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## **Principal's Welcome**

We are excited to welcome Hancock Middle and High School students back to campus for the 2025-2026 school year. We are looking forward to a productive, exciting, and successful new school year for all of our students.

My hope is that you enjoyed your time off in the Summer and are ready to start a brand-new chapter in your educational journey this Fall. Thank you, parents, guardians, teachers, staff, and students, for all your time and resources in preparing for the new school year.

I want to encourage and challenge all at HCMHS to start the year strong! Be ready to learn, grow, build positive relationships, and truly enjoy your school experience.

We have worked hard this Summer to provide new opportunities to cultivate a positive school environment with the goal of providing each of you with the skills to succeed.

Again, welcome back, and this school year let's all make a concerted effort to be kind, respectful, and motivated each and every day!

YOU Determine Who YOU Become!

Mr. Evan McCoy

## **Mission Statement and Beliefs**

The mission of Hancock County Middle/High School is to prepare all students with a quality education with diverse strategies so they will be able to succeed in college, vocational school, military, or the workforce, and make them productive citizens. By doing so, the school will provide a safe and challenging learning environment that fosters intellectual growth, individual integrity, and community responsibility for lifelong learning.

### **We believe that:**

- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and vocational needs.
- Students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process.
- Students, teachers, support personnel, parents, and the community share the responsibility for the support of the school's mission.
- A safe, comfortable, and nurturing environment that adheres to school policy should promote student learning
- Positive relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff enhance student success.
- Students should be provided the technology and resources that prepare them for a competitive global society.
- Educational decisions should be based upon research and data and should include the input of all of the school's stakeholders.

## **Student Expectations**

- Know and adhere to reasonable rules and regulations established by local boards of education and implemented by school administrators and teachers.

- All middle school students are expected to stay on their side of the building. Likewise, all high school students are expected to stay on their side. Any student caught on the wrong side of the building, without permission or justifiable reason, will be punished accordingly.
- Respect the human dignity and worth of every individual.
- Refrain from libel, slanderous remarks, and obscenity in verbal and written expression.
- Study diligently and maintain the best possible level of academic achievement.
- Be punctual and present in the regular school program.
- Dress and groom in a manner that meets reasonable standards of health, cleanliness, modesty, and safety.
- Help maintain and improve the school environment, preserve school property, and exercise the utmost care while using school facilities.
- Refrain from gross disobedience or misconduct or behavior that would lead to any physical harm or disrupt the educational process.
- Respect the reasonable exercise of authority by school administrators and teachers in maintaining discipline in the school and at school-sponsored activities.
- Carry only those materials that are acceptable under the law and accept the consequences for the articles stored in individual lockers.
- Do not have in your possession or participate in the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other unauthorized substances.
- Seek out and apply for post-secondary scholarships.
- Obey the rules listed in this handbook.

### **Guidance/Counselor Notes**

A counselor will be available to assist in planning schedules, checking records, and completing forms for classes here at HCMHS and continuing education after high school.

Students are encouraged to have a conference with the counselor if they are experiencing any problems that affect their educational progress or personal well-being.

Please visit the Hancock County Schools website for newsletter and scholarship information. The school counselors would like to encourage all students and parents to use ASPEN to check grades, attendance, tardiness, and graduation requirements.

Deborah Gibson, School Counselor

Tara Marion, School Counselor

## **PROGRAMS AND POLICIES**

### **ACADEMIC INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

The Academic Incentive Program is open to all HCMHS students to encourage academic excellence. Gold cards are awarded for attaining all As in a semester. Each recipient receives-

- Free admission to all HCMHS home athletic events.
- Extended lunch periods on designated Awards Days.
- \$5.00 credit to the school store.

Silver cards are awarded for attaining all A's and B's in a semester.

- 7 free admissions to HCMHS home athletic events
- \$3.00 credit to the school store
- Extended lunch periods on designated Awards Days.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

The purpose of Hancock County's AUP provision of access to the Internet is to support research and education in and among schools and academic institutions in the U.S. by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The full AUP may be found in student paperwork or accessed at [www.hancockcountyschools.com](http://www.hancockcountyschools.com)

#### **Internet/Acceptable Use**

Students will participate in projects using the internet in a directed manner to support curriculum and research activities. A written parental form shall be required prior to a student being granted independent access to electronic media involving the internet. The form must be signed by the student and by the parent/legal guardian of any student under 18.

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

Achievement at HCMHS is defined by numerical grades earned in courses and performance on state exams. Achievement is supported in numerous ways. Academic Tutoring is available throughout the year for students seeking enrichment or remediation. Parents may enrich their child's learning by using teacher or school-provided materials. Also, a list of helpful academic websites can be found on our school's webpage. We encourage parents to explore all available resources.

