


Discipline Definitions

**Georgia Department of Education
Summer Learning Series for Administrators**

June 8, 2023



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Introduction

- Program Specialist, Safe and Supportive Schools, GaDOE Office of Whole Child Supports
- Bachelor' Degree in Criminal Justice from University of Georgia
- Employed at GaDOE for over 24 years
- Over 20 years of experience in school safety, school climate, student discipline and bullying prevention




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Introduction

- Program Specialist, Georgia Tiered System of Supports, Office of Whole Child
- Provides support for FDRESA, OKRESA and HGRESA
- Associates of Science, Teacher Education, BS Middle Grades, M.Ed. Middle Grades Education, Ed.S. Educational Leadership
- Former middle school Algebra, Language Arts and Social Studies teacher in Houston & Glynn Counties
- Former District Coordinator in Glynn County (MTSS, PBIS, SST, Section 504)




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Learning Targets


- To understand state discipline definitions and levels
- To improve the accuracy and consistency of reporting student discipline data
- To understand the importance of reporting student discipline data accurately and consistently


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Student Discipline Resources

Student Discipline (State Board Rule) 


Student Discipline Dashboard 


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Student Discipline Resources

Discipline Matrix (updated January 2020) 

Discipline Matrix Quick Reference Guide 

Discipline Matrix Rationale 

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What is the Discipline Matrix?

- Serves as a guidance tool for school systems
- May be aligned with student codes of conduct
- Discipline Matrix includes:
 - ✓ Discipline Incident Types
 - ✓ Incident definitions were revised to provide more clarity
 - ✓ Specific examples are available
 - ✓ Three-tiered discipline incident severity levels

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Rationale for Discipline Matrix

- Improve Data Accuracy and Reliability
- Improve Transparency in Data Reporting
- Address Concerns about the Disproportionate Use of Discipline Actions
- Improve Ambiguous Categorical Definitions and the Correlation Between Discipline Incidents and Discipline Actions

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Alcohol (01)

Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, beverages, or substances represented as alcohol.

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Alcohol (01)

Level 1
UNINTENTIONAL possession of alcohol

Level 2
Under the influence of alcohol W/OUT POSSESSION

Level 3
Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, beverages, or substances represented as alcohol.

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Battery (03)

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.

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Battery (03)

Level 1
INTENTIONAL physical attack with the INTENT to cause bodily harm resulting in NO bodily injuries

Includes but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping and other intentional physical confrontations.

Level 2
INTENTIONAL physical attack with the INTENT to cause bodily harm resulting in MILD OR MODERATE bodily injuries

Level 3
INTENTIONAL physical attack with the INTENT to cause bodily harm resulting in SEVERE injuries

OR
Any physical attack on school personnel

Note: The key difference between battery and fighting is that fighting involves mutual participation.

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Fighting (08)

Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender and intent to harm.

Note:
The key difference between battery and fighting is that **fighting involves mutual participation.**

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Fighting (08)


Level 1
A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in **NO BODILY INJURIES**.

Level 2
A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in **MILD OR MODERATE BODILY INJURIES**. May include but are not limited to scratches, bloody noses, bruises, black eyes and other marks on the body.

Level 3
A physical confrontation between two or more students with the intent to harm resulting in **SEVERE BODILY INJURIES** that require medical attention.

May be used for students who violate the school policy on **fighting 3 or more times** during the same school year.

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Drugs, Except Alcohol & Tobacco (07)

- 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.

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Drugs, Except Alcohol & Tobacco (07)

Level 1

UNINTENTIONAL possession of PRESCRIBED or OVER THE COUNTER (OTC) medication.

Level 2

Any medication prescribed to a student or purchased OTC and not brought to the office upon arrival to school.

Level 3

Unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any CONTROLLED DRUG OR NARCOTIC SUBSTANCE OR DEVICES used for preparing or using drugs or narcotics

Note:
Does not include auto-injectable epinephrine as properly administered pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-776.



