. (all around)
- The 6-inch rule applies with leggings.
- Top of the open pleat, vent or slit can be no more than six (6) inches above the kneecap.
- Jumpers must be worn with shirts or blouses.

**d. SHIRTS AND BLOUSES:**

- Tops and blouses must have straps at least two inches at top seam.
- All sleeveless tops must fit the armpit.
- The midriff must be covered always.

**e. SHOES:**

- Shoes must be worn always.
- No bedroom shoes are allowed.
- No shoes with wheels or Heelys

**f. PENALTIES FOR DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS:**

- First Offense: Warning by Administrator (contact parent for change of clothing)
- Second Offense: Final warning by Administrator (contact parent for change of clothing)
- Third Offense: Administrator Discretion
- Fourth Offense: Administrator Discretion
- Fifth Plus Offense: Administrator Discretion

**g. OTHER:**

- Students may wear earrings in their ears and nose. Only stud earrings should be worn in their nose.
- No other body piercing is allowed.
- No trench coats will be allowed.
- NO CHAINS of any kind will be allowed.

**h. NOT PERMITTED:**

- Tank tops, crop tops, tube tops, midriff tops, halter tops, no low cut or revealing tops
- Not more than one item of camouflage-type clothing may be worn at a time (jacket, or pants, or top).

- **Nothing can be worn to conceal identity, including clothing, accessories, and hair. Neither hats, nor the hood on a hoodie may be worn in the building at any time.**
- Sunglasses
- Bandanas
- Blankets
- Inappropriate symbols, signs, messages, or pictures. Included could be goods or services prohibited by law such as alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances; gang related clothing; swastikas, sexually suggestive clothing, and other clothing that could be disruptive.
- Spandex clothing
- Extremely tight-fitting clothing
- Clothing that is sexually or morally suggestive (including profanity).
- Hair and face paint that is deemed disruptive
- No spiked jewelry.
- Caps/Hats with fish hooks worn on them
- No Pajamas

**P. PROHIBITED ITEMS:**

- Collector cards, playing cards and dice
- Tobacco and alcohol products of any kind, including lighters, etc.
- Knives of any length
- Laser light pens
- Skateboards are not allowed on school property
- Hair pick in hair
- Mace/pepper spray
- Over-the-ear headphones
- Any items that may disrupt the daily operations of the school not listed above
- JUUL Pods, JUULs, E-Cigarettes, and Vaping paraphernalia are considered prohibited items and will be confiscated and disposed of; the prohibited items will not be returned to the student or guardian regardless of the student's age or ownership of the prohibited items.

**Q. Cheating:**

Cheating is prohibited at Upson-Lee High School. Cheating may include but is not limited to, such things as copying another student's homework, copying another student's answers on a test, plagiarizing a paper, using a "cheat sheet" during a test, or giving answers to another student during a test. Cheating can be also identified as the use of electronic devices to take pictures and/or transfer any answer document information to other students. Further, it can include any other activities that are designed to substitute someone else's work for that of a student who will receive credit for the work. Any behavior that is intellectually dishonest must be avoided and is prohibited. Students who are found to be cheating or to have cheated will be subject to strict disciplinary action by the teacher/and or school administration. These consequences will include loss of credit for any assignments, tests, or other items on which the student cheated in addition to the administrative penalties applied. First offense for cheating: students will be given a "zero", the teacher will contact parents, and the student will receive an office referral. Second offense: 1 - 2 days of ISS. Third offense: 2 to 5 days ISS. Having a cell phone out, talking, being out of assigned seat, and other disruptions are testing violations and may or may not be cheating offenses.

**R. Prom:**

- Upon approval by the Principal, fifth year or more seniors can attend the prom only if invited with the purchase of a ticket.
- All students are required to purchase a ticket to attend the prom. A prom ticket will admit one person.
- Prom dates are subject to the same Extracurricular Code of Conduct as our students. Student or date must be at least in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and cannot be over the age of 20.
- All dates who do not attend ULHS must be pre-approved BEFORE the ticket is purchased. A form must be filled out and returned to the prom coordinator prior to the ticket being purchased.
- Only authorized students are permitted to attend the prom; no loitering allowed on premises.
- Prom Attire: Dress code applies to ULHS students and dates
  - Female:
    - Only formal wear is permitted
    - Anyone planning to wear a two piece must have it approved before wearing it to the prom.
    - Slits must not be more than six (6) inches above the knee
    - Strapless and spaghetti straps are permitted, except if cut very low in the front.
    - The back of the dress must stop at the natural waistline. It cannot be below this point.

ii. Male:

- Only formal wear is permitted
- A shirt must be worn always
- All shirts must be tucked in always
- Only authorized students are permitted to attend the prom, no loitering allowed on premises

S. **ULHS Media Center Student Regulations:**

1. The media center is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Extended hours are determined in cooperation with classroom teachers and/or media specialist.
2. Students may come to the media center before and after school and during lunch without a pass. ACCESS WILL BE CONTROLLED AS NECESSARY BY STAFFING AND SPACE LIMITATIONS.
3. Clubs are regularly scheduled to meet in the media center on club days. During these activity periods, teachers should limit media center use to one student at a time needing to return materials or to use the media center for a specific reference purpose.
4. Rules of conduct that are observed throughout the school will also be in effect in the media center. Students are expected to use good judgment in the use of materials and equipment.
5. Conference space is available to small groups or committees with permission of a media specialist in conjunction with a teacher.
6. Any reasonable number of books may be checked out and renewed once if necessary. Students may check out books for two weeks.
7. Fines are charged to students for overdue materials. Overdue fines are ten cents per school day per book.
8. The Media Center is open before school for student research only, not for student study halls.
9. Computer usage policies, including the following:
  - a. No chat rooms, e-mail or registrations
  - b. Disks must be scanned
  - c. No downloading from Internet (copy/paste only)
  - d. Academic/instructional purposes only
  - e. Printing limited to a reasonable amount (See Media Specialist)
  - f. Violation of internet privileges will result in loss of privileges and code of conduct will be implemented (nine weeks/ semester/ entire year).

T. **CELL PHONES, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATORS, OR PAGERS, IPODS, MP3'S, ELECTRONIC DEVICES (Refer to OCGA 20-2-1183)**

- a. Students will be allowed to use communication or music devices only during the below specified times:
  - i. Before the first bell rings to signal the start of the school day - 8:00 am. (Students may have their cell phones during breakfast and lunch in the classroom.)
  - ii. During a student's designated lunch only in the cafeteria or courtyard.
  - iii. During the five minute transition period between classes.
  - iv. After the 3:10pm dismissal bell sounds.
- b. Any student listening to music during the specified times listed above, should do so on his/her device should do so with the use of earbuds.
- c. Students are not allowed to use their electronic devices in the hallway or any area of the school outside of the designated times and areas referenced above.
- d. Students who routinely and consistently violate the cell phone policy will be deemed as defiant. Students with a defiant disposition will be addressed accordingly.
- e. Refusal to turn in a cell phone/electronic device will result in two-day suspension. You will receive two warnings regardless of the type of electronic device! A student committing an act of misconduct not listed will be subject to the discretionary authority of the principal. Cell phones or any other type of electronic device cannot be brought into a state assessment testing site for any reason.
- f. Unauthorized recording or photos of any nature with or without consent are prohibited.
- g. Disposition: First Offense: Device is confiscated, a one-to-five-day OSS and student will lose privileges to have any type electronic device the rest of the school year.
- h. **CELLPHONE, MULTIMEDIA, AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES TAKEN FROM STUDENTS DUE TO POSSESSION AND/OR USE IN VIOLATION OF SCHOOL RULES ARE SUBJECT TO HAVING THEIR CONTENTS SEARCHED BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS.**



## 2023-2024 Thomaston-Upson County Schools Board of Education

<b>Jacqueline Hollis</b>	Chairperson- District 2
<b>Jaye Eubanks</b>	Vice Chairperson-District 7
<b>Angeline D. McGill</b>	District 1
<b>Sheila Hall</b>	District 3
<b>Brian Salter</b>	District 4
<b>Scott Roberts</b>	District 5
<b>Steve Sadler</b>	District 6

The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education holds public meetings on the second Tuesday of each month except during school closure (i.e., Fall Break, Spring Break). Please contact the Superintendent's Office or check the system website for the time and location of these meetings.

## 2023-2024 Thomaston-Upson County Schools District Administration

### District Office Staff

<b>Dr. Larry Derico</b>	Superintendent
<b>Dr. Amy Miller</b>	Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum/Instruction
<b>Mr. Matt Bentley</b>	Director of Technology
<b>Mrs. Mindy Davis</b>	Director of Federal Programs, Assessment
<b>Mrs. Jenna Dunaway</b>	Director of Exceptional Children Services
<b>Mr. Marc Ellington</b>	Director of Operations
<b>Mr. George Flowers</b>	District Network Engineer
<b>Mrs. Joan Foy</b>	Director of Transportation
<b>Mrs. Starr Jeffreys</b>	Assistant Director of Exceptional Children Services
<b>Dr. Jeff Kelly</b>	Director of Human Resources and Safety and Title IX Coordinator
<b>Mrs. Kathy Matthews</b>	Director of Finance
<b>Mrs. Karen Puckett</b>	Director of School Nutrition
<b>Mrs. Karen Truesdale</b>	Director of School & Community Relations and Fine Arts
<b>Dr. Jessica Watson</b>	Director of Student Services

The Thomaston-Upson County School System provides quality educational programs for students. All schools in the system meet the Standards for Public Schools in Georgia, and are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Georgia Accrediting Commission.

District Office Phone (706) 647-9621      District Office Website [www.upson.k12.ga.us](http://www.upson.k12.ga.us)  
Georgia's curriculum is available at [www.doe.k12.ga.us](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us)

## 2023-2024 Thomaston-Upson County Schools Calendar

July '23						
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### Important Dates

**August 1:** First Day of School  
**September 4:** Labor Day  
**October 9-13:** Fall Break  
**November 20-24:** Thanksgiving Break  
**December 18-January 2:** Christmas Break  
**January 5:** Start of 2nd Semester  
**January 15:** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday  
**February 19-23:** Winter Break  
**April 8-12:** Spring Break  
**May 23:** Last Day of School  
**May 24:** Graduation Day



- Schools Closed/Holidays
- Professional Development
- Professional Development / Inclement Weather
- First Day/Last Day of

### Instructional Dates

**1st 9 Weeks:** August 1 - September 29 (43 Days)  
**Midterm:** August 30  
**Report Cards:** October 18  
**2nd 9 Weeks:** October 2 - December 14 (43 Days)  
**Midterm:** November 8  
**Report Cards:** January 10  
**3rd 9 Weeks:** January 5 - March 14 (44 Days)  
**Midterm:** February 7  
**Report Cards:** March 20  
**4th 9 Weeks:** March 18 - May 23 (44 Days)  
**Midterm:** April 24

## Access Control System/Visitors in the Building

In an effort to maintain a safe and secure environment for everyone in the Thomaston-Upson School System, our schools are equipped with electronic access control systems at each main entrance and other entrances used by teachers and staff. Access control systems at each main entrance are equipped with a camera that allows the receptionist on duty to visually inspect the person(s) requesting entry. Once student arrival concludes each morning, all entryways are locked and remain locked throughout the school day. Visitors are asked to enter the school through the main entrance, where they must interact with the receptionist before entry into school.