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a proactive approach that schools use to improve school safety and promote positive behavior. The focus of PBIS is prevention, not punishment. PBIS recognizes that students can only meet behavioral expectations if they know what the expectations are. Everyone learns what's considered appropriate behavior and uses a common language to talk about it.

A school using PBIS looks at behavior as a form of communication. PBIS doesn't ignore the problem behavior. Schools still use discipline, but punishment isn't the focus. Instead, the focus is on teaching expectations, preventing problems, and using logical consequences.

### **ACT TESTING**

ACT is a graduation requirement for all students (high school policy 2.103).

**March 10, 2026**, all juniors will participate in the ACT testing at Hancock County High School. Attendance and participation are required. No testing fee will be charged for this test administration.

**Other 2025/2026 ACT Test Dates-**

<b><u>Test Date</u></b>	<b><u>Registration Deadline</u></b>
September 6, 2025	August 1, 2025
October 18, 2025	September 12, 2025
December 13, 2025	November 7, 2025
February 14, 2026	January 9, 2026
April 11, 2026	March 6, 2026
June 13, 2026	May 8, 2026
July 11, 2026	June 5, 2026

These tests will be administered at a variety of colleges in our area (LMU, WSCC, Carson Newman, etc.) The registration fee is approximately \$60.00 (without writing) or \$80.00 (with writing). Students must register at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) for more information concerning ACT testing.

This year, if there is a senior who would like to retake the ACT free of charge at school, the date will be October 1, 2025, and if they take the test anywhere else, they may obtain a voucher from the guidance department.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

#### **LATE TO CLASS**

Any student **entering** any classroom after the tardy bell rings is considered late. (Teachers will record their tardiness on ASPEN daily.) Tardies will be reset back to zero when the 9 weeks are complete. We want the students in class as much as possible, but there needs to be a punishment for their excessive tardiness.

- 6th Tardy- Student Warning
- 7th Tardy- 1 Day In-School Detention (Parent Contact)
- 8th Tardy- 1 Day In-School Detention
- 9th Tardy- 2 Days In-School Detention
- 10th Tardy- In-Person Parent Conference (3 Days Out-of-School Suspension)
- 11th Tardy or More- In Person Conference/Possible Alternative Placement

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Students are responsible for making up missed class work. Excused absences will be given for the following reasons:

1. Illness with doctor or dentist, etc., verification
2. Death in the family
3. Recognized religious holiday
4. School-sponsored activities
5. Extreme family hardships
6. Student absences approved by the principal.
7. Court dates are only excused for the day of the appearance from 12:30 - 3:00
8. Four parent notes for the entire school year.

**NOTE:** Excuses for tardiness or absences must be turned in to the office within five days from the occurrence.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

An unexcused absence is any absence that is not listed above as being excused.

Students are expected to make up any work missed and are responsible for acquiring work from the teachers before signing out.

### **OTHER PLACEMENT**

If a student has been sent or placed in a facility other than Hancock County Middle/High School, the risk assessment team must meet and discuss the placement before returning to the school.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

*Work missed because of any absence, which is **EXCUSED** through the attendance office with proper notes or documentation, may be made up within five (5) school days upon the student's return. The first day the student returns counts as day one. It is the student's responsibility to get the make-up work assignment and arrange a time with the teacher if needed. Work that was due or a test that was scheduled on the day that the student missed is due the day that the student returns to school. After 3 UNEXCUSED absences, no make-up work will be allowed. Students who have excused absences shall be allowed to make up the exam/test missed. If the exam/test is not made up on the day of return, an alternative make-up test may be given. The type of exam and time of make-up may be at the discretion of the teacher*

## **TRUANCY**

### **Hancock County Schools' New Truancy Intervention Procedure**

TCA Code 49-6-3009(b) / Senate Bill 196 / Public Chapter 379

Effective July 1, 2018

On or before the beginning of each school year, the principal or a teacher at every public, private, or parochial school shall notify a student's parent, in writing, that:

- If the student is absent from school for an aggregate of five (5) days during the school year without adequate excuse, then the student is subject to referral to juvenile court; and
- It is a parental duty to monitor the student's school attendance and require the student to attend school.

Each successive accumulation of five (5) unexcused absences by a student must also be reported.

If it appears that, within three (3) days after receipt of the notice, any child, parent, guardian, or other person in parental relation has failed to comply with this part, then the director of schools shall request a conference between school officials and the parent to discuss the absences and to trigger the first tier of the progressive truancy interventions.

