

VII. Instructional Program

7.1 *Curriculum*

The Superintendent will coordinate the design and development of a comprehensive curriculum plan in accordance with state law and any requirements of the State Department of Education for approval by the Board.

7.2 *Textbooks*

Textbooks will be purchased and distributed in accordance with State Department of Education regulations. Only textbooks recommended by the local textbook committee will be approved by the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. The local textbook committee will be appointed by the Board and will consist of teachers representing the subject, school curriculum representatives, and parents who will serve a term of one year. Students are loaned textbooks for the duration of the course that requires the textbook and are responsible for the care of the textbook. Students must reimburse the Board for the cost of any textbooks that are lost or damaged beyond reasonable wear and tear.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-36-62 (1975)]

7.3 *Academic Standards*

Teachers will assign grades and confer academic credit for work and activities performed by students in accordance with objective and generally accepted instructional and grading standards, applicable laws and regulations, and criteria hereinafter specified.

7.3.1 General Grade Scale –

Grades for coursework in Kindergarten and First Grade will be based on the following grade scale:

Kindergarten

4	Exceeds Grade Level Standard **not assessed until 3 rd trimester**
3	Meets Grade Level Standard
2	Partially Meets Grade Level Standard
1	Does Not Meet Grade Level Standard
NY	Not Yet Taught or Assessed
AS	Area of Strength (Social Development Skills)
NH	Needs Help (Social Development Skills)

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First Grade

- 4 Exceeds Grade Level Standard
- 3 Meets Grade Level Standard
- 2 Partially Meets Grade Level Standard
- 1 Does Not Meet Grade Level Standard
- S Satisfactory
- NI Needs Improvement

Second and Third Grade (Science and Social Studies Only)

- S Satisfactory
- NI Needs Improvement

Grades for academic coursework in grades 2-12 will be awarded according to the following scale: (excluding Science and Social Studies in grades two and three).

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Grade (100 point scale)</u>	<u>Grade Point Average Points (4 point scale)</u>
A	90 – 100	4.00
B	80-89	3.00
C	70-79	2.00
D	60-69	1.00
F	Below 60	0.00

- 7.3.2 Advanced Placement and Pre-AP Grade Scale – Numerical grades in Advanced Placement courses (approved by the College Board) will be weighted by adding ten (10) points, and Pre-AP courses (approved by the Board) will be weighted by adding five (5) points. When calculating the grade point average on a four point scale one- point (1.0) will be added for Advanced Placement courses and one-half point (0.5) will be added for Pre-AP courses. Pre-AP Math team grades will be credited eight-tenths (0.8) of a point on a four-point scale.
- 7.3.3 Special Education Grading Standards – Students who are receiving special educational services may be graded according to an individualized educational plan, and nothing in Board policy or procedure prohibits the extension of appropriate academic modifications or accommodations to students who may be eligible for such modifications or accommodations under provisions of state and federal law.
- 7.3.4 Report Cards – Report cards reflecting student progress will be provided to the parents or legal guardians of students on a regularly scheduled basis.
- 7.3.5 Promotion – Students are promoted from grade to grade on the basis of academic credit earned during the school year, in summer school programs, or in such other

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academic programs as may be approved or recognized by the Board. Students who are eligible for promotion from grade to grade may nevertheless be retained. The final decision is to be made by appropriate school officials.

7.3.6 Class Rankings – Beginning with the ninth grade of high school, all students will be ranked based on the four point grade point average scale (GPA) (calculated and weighted as described herein). The GPA calculation will be carried out four decimal places and rounded off.

7.3.7 Credit Recovery – The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for a program through which a student may recover credits in one or more failed courses, in compliance with regulations promulgated by the State Department of Education. The curriculum will align with the State Board of Education course of study and study content standards in which the student seeking credit recovery is deficient.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(12)]

7.3.8 Credit Advancement – The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for students who pursue credit advancement. Procedures for credit advancement will be located on the high school and school system website.

7.3.9 Early Graduation - Students who meet the requirements for graduating may choose to graduate at the end of the first semester of his/her senior year. Early graduates will not be eligible for valedictorian and/or salutatorian. Once students graduate, they will not be allowed to participate in winter/spring school events; however, they will be eligible to participate in prom and all commencement exercises and related activities. Students will need to declare in writing to his/her principal their intent to be an early graduate by the last day of his/her eleventh-grade year.

7.4 *Testing*

The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement a standardized testing program that will include, at a minimum, all testing required under state and federal law. All standardized tests are to be conducted in accordance with the appropriate test administration manual guidelines and any rules or regulations that are intended to ensure their security and validity. Teachers are authorized to conduct tests for their courses in order to determine their students' abilities, knowledge and skills, and to use in calculating a student's grade.