After arriving at the main entrance, the visitor(s) must press the bell button to request entry into the building. Visitors may/will be asked to state their intentions before entering the building. Upon entry, visitors will approach the school receptionist and follow the regular sign-in procedures. Please bring a photo ID with you when entering the building. Visitors entering the school hallways and classrooms will be provided with a visitor's badge to be worn at all times while in the school and will be escorted throughout the building by a staff member. The U.S. Department of Education's guidelines for school security recommend limited school access points along with the implementation of a visitor control system. We are very excited to be able to offer these safety and security provisions. As always, parents and guardians are warmly welcomed at our schools, and we look forward to seeing you throughout the school year.

## Asbestos Management Plan

The Thomaston-Upson School System complies with all regulations of the Environmental Protection Agency concerning asbestos containing materials. A copy of the Asbestos Management Plan is available in the Central Administration Offices at 205 Civic Center Drive.

## Address/Telephone Number/Contact Changes

It is the policy of the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education that accurate and complete student academic and discipline records shall be maintained for each student enrolled in the schools of this school district. Please notify your child's school when there are updates to household addresses, phone numbers, and emergency contact information. Changes to information can be made in person, by visiting the school, or via the Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

## Attendance (Absences/ Tardies/Early Dismissals)

The Thomaston-Upson School District operates under the authority of the State Board of Education Rules and laws set forth in the state of Georgia. Punctual and regular attendance is important and expected. Regular attendance in school is the joint responsibility of the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s). The responsibility of our district and schools is to provide each student with quality instruction and inform parents if their child is absent from school. Upon enrollment and registration each school year, parents and guardians will be given notice of State Compulsory Attendance Law pursuant to O.C.G.A. Code 20-2-690.1. The guidelines also note the location of the system website of the local Board of Education school attendance policy JB. The school will make reasonable efforts to ensure receipt and comprehension of the policy by requesting signatures from parents/guardians that this notice was received and understood. Regular attendance is essential if students are to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided for them.

### **GENERAL ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES**

- Any student who is tardy or who must leave school prior to regular dismissal time MUST check in and/or out with the attendance office secretary. Otherwise, the student will be considered truant.
- If a student misses school in order to attend a non-school function, the absence will be considered as unexcused unless he/she has received prior approval from his/her building principal.
- Students participating in a contest/event will attend school the full day in order to participate. Exceptions can only be made by the building principal designee.
- A student, who has been absent more than five (5) consecutive days for illness, must present a physician's statement for the absences to be excused.
- Any student who is late to school must sign in with the attendance office/clerk or school designee.
- Disciplinary actions for excessive absences, unexcused absences, tardiness and trancies are outlined in the Progressive Discipline Attendance Matrix.
- A student will be marked absent for a whole day if the student is out of school for more than half of the school day.
- After an absence, a parental note or doctor's excuse is required on the date of return stating the dates and reasons for the absence, and the signature of the parent or of the doctor who treated the student. If a parental note or doctor's excuse is not provided within five days of absence/tardy/early dismissal, the student's absence will be marked as an unexcused absence in Infinite Campus.
- Handwritten parent notes for sickness should state the type of sickness and not just the words "was sick". If students are frequently absent/tardy, the principal may ask the parent to provide more information, such as medical documentation, about the absences/tardies/early check-outs. The school will excuse only five (5) days per semester with a written parent note. After this point, a doctor's note will be required for excused absences.
- Perfect Attendance: Students must be present each school day and not accumulate 10 or more unexcused tardies to school or unexcused early dismissals or a combination of both in order to receive this award at the end of the school year.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

The following are considered excused absences: illness, funeral, medical or dental appointment, and other absences for which permission has been granted in advance.

- Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others. The Thomaston-Upson School District Board of Education may require students to present appropriate medical documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence. With proper verification, a student may be eligible for hospital/homebound instruction as outlined in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 [Hospital/Homebound Instruction](#).
- A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school. In the event of a serious illness in a student's immediate family, the Thomaston-Upson School District Board of Education may require students to present appropriate



medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.

- A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
- Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
- The Thomaston-Upson School District Board of Education may allow a period not to exceed one day for registering to vote or voting in a public election.
- Any student serving as a page within the Georgia General Assembly.
- The Thomaston-Upson School District Board of Education permits a student, whose parent is in the military service and who has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, to be granted up to 5 excused absences per school year to visit with a parent prior to deployment or during such leave.
- A foster care student who attends court proceedings relating to his or her foster care shall be counted present and shall not be counted absent, either excused or unexcused, for any day or portion of a day missed from school.
- School days missed as a result of out of school suspension shall not be counted as unexcused for the purpose of determining student truancy, but shall be counted as unexcused for other purposes.

#### **District Attendance Matrix:**

	<b>All Absences Excused and Unexcused</b>	<b>5 Unexcused Absences</b>	<b>7 Unexcused Absences</b>	<b>10+ Unexcused Absences</b>
<b>Unexcused Absences</b>	Parents will receive an automated (school reach message) or personal call when the student is absent from school.	Parents will receive a truancy letter detailing unexcused absences and next steps. The letter must be signed by parent, If letter is not signed and returned, an additional letter will be sent via first class mail  The student will be referred to the school attendance support team.	School counselors will contact parents to discuss student truancy and next steps.	The student may be referred to the district social worker at 10 or more unexcused absences. The district social worker may refer students and parents to the Upson County Attendance Task Force*.  Students with 15 or more unexcused absences may be retained by a retention committee.
	<b>All Unexcused Tardies/ Unexcused Early Dismissals</b>			<b>10 Unexcused Tardies/ Unexcused Early Dismissals</b>
<b>Unexcused Tardies/ Unexcused Early Dismissals</b>	Parents will receive an automated (school reach message) or personal call when the student is tardy to school.			The school attendance support team will meet to discuss the educational impact of tardies. Administration will be notified of excessive tardies. Students with 15 or more unexcused tardies/unexcused early dismissals are not eligible for perfect attendance.

\* Students accruing 10 or More unexcused absences may be referred to the Attendance Task Force for further action. The attendance task force is a committee with members from the following stakeholders: Upson County DFCS, Upson County Department of Juvenile Justice, Upson Collaborative, Upson Mental Health, TUCS schools, Upson County Sheriff's Office, and Thomaston Police Department. The attendance task force will provide recommendations for improved attendance. If recommendations are not met by both the parent and student, both parties will be referred to local law enforcement.

#### **Audio and Video Camera Surveillance**

Audio and video cameras are placed in various locations within all Thomaston-Upson Schools to ensure the safety of our students, faculty, and guests.

#### **Board Policy**

In order to read board policy on a specific subject, please follow the steps listed below:

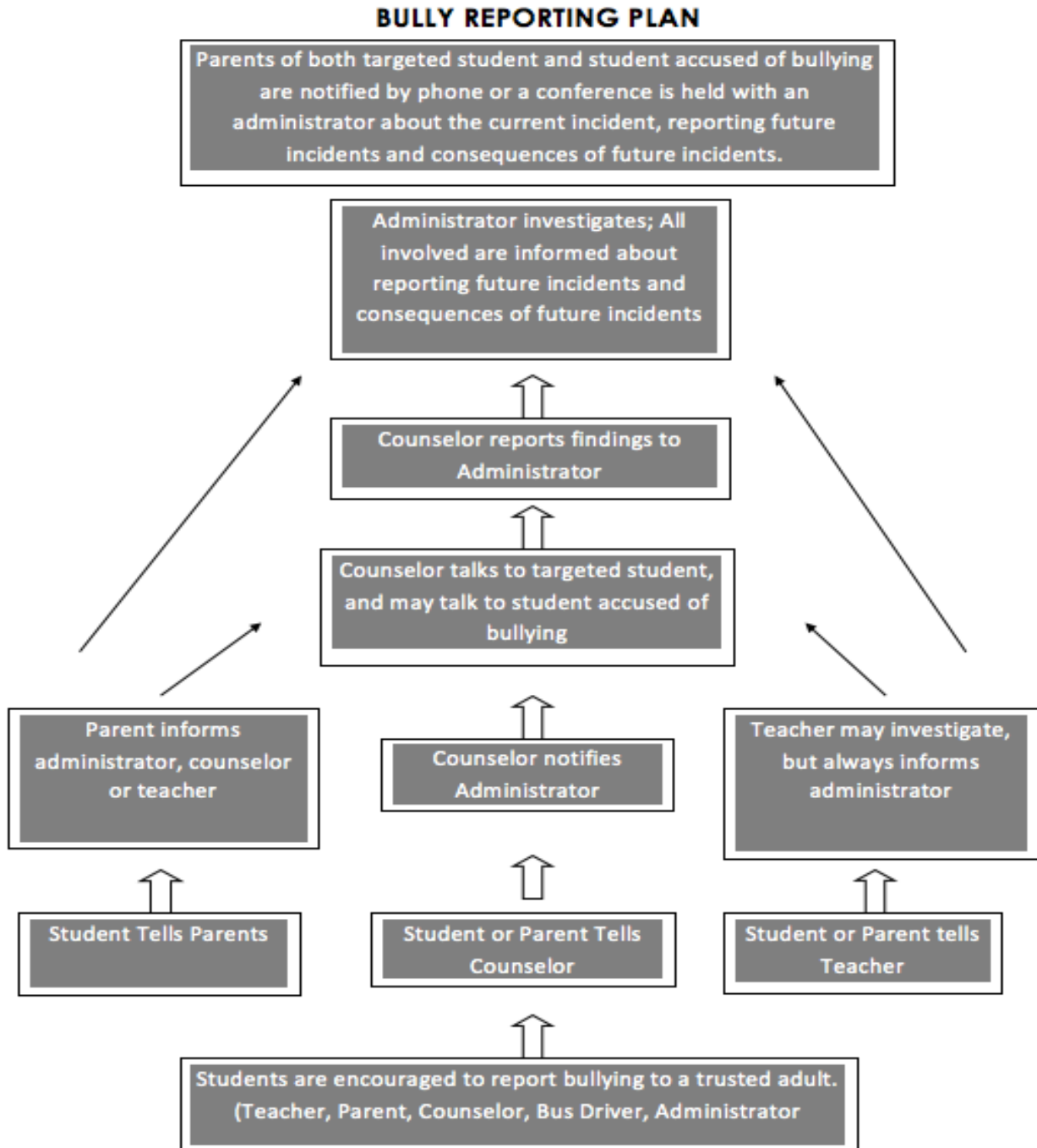
- Go to the system web site. [www.upson.k12.ga.us](http://www.upson.k12.ga.us)
- Under "Quick Links", choose Board of Education
- Across the top, choose "Policies."