#### **Tier I:**

- Daily Phone Calls will be made for any student who misses any day of school, excused or unexcused.
- 3-Day Letters will be sent to any student who misses 3 unexcused days of school
- Upon the 4<sup>th</sup> unexcused day the student misses, the Parent/Guardian will receive one or more of the following: notification by letter, a home visit and/or a phone call, including an invitation to a Conference with the Student, Parent/Guardian, Principal/Guidance Counselor and Attendance Supervisor at the School
- 5-Day Letters will be sent to any student who misses 5 unexcused days of school
- Conference with Student, Parent/Guardian, Principal/Guidance Counselor, and Attendance Supervisor at School, including
  - (a) A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the child;
  - (b) The period for which the contract is effective, not to exceed ninety (90) school days, or the last day of the semester after the date the contract becomes effective, whichever comes first; and
  - (c) Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court; and
- An Individualized Assessment of the Student's Attendance is reviewed, and all parties present must sign an Attendance Contract
- Follow-up meetings to discuss the student's attendance progress are scheduled



*If the Student/Parent/Guardian fails to show up or to comply with Tier I, Tier II is invoked*

**Tier II:**

- Second Attempt at Conference with Student, Parent/Guardian, Principal/Guidance Counselor, and Attendance Supervisor at School, if not completed in Tier I
- Second Attempt at review of Individualized Assessment of Student's Attendance, and Signing of the Attendance Contract, if not completed in Tier I
- Referral to counseling, community-based services, or in-school or out-of-school services aimed at addressing the student's attendance problems

*If the Student/Parent/Guardian fails to show up or to comply with Tier I or Tier II, Tier III is invoked*

**Tier III:**

- Referral to Truancy Board\*
- Third Attempt at Signing of the Attendance Contract, if not completed in Tier I or Tier II
- Referral to counseling, community-based services, or in-school or out-of-school services aimed at addressing the student's attendance problems

***\*If Student/Parent/Guardian fails to show up to the Truancy Board Meeting, Referral to Juvenile Court***

Each referral to juvenile court will be accompanied by a statement from the student's school certifying that:

- The school applied the progressive truancy interventions to the student; and
- The progressive truancy interventions failed to meaningfully address the student's school attendance.

Each intervention program shall report school attendance of program participants to the director of schools in the year following the intervention.

Ms. Marta M. Stapleton, Attendance Supervisor

Visit [hancockcountyschools.com](http://hancockcountyschools.com) for additional information

***DRIVERS' LICENSE AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE***

**School attendance is required to get and keep a driver's license!**

Parents and students equally need to be aware of the Tennessee State Statute 49-6-3017. This statute, "Minors withdrawn from secondary school – denial of motor vehicle license or permit," explains when a student loses his/her driver's license for failure to attend school, TCA 49-6-3017. The Department of Safety shall deny a license or instruction permit to any person under eighteen (18) years of age who does not at the time of application of a driver license present a diploma or other certificate of graduation issued to the person from a secondary high school of this state or any other state, or documentation that the person is:

1. Enrolled and making satisfactory progress in a course leading to a General Educational Development Certification (GED) from a state-approved institution or organization, or has obtained such a certificate;
2. Enrolled and making satisfactory academic progress in a secondary school of this state or any other state; or
3. Excused from such requirements due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control.

The definitions of "withdrawn" and "making satisfactory academic progress" should be of interest to students and their parents. The state of Tennessee considers withdrawal to be more than 10 consecutive or 15 days total unexcused absences during a single semester. It is pertinent to note that the state does not consider, for this section, suspension, expulsion, or confinement in a correctional facility as being beyond the student's control. The state considers satisfactory academic progress to be a passing grade in at least 3 full unit subjects at the conclusion of any grading period. Once a student is not in compliance with these requirements, his/her driving privileges either will not be granted or will be revoked until the next grading period, provided the student's attendance and grades at that time are in compliance. A second noncompliant notice suspends driving privileges until the student reaches the age of 18. The Tennessee Department of Safety requires a noncompliant student to surrender their driving license/permit until the student attends school and fulfills the legal requirements for reinstatement. Failure to surrender the driving license/permit will result in a higher reinstatement fee.

**NOTE: It is the parents' responsibility to notify the school of a change of address within the county or state, or if moving out of state. Also, the school must be notified of changed telephone numbers.**

## ***LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE DAY***

### **Sign-out Procedures**

Students will be allowed to sign out under the following conditions:

- a) The parent or guardian may come to the office to sign the student out. Parents should take note of the times during which students may be dismissed for non-emergencies. Those times are during the change of classes or during the student's lunch period.
- (b) Parents' call-ins **are not accepted** to sign a student out.
- (c) Students may ONLY leave with those who are on their sign-out list in ASPEN.
- (d) Students who are 18 years old or older must also have parental permission on file to leave school, and the parent will be called to verify if the student is able to sign out before leaving school.
- (e) Any student who signs out early will not be allowed to sign back in unless they can produce documentation listed in the "excused absences" section.