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Larceny/Theft (11)

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.



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Larceny/Theft (11)

Level 1

The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a VALUE BETWEEN \$25 and \$100

Level 2

The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a VALUE BETWEEN \$100 and \$250

Level 3

The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity that does not belong to the student with a VALUE EXCEEDING \$250

May be used for student who violate the school policy on larceny/theft three or more times during the same school year.



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Threat / Intimidation (17)

- 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

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Threat / Intimidation (17)

Level 1

NA

Level 2

INDIVIDUAL physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm WITHOUT displaying a weapon OR subjecting victims to physical attack

Level 3

SCHOOL-WIDE physical, verbal or electronic threat which creates fear of harm WITHOUT displaying a weapon OR subjecting victims to physical attack;

Includes but is not limited to bomb threats or unauthorized pulling of the fire alarm

Note: Students who display a pattern of behavior that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, threatening the educational environment, or causing substantial physical harm, threat of harm or visible bodily harm may be coded as bullying.

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Bullying (29)

- Behavior, which may include written, verbal, physical acts, or through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology
- occurring on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions
- that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, threatening the educational environment, or causing substantial physical harm or visibly bodily harm.

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Bullying (29)

Includes but is not limited to unwanted teasing, threats, name-calling, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, hazing, physical attacks, extortion, social exclusion, coercion, spreading rumors or falsehoods, gossip, stalking, or using any type of electronic means to harass or intimidate.

Level 1

1st offense of bullying as defined in [Georgia Code Section 20-2-751.4](#)

Level 2

2nd offense

Level 3

Repeated acts, as defined in Georgia Code Section 20-2-751.4 occurring on school property or school possession that is a willful attempt or threat to inflict injury, or apparent means to do so, any display of force that puts victim at fear of harm, any written, verbal or physical act that threatens, harasses, or intimidates; causes another person physical harm; interferes with a student's education; so severe and pervasive intimidates or threatens educational environment.

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Bullying O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4

Bullying also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic equipment:

1. Is directed specifically at students or school personnel,
2. Is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and
3. Creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

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Bullying O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4

Each local board policy shall require that, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal of school officials provided for in this subpart that a student in grades six through 12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, such student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

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Bullying O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4

Each local board of education shall ensure that students and parents of students are notified of the prohibition against bullying, and the penalties for violating the prohibition, by posting such information at each school and by including such information in student and parent handbooks.

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Weapon/Knife (22)

The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife.

Level 1

UNINTENTIONAL possession WITHOUT INTENT to harm or intimidate

Level 2

INTENTIONAL possession WITHOUT INTENT to harm or intimidate

Level 3

INTENTIONAL possession WITH INTENT to harm or intimidate

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Disorderly Conduct (06)

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.)

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Disorderly Conduct (03)


Level 1
 Creating or contributing to a **MODERATE** disturbance that **SUBSTANTIALLY disrupts** the normal operation of the school environment but **DOES NOT pose a threat** to the health or safety of others.
 Includes but not limited to general bus misbehavior, spitting on property or persons, encouraging disruptive behavior

Level 2
 Creating or contributing to a **SEVERE** disturbance that **SUBSTANTIALLY disrupts** the normal operation of the school environment but **DOES NOT pose a threat** to the health or safety of others.
 May represent a repeat action.

Level 3
 Creating or contributing to a **SEVERE** disturbance that **SUBSTANTIALLY disrupts** the normal operation of the school environment **OR poses a threat** to the health or safety of others.
 May be used for students who violate the school policy on disorderly conduct **three or more times** during the same school year

AY Includes but not limited to disruptive behavior on school bus, misbehavior during a fire drill or other safety exercise

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Other – Student Incivility (33)

- 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

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Other – Student Incivility (33)


Level 1
 May include but is not limited to general disrespect for school staff or students; profanity, failure to follow instructions

Level 2
 Blatant insubordination or the use of inappropriate language directed towards school staff or peers; intentional misrepresentation of the truth

Level 3
 Issuing false reports on school staff; Three or more offenses in the same year

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Other Incident for a State-Reported Discipline Action (24)

Level 1

Any other discipline incident for which a student is administered corporal punishment, detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, expelled, suspended from riding the bus, assigned to an alternative school, referred to court or juvenile system authorities, or removed from class at the teacher's request (pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-738).