7.5 *Summer School Operations*

A "summer school" program may be implemented in compliance with regulations promulgated by the State Department of Education. Summer school is provided as a service by the Board and is separate and distinct from the regular academic year. The Superintendent is authorized to develop and maintain rules and regulations for the

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operation of summer school, including requirements for enrollment, attendance, transportation, and tuition, which will be subject to approval by the Board.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(6)]

7.6 *Dual Enrollment*

The Board authorizes a dual enrollment program for qualified students in accordance with the regulations of the State Department of Education by which such students are allowed to take post-secondary college courses for high school credit.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(11)]

7.7 *Correspondence or Online Courses*

Credit for correspondence and online courses will be recognized if the conditions and criteria established by the Alabama Department of Education for such programs are met.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(12, 13)]

7.8 *Virtual School Option*

7.8.1 Scope and Delivery of Services – The Board provides a virtual school option for grades 9-12 that includes all courses that are needed to obtain a high school diploma.

Such courses will be delivered through the Alabama State Department of Education’s ACCESS program or other accredited programs approved by the Board.

7.8.2. Student Eligibility Criteria – Students who meet the following requirements are eligible to participate in the virtual school program:

a. *Currently Enrolled Students*

Full-time enrollment requires that the student **must have and maintain a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) and have completed and passed at least one (1) blended or virtual course**. In the event that the student does not meet the eligibility requirements for full-time enrollment, the student may submit a waiver request or enroll on a part-time basis until all eligibility requirements are met. The waiver request will include the following:

- School counselor recommendation from current school of enrollment,
- Student statement of interest,
- Academic history, and

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- Cullman Virtual Program readiness survey.

Upon receipt, the Virtual School administrator or designee will review the waiver request to determine readiness and approve, deny, or request additional information.

b. *Non-resident Students*

Students who do not reside in the attendance zone of the school system may enroll in the school system for the purpose of participating in the school system's virtual program, but such enrollment is subject to the school system's nonresident enrollment policy.

- 7.8.3. Monitoring Performance and Testing Requirements – Individual student performance will be monitored pursuant to the school system's traditional academic credit requirements and grade scale. Students utilizing the virtual school option will be subject to all state testing and accountability requirements and will be subject to the same rules and regulations regarding the administration of such tests applicable to traditional public school students enrolled in the traditional public school.

The Superintendent is hereby authorized to take whatever action may be necessary to facilitate the state testing and accountability requirements applicable to virtual school students. The school system reserves the right to require students utilizing the virtual school option to participate in state testing and accountability requirements on campus at a date and time selected by the school system.

- 7.8.4. Attendance – Students enrolled in any approved Cullman City Schools virtual program are required to meet the program's attendance requirements.

Each day a student has not completed 90% of the virtual course content available as of that date will be counted as an absence for purposes of tracking the student's attendance unless the student is granted approval by Virtual School administrator or designee to fall below the 90% threshold.

All school system policies and procedures otherwise applicable to absences from the traditional school program apply to absences from the virtual course. If the student provides a valid excuse for the day of absence, the student will be provided the same amount of time to come into compliance with the 90% completion requirement that a traditional day student would be provided to makeup school work.

The Superintendent is authorized to develop alternate attendance policies for virtual programs that do not allow the system to track percentages of

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course completion or that warrant a more liberal attendance policy due to the nature of the course, provided that students in such programs are given notice of attendance requirements upon enrollment in such programs.

The school system reserves the right to transition a student back to a traditional day program if the student's participation in the virtual program is impeding the student's academic progress.

[Reference: Act of Alabama No. 2015-89]

7.9 Career and Technical Education Programs

7.9.1 Work-Based Learning Experience – A work-based learning experience provides students with educational opportunities in a work setting that typically cannot be obtained in a classroom and may include, but is not limited to, cooperative education, internships, clinical experiences, and other related opportunities. The Superintendent is authorized to develop guidelines and procedures in accordance with the regulations of the Alabama State Department of Education for work-based learning experiences to be conducted in the school system, including, but not limited to, guidelines for decision making and protocol for solving problems at the workplace and school.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-6-1-.04]

7.9.2 Live Work – Live work consists of work conducted by students that relates to the knowledge and skills taught as part of a CTE program of study, but is presented from outside the classroom. The Superintendent is authorized to develop for Board approval guidelines and procedures in accordance with the regulations of the Alabama State Department of Education and any applicable Business/Industry Certification requirements for live work to be conducted in the school system, including, but not limited to, a systematic method for managing live work, work requests and orders, and procedures for approval of where and for whom work may be conducted, school liability, and restrictions on live work. Any money collected for live work will be accounted for in accordance with the Board's Finance Manual.