(f) Any student who leaves school without permission will be placed in ISS for 5 days. If a second offense happens, the student will go to the Alternative School for a 9-week period (45 days), no matter when they begin at the Alternative School.

## **TRANSPORTATION/BUS INFORMATION**

The Hancock County Department of Education will provide free bus transportation for students who are zoned to HCMHS. Bus transportation is provided by the taxpayers of Tennessee and is a privilege extended to all eligible students. Misconduct on the bus, at bus stops, or in the bus duty area at school may result in the loss of this privilege. The privilege of riding a school bus is conditional upon students' good behavior and observation of reasonable safety rules and regulations. It is understood that the bus driver is in full charge of the bus and the students. Any child who violates the safety rules will be reported to the Supervisor of Transportation by the bus driver. The principal will investigate and, if warranted, will discipline the student according to Hancock County Board of Education Policy.

### **School Bus Rules**

1. The bus driver may assign seats and seatmates.
2. Remain seated. Seatbelts must be worn at all times.
3. No profanity, yelling, spitting, inappropriate noises, playing loud music
4. Do not eat or drink on the bus; keep the bus clean.
5. Violence/intimidation is prohibited
6. The use of any tobacco products (cigarettes, vapes, smokeless tobacco) is prohibited. Vapes of any kind are prohibited.
7. Keep your hands and head inside the bus. Do not throw things out the bus windows.
8. Do not destroy property; no writing on the bus, cutting seats, touching the bus cameras, or throwing paper wads.
9. Do not distract the driver through misbehavior.

### **Penalties for Misconduct**

Misconduct on the bus jeopardizes everyone's safety. Penalties for bus behavior will be determined by the Supervisor of Transportation, the Principal, or the Vice Principal. Penalties include, but are not limited to, in-school detention, suspension, removal from the bus for 1-10 days, or removal from the bus for the remainder of the school year. Students who break Tennessee laws may be petitioned to Juvenile Court in addition to penalties for school-level behaviors.

If you have any questions concerning transportation, routes, drivers, discipline, or other issues, call Joseph Southern, Hancock County Supervisor of Transportation, at 733-4848 or the HCMHS office at 733-4611.

## **BULLYING, CYBER BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND INTIMIDATION**

### **Discrimination/Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious)**

Students will be provided a learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment. It is a violation of this policy for any employee or any student to discriminate against or harass a student through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature. The following guidelines are set forth to protect students from discrimination or harassment:

1. Student discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated.
2. **Discrimination/harassment** is defined as conduct, advances, gestures, or words, either spoken or implied, of a sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious nature which:
  - a. Unreasonably interfere with the student's work or educational opportunities; or
  - b. Create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment; or
  - c. Imply that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of receiving grades or credit; or
  - d. Implying that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for determining the student's grades and/or participation in a student activity.

### **Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Intimidation**

Students will be provided a safe learning environment. ***It is a violation of this policy for any student to bully, intimidate, or create a hostile educational environment for another student, including cyber-bullying.*** **Bullying** is a form of aggressive behavior, which may manifest as abusive treatment, the use of force or coercion to affect others, particularly when habitual and involving an imbalance of power. **Cyberbullying refers to any harassment that occurs via the internet, cell phones, or other devices.** **Cyber bullies** use communication technology to intentionally harm others through hostile behavior such as sending text messages and posting malicious comments on the internet. **Intimidation** means to be fearful or to put fear into others.

This policy applies to all activities in the school, including activities on school property or while in route to or from school-sponsored activities and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. This policy also applies to activities that take place off-campus if the activities cause emotional distress to an individual that substantially disrupts or interferes with the operation of a school or an individual student's ability to receive an education.

HCMHS expects students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner for their respective levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities. Students should show a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose, and school facilities and equipment.

Alleged victims of the above-referenced offenses shall report these incidents immediately to a teacher, counselor, or building administrator.

## **CAFETERIA/LUNCH PERIOD**

In order for the cafeteria to operate efficiently, students should wait their turn in line, eat quietly, and take all trays and silverware to the designated disposal areas. **All food and drinks must be eaten in the cafeteria. If any food is brought during the school day, the food must be eaten during the lunch period and in the cafeteria, and brought to the students during their lunch period. Food will not be allowed into the classrooms. Any commercial food brought must come through the office and be taken to the cafeteria. Food/Drinks SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT INTO THE GYM.** Breakfast will be from 7:30 to 8:00, and then the doors will be shut. Lunch schedules are as follows: 6<sup>th</sup> grade 10:50 –11:20, 7<sup>th</sup> grade 11:20 – 11:50, 8<sup>th</sup> grade 11:50-12:20, 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> grades 10:50 – 11:20, 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade 11:25 – 12:00.