Level 2

Should be used for students who display a pattern of violating local school policies NOT LISTED among the state incident types.

Includes but is not limited to parking violations, etc.

Level 3

NA

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Documenting Physical Restraints

Why is this so important?

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Physical Restraint

- Defined as "the direct physical contact from an adult that prevents, or significantly restricts, a student's movement."
- The term does not include prone restraint, mechanical restraint, or chemical restraint, all of which are prohibited in Georgia.
- Additionally, it does not include providing limited physical contact and/or redirection to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing guidance to a location or providing comfort.

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Other Non-Disciplinary Incident (40)

This code is used exclusively for the reporting Physical Restraint. When the INCIDENT TYPE = '40', then the ACTION CODE must = '95' for Physical Restraint.

Do NOT report a Teacher ID when Incident Code is "Other Non-Disciplinary Incident."

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Other Non-Disciplinary Incident (40)

Level 1

Can only be used to report "Physical Restraint" with action "95" (no teacher name)

Level 2

Can only be used to report "Physical Restraint" with action "95" (no teacher name)

Level 3

Can only be used to report "Physical Restraint" with action "95" (no teacher name)

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Local Code Mapping



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Disorderly Conduct

- Other/disruptive behavior
- Classroom disruption
- General bus misbehavior
- Behavior that endangers others (level 3)
- General disruption of school environment
- Bus conduct violation
- Inciting prohibited behaviors
- Behavior detrimental to learning
- Disruption of school operations

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Other - Student Incivility

- Disrespectful conduct
- Insubordinate conduct
- Giving false/misleading information
- Profane/vulgar/obscene/insulting act
- Failure to report event to teacher/administrator
- Disrespect
- Inappropriate behavior or comments
- Insubordination, blatant disrespect
- Profanity
- Other – disrespect/defiance
- Other – giving false information
- Other – profanity
- Refusal to do classwork
- Willful and persistent disobedience

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Other - Attendance Related (30)

- Tardies
- Truancy
- Failure to serve detention
- Failure to serve Saturday School
- Skipping class
- Skipping school
- Leaving campus without authorization
- Leaving class without authorization
- Refusal to serve ISS

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Other – Possession of Unapproved Items (34)

- Possession/use electronic or communication device
- Use/display of cell phone
- Possession/use/exchange of items inappropriate for school
- **Do not use this code for reporting weapons!**

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Student Incivility & Disorderly Conduct

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Accurate Discipline Reporting

- Be mindful that the media and others are carefully reviewing your student discipline data.
- Be mindful that when signing off on student discipline data, local superintendents are acknowledging that **falsifying, misrepresenting or omitting information may result in criminal, civil, or administrative penalties, including disciplinary action under the Code of Ethics for Educators (Georgia Professional Standards Commission).**

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Accurate Discipline Reporting

- Be mindful of **public perceptions** about student discipline
 - For example, have you reviewed your **Georgia Student Health Survey (GSHS)** results?
 - If GSHS results indicate a bullying problem at your school/district but the school/district has reported zero bullying incidents, this might raise questions about your discipline reporting.

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Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO)



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44 Offering a holistic education to each and every child in our state.



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What is USCO?

The Unsafe School Choice Option provision [Section 8532, 20 U.S.C. 7912] under ESSA sets forth the following:

Each State receiving funds under this Act shall establish and implement a statewide policy requiring that:

- Students attending a **persistently dangerous school** or;
- Students who become **victims of a violent criminal offense** while in or on the grounds of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends

Such students must be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school (school choice option).