7.9.3 Safety – To the extent practicable, reasonable safety procedures will be implemented in the Career and Technical Education program in accordance with Alabama State Department of Education regulations and any **other** applicable ~~Business/Industry Certification~~ requirements.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-6-1-.04]

7.10 Foreign Exchange Programs

The Superintendent is authorized to develop guidelines and procedures, to be approved by the Board, under which foreign exchange students may attend Cullman City Schools and Cullman City Schools' students may participate in foreign exchange programs.

7.11 Extended Programs: Community Education

Upon their approval by the Board, the Superintendent is authorized to implement programs and projects designed to meet the needs of the community served by the school system in accordance with any laws or regulations governing such programs.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-080-050]

7.12 Graduation, Certificate of Completion, and Commencement

Students who have satisfactorily completed requisite course work and have met minimum attendance criteria are eligible for graduation. Student participation in graduation ceremonies and related graduation activities will be subject to the principal's approval and payment of outstanding financial obligations. Participation in a graduation-related ceremony may be prohibited by the principal if the student violates disciplinary standards or if, in the judgment of the principal, the student's participation could lead or contribute to disorder or disruption of the ceremony or activity.

7.12.1 Honor Graduates – No policy

7.12.2 Valedictorian/Salutatorian

- a. *Criteria* – The valedictorian and salutatorian for the graduating class must qualify for the most advanced academic diploma offered and have been enrolled in the school system for a minimum of one full academic year prior to the date of graduation. The student with the highest numerical grade average (calculated and weighted on the 100 point scale as prescribed in the grading section *7.3.1) will be the class valedictorian. The student with the second highest numerical grade average shall be the class salutatorian. The calculated average will be carried out four decimal places and rounded off. In the case of a tie, students having the same average will be recognized as co-valedictorians and co-salutatorians.
- b. *Grade Conversion* – Where letter grades are present on a candidate's transcript from a previously attended, accredited school, the candidate must have the respective school(s) submit the grades in numerical form. If school officials of the school the student previously attended cannot or will not convert the letter grades to numerical grades, the letter grades will be converted to numerical grades as follows:

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A+ = 99	B+ = 89	C+ = 79	D+ = 69	F = 55
A = 95	B = 85	C = 75	D = 65	
A- = 90	B- = 80	C- = 70	D- = 60	

Issues or uncertainties regarding eligibility or grade calculation will be resolved by the school principal in consultation with the Superintendent.

7.12.3 Fifth Year Seniors – Upon the recommendation of the counselor and approval of the principal, a student who has completed four full academic years of high school but who has not completed the required course work for graduation will be allowed to attend the number of class periods necessary to complete the courses required for graduation.

7.13 *School Wellness*

In furtherance of its commitment to fostering healthy nutritional and physical activities that support student achievement and that promote the development of lifelong wellness practices, the Local Education Agency endorses the following programs, practices, and activities:

7.13.1 Nutrition Education and Promotion - The Curriculum Instructional Department in conjunction with the Child Nutrition Program will provide nutrition education, nutrition promotion, and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity. Nutrition lessons and topics are integrated into the curriculum and the health education. Students should have the appropriate skills necessary to make nutritious food choices. Both departments will establish links between high quality nutrition education within the school and community. The school environment should be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student’s understanding and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. The district website will keep the public updated on the policy content and implementation status. The Local Education Agency (LEA) will proactively comply with all federal and state nutrition and physical activity regulations.

7.13.2 Nutrition Standards and Guidelines - Schools will participate in available school meal programs. Child nutrition professionals will receive training consistent with USDA standards to assist them in providing students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods; will accommodate the ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide a clean, safe, and pleasant dining experience. School staff will ensure students have adequate time to eat and access to free drinking water during meals and during the school day. All foods and beverages sold at school during the school day will meet or exceed the nutrition standards identified by USDA and the State of Alabama Board of Education. Foods and beverages that are not part of the school meal program will not be sold within one hour before or after school meals. The applicable USDA Meal Standards and USDA Smart Snack Standards will be

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followed. Nutritional information for meals served is available on the district website. School cafeterias will promote and encourage students to eat healthy food items including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, or low- fat milk.