## **CURRICULUM**

Academic standards establish desired learning outcomes, and the curriculum provides instructional programming designed to help students reach these outcomes. Hancock County Schools work locally to establish curricular programs that support student mastery of Tennessee's academic state standards while reflecting unique community values. Instructional practices should provide each student with the best opportunity to meet these standards by supporting individual learning needs.

## **TENNESSEE STATE STANDARDS**

### ***Math and English/Language Arts***

The Standards were drafted by experts and teachers from across the country and are designed to ensure students are prepared for today's entry-level careers, freshman-level college courses, and workforce training programs. The standards focus on developing the critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills that students will need to be successful. To ensure all students are ready for success after high school, the standards establish clear, consistent guidelines for what every student should know and be able to do in math and English language arts from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

### ***All subject areas, excluding Math and Language Arts***

The Tennessee State Department of Education establishes standards for Science and Social Studies as well as Physical Education, Computer Technology, Guidance, Foreign Language, English as a Second Language, Health, and the Arts.

More information can be found at:

[www.tennessee.gov/education/assessment](http://www.tennessee.gov/education/assessment)

## **Credit Recovery**

### **Eligibility Guidelines for Credit Recovery:**

- Must have been enrolled and failed in a core academic course
- Must have made **no less than 40** in the semester class to be eligible
- No more than **10 unexcused absences** per semester to be eligible

**To receive CREDIT:** (if these guidelines aren't met, the student will need to enroll in class the next semester)

- 10 hours of coursework
- 1.0 hours for every point needed to have a passing grade of 60
- 1.0 hours of coursework for each absence in class
- Cannot miss Credit Recovery class more than 2 days total
- Must complete the course 10 days before the end of the semester

**All work must be at 60% accuracy and completed within the semester following the failed subject, or the hours and work will not be accepted.**

**See the guidance counselor for the contract that must be completed before you start class.**

***Credit Recovery is a privilege that gives you a second opportunity to complete your coursework and stay on track to graduate.***

### **DISRUPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS**

No student shall by the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, active and passive resistance, **dialing 911 or pulling the fire alarm, pressing classroom emergency buttons** or any other conduct, that causes the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process or function of the school, or urge other students to engage in such conduct. The disruption or obstruction of the educational process may lead to suspension, alternative school, or expulsion.

**Dialing 911 or pulling the fire alarm** without proper provocation is a Class B misdemeanor that can result in up to 45 days in jail and up to \$200.00 in fines plus court costs. In addition to being cited to court, students pulling the fire alarm will be subject to suspension, alternative school, or expulsion.

### **DISTANCE LEARNING**

A variety of distance learning courses are offered in the Distance Learning Lab. In all courses, student grades are calculated by the course instructor. In college-level coursework, the students will receive the highest possible numeric grade that corresponds with that letter grade.

### **DRESS CODE**

Students should dress appropriately at all times (attire should be size appropriate). Dress should never distract from school activities or prove a hazard to the student's safety or to the safety of others. In the judgment of the administration or designees, a student not appropriately attired or whose grooming constitutes a distraction or disturbance to the school environment will be asked to change clothes.

#### ***Rules of Student Attire and Accessories***

- Hats are permitted. However, students must comply with the teacher's request to remove hats in the classroom and cafeteria. No hoods are to be worn on the head during the school day.
- No blankets allowed at school
- Students may not wear shorts, skirts, or pants with holes that are above a 5-inch inseam. Dress code will still be at the administrator's discretion.

- All teachers will assume responsibility for overseeing dress code compliance. Students in violation of the dress code will be sent to the office
- In a situation where a disagreement exists regarding this dress code, the principal shall make the final decision.
- A written record of violators will be kept in the office. Obvious violators will be required to (1) change clothes, (2) be offered clothing from school (if the student doesn't have clothing to change into), and (3) be sent to In-School for the remainder of the day for non-compliance or until clothing is brought. Students will be unexcused for the class missed for dress code violations.
- No toboggans, hoods, or anything that covers the head unless approved by the administration.
- Bandanas are not permitted either as clothing or as hair accessories
- No swimwear or spandex-type clothing is permitted
- No sunglasses are worn in the building
- No sagging pants (if so, a belt will be provided)
- Leggings are only to be worn under skirts, shorts, or pants that have holes in them.
- No oversized clothing and jackets that are excessive or compromise the safety of students will be permitted.
- Shoes must be worn at all times for health and safety reasons. Footwear should be subject matter appropriate.
- No chains, keychains, spikes, or anything that could be used as a weapon hanging from clothing.
- Clothing that allows undergarments to be visible is not allowed. Pants must be worn at or near the waist. Clothing must not expose the stomach, chest, ribcage, midriff, or back area.
- Shirts, t-shirts, or caps with pictures, drawings, words, or implied references to illegal substances, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vulgar or profane language, sexual connotations, violence, may be related to gang attire or questionable slogans may not be worn at school or school functions
- Muscle shirts, tank tops, midriff shirts, halter-tops, tube tops, and spaghetti strap tops are not appropriate in the school environment. Tops may be sleeveless, but school-appropriate.