## Bullying Policy and Reporting Procedures

The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. For a complete definition of bullying and the procedures to be followed, please refer to Thomaston-Upson Board Policy JCDAG and GA Code 20-2-751.4. Reporting procedures for each school are in the student handbook.

### Bullying Procedures Flowchart

The Bullying Procedures Flowchart is used by school administration in determining if the conduct in question meets the definition of “bullying” under the Georgia law. All allegations of bullying should be funneled/reported through the Principal or an administrator charged with the responsibility of handling discipline. School administration must notify the parents of the victim and the parents of the student that committed the offense.



Riding a school bus in the Thomaston-Upson County School System is a privilege extended to students that can be taken away at any time because of disruptive or unsatisfactory conduct.\* In the event of such behavior, school administrators will have the authority to suspend students from riding any Thomaston-Upson School System bus for a period of up to ten (10) consecutive days. In situations which involve serious offenses or repeated offenses, the administrator will have the opportunity to suspend students for periods of more than ten (10) days, to include the remainder of the year, with the approval of the superintendent. Disciplinary decisions for cases involving weapons, drugs, alcohol, violence, or any other offense considered to be of a serious nature will carry the same penalty as if the incident took place on the school campus.

In all cases where bus discipline problems involve students from more than one school, the administrator from each school involved will consult before bus discipline is assigned. A copy of bus rules will be sent home at the beginning of each school year for parents to review and sign.

For the safety and well-being of our children, Thomaston-Upson County's Transportation Department follows Georgia Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) guidelines in the bus delivery of younger students to their homes at the end of the school day.

Under DFCS guidelines:

- Children 8 years and younger cannot be left alone. Therefore, a bus driver must make visible contact with a parent or guardian before leaving the child at home.
- Children 9-12 years old can be left alone for up to two hours.
- Children 13 and older can be left alone without adult supervision.

In delivering younger children to their homes in the afternoon, bus drivers communicate with school personnel to determine safe drop-off conditions. Schools and parents should work collaboratively to establish procedures and requirements for children 13 or older who are medically fragile or have significant cognitive disabilities and require adult supervision at drop-off.

Should a bus driver deem they cannot leave a child in a safe situation, the driver will contact school personnel and/or parents or guardians. If necessary, the child will be returned to their home school.

Repetitive violation of the above DFCS guidelines may result in the following actions:

- Parent conference regarding student supervision
- Return the student to school administration
- Communication with and/or transportation of student to the Upson County Sheriff's Department
- Communication and referral to DFCS and/or TUCS Social Worker

Parents with questions or concerns about these guidelines may contact the TUCS Student Transportation Department, TUCS School Social Worker, or their child's school administrators.

\*Transportation is a related service as defined by 34 CFR §300.34(c)(16) of the IDEA regulations and can include travel to and from school and between schools; travel in and around school buildings; and specialized equipment such as special or adapted buses, lifts, and ramps. A child's individualized education program (IEP) Team is responsible for determining both if transportation is required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education and related services, and how the transportation services should be implemented. Transportation may also be a service documented in a child's 504 Plan.

### **BUS SAFETY RULES**

1. Students should be at the designated bus stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives at the stop.
2. Bus seating is the bus driver's responsibility. Students must sit in the assigned seat only and may move only with the bus driver's permission. Students must REMAIN SEATED when the bus is in motion-NO STANDING!
3. Aisles should be kept clear at all times (clear of persons and possessions).
4. Seat covers should be protected from pens or other objects that may mark or puncture. Any damages will be paid for by the student.
5. Students should always follow the bus driver's instructions, especially in the event of an emergency.
6. Eating/drinking/tobacco products of any kind are prohibited on buses.
7. Proper behavior is a LIFE-OR-DEATH matter on a school bus! Listed below are some unacceptable behaviors that will result in referrals from the drivers and disciplinary actions by school administrators:  
Immediate attention will be given to the following behaviors:
  - Disrespectful behavior or language toward the bus driver
  - Hitting/touching other students
  - Any conduct that endangers the other ridersThe following behaviors will result in the discipline process:
  - Disruptive behavior such as horseplay, shouting, or profanity
  - Handling other students' possessions without permission
  - Putting objects through windows, including hands and arms, or tossing items out the windows
8. If an unusual item must be transported to/from school for a project, assignment, or a regular class, the item should be placed where the driver instructs.
9. SKATEBOARDS AND BALLOONS ARE PROHIBITED ON SCHOOL BUSES AT ALL TIMES.
10. Students are required to bring a note signed by a school administrator or designee to get on or off the bus at any place other than their regular stop.
11. Students shall be prohibited from using any audible electronic devices during the operation of a school bus or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus. The board authorizes drivers to prohibit any electronic usage by a student who is causing a disturbance with the device. The Thomaston-Upson School System will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices.

12. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.
13. School Dress Code will be enforced on the bus.

Note: Water is permissible on the bus during extremely hot weather at the Transportation Department's discretion.

## CONSEQUENCES

Possible interventions by driver to mitigate student behavior:

1. Mandatory seat assignments (all students)
2. Verbal reminder
3. Talked privately with student
4. Reassigned bus seat
5. Parent/Guardian called
6. Parent/Guardian notified
7. Bus discipline form sent to administrator

\*If transportation is provided under IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a bus suspension must be treated as a suspension under 34 CFR §300.530 and all of the discipline procedures applicable to children with disabilities would apply. An LEA is not required to provide alternative transportation to a child with a disability who has been suspended from transportation for 10 school days or less unless the LEA provides alternative transportation to children without disabilities who have been similarly suspended from bus service. 34 CFR §300.530(d)(3). If a child with a disability is suspended from transportation for more than 10 school days in the same school year, and transportation is included in the child's IEP, during any subsequent suspensions the LEA must provide transportation.

## Child Custody

**These provisions are provided to assist school personnel when responding to parents in most custody-related situations. It must be emphasized, however, that the provisions contained in this summary are subject to modification by court order.**

According to O.C.G.A. 20-2-780, The individual who enrolls the student within the Thomaston-Upson School System is deemed the custodial parent unless a court order or legally binding document is produced that states otherwise. In instances where a court order or legally binding document exists, it shall be the responsibility of the parent to provide a bona fide copy of the order or document to the principal or designee. If a custodial parent/guardian gives permission through a notarized statement for the student to live with the other natural parent and that parent enrolls the child, the school will then conduct all school business with the parent who has physical custody. The custodial parent will then fall under the provisions of this rule. A summary of custodial and non-custodial parent rights are located on our district website, under the student services section [here](#).

## Clinic and Medication

The clinic's purpose is to provide medical treatment (within their scope of practice), services required under a doctor's order, and the administration of prescribed medicines. No medication will be given by the clinic without a written, signed parent request and medication will not be provided. All prescription medication must have a written statement/authorization from a licensed physician. All medication (prescription and nonprescription) brought to school by parents and/or students must be taken to the clinic immediately upon arriving on campus with a note from the parent/guardian authorizing the dispensing of the medicine. The medicine should be in the original, up-to-date pharmaceutical container clearly labeled as to the student's name, name of the medication, the appropriate dosage, and the time for each dose. No more than a 30-day supply of the medication can be stored in the clinic. At the prescribed time for dosage, the student should come to the clinic for the nurse to dispense the medicine. The nurse/designee is the only person certified to distribute medicine. According to policy JGCD, a student for whom the school has supporting medical documentation on file may carry at all times, with parental/guardian permission, inhalers for asthma, auto-injectable epinephrine for allergic reactions, and all necessary supplies and equipment to perform monitoring and treatment functions authorized by the student's diabetes medical management plan while in school or at a school-sponsored activity. Students may not dispense medicine, including cough drops, to other students.

If a student becomes too ill to remain in class, the school nurse will try to reach a parent/guardian by phone and recommend that they come to school and pick up their child. It is so important that we have updated, working phone numbers on every student's contact information form. Bus transportation cannot be provided to sick children. If your child is ill, please do not send him/her to school. A student who contracts a contagious disease or condition, such as pink eye, chickenpox, ringworm, impetigo, or pediculosis (head lice) will be sent home from school and must remain home until the condition or disease is corrected.

## Chromebook Policy

Thomaston-Upson County Schools (TUCS) provides Chromebooks to students for educational purposes. Chromebooks are the property of TUCS and are intended for educational use only. Students are not allowed to use TUCS Chromebooks for personal, commercial, or business use, or for political or religious reasons.

Before a Chromebook is assigned to a student, the student and/or legal guardian must sign an acknowledgement form stating that they have read and agreed to the school system's Chromebook policy.

Students who are assigned a Chromebook must take full responsibility for its basic care, security, and reporting of any device problems, breakage, or damage immediately. The device must be kept safe and secure both on and off school premises.

If a student loses possession of the device for any reason or if it is destroyed or damaged while in the care of the student, the student is responsible for the replacement cost of the device. This includes loss of use due to theft, fire, flood, lightning, or any other cause. A \$50 fee will be charged to cover the cost of repair or replacement of the device.

By following these guidelines, TUCS students can make the most of their Chromebooks and ensure they are used responsibly for educational purposes.

### Complaints of Discrimination/Harassment

#### **COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT**

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or gender in employment decisions or educational programs and activities, including its athletic programs. Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent or other individual who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the School District based upon any of the factors listed above should promptly report the same to the principal of the school or the appropriate coordinator as listed below, who will implement the Board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor.