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Georgia's Definition of a Persistently Dangerous School

Persistently Dangerous School – Any school in which for **three consecutive years**:

1. At least one student is found by official tribunal action to have violated a school rule related to a violent criminal offense either on campus or at a school-sanctioned event;
2. At least 2% of the student body or 10 students, whichever is greater, have been found to have violated school rules related to other identified criminal offenses;
3. Any combination of 1 and 2.

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USCO Incidents

- Aggravated Battery
- Aggravated Child Molestation
- Aggravated Sexual Battery
- Aggravated Sodomy
- Armed Robbery
- First Degree Arson
- Kidnapping
- Murder
- Rape
- Voluntary Manslaughter
- *Non-felony Drugs**
- *Felony Drugs**
- *Felony Weapons**
- *Terroristic Threats**

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[GaDOE USCO Webpage](#)

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Unsafe School Choice Option

Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO) incidents are separate from Student Discipline incidents

- Focuses primarily on violent crimes.
- **USCO incidents must occur on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.**
- USCO data is based on tribunals, hearings conducted by a disciplinary hearing officer, and official actions of the local board of education
- USCO data is not based on criminal charges or court proceedings.
- Definitions are different
 - Battery (Student Discipline) vs. Aggravated Battery (USCO)
 - Robbery (Student Discipline) vs. Armed Robbery (USCO)
 - Threat / Intimidation (Student Discipline) vs. Terroristic Threat (USCO)

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USCO Incident Context and Location Codes

- **USCO incidents must occur on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.** Otherwise, do not report it as an USCO event!
- Use Incident Context and Location Codes to indicate the location, time, and sponsorship of the activity during which the incident occurred.

INCIDENT CONTEXT AND LOCATION	
Code	Description
11	During school hours, and on school grounds or campus
12	During school hours, at a school-sponsored activity, but off school grounds or campus
13	During school hours, at a school-sponsored activity, while on school-sponsored transportation
14	During school hours, Off school campus/Non-sponsored activity
21	Outside school hours, at a school-sponsored activity, and on school grounds or campus
22	Outside school hours, at a school-sponsored activity, but off school grounds or campus
23	Outside school hours, at a school-sponsored activity, while on school-sponsored transportation
31	Outside school hours, NOT at a school-sponsored activity, but on school grounds or campus
32	Outside school hours during non-school sponsored activity, not on school grounds/not on campus, but was somehow associated with school personnel, students, or school property
00	No Incident nor Context & Location for this record (continuation of Action only)

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USCO "Gatekeeper"

Each school district should assign an USCO "gatekeeper" that is responsible for reviewing all USCO incidents before local superintendent sign-off. Gatekeepers should look for the following before reporting USCO incidents to GaDOE:

- USCO incidents must occur on school property or at a school-sponsored activity
- Students responsible for committing USCO incidents must have been found in violation by hearing officer, tribunal panel, signed a waiver admitting guilt or some other "official action" by the local board of education.

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Let's Practice!



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Example #1

A group of students follow Student A to the bus ramp. Student B begins to punch Student A repeatedly. Student A falls to the ground and does not attempt to hit back. A teacher on duty intervened to stop the incident. Student A's nose was bleeding and was sent to the nurse's office for treatment. How would you code this incident?

- A. Battery (03) – Level 1
- B. Battery (03) – Level 2**
- C. Fighting (08) – Level 2
- D. Fighting (08) – Level 3

Intentional physical attack with the intent to cause bodily harm resulting in mild or moderate bodily injuries.

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Example #2

A student brings a knife to school and uses it to steal another student's lunch. How would you code this incident?

- A. Threat / Intimidation (17) – Level 3
- B. Robbery (13) – Level 3**
- C. Weapons – Knife (22) – Level 3**
- D. Larceny/Theft (11) – Level 1

Robbery with the use of a weapon

Weapons may include but are not limited to guns, knives, clubs, razor blades, etc.