### **DRUG TESTING**

This serves as notice that all students shall be subject to drug and/or alcohol testing during the school year, according to the Hancock County Board of Education's Student Alcohol and Drug Testing Policy code – 6.3071

### **DELIVERIES**

Hancock County High School will not interrupt class time to deliver food, drink, flowers, balloons, etc.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Definition of a Personal Communication Device: *A device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message, or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the possessor. This*

*includes smart watches, earbuds, or any other wearable technology that can transmit and/ or receive an electronic signal. A personal communication device stored in a vehicle on school grounds is not considered to be in the possession of the student.*

Students in Grades 6-12 may possess personal communication devices while on school property; however, the device must be in the off mode and must be kept in a locker, backpack, purse, or similar personal carry-all and may not be used during school instructional hours. If and when a violation occurs, the following actions will be taken:

- **1st Offense**: The device is taken up by the teacher, where it will remain on their desk until the end of the class period.  
**Penalty**: Verbal Warning  
**Refusal to Comply**: A student who refuses to comply will be OSS (Out of School Suspension).
- **2nd Offense**: The device is taken up by the teacher, and they will send it to the office, where it will remain in the principal/vice principal's office until the end of the day, when a parent/guardian can pick up after 3:00 PM.  
**Penalty**: The student will serve 1 Day of ISS.  
**Refusal to Comply**: A student who refuses to comply will be OSS (Out of School Suspension).
- **3rd Offense**: The device is sent to the office. Parents may pick up the device by paying fifty dollars (\$50) or by waiting until 3:00 p.m. on the seventh (7th) school day. The seven (7) days will begin the day following the date of the offense.  
**Penalty**: The student will serve 2 days of ISS.  
**Refusal to Comply**: A student who refuses to comply will be OSS (Out of School Suspension).
- **4th Offense**: The device is sent to the office. Parents may pick up the device by paying one hundred dollars (\$100) or by waiting until 3:00 p.m. on the fourteenth (14th) school day. The seven (14) days will begin the day following the date of the offense.  
**Penalty**: The student will serve 3 days of ISS.  
**Refusal to Comply**: A student who refuses to comply will be OSS (Out of School Suspension).
- **5th Offense**: 10 Days OSS (Out of School Suspension)
- **6th Offense and On**: 45 Days of Alternative Placement

**The Hancock County School System will not accept responsibility for student cell phones or electronic devices that are lost or stolen.**

**Any student caught using a cell phone or any other electronic device to film a violent, vulgar, or offensive act will have their phone or electronic device taken up and lose his/her**



phone privileges for the remainder of the semester. Any student who does not comply with this rule may face further disciplinary action.

**TN Code: 39-13-605 Invasion of Privacy: Unlawful photographing in violation of privacy**

(a) It is an offense for a person to knowingly photograph, or cause to be photographed an individual, when the individual has a reasonable expectation of privacy, without the prior effective consent of the individual, or in the case of a minor, without the prior effective consent of the minor's parent or guardian, if the photograph:

(1) Would offend or embarrass an ordinary person if such a person appeared in the photograph

(2) Was taken for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification of the defendant

(b) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires, "photograph" means any photograph or photographic reproduction, still or moving, or any videotape or live television transmission of any individual.

(c) All photographs taken in violation of this section shall be confiscated and, after their use as evidence, destroyed

(d) (1) A violation of this section is a Class A misdemeanor

(2) A violation of this section is a Class E felony if:

(A) The defendant disseminates or permits the dissemination of the photograph to any other person; or

(B) The victim of the offense is under thirteen (13) years of age at the time of the offense

(3) A violation of this section is a Class D felony if:

(A) The defendant disseminates or permits the dissemination of the photograph to any other person; and

(B) The victim of the offense is under thirteen (13) years of age at the time of the offense.

(e) Nothing in this section shall preclude the state from electing to prosecute conduct in violation of this section under any other applicable section, including chapter 17, parts 9 and 10 of this title.

(f) In addition to the punishment provided for a person who commits the misdemeanor unlawful photographing in violation of privacy, the trial judge may order, after taking into account the facts and circumstances surrounding the offense, including the offense for which the person was originally charged and whether the conviction was the result of a plea bargain agreement, that the person be required to register as a sexual offender pursuant to the Tennessee Sexual Offender and Violent Sexual Offender Registration, Verification and Tracking Act of 2004, compiled in title 40, chapter 39, part 2.