- 7.13.3 Physical Education and Physical Activity Opportunities - The LEA will offer physical education opportunities that include the components of a sound physical education program. Physical education will equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to maintain healthful lifelong physical activity. Physical education instruction will be aligned with the curriculum and existing state standards. All students will be provided the opportunity to participate regularly in supervised physical activities that are intended to maintain physical fitness and to impart the benefits of maintaining a physically active and healthy lifestyle.
- 7.13.4 Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness - The LEA is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children’s health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. All foods and beverages utilized as fundraisers during the school day must be Smart Snack Compliant or have an exemption form completed. Schools are allowed thirty exemptions per school year. The completed “Alabama’s Implementation of USDA Smart Snacks in School and Exempt Fundraisers Form” must be kept on file at the school and with the Child Nutrition Program Coordinator. Class parties and celebrations which involve foods and/or beverages provided to students during the school day are encouraged to include Smart Snack compliant items, such as fresh fruit, vegetables, and water. Schools should market healthy foods and beverages during the school day that are Smart Snack compliant. The school system will engage stakeholders such as students, parents, teachers, school representatives, board members, and community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies. Stakeholders may contact schools to increase participation in the development, review, or implementation of the wellness policy. The Wellness Committee is comprised of the Superintendent, CSFO, Students Services Coordinator, lead nurse, teacher, and parent, in conjunction with the Child Nutrition Coordinator, will periodically monitor and review the wellness policy. An assessment of the wellness policy will occur at least every three years and be posted on the school system’s website. All students will have opportunities to be physically active on a regular basis during the school day and beyond that promote wellness in a manner that the LEA determines appropriate.
- 7.13.5 Administrative Implementation The LEA, as the recognized food and nutrition services authority for the school district, shall annually approve a free and reduced price meal program. Applications for Free and Reduced priced meal benefits are available on the district website or at the local school. The district shall ensure that students qualifying for free or reduced priced meal benefits are not overtly identified. It is the LEA’s expectation that the teachers shall support the food service program and encourage children to eat a well-balanced meal each

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day. School employees are strongly encouraged to model healthy behaviors for students, including eating and physical activity. Teachers are encouraged to use non-food alternatives such as physical activity as a reward. Food should not be used as a punishment. Any concerns regarding the local school breakfast or lunch program should be reported to the school principal or CNP Coordinator. The Superintendent and his designated representatives shall be responsible for operating an economically sound child nutrition program in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. The Superintendent shall recommend for appointment the necessary personnel to initiate and maintain a quality child nutrition program. The accounting, financial planning, and reporting functions of the program shall be coordinated within the central office.

All sanitation standards required by law shall be strictly observed in each local school's child nutrition program. This shall include, but not limited to, physical examination requirements of employees, preparation procedures, conditions of kitchens and dining areas and maintenance procedures. The CNP Coordinator and School Principal will share responsibility for the operation and supervision of the school child nutrition program. (Policy Revised: 11-08-2023)

Ref: P.L. 108.265, Part 210 and 220, and Section 204 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act.

7.14 *Selection of Instructional Materials and Materials for the School Libraries*

The Superintendent is authorized to develop criteria for approval by the Board for selection of materials (other than textbooks) that are used in conjunction with student instruction and for circulation in school libraries. The Superintendent is further authorized to develop a procedure for review of objections to instructional and library materials.

7.15 *Parent/Family Involvement –*

7.15.1 Parental Involvement, Partnerships Encouraged – Training and appropriate resources will be provided for teachers, administrators, and parents to strengthen the ability of strong parent-school partnerships to enhance student achievement. Parents will be involved in jointly developing appropriate parental involvement policies and in reviewing school improvement through meetings with the school system's Parent Advisory Committee. Policies developed through this process will be distributed to parents of students attending Title I schools. Additionally, the Board will provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist Title I schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student achievement and school improvement. The Board will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies with other programs as appropriate.

- 7.15.2 Annual Evaluation of Initiatives – An annual evaluation will be conducted, with the involvement of parents, to determine the effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the schools. The evaluation will include parent surveys, focus groups, and student assessment data. Parents will also be given the opportunity to submit suggestions and concerns regarding the parental involvement policy to the parent advisory committee. This information will be reviewed annually and used to make revisions to the school system plan as necessary.
- 7.15.3 Impediments to Parent Participation to be Identified – The Board will identify barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities, with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or whose racial or ethnic background may impede effective participation. To the extent practicable, all information required under Section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”), 20 U.S.C. §6301 *et seq.*, will be provided to parents in a uniform, understandable format and upon request, in an alternative format and language that the parents understand.
- 7.15.4 Elementary and Secondary Education Act Compliance – The school system will work with its schools to ensure that school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA and each includes a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA. This policy will specify that each school will:
- a. Convene an annual meeting to explain the school programs to parents and inform them of their responsibilities and right to be involved in the program;
 - b. Offer a flexible number of informational parent meetings, including building a strong home/school connection, parenting skills, and literacy development;
 - c. Involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in planning, review, and improvement of school programs;
 - d. Provide timely information about its school programs to parents, describe the curricula, student assessments, opportunities for regular meetings where parents can provide input, and respond promptly to parent suggestions; and
 - e. Provide parents with an opportunity for meaningful and ongoing consultation and communication about the academic quality of the school.
- 7.15.5 Notice of Rights and Information – The Board will comply with the *Parents Right to Know* provision of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, including the rights of

parents to be informed of the credentials/qualifications of their child’s teacher(s) and their school choice and/or supplemental educational services options when schools are identified for school improvement or determined to be unsafe within the meaning of the Act.

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Policy Manual

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