##### **The Title VI Coordinator is:**

Mrs. Mindy Davis, Director of Federal Programs and Assessment

Address: 205 Civic Center Drive, Thomaston, Georgia 30286

email: [midavis@upson.k12.ga.us](mailto:midavis@upson.k12.ga.us)

Phone Number: 706-647-9621

##### **The Title IX Coordinator and the Sports Equity Coordinator is:**

Dr. Jeff Kelly, Director of Human Resources and Student Safety

Address: 205 Civic Center Drive, Thomaston, Georgia 30286

email: [jkelly@upson.k12.ga.us](mailto:jkelly@upson.k12.ga.us)

Phone Number: 706-647-9621

##### **The Section 504 Coordinator is:**

Dr. Jessica Watson, Director of Student Services and Section 504

Address: 205 Civic Center Drive, Thomaston, Georgia 30286

email: [jwatson@upson.k12.ga.us](mailto:jwatson@upson.k12.ga.us)

Phone Number: 706-647-9621

##### **The Exceptional Children Services Coordinator is:**

Jenna Dunaway, Director of Exceptional Children Services

Address: 205 Civic Center Drive, Thomaston, Georgia 30286

email: [jdunaway@upson.k12.ga.us](mailto:jdunaway@upson.k12.ga.us)

Phone Number: 706-647-9621

Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. A copy of the discriminatory complaints procedure under Policy JAA (Equal Educational Opportunities) or under Policy IDFA (Equity in Sports) is located on the District website at [www.upson.k12.ga.us](http://www.upson.k12.ga.us)

### Counseling Services

The counseling program in our schools consists of a variety of services and activities, including: individual and group counseling, parent and teacher consultation, group/classroom, advisory program guidance, information services, referral assistance to other programs and services in the community, pathway completion plans and student testing. Primary services of the school counselor are to provide direct assistance to students in the school. The counselors are certified professionals with training in human development, learning theory, counseling and mental health, tests and measurement, career development, research and other applicable areas. If needed, please call your child's counselor to arrange an appointment.

As a service, the TUCS counseling department offers a variety of mental health services:

- A social-emotional school counselor at Upson-Lee Alternative school to provide mental health and wellness services and programs that foster pro-social skills to students in the alternative setting.
- Certified Play Therapy to provide play therapy to K-2 students. Play therapy is an alternative approach to counseling that incorporates "student play" to assess student emotions.
- 9 school-based counselors to provide individual counseling, group counseling, and targeted classroom instruction to meet student needs.
- 5 mental health counselors to provide specific, research-based therapeutic services for our students with trauma, a diagnosed mental illness, or social-emotional needs.

### Drug Free/Tobacco Free Schools

System policy prohibits the use of all tobacco products everywhere, by everyone, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week while on school property. If a student is guilty of the sale or distribution of drugs, the student will be expelled for a minimum of one year. All policies concerning drug offenses are listed in the Code of Conduct. The tobacco policy includes the possession and use of vapes and vape/JUUL accessories.

### Emergency Information Forms

It is the policy of the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education that accurate and complete student records shall be maintained for each student enrolled in the schools of this school district. Please notify your child's school when there are updates to household addresses, phone numbers, and emergency contact information. Changes to information can be made in person, by visiting the school, or via the Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

The Georgia Department of Education requires presentation of evidence of date of birth at any time that a student enters a Georgia Public School System. In addition, the school district requires residency, a registrant photo identification, certificate of immunization, and additional documents. The Thomaston-Upson School System requires a copy of this evidence be included in the student record for any student who enters a Thomaston-Upson School. All registration requirements are uploaded to the student's personal documents within Infinite Campus.

Students who are new to Thomaston-Upson County Schools or returning after being withdrawn from Thomaston-Upson County Schools are required to complete the registration process with the registrar located at each school or online using Infinite Campus Online Registration. Students transferring within the district, between elementary schools, are not required to complete the registration process. However, parents are expected to regularly update their information within the parent portal to keep the school informed of new addresses and phone numbers.

**Withdrawals for Students:**

**A. Request to Withdrawal**

In order to withdraw a student from TU School System, the parent/legal guardian must fill out a withdrawal form with the school registrar indicating the child will withdraw. Only formal withdrawal forms or records requests are recognized by the state as acceptable forms of withdrawal.

1. Withdrawal by Email - A parent may elect to withdraw the student by email, but they must submit a signed TU withdrawal form with the effective date and their signature.

**B. Students Subject to Compulsory School Attendance**

Students who are not in attendance and their parent/legal guardian has not filled out the documentation for withdrawal shall be marked as an unexcused absence for each day they are not in attendance. Students (over the age of 5) missing 10 consecutive unexcused days may be dropped for lack of attendance\*, provided the school has adhered to the guidelines of the school attendance matrix. Students withdrawn for this reason should receive an exit code "R: Removed for Lack of Attendance". Students (5 and younger) may be withdrawn using the exit code "5: Underage of Compulsory Attendance".

\*Students receiving Exceptional Children Services cannot be dropped due to lack of attendance until the Director of Exceptional Children Services is notified and procedures take place.

Exceptional Children Services Program

Thomaston-Upson County Schools Program for Exceptional Children is implemented in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures that all children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. Part B of IDEA provides educational guidelines for public schools serving students ages 3-21 which include six principles: Individualized Education Program (IEP); Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE); Least Restrictive Environment (LRE); Appropriate Evaluation; Parent and Teacher Participation; and Procedural Safeguards. Thomaston-Upson County Schools provide exceptional children services to those students who meet eligibility requirements based on comprehensive evaluations. Categories of eligibility are established by the State of Georgia according to requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Students will be exited from the Exceptional Children Program when meeting one (1) of the following criteria below:

- Determination of ineligibility based on a comprehensive evaluation and decision of an IEP Team to include Prior Written Notice;
- Written parent revocation of services and Prior Written Notice (PWN) to end specialized and/or related services;
- Receipt of a regular education high school diploma or state-defined alternate diploma; OR,
- Reaching the age of 22 or, if school is not in session, the last day of services prior to the 22nd birthday.

Students with an IEP that age out may participate in the annual graduation ceremony for the appropriate school term.

Thomaston-Upson County Schools' students eligible for the Exceptional Children Program can be served through other off-campus, Georgia accredited schools such as:

- Atlanta Area School for the Deaf
- Georgia Academy for the Blind

**Georgia Special Needs School (GSNS) Choice/Scholarship Options (SB10)**

Under a state law passed by the Georgia Legislature in 2007, parents of students who receive exceptional children services may request to transfer their child to another public or private school in Georgia, provided that their child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and has been enrolled for a full academic year in a Georgia public school. Please see the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) website ([www.gadoe.org](http://www.gadoe.org)) for complete student eligibility criteria. Three options are described below.

If a student meets the eligibility criteria for the GSNS Program, a parent/guardian has the right to request a transfer from a student's current public school to:

- Another public school within their district of residence; or
- Another public school district outside their district of residence; or
- One of the three state schools for the blind or deaf; or
- A private school authorized to participate in the GSNS Program.

Funds received through the GSNS Program can only be used to pay for tuition and fees at a private school authorized by the State Board of Education to participate in the program. Funds cannot be used to pay the costs of out of district tuition, charter schools, or other options available under public school choice. Transportation under all school choice options are the responsibility of a parent/guardian.

Additional information can be found at this site:

<http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program.aspx>



## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal privacy law that gives parents certain protections with regard to their children's education records, such as report cards, transcripts, disciplinary records, contact and family information, and class schedules. As a parent, you have the right to review your child's education records and to request changes under limited circumstances. To protect your child's privacy, the law generally requires schools to ask for written consent before disclosing your child's personally identifiable information to individuals other than you. For more information visit the U.S. Dept. of Education website at: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/brochures/parents.html>

FERPA requires that the Thomaston-Upson School System, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the Thomaston-Upson School System or your child's school may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised your child's school to the contrary in accordance with school system procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Thomaston-Upson Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications.

Examples include: The annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses and telephone listings - unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.<sup>(1)</sup> The Solomon Amendment, which was determined by the DOE to supercede FERPA, obligates LEAs to release to all 5 branches of military for the purpose of recruitment name, address, telephone, year of birth, level of education, academic major, degrees received, educational institution in which the student was most recently enrolled for students 17 and older.

If you do not want the Thomaston-Upson School System/Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify your child's school in writing designating the information you do not want released or come by the school and sign a "Do Not Release" form. The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name, address, and telephone number;
- Student's date and place of birth;
- Student's email address;
- Student's participation in clubs and sports;
- Weight and height of student if he or she is a member of an athletic team;
- Dates of attendance at the school where the student is enrolled;
- Awards received during the time enrolled;
- Photograph; and
- Grade Level.

**Footnotes:** 1. These laws are: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7908), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110), the education bill, and 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by section 544, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's armed forces.

## Georgia Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act (TAADRA)

Parents and students should become familiar with Georgia's Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act or TAADRA (Georgia Code Section 40-5-22). The law requires local school districts to certify that a student **is enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school** to meet the TAADRA requirements to obtain or retain a Georgia learner's permit or driver's license. More information about TAADRA, including forms and implementation guidelines, is available on the GaDOE website.

## Health Records

Georgia code O.C.G.A. 20-2-771 requires that every student enrolled in a Georgia public school have a current Georgia Certificate of Immunization on file. Students who do not provide the school with an approved certificate will not be allowed to remain in school. Please note that the vaccination record must be on an official form (Form 3231) provided by the Georgia Department of Human Resources. The responsible official for the school or facility may grant a 30 calendar day waiver of the certification requirement for a justified reason. The waiver may be extended from the date of first admittance or of first attendance, whichever is earlier, for up to 90 calendar days if the student is a transfer student who moves from an out-of-state school system to a Georgia school system or is a student entering kindergarten or first grade from out-of-state. However, documentation must be on file from the health department or a physician stating that an immunization sequence has been started and can be completed within the 90-day waiver period. **The waiver may not be extended, and the child shall not be permitted to attend any school or facility unless the child submits a completed Georgia Certificate of Immunization.** In addition, those students entering Georgia public schools for the first time must provide an eye, ear, and dental certificate at the time of registration.

## Hospital/Homebound Services

Thomaston-Upson County Schools will provide hospital/homebound services to students when the requirements of the law, including but not limited to Ga. Rules and Regulations 160-4-2.31, have been met and after approval has been granted by the school official designated by the Superintendent. Any student or parent desiring to request hospital/homebound services shall fill out all referral forms provided by the Thomaston-Upson County School District and provide such medical referrals and releases of records as requested by the Thomaston-Upson County School District. Certain students may not be eligible to receive hospital/homebound services, including but not limited to, students who may endanger the health and safety of the instructor or other students with whom the instructor may come in contact and other students that do not meet the eligibility standards set forth in applicable law. Please contact your child's counselor for additional information.

