

# Q&A

## The Discipline Laws *Information for Parents*

---

*All districts in the state of Georgia are required to implement uniform discipline rules and consequences for misconduct. In addition, teachers are given authority to remove disruptive students from their classrooms. The following information provides an explanation of one recent law and how school administrators will use them in the Fulton County School System. For further information, contact your local school.*

### **What is HB 605?**

House Bill 605 is the Improved Student Learning Environment and Discipline Act passed by the 1999 Georgia General Assembly. This law contains two parts: a code of conduct for students and teacher authority in discipline matters. The Fulton County Board of Education Policy and Procedure JD/Student Responsibility Cycle specifies what rules are in place and how the responsibility cycle will be implemented when infractions of these rules occur. The Teacher Authority Act/Teacher Removal of Student (TROS) allows teachers to remove disruptive students from their classrooms.

### **How will these laws affect my child?**

Students who disobey the Fulton County School System Code of Conduct will be disciplined in a manner appropriate for their age, the severity of their actions, and their history of behavior. In the Student Responsibility Cycle, the consequences for continued misbehavior become progressively more severe. A different Student Responsibility Cycle has been developed for each school level: elementary, middle, and high. Also, the new law allows teachers to remove disruptive students from the classroom. The Responsibility Cycle and the teacher removal of a disruptive student help schools provide safe, orderly classrooms where all students can learn and all teachers can teach.

### **How can teachers put a student out of class?**

Under the Teacher Authority Act (TROS), a teacher can remove a student from the classroom if he/she interferes with teaching or poses a threat to his/her classmates or the teacher. When a teacher removes a student from class using this law, a review process begins. A committee of his/her peers and a school administrator review the situation and determine placement. The Placement Review Committee and the administrator have options for placement: move the student to another teacher's classroom, new placement in an alternative setting, or return the student to the removing teacher's classroom.

### **When a student is taken out of class, where will he/she wait for placement?**

The school administrator must temporarily place the student until the committee completes its review of the situation. This placement should be appropriate to the needs of the student. While in temporary placement, the student may also be assigned disciplinary consequences for his/her offenses.

### **What are the differences between the old and new discipline rules?**

The change in discipline rules and consequences for misbehavior are not so different from the old rules. Because the Responsibility Cycle specifies consequences for rule infractions throughout the district, schools have a more uniform process to administer. School administrators must still use their best judgment when working with students and teachers.

**How can I find out about these new rules?**

At the beginning of school and thereafter whenever entering, all students should received two copies of the Parent/Student Handbook, one copy for the student and one for the parent. These handbooks include the Code of Conduct and Responsibility Cycle for the appropriate school level. If you have not received a copy, contact your child's school. Administrators and teachers at each school are available to answer your questions about the new law.

**Do the discipline rules apply to all students?**

Yes, all students are included in this state law, HB 605. But Federal laws take precedence over state laws, and state laws take precedence over local Board of Education policies and procedures.

**Does the Responsibility Cycle apply to all offenses?**

Offenses covered in the Responsibility Cycle refer to general infractions that could occur at any school. Other infractions may occur, and local school administrators should handle these with appropriate notice to parents, students, and teachers. If additional rules are needed at the local school, administrators will involve the school community by including parents, students, staff, and community leaders in discussions.

**Will I be notified about my child's disciplinary problems?**

As stated earlier, school administrators will make every effort to contact parents. You may help by keeping your address and telephone information up-to-date in the school's office. The student, his/her parent, teacher, counselor/social worker, and administrators receive copies of all disciplinary documents.

**Is this discipline information included on my child's permanent record?**

Both academic and discipline records remain with your child as he/she progresses through school. Remember, at any time a parent may ask to see the school records of his/her child.

**What input did parents have in writing the rules?**

A committee of parents, school staff, and central office staff developed the Code of Conduct and Student Responsibility Cycles. As schools identify additional rules they need at the local level, parents and staff at that school will have input. If a student has a discipline problem, the parent will be contacted by telephone, parent conference, U.S. Mail, or email as soon as possible. The parent of a student who has been removed from the classroom by a teacher will be contacted by the school administration.

**Are parents required to attend conferences at the school?**

Yes, parents can be required to attend a conference when their child has been designated as a chronically disruptive student. After repeated tries, if the parent does not respond, the parent can be referred to the Fulton County Courts, which may require the parent to pay a \$500 fine for willfully not conferencing with school officials. However, the best relationship for a child is when the home and school work together cohesively as a regular part of the student's educational experience.

November 2002



For further information contact the Office of Student Discipline at (404) 763-5600 ext. 146/151  
Jo Wells Center, 554 Parkway Drive, Hapeville, GA 30354