**SENATE BILL 897**

**By Haile**

**SB0897**

**002917**

**- 1 -**

**AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, relative to communication devices at schools.**

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:**

**SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 3, is amended by adding the following as a new section:**

(a) As used in this section, "wireless communication device" means a portable wireless device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two (2) or more parties, including, but not limited to:

- (1) Cellular telephones;
- (2) Tablet computers;
- (3) Laptop computers; and
- (4) Gaming devices.

(b) Each local board of education and each public charter school governing body shall adopt and implement a wireless communication device policy that:

- (1) Except as provided in subdivisions (b)(2)-(4), prohibits a student from using a wireless communication device during instructional time;
- (2) Authorizes a teacher to allow a student to use a wireless communication device for educational purposes during instructional time;
- (3) Permits a student to use a wireless communication device in the event of an emergency or to manage the student's health;- 2 - 002917
- (4) Permits a student to use a wireless communication device during instructional time if the student's use of the wireless communication device is included in the student's:

- (A) Individualized education program under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.); or
- (B) Active 504 plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794); and

(5) Establishes a process by which parents or guardians of students will be contacted in the event of an emergency or possible emergency occurring at the school at which the parent's student is enrolled to ensure that the absence of, or restricted access to, wireless communication devices during the school day does not prevent parents from receiving notice of an emergency or possible emergency.

(c) Each LEA and public charter school shall publish the wireless communication device policy established pursuant to subsection (b) on its website.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-4002, is amended by deleting subsection (h) and substituting:

(h) A discipline policy or code of conduct adopted by a local board of education or public charter school governing body may authorize a teacher to withhold a student's wireless communication device from the student for the duration of the instructional time if the student is noncompliant with the LEA's or public charter school's wireless communication device policy adopted pursuant to Section 1. As used in this subsection (h), "wireless communication device" has the same meaning as defined in Section 1.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect July 1, 2025, the public welfare requiring it, and applies to the 2025-2026 school year and each school year thereafter.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Extra-curricular activities are defined as activities that take place outside of a normal school day. This includes but is not limited to sporting events, prom, middle school formal, and field trips. Students who participate in extracurricular activities are required to be in attendance the full day of the event or have a documented, legitimate excuse for the absence or permission from a school administrator.

The following conduct is expected during all middle/high school extra-curricular activities:

- All school bus rules apply.
- All school rules and policies apply and will be enforced.

The following will not allow students to participate in extracurricular activities.

- Students must not have been suspended from the bus more than 6 times.
- Students must have had no more than 6 complete days total in ISS.
- Students must have had no more than 3 days of OSS.
- Students must not have a combination of 8 days or more of ISS, OSS, or days suspended off the regular bus routes or discipline issues on trips.
- Students cannot have been in any alternative school.
- Students must have had no more than 10 unexcused absences per year.
- Students who have had more than 1 juvenile court citation.

**All field trips must be approved with the proper documentation prior to the field trip.**

## **FIGHTING POLICY**

According to the PBIS policy, a fight is considered a major behavior. A major office referral will result in:

- Discuss behavior(s) documented on the major office referral form
- Contact and forward a copy to the guardian
- Up to 3 days of in-school suspension for the 1st offense.
- Multiple offenses can result in 5 days in-school suspension/Alternative School/Out of School Suspension, or even be petitioned to juvenile court and charged with assault.

## **FIREARM SAFETY**

In 2024, the Tennessee General Assembly passed legislation requiring instruction of firearms safety in schools, outlined in Tennessee Code Annotated §49-6-1016. Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, each LEA shall annually provide students, grades K-12, with age-appropriate and grade-appropriate instruction on firearm safety.

The instruction required must:

1. Teach students:
  - a. Safe storage of firearms;
  - b. School safety relating to firearms;
  - c. How to avoid injury if the student finds a firearm;
  - d. To never touch a found firearm; and
  - e. To immediately notify an adult of the location of the found firearm;
2. Be viewpoint neutral on political topics, such as gun rights, gun violence, and the Second Amendment
3. Not include the use or presence of live ammunition, live fire, or live firearms.

Standards will be provided from the Department of Education and Safety, in consultation with the Tennessee Fire and Wildlife Commission. Instruction will be provided by SRO's and/or Local Law

Enforcement in a classroom setting, through viewing a video, or through the review of resources or materials, as determined by the Department of Education.

## **FUNDRAISERS**

The sale of fundraising items is to be done only by principal approval for school-sponsored organizations. Selling without the principal's permission or during class time is strictly prohibited. Fundraising items must not be drinks of any kind or anything that the school concession store is selling.