## Internet Access

The Thomaston-Upson School System encourages students to use the Internet as a learning and research tool. All students are required to sign and return an Acceptable Use Policy Form upon enrollment in the Thomaston-Upson County School System. The contract must be signed by both student and parent only after thoroughly reading the terms and conditions of the Thomaston-Upson School System Acceptable Use Policy. Internet access is guarded by a web filtering software to help prevent access to inappropriate areas of the Internet. In addition, students are closely monitored when using the Internet. Unauthorized use of Internet sites may result in suspension of Internet use and/or disciplinary measures as outlined in the school system Acceptable Use Policy and the Code of Conduct.

#### **Moment of Reflection**

In compliance with Georgia Law (SB396, amending O.C.G.A. 20-2-1050), at the opening of school on every school day a brief period of quiet reflection for not more than sixty seconds will be conducted with the participation of all the pupils. This moment of quiet reflection is not intended to be a religious service or exercise but shall be considered as an opportunity for silent reflection on the activities of the day. Teachers and administrators shall not suggest or imply that students should or should not use the moment of reflection for prayer, nor shall they deny to any student the right to use it for a moment of quiet prayer. Students and/or staff may not, under any circumstances, use the moment of quiet reflection to audibly pray, singly or in unison.

#### **Multi-Tiered Systems and Supports (Student Support Team/Response to Intervention)**

Thomaston-Upson County Schools Multi-Tiered Systems and Supports (MTSS) program, which includes the principles of several academic, behavioral, developmental, and functional programs such as Response to Intervention (RTI), Student Support Team (SST), and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), gathers data from multiple sources to determine:

- Are our kids learning and progressing?
- How do we know what they are learning and how they are progressing?
- And most importantly, what are we prepared to do when they do not learn, make adequate progress, or they already know what is to be learned?

Student academic, behavioral, developmental, and functional concerns are addressed through a four-tiered process that systematically develops and delivers instructional and behavioral interventions. The essential components of the process include the following:

- Providing scientific, research-based instruction and interventions
- Monitoring progress in response to these changes in instruction and interventions
- Using this information to shape instruction and make educational decisions

#### **Non-Resident Student Policy**

The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education will accept non-resident students when maximum class size requirements allow. Non-resident students will be charged annual tuition not to exceed the per pupil amount of local tax funds used to supplement state FTE funds. The Superintendent shall set a tuition fee annually. Transportation will not be provided for non-resident students. Exempt students will not be charged tuition.

##### **Criteria for Acceptance of Non-resident Students**

1. History of good behavior, good attendance, and passing grades.
2. Student can be accommodated by current instructional program services.
3. Must provide the following documents in acceptable form before enrollment can be considered:
  - a. Complete transcript from previous school.
  - b. Complete disciplinary record.
  - c. Complete attendance record.

The continued enrollment of non-resident students in all schools within the school system shall be conditioned upon the following criteria:

- a. Consistent attendance with no excessive unexcused or excused absenteeism; and no excessive unexcused or excused tardies and no excessive unexcused or excused early releases;
- b. Satisfactory discipline.

In the event a non-resident student becomes a disciplinary or attendance (to include tardies and early releases) school problem, the principal may revoke the student's privilege to attend school in the Thomaston-Upson School System without the necessity of convening a disciplinary tribunal. Non-resident students may also be removed from the Thomaston-Upson School System for falsification and/or misrepresentation of information during the application process or for other good and sufficient cause.

#### **Non-Solicitation Policy**

Thomaston-Upson Board of Education policies GAI, GAIA, and JKA prohibit solicitation on school grounds. The intent of these policies is to ensure non-interference with the educational activities of the schools. Flyers, coupons, pamphlets, catalogs, etc. from private, for-profit businesses, organizations, and/or individuals may not be distributed to students or staff. In addition, no school employees may have items displayed for sale on school property. Exceptions include: 1) School-sponsored, student organization-sponsored, or parent organization-sponsored fundraisers where a portion of the sales go to the school, student, or parent organization; 2) Official Thomaston-Upson Partners in Education who have received Superintendent approval for distribution of discounted or free offers to employees and/or students. These policies may be accessed from the school system website at [www.upson.k12.ga.us](http://www.upson.k12.ga.us).

#### **Notice of Non- Discrimination**



The Thomaston-Upson County School System provides equal opportunity to students and staff and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status., Dr. Jeff Kelly, is the Title IX and Sports Equity Coordinator and may be contacted at the Thomaston-Upson School System, 205 Civic Center Drive, Thomaston, GA 30286- (706) 647-9621. Jenna Dunaway, Director of Exceptional Children Services, is the ADA coordinator and may be contacted at (706) 647-9621. Dr. Jessica Watson, is the 504 coordinator and may be contacted at (706) 647-9621.

### Parent Policy

The goal of the Family Engagement Program for the Thomaston-Upson School System is to promote an effective home and school partnership. The Thomaston-Upson School System affirms and assures the right of parents to be involved in the education of their children. A copy of the Parent Policy is sent home at the beginning of each school year.

### Parent's Right to Know

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the Thomaston-Upson School System would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher—
  - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
  - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
  - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's qualifications, please contact the school's principal. ULPK 706-646-4729; ULPS 706-647-7516; ULES 706-647-3676; ULMS 706-647-6256; ULHS 706-647-8171; ULAS 706-647-5738.

### Physical Restraint Guidelines

The District complies with state requirements related to restraint and seclusion as set out in Georgia SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.35. Consistent with that rule, physical restraint will be used only in situations in which the student is in immediate danger to himself/herself or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other less intensive de-escalation techniques. A parent or guardian will be notified in writing each time his/her child has been restrained. The District maintains written policies and procedures governing the use of restraint.

### Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is an evidence-based three-tiered framework to create a positive school climate, in which students learn and grow. The core principles guiding PBIS include the understanding that we can and should:

- Effectively teach appropriate behavior to all children.
- Intervene early before unwanted behaviors escalate.
- Use research-based, scientifically validated interventions whenever possible.
- Monitor student progress.

**PBIS** is a proactive approach that schools use to improve school safety and promote positive behavior. The focus of PBIS is prevention, not punishment. At its heart, PBIS calls on schools to teach students positive behavior strategies, just as they would teach about any other subject — like reading or math. Appropriate school-wide behaviors for specific areas (classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, gymnasium, etc.) are taught and displayed using a PBIS Matrix. Positive behavior is recognized and rewarded using school-based incentives.

Our primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary. Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in the Code of Conduct. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children.

### Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA is a federal law that affords certain rights to parents of minor students with regard to surveys that ask questions of a personal nature. For more information, please visit: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/faq/what-protection-pupil-rights-amendment-ppra>  
*The Thomaston-Upson School System will adhere to all federal requirements of FERPA and PPRA.*

### School Nutrition Program

The Thomaston-Upson School Nutrition Program is an integral part of our educational system. More than 7,000 nutritious, well-balanced meals are served by our professional staff each day to students, faculty members, and visitors. Menus are planned to incorporate the USDA dietary guidelines, which include offering fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as increasing daily fiber intake and reducing total fat and sodium content. All school facilities provide breakfast and lunch service. Monthly menus are posted on our school and system websites. Based on our Local Wellness Policy, students are not allowed to bring commercial fast food items to school. We strongly encourage our students to participate in our School Nutrition Program.

<b>SY 23-24 Meal Prices</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
TU Faculty/Staff	\$2.50	\$4.50
Parents/Visitors	\$4.00	\$5.50

### School Safety Plan

The Thomaston-Upson School System reviews and implements a School Safety Plan that addresses inclement weather, fire hazards, unapproved school intruders, and safety issues surrounding our schools. Each school conducts monthly fire drills, safety drills, and severe weather drills throughout the school year.

### Section 504

Section 504 is short for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal funds. Section 504 guarantees that qualified disabled individuals receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). This compliance is overseen by the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to:

1. have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities,
2. have a record of such an impairment, or
3. be regarded as having such an impairment.

The Thomaston-Upson School System does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in any student program. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations (TU Policy JAA). It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

#### Notice of Section 504 Procedural Safeguards and Parent/Student Rights

Any student or parent or guardian (“grievant”) may request an impartial hearing due to the school system’s actions or inactions regarding your child’s identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant’s failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system’s obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator. The school system’s Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing. The Section 504 Coordinator may be contacted through the school system’s central office. Copies of the 504 Procedural Safeguards, Notice of Rights of Students and Parents under Section 504, and TU Section 504 Grievance-Complaint form may be found at the system website or may be picked up at the central office or at any of the school offices.

### Severe Weather: Tornado Protocol

#### **Watch:**

Students may be checked out or picked up at school during a Tornado Watch.

#### **Warning:**

Due to safety concerns for students and staff, students may not be checked out or picked up at school during a Tornado Warning. If a Tornado Warning occurs during release time on a school day, students will be held at school until it is deemed safe by the National Weather Service or the Georgia Emergency Management Association.

### Student Support Team

Each school is required to have a Student Support Team (SST). The SST is an interdisciplinary teaching team that identifies, plans, and recommends alternative instructional strategies for students who are experiencing academic, social, or behavioral difficulties in school. The SST should be viewed as a function of the regular education program. Student Support Team (SST): a multi-disciplinary team which utilizes a problem-solving process to investigate the educational needs of students who are experiencing academic and/or social/behavioral difficulties. SST, which is required in every Georgia public school, uses a data-driven process to plan individualized supports and interventions and to assess the effectiveness.

### Visitors in Classroom

**Who May Visit:** The right to observe a child’s instructional program during classroom time resides solely with a child’s parent, legal guardian, or foster parent and does not extend to grandparents, other interested close relatives, 3 party agencies or caregivers.

**Who May Be Observed:** The sole purpose of a classroom visit by a parent is to observe their student and the instructional program being presented. At no time should a parent’s motive for or focus of a classroom visit be to observe another student or students in the classroom. If the Principal has knowledge of or suspects that the focus of a parent’s classroom visit is to observe another student, he/she reserves the right to deny a requested visit or to end a visit in progress.

**Scheduling:** Visits must be scheduled through the Principal for a time and date convenient to both the parent and the teacher. The parental observation date shall be within a reasonable time frame following the initial request. A request for a specific date must be made no less than 48 hours in advance. No visits will be allowed while students are participating in assessments, quizzes or tests.

**Duration:** To minimize potential interruptions and distractions during instructional time, the Principal reserves the right to limit the duration of classroom observations.