Intentional possession, use or intention to use a knife or knife-like item with the intent to harm or intimidate

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This could be coded as an USCO violation:

Armed Robbery

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Example #3

A student enters a classroom and steals a calculator (worth approx. \$10.00) and is assigned one day of ISS as a consequence. How would you code this incident?

- A. Larceny / Theft (11) – Level 1
- B. Breaking and Entering / Burglary
- C. Robbery (13) – Level 2
- D. Non-State Reportable Offense (24) – Level 1**

Any other discipline incident for which a student is administered corporal punishment, detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, expelled, suspended from riding the bus, assigned to an alternative school, referred to court or juvenile system authorities, or removed from class at the teacher's request (pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-738)

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Example #4

A student takes Ritalin for ADHD. His medication is kept at his school and the school nurse distributes the medicine to him. Today his Mother put his medication in his book bag because he plans to spend the night with a friend. The medication falls out of his book bag and is confiscated by a teacher. How would you code this incident?

- A. Other – Possession of Unapproved Items (34) – Level 1
- B. Other – Possession of Unapproved Items (34) – Level 2
- C. Drugs – Except Alcohol and Tobacco (07) – Level 1
- D. Drugs – Except Alcohol and Tobacco (07) – Level 2

Unintentional possession of prescribed or over the counter medication. Does not include the possession of narcotics or any illegal drugs.

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Example #5

A student takes Ritalin for ADHD. His medication is kept at his school and the school nurse distributes the medicine to him. Today his Mother put his medication in his book bag because he plans to spend the night with a friend. He takes the medication out of his book bag and gives one of the pills to a friend. How would you code this incident?

- A. Other – Possession of Unapproved Items (34) – Level 2
- B. Other – Possession of Unapproved Items (34) – Level 3
- C. Drugs – Except Alcohol and Tobacco (07) – Level 2
- D. Drugs – Except Alcohol and Tobacco (07) – Level 3

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.

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Example #6

A student brings a lighter to school buried within his pocket and another student sees it and tells the teacher. How is this incident coded?

- A. Other - Possession of Unapproved Item (34) – Level 1
- B. Other - Possession of Unapproved Item (34) – Level 2
- C. Other - Possession of Unapproved Item – Level 3
- D. Non-State Reportable Offense – Level 3

The use or possession of unauthorized items including but not limited to toy guns or other items that can be construed as dangerous or harmful to the learning environment; includes the possession of matches, lighters, incendiary devices or fireworks. The use of matches, lighters, incendiary devices or fireworks should be coded as Arson, Level 3 should be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to unapproved items.

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Student Discipline Reporting Resources

- Discipline Matrix
- Discipline Matrix Rationale
- Discipline Matrix Quick Reference Guide
- Student Discipline Reporting PowerPoint Presentation
- K-12 Student Discipline Dashboard
- School Climate and Discipline Resources

[GaDOE Student Discipline Website](#)

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GaDOE Community


[Office of Whole Child Supports](#)

Join the GaDOE Office of Whole Child Supports Community to discuss general topics related to student non-academic barriers to success and expanding learning opportunities in Georgia.



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Develop an Action Plan to Implement Best Practices for Annual Training

- **WHO:** All administrators and teachers, particularly those who are new
- **WHEN:** July/August; as needed for new hires
- **HOW:** Include in existing PL calendar for new teacher orientation or district meetings for administrators
- **WHAT:** Use local examples of redacted referrals to facilitate discussions and address local concerns; utilize state resources

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- SAVE THE DATE -
"Prevent, Teach, Respond"
 Premiering Tuesday, June 13, 2023
 Secondary Focus: 9-10:30
 Primary Focus: 1-2:30

- ✓ For district & school leaders
- ✓ Focus on data-driven problem-solving process
- ✓ Building solutions to behavior problems

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Administrator Summer Series
 Feedback Form

Click [HERE](#)

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