**Conduct During Classroom Visitation:** Parents visiting classrooms should arrange their schedules to enter and exit the classroom in a manner that would not interrupt the instructional activities in progress. While visiting the class, the teacher will designate an area for parents to sit, generally in the back of the classroom. (Parents are asked NOT to sit with their students as this could create an unnecessary disruption for other students.) Once in the classroom and seated, parents are asked to remain seated and refrain from interacting with students or the teacher unless the classroom teacher initiates the interaction. Unnecessary noise and/or movement must be kept to a minimum. Parents wishing to discuss their students' behavior after observing him/her during class should schedule a parent conference with the teacher. Parents who fail to observe the stated guidelines during their visit may be asked to leave the room if their presence or conduct unduly interferes with the orderly operation of the classroom. Any concerns or complaints may be addressed directly to the classroom teacher after regular school hours or to the Principal.

**No Audio or Video Taping of Classroom:** Video and/or audio recording of classroom visits by the parent or guardian is prohibited. Electronic devices which could be used for video or audio record should not be visible during the visit. Violation of this guideline can result in dismissal from the classroom visit, and/or school site.

**School Administration:** The Principal or his/her designee is required to be in the room during the parent observation to protect the learning environment for all students.

## Wellness Program

The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education recognizes the importance of a learning environment where students practice healthy habits. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes proper nutrition, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience.

## THOMASTON-UPSON STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT STUDENT INFRACTIONS AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

*Note: In accordance with disciplinary procedures of the Thomaston-Upson County School System, and as required by Georgia Code (20-2-736), this publication of student behavior infractions and required or recommended dispositions is submitted for the information of school personnel, students, and parents.*

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the schools within the Thomaston-Upson County School system is to provide the best learning opportunity possible. Our standards of student behavior during school hours, on school property, and at school related functions are designed to create the expectations that students will behave themselves in such a way as to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students.

We expect students to:

1. Respect each other
2. Respect school district employees
3. Obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board of Education
4. Obey rules established by individual schools

Good order and discipline may be described as the absence of distractions and disturbances, which interfere with the optimum functioning of the student, the classroom, the school, school related functions, and the safe operation of school buses. It is also the presence of a friendly, yet businesslike, rapport in which students and school personnel work cooperatively toward mutually accepted goals. We ask for your cooperation in sharing this responsibility for maintaining a proper learning environment.

Included in this Code of Conduct are prohibited behaviors and consequences for such behaviors. The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education's Code of Conduct was designed and created to comply with the progressive discipline processes set forth in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-736 and Thomaston-Upson Board of Education Policy JCDA – Student Code of Conduct.

### ADDITIONAL BEHAVIOR REQUIREMENTS

The District may impose campus, classroom, or club/organization rules in addition to those found in the student handbook. These rules may be listed in the student and campus handbooks, be posted or distributed in classrooms, or be published in extracurricular handbooks, state or national organization bylaws, and/or constitutions. Sponsors and coaches of extracurricular activities may require and enforce additional standards of conduct for student participation in extracurricular activities.

Organizational standards of behavior concerning an extracurricular activity are independent of the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of these standards of behavior that are also violations of the Student Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student, including but not limited, to the student being removed from participation in extracurricular activities, exclusion from school honors, suspension, and expulsion for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct governs students' behavior on school grounds; off school grounds at a school activity; off school grounds at a non-school activity, but where the misconduct leads to a disruption of school or any other violation of the Student Code of Conduct; in route to and from schools, or any school-sponsored activity; on the bus; and at the bus stop.

## INTRODUCTION TO STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

### SECTION I: PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Progressive discipline processes will be utilized by schools and the School System to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior, as well as consideration given to each student's previous discipline history and other relative factors; and that all due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed.

### SECTION II: INVESTIGATION AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

1. A teacher must document a student's violation of the student code of conduct within one school day of the incident. The report will be filed with the principal (or designee) and shall describe the student's behavior.
2. Following an appropriate investigation of the alleged infraction, the principal (or designee) will make a determination regarding disposition.
3. Within a timely manner after determining a disposition, the principal (or designee) will send to the student's parents or guardian a copy of the report and information relative to the student support services being utilized or the disciplinary action taken upon completion of the investigation. The principal (or designee) will make a reasonable attempt to confirm receipt of such written notification by the student's parents or guardians. Written notification will include information regarding how the student's parents or guardians may contact the principal (or designee).
4. The principal (or designee) will notify the referring teacher of the action taken.

### **SECTION III: DUE PROCESS RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS RELATIVE TO ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS**

In all cases, the rights of individuals involved will be ensured and protected. Within that statement, however, students and parents/guardians must realize that the due process rights of students during administrative investigations are defined relative to proposed dispositions to be imposed by the school's administration. Namely, if a principal (or designee) is planning to impose a punishment amounting to less than a ten-day suspension, he/she has three responsibilities to the student (*Goss v. Lopez*, 1975):

1. Notify the student of the charge;
2. Provide an explanation of the evidence collected; and,
3. Extend an opportunity to the student to answer to that charge.

*If the principal (or designee) is seeking to impose a punishment that will exceed a ten-day suspension, he/she must also afford the student a due process discipline hearing before a panel or hearing officer.*

### **SECTION IV: STUDENT SEARCHES**

To maintain order and discipline on school property or property being used by the school/School System, and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may conduct searches of both school and personal property as provided for in laws, procedures, and policies. Additionally, school authorities may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in said searches.

Student vehicles located on or near campus as well as student possessions such as pocketbooks, book bags, school lockers, desks, containers, and other school property may be subject to random inspection and search at any time without further notice to parents. Such searches may be conducted by school authorities or police canines. An individual student may be searched if there is reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or in violation of school rules.

### **SECTION V: ILLEGAL ACTS**

Parents and students should be aware that in some instances, an offense may constitute a violation of Georgia Law. As a result of any violation of Georgia law, law enforcement, having jurisdiction, may impose additional sanctions/consequences.

### **SECTION VI: REPORTING OF THREATENING BEHAVIOR OR ILLEGAL/SUSPICIOUS ITEMS AT SCHOOL**

Any threat (expressed or implied) by any individual which if carried out would pose a potential danger to the life and safety of students and/or staff members or the destruction of property should be regarded and treated seriously. Any student who receives or has knowledge of information concerning such a threat should immediately report that information to a school administrator or staff member.

*Students should notify an administrator or staff member when illegal or suspicious items, dangerous items or other items banned from school are found in the school building, on the school campus, or on the school bus. Students are advised not to pick up or handle illegal, dangerous, banned, or unidentified items, or items not belonging to them.*

### **SECTION VII: SUSPENSION/EXPULSION OF STUDENTS WITH IDEA SERVICES**

1. **Guidelines for suspension / expulsion of students receiving special education services:** Students receiving special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) can be suspended out-of-school (OSS) or removed from the classroom for in-school-suspension (ISS) for a total of 10 consecutive or cumulative school days in a school year without a consideration of whether the behavior is related or not to the student's disability. If school administration is imposing consequences to a student being served under IDEA that exceeds removals of 10 cumulative school days in a school year or is recommending a long-term suspension or expulsion, the School System will convene a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) to determine if the student's behavior is related to the student's disability. If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability OR the MDR determines that the district did not follow the IEP, the student may not be suspended out-of-school. If the behavior is found not to be related to the student's disability, the School System may impose the recommended discipline; however, the student served in special education will continue to receive educational services. The student's Individual Education Program (IEP) committee will determine the location of the education services.

In cases in which a student is being considered for a suspension/expulsion, and there is no record indicating the student has a disability, but the parent(s) claim the school/School System has knowledge that the student does have a disability, the school administration should notify the Director of Exceptional Children Services before proceeding with the discipline process.

2. **Tribunal guidelines for students receiving special education services:** Students receiving special education services are afforded the same right to a disciplinary due process hearing before a tribunal as nondisabled students where there is a recommendation for suspension/expulsion to exceed 10 school days.
3. **Tribunal guidelines for students holding a "Section 504 Plan:"**  
A tribunal for a student holding a "Section 504 Plan" will only be held if:

- a. A Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) reviews the student's plan and determines that the behavior exhibited by the student resulting in the discipline infraction is NOT a manifestation of the student's disability AND the district followed the Section 504 Plan; or,
- b. the student maintains his/her innocence. In these two cases, the discipline should proceed in the same manner as prescribed for a student receiving special education services, except the role of the IEP committee will be replaced with the student's Student Support Team (SST).

Note: Parents should be aware that state and/or federal law may require modified disciplinary actions for special education students.

#### **SECTION VIII: UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTION AND VIOLENT CRIMINAL OFFENSES**

Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an "Unsafe School" according to the provisions of the State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16, UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTION (USCO). Also, under USCO provisions, School System guidelines are in place to facilitate the timely and appropriate requested transfer of students who are victims of "violent criminal offenses" and/or students enrolled in schools determined to be "persistently dangerous" (as determined by the same State Board Rule).

#### **SECTION IX: DISCIPLINING OFF-CAMPUS STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Students shall be disciplined for engaging in off-campus conduct which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process. Discipline may include, but is not limited to, change of placement, suspension, or expulsion. Off-campus misconduct for which a student shall be disciplined includes, but is not limited to, any off-campus conduct that:

1. is prohibited by the Georgia or United States criminal codes;
2. is punishable as a felony or would be punishable as a felony if committed by an adult; and
3. is conduct for which a student has been arrested, indicted, adjudicated to have committed, or convicted. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.5(c).

#### **SECTION X: POST INCARCERATION SCHOOL PLACEMENT**

Upon notification by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) that a student will be coming or returning from youth detention centers, incarceration, or similar facilities, the student shall be enrolled in his/her home school as opposed to an alternative educational setting unless the Student Support Team, consisting of the building principal, school counselor, special education teacher (if applicable), MTSS Coordinator, the student and his parent/guardian/foster parent/other person, a DJJ counselor, or a local DJJ Community Service Officer and respective DJJ Juvenile Parole and Probation Specialist, concludes that the best placement for the child would be the alternative setting. Any placement made pursuant to an IEP team shall take precedence. The case manager (i.e., counselor, special education teacher, or MTSS Coordinator) shall consult the Student Support Team within 5 days to determine whether transition or other services are necessary for the student. (GADOE rule 160-4-8.17). This meeting will take place at the student's home school.

#### **SECTION XI: DEFINITIONS OF DISCIPLINARY / EDUCATIONAL TERMS**

**ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM:** (Grades 6-12) May be alternative to external suspension or expulsion. Students in the alternative program are not allowed to participate in school-sponsored activities including athletics/sporting events, extracurricular events, and graduation. Under certain circumstances, bus transportation to the alternative program may be denied at the discretion of school authorities. The Alternative Program is located at Upson-Lee Alternative School.

**COUNSELING:** The Thomaston-Upson County School System has counseling services in each school. The school counselors assist in efforts to help students focus on academic, personal, social, and career development so they achieve success in school. Counselors provide guidance regarding making smart choices and preparing students to lead fulfilling and responsible lives. Counseling is provided through classroom lessons, small groups, and individual counseling sessions as needed.

**DETENTION:** A requirement that the student report to a specific school location and to a designated teacher or school official to make up work missed or to receive specific instruction in behavior modification. Detention may require the student's attendance before school, after school or during scheduled class or school activity time if school officials deem removal of the student from his/her regular school schedule essential to the well-being of the student or school.

**HEARING OFFICER/PANEL:** A person or persons that, by law and through an appointment of the Superintendent, may hear predetermined student discipline proceedings. This person or persons would be authorized to rule on discipline cases when there is a recommendation for suspension/expulsion for more than nine school days. Hearing/Tribunal panel members are required to participate in annual training.

**INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA):** IDEA is a United States federal law that governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to children with disabilities. It addresses the educational needs of children with disabilities from birth to age 21 in cases that involve 13 specified categories of disability.

**INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP):** IEP is a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised in a meeting in accordance with State Board Rule 160-4-7-.06.

**POSSESSION:** For purposes of this Policy and Code, possession shall be defined as the actual control or manual custody of anything which may be the subject of property for one's use, either as the owner or as the proprietor of a qualified right in it and either held personally or by another, who exercises it in one's place and name. This definition shall embrace the concept of actual possession as well as constructive possession and shall extend to items of contraband held personally by a student or maintained by a student in a space or spaces in which the student exercises control including but not limited to purses, book bags, lockers, and vehicles.

**PRINCIPAL'S DISCRETION:** When a disposition notes that schools may have "principal's discretion" in dealing with an infraction, that distinction should also be interpreted as a "principal's, assistant principal's or principal's designee discretion." Some examples of Principal's

discretion could include but are not limited to: Administrative Detention, Check-in Check-out, Behavior Intervention Group, Counselor referral, Parent Conference, Phone Conference, Behavior Plan.

**PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE:** The degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity and/or the number of occurrences of the behavior.

**STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST):** The Student Support Team (SST) is a multi-disciplinary team which utilizes a problem-solving process to investigate the educational needs of students who are experiencing academic and/or social/behavioral difficulties. SST, which is required in every Georgia public school, uses a data-driven process to plan individualized supports and interventions and the method of assessing their effectiveness.

**SUSPENSIONS:** The removal of a student from class, school, or school-sponsored events for a specified period of time. Suspensions may also include the removal of privileges such as bus transportation, student parking, or other opportunities as provided to them by the school or School System. Student suspensions are generally applied as either short-term or long-term suspensions based on the severity of the violation(s). **SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS** are suspensions for less than ten school days. **LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS** are for greater than nine school days and require a due-process hearing (tribunal) before being implemented.

1. **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** Temporary removal from classes by placing students in designated area. Students will continue to do classroom work and receive credit.
2. **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** Denial to a student of the right to attend school. Absences will be registered as excused absences. Students who have been externally suspended are not permitted on any Thomaston-Upson County Schools campus or at any school function while under suspension. Alternative school students may, as determined by a tribunal, be allowed transportation shuttle privileges to/from home. Externally suspended students who return to school or attend a school function while under expulsion/suspension may be considered to have criminally trespassed and may be prosecuted accordingly if they have not obtained and carry written permission from that Principal.
3. **SUSPENSION OF BUS PRIVILEGES:** Denial of the privilege of school System bus transportation as the result of the safety of students, bus drivers and/or materials being threatened. Discipline will be administered according to procedures in this handbook.
4. **SUSPENSION OF PARKING PRIVILEGES:** Parking is a privilege bestowed by permit which may be suspended or revoked at the Principal's discretion. Suspended and expelled students are denied parking privileges for the term of their suspension or expulsion.

**EXPULSIONS:** Removal of students from the school system permanently, or for an extended period of time beyond the current semester. Expulsion of a student requires a due-process hearing (tribunal) as explained below. Expulsion by a tribunal from a TUCS school may be accompanied with an opportunity to attend the Alternative Program. A student expelled from a TUCS school and allowed to enroll in an Alternative Program is not eligible to participate in extra-curricular or co-curricular programs or activities at the school from which they are expelled.

**TRIBUNAL/DISCIPLINARY HEARING:** In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751 through O.C.G.A. § 20-2-759, the definition of tribunal/disciplinary hearing is a due process hearing afforded to students where there is a recommendation for suspension/expulsion for longer than nine school days. A tribunal panel has the authority to suspend students out of school long-term or place them in the Alternative Program. All tribunals must be held no later than ten days after the beginning of the student's suspension unless: (1) the parent/guardian requests, in writing, an extension to the established deadline; (2) parent agrees to maintain student's status until tribunal has been completed; (3) both school and parent accept this extension/continuance. Any teacher who is called as a witness by the school system shall be given notice no later than three days prior to the hearing. Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education will observe Georgia law in developing and implementing disciplinary hearings held by a disciplinary hearing officer, including the ability to honor disciplinary orders of private schools and other public schools/school systems pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.2.

**UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTION (USCO):** The process of allowing students who attend a school identified as a "persistently dangerous" public school or students who become victims of a violent criminal offense while at school to transfer to a safe public school.

## **SECTION XII: AMENDING THE DISCIPLINE CODE**

Additions or changes in the student infraction codes and the corresponding dispositions may be made as deemed necessary. If this becomes necessary, appropriate announcements will be made to all students.

## **SECTION XIII: REVIEW OF LOCAL BOARD POLICIES RELATIVE TO STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Current School Board Policies regarding Student Discipline are available for review on the School System's website at [www.upson.k12.ga.us](http://www.upson.k12.ga.us).

## **SECTION XIV: LEVELS OF DISCIPLINE**

The Code of Conduct is generally organized into three (3) categories of prohibited behaviors: Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3. However, it is important for students and parents to note that the circumstances of particular violations may warrant more severe consequences, even on the first violation. The School District reserves the right, in administration's sole and exclusive discretion, to take all action necessary to protect its students, provide a safe and secure learning environment, and to ensure the orderly operation of all educational facilities, including without limitation treating a violation as a higher level violation and/or providing for more severe consequences. Additional information regarding prohibited behaviors and disciplinary actions follows these sections.

### **Level 1:**

Minor acts of misconduct which interfere with the good order of school. Level 1 violations may represent a failure to demonstrate universally accepted expectations or social skills. It is the responsibility of all staff to address minor violations as soon as possible within the environment in which the misbehavior occurred. Teachers will record minor classroom behaviors on Student Incident Reports (SIRs) and assign teacher

determined consequences. Once a student receives 4 SIRs, the teacher will complete an office referral form. The accumulation of multiple Level 1 violations could result in more severe consequences.

**Level 2:**

Intermediate acts of misconduct. Level 2 violations are generally mid-level infractions. Repeated (two or more) violations of any intermediate infraction can result in that violation being considered a Level 3 violation.

**Level 3:**

Severe acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehaviors of a similar nature, serious disruptions of the school environment, threats to health, safety, or property, and other acts of serious misconduct. Level 3 violations are generally major infractions and are serious safety violations. Level 3 violations may result in a referral to a Disciplinary Hearing. Administrators will notify the appropriate district personnel, school resource officers, and law enforcement or state agencies deemed appropriate and required by law.

**SECTION XV: STUDENT CONDUCT VIOLATIONS**

**Academic Dishonesty:** Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assignments, or exams.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
All Violations	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: Administrative Discretion	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: Administrative Discretion

**Battery:** Intentional touching or striking of another person to intentionally cause bodily harm. (Note: The key difference between battery and fighting is that fighting involves mutual participation.)

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 2 days	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS 1- 3 days Maximum: OSS for 3 days	Minimum: Period Only ISS 1- 3 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
3 or More Violations	Minimum: Period Only ISS 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: Period Only ISS 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal

**Bullying:** In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4, bullying means an act that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - i. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1;
  - ii. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - iii. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening education environment; or
  - iv. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	OSS for 3 days	OSS for 3 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	OSS for 5 days	OSS for 5 days
3 or More Violations	OSS for 7 days w/required SST meeting	OSS for 10 days w referral to tribunal

**Computer Trespass:** Use of a school computer for anything other than instructional purposes or unauthorized use of a computer or computer network with the intention of deleting, obstructing, interrupting, altering, damaging, or in any way causing the malfunction of the computer, network, program(s), or data.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: ISS for 2 days	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: ISS for 3 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: ISS for 3 days	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 3 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3 days/Removal of Technology Privileges Maximum: OSS for 1 day/Removal of Technology Privileges	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3 days/Removal of Technology Privileges Maximum: OSS for 5 days/Removal of Technology Privileges

**Disorderly Conduct:** Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others. (Includes disruptive behaviors on school buses).

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 2 days	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 3 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 3 days	Minimum: Period Only ISS 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: Period Only ISS 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting

**Electronic Smoking Device:** Any device used to deliver nicotine, or any other substance intended for human consumption that may be used by a person to simulate smoking through inhalation of vapor or aerosol from the device. Such devices include those manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, electronic hookah, vape pen, electronic nicotine delivery system or any cartridge or other component of the device or related product.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 2 days	Minimum: ISS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 2 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3 days Maximum: OSS for 3 days	Minimum: ISS for 2- 3 days Maximum: OSS for 3 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: OSS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 5 days	Minimum: OSS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 5 days

**Fighting:** Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender and intent to harm (Note: The key difference between fighting and battery is that fighting involves mutual participation.)

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: ISS for 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 3 days	Minimum: OSS for 3 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: ISS for 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/Parent Meeting	Minimum: OSS for 5 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
3 or More Violations	OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal



**Other – Attendance Related:** Repeated or excessive unexcused absences or tardiness; including failure to report to class, skipping class, leaving school without authorization, or failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: ISS for 1 day	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: ISS for 1 day
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS – 1 day Maximum: ISS for 2-3 days	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1 day Maximum: ISS for 2-3 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 2-3 days Maximum: OSS for 1 day	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3 days Maximum: OSS for 1 day

**Other – Dress Code Violation:** Violation of school dress code that includes standards for appropriate school attire.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
All Violations	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: Administrative Discretion	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: Administrative Discretion

**Other – Possession of Unapproved Items:** The use or possession of any unauthorized item disruptive to the school environment. (Note: The use of fireworks or incendiary devices must be coded as Arson.)

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 2 days w/parent meeting	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 3 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 3 days w/parent meeting	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1-3 day Maximum: OSS for 5 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 2-3 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting

**Other – Student Incivility:** Insubordination or disrespect to staff members or other students; includes but is not limited to refusal to follow school staff member instructions, use of vulgar or inappropriate language, and misrepresentation of the truth.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 2 days w/parent meeting	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 3 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS – 1 day Maximum: OSS for 3 days w/parent meeting	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: Period Only ISS for up to 3 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting

**Repeated Offenses:** Collection of offenses not previously assigned a state reportable action that occurs on a single or across multiple school days that leads to a state reportable disciplinary action.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Administrative Warning	Administrative Warning
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Period Only ISS for 1 day	Period Only ISS for 3 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: ISS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: ISS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting

**Sex Offenses:** Unlawful sexual behavior, sexual contact without force or threat of force, or possession of sexually explicit images; can be consensual.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: ISS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: ISS for 2-3 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
3 or More Violations	Minimum: OSS for 1-3 days w/parent meeting Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: OSS for 3 days w/parent meeting Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal

**Sexual Harassment:** Non-physical and unwelcome sexual advances, lewd gestures or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature; requests for sexual favors; gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: ISS for 1- 3 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: OSS for 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
3 or More Violations	OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal

**Threat/Intimidation:** Any threat through written or verbal language or act which creates a fear of harm and/or conveys a serious expression of intent to harm or violence without displaying a weapon and without subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: OSS for 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	Minimum: OSS for 3-5 days Maximum: OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal
3 or More Violations	OSS for 5 days w/required SST meeting	OSS for 10 days w/possible referral to tribunal

**Tobacco:** Possession, use, distribution, or sale of tobacco products on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, and on transportation to and from school.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 2 days	Minimum: ISS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 2 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS 1-3 days Maximum: OSS for 3 days	Minimum: ISS for 2-3 days Maximum: OSS for 3 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: OSS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 5 days	Minimum: OSS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 5 days

**Vandalism:** The willful and/or malicious destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property without consent.

Violation	Grades K-5	Grades 6-12
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: ISS for 2 days	Minimum: Administrative Warning Maximum: OSS for 2 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 1 day Maximum: OSS for 1 day	Minimum: ISS for 2-3 days Maximum: OSS for 3 days
3 or More Violations	Minimum: Period Only ISS for 2-3 days Maximum: OSS for 1 day	Minimum: OSS for 1-3 days Maximum: Principal Discretion

The following violations are the most egregious acts of misconduct and generally constitute a serious violation of the law (for example, conduct which would be considered a serious felony criminal act if the student were an adult), and pose a significant safety risk or result in serious bodily injury. The School District reserves the right, in administration's sole and exclusive discretion, to take all action necessary to protect its students, provide a safe and secure learning environment, and to ensure the orderly operation of all educational facilities. School-level administration will consult with district-level administration to determine appropriate consequences.

- **Alcohol:** Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, beverages, or substances represented as alcohol. Students under the or consumption of intoxicating alcoholic influence of alcohol may be included if it results in disciplinary action.
- **Arson:** Unlawful and intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary devices. (Note: Possession of fireworks or incendiary devices must be reported as "Possession of Unapproved Items".)
- **Breaking and Entering:** Unlawful or unauthorized forceful entry into a school building or vehicle (with or without intent to commit theft). (Note: The key difference between Trespassing and Breaking & Entering-Burglary is that Trespassing does not include forceful entry into the school building.)
- **Drugs, Except Alcohol and Tobacco:** Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, or equipment or devices used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics; or any medication prescribed to a student or purchased over-the-counter and not brought to the office upon arrival to school.\*
- **Gang-Related:** Any group of three or more students with a common name or common identifying signs, symbols, tattoos, graffiti, or attire which engage in criminal gang activity (O.C.G.A. § 16-15-3)
- **Homicide:** Killing of one human being by another.
- **Kidnapping:** The unlawful and forceful abduction, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will.
- **Larceny/Theft:** The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity (e.g., school) without threat, violence, or bodily harm. (Note: The key difference between larceny/theft and robbery is that the threat of physical harm or actual physical harm is involved in a robbery.)
- **Motor Vehicle Theft:** Theft or attempted theft of any motor vehicle
- **Other – Firearms:** Firearms other than handguns, rifles, or shotguns as defined in 18 USC 921. Includes any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive; the frame or receiver of any weapon described above; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device, which includes any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas; any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than ½ inch in diameter; any combination or parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. \*
- **Robbery:** The taking of, or attempting to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. (Note: The key difference between robbery and larceny/theft is that the threat of physical harm or actual physical harm is involved in a robbery)
- **Serious Bodily Injury:** The term "serious bodily injury" means bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.\*
- **Sexual Battery:** Penetration against the person's will or where the victim did not or is incapable of giving consent; touching of private body parts of another person either through human contact or using an object forcibly or against the person's will or where the victim did not or is incapable of giving consent.
- **Trespassing:** Entering or remaining on a public school campus or school board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry. (Note: The key difference between Trespassing and Breaking & Entering-Burglary is that Trespassing does not include forceful entry into the school building.)

- **Violence Against a Teacher:** Intentional physical attack against a teacher with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in severe injuries or any physical attack against a teacher.
- **Weapons – Handgun:** Possession of a firearm that has a short stock and is designed to be held and fired using a single hand; and any combination of parts from which a firearm described above can be assembled. \*
- **Weapons – Knife:** The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife.\*
- **Weapons – Other:** The possession, use, or intention to use any instrument or object that is used or intended to be used in a manner that may inflict bodily harm (does not include knives or firearms).\*
- **Weapons – Rifle/Shotgun:** The term "rifle" means a weapon designed or redesigned, made, or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire only a single projectile through a rifled bore for each single pull of the trigger. The term "shotgun" means a weapon designed or redesigned, made, or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire through a smooth bore either a number of ball shot or a single projectile for each single pull of the trigger. \*

\*Each of these offenses can lead to a child who is served in the Exceptional Children Services program to be moved to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, even if the conduct is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability. Removing the child for these offenses does not require parent consent or agreement, nor does it require a tribunal hearing.

## THOMASTON-UPSON SCHOOL SYSTEM Student Activity Code of Conduct

### I. Introduction

The Thomaston-Upson School System has determined that participation in extracurricular activities (i.e., athletics, student officers, student council, homecoming court, clubs and or interscholastic activities) is a privilege for students enrolled in the school system. A student participating in such activities is a school leader; and, with leadership comes additional responsibility, so students must adhere to the standards and expectations contained in the School System's Activity Code of Conduct. As such, if a student violates these standards, schools may withdraw the privilege of participating in these activities, regardless of whether the violation occurred at a school-related or non-school-related activity. Schools may also withdraw the privilege of participating in these activities if the student violations occur outside of the scope of the activity's "season"; or, beyond the scope of the school day/year.

### II. Student Infractions and Standards of Behavior

**Student Infractions:** Any student who commits the following infractions may be suspended or permanently dismissed from the team:

1. Hazing other students—school clubs and student organizations will not use hazing or degradation of individual dignity;
2. Missing practice, rehearsal or activities (unless excused by the coach or sponsor);
3. Truancy and/or skipping classes;
4. Acting in an unsportsmanlike manner when representing the school;
5. Violating team curfews (as established by the coach or sponsor);
6. Any behavior which results in discipline by the school administration; and,
7. Any behavior which, in the opinion of the administration, reflects in a negative manner on the team, activity, athletic program or school.

**Standards and Expectations for Behavior:** Students participating in interscholastic/extracurricular activities must comply with the following standards and expectations for behavior:

1. Establishing and promoting a positive self-image for the program, school, and School System.
2. Exhibiting good sportsmanship.
3. Supporting team/activity rules developed by the activity's coaches or sponsors.
4. Adhering to the School System's Code of Student Conduct.
5. Observing all standards and guidelines established by the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) Constitution and by-laws.
6. Obeying local, State and Federal laws governing behavior and conduct.\*

*Note: Provisions for dealing with starred (\*) items above are contained in Section V of this document.*

### III. Dispositions for Student Infractions and Standards of Behavior

Dispositions for student infractions and violations of standards and expectations of behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Additional practice or conditioning time
- Conferencing between sponsor/parent or sponsor/student athlete
- Loss of position or awards privileges
- Suspension and/or removal from team(s)
- Spectators that are removed from any after school function may be subject to loss of admittance of other functions. Spectators will be subject to the Code of Conduct for behaviors.

### IV. Suspensions for Student Infractions and Standards of Behavior

**Applying Suspensions:** Relative to suspensions, progressive discipline processes will be utilized to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior, as well as consideration given to each student's previous discipline history and other relative factors.

Reporting Suspensions: Parents/guardians will be notified of the student's suspension. A suspension report will be filed with the Superintendent or designee.

## **V. Dealing with Student Arrests**

Reporting of Misdemeanor or Felony Arrests: A student (or his/her parent/guardian) is responsible for informing a school official, which may include the Principal, Athletic Director or his/her Head Coach or sponsor, of misconduct which results in a misdemeanor or felony arrest. This report must occur within five calendar days of the arrest or the student faces disciplinary action up to, and including, partial or permanent suspension.

Confirming Student Arrests: Student arrests that are verified through a reliable source (school administrator, teacher, coach/sponsor, staff member, parent of involved student, law enforcement, etc.) will be appropriately investigated by the school administration or designee.

Investigations arising from student arrests will be reviewed by a panel comprised of staff from the offending student's school, to include, but not be limited to the following: a school administrator, the school's athletic director, the coach/sponsor of the student, one additional coach/sponsor (as selected by the Principal), and one teacher (as selected by the Principal). It will be the role of this panel to review all information available because of the investigation and recommend potential dispositions for any confirmed infraction to the Principal for his/her consideration—it will ultimately be the responsibility of the Principal to administer discipline. The student may present a written response to the alleged infractions being presented to the panel, but the student will not be present at the panel hearing. The student's parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the panel's decisions.

The school reserves the right to suspend and/or permanently dismiss a student from all extracurricular/interscholastic programs for the remainder of their school career for misconduct, which could result in the arrest or conviction of select misdemeanor or felony crimes.

Addressing Felony Arrests and/or Convictions: Felony arrests constitute an immediate suspension from activities. Relative to that arrest, any subsequent felony conviction of a student may result in a permanent dismissal from activities.

Addressing Misdemeanor Arrests and/or Convictions: Misdemeanor arrests and/or convictions that will cause suspensions from activities may include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Disruption of school or school events
- Threats of violence or acts of violence against school employees or students
- Sexual Offenses
- Weapons Offenses
- Alcohol or Drug Offenses

## **VI. Duration of Code of Conduct**

The Student Activity Code of Conduct will be in effect year-round.