## **GRADES**

Schools teaching grades nine through twelve shall use the uniform grading system established by the State Board of Education. Using the uniform grading system, students' grades shall be reported for the purposes of application for post-secondary financial assistance administered by the

Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation. Subject-area grades shall be expressed by the following letters with their corresponding percentage range:

***GRADING SCALE***

A (4.0) = 90 – 100

B (3.0) = 80 – 89

C (2.0) = 70 – 79

D (1.0) = 60 – 69

F (0.0) = 0-59

This grading system shall be uniform throughout the school system for each grade.

**Walters State Community College–Middle College Program**

WSCC and service area school systems have partnered to provide opportunities for highly motivated students to earn a high school diploma and an associate degree simultaneously.

Hancock High Juniors will be eligible for this program under the following guidelines:

1. Maintain a B average/3.0 GPA or ACT Composite of 21
2. Be screened by the principal/guidance counselor
3. Submit 2 letters of recommendation from school-level personnel
4. Draft a letter explaining how the Middle College program would help you with your goals after high school.

Students admitted to Middle College will be allowed to take College classes as substitutions for High School classes for graduation. The following classes will not be permitted because of END of Course requirements.

- English I and English II
- Algebra I and Algebra II
- Geometry
- Biology I
- U.S. History

Students must also take the Civics exam even if American History is taken instead of U.S. Government.

The school will not be responsible for classes that do not transfer to other universities.

***GRADE CLASSIFICATION***

- 28 credits required for graduation.
- Earn 21 credits to be designated as a senior
- Earn 14 credits to be designated as a junior
- Earn 7 credits to be designated as a sophomore

- Successfully completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade to be designated as a freshman

## **GRADUATION HONORS AND DISTINCTIONS** **TENNESSEE DIPLOMA PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

*Statewide requirements that are consistent throughout Tennessee*

### **Graduate with School Honors** – *(Gold Cord at Graduation)*

- *Must have a 3.5 cumulative GPA*
- *Must take Spanish I & II*
- *Must take at least one art class during their high school career*

### **Graduate with State Honors**

Seniors who score at or above all of the subject area readiness benchmarks on the ACT will graduate with state honors. The benchmarks are:

English	18
Math	22
Reading	21
Science	23

\*No ACT Residual Scores will be accepted. National test scores only.

### **Graduate with Distinction** – *White Cord at Graduation*

Seniors will be recognized as graduating with “distinction” by attaining a B average and completing at least one of the following:

- earn a nationally recognized industry certification
- participate in at least one of the Governor’s Schools
- Participate in one of the state’s All-State musical organizations
- be selected as a National Merit Finalist or Semifinalist
- attain a composite score of 31 or higher composite score on the ACT
- attain a score of 3 or higher on at least two advanced placement exams
- successfully complete the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program
- earn 12 or more semester hours of college transcript credit

**As of April 7, 2022, the Hancock Board of Education, with the support of the director, has recommended removing the top ten. This will start the Fall semester 2022 with the graduating class of 2026. The board will recognize all students for their achievements.**

Students will be recognized for the following:

- School Honors (Gold Cord)
- State Honors (Gold Cord)
- Distinction (White Cord)
- Tri-Star Scholar (Silver Cord)
- 31+ ASVAB (Green Cord)

- Latin Honors (cum laude (GPA of 3.5–3.64); magna cum laude (GPA of 3.65–3.79); or, summa cum laude (GPA of 3.8–4.0).

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Hancock County High School students are required to **earn 28 credits** to receive a diploma from Hancock County High School. On the block schedule, students have 4 classes each semester, 2 semesters each year. At the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> year, students can have earned up to 32 credits.

### **Specific Course Requirements:**

<b><u>Course Name</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Credits</u></b>
English	4
Math	4
Science	3
Social Studies	4
Wellness	1
PE	1
Personal Finance	0.5 or 1
Foreign Language	2
Computer Science	1
Fine Arts	1
Electives	4
Elective Focus	3

## **Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction Overview and Requirements**

**Overview:** The Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction is a distinction that allows students to pursue a career in a high-need, high-skill industry while in high school, as outlined in T-C.A. 49-6-420 and State Board Pending Rules 052001-03-.06(31) on Graduation Requirements. The Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction was developed for high school students who are interested in pursuing a career in a high-need, high-skill industry after graduation. Students who earn the Industry 4.0

Diploma Distinction must complete at least nine dual enrollment or work-based learning (WBL) credits aligned to their career goals. They will receive monthly career coaching and counseling to better prepare them for the transition into the workforce. Additionally, they will have the option to substitute a WBL or dual enrollment credit, as approved by the State Board of Education, for one math credit and one science credit.

To ensure students and parents are well-informed about this opportunity and to allow students to complete the requirements for the Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction, all public high schools, including public charter schools, are required to fulfill specific obligations for students in

different grades beginning in the 2022-23 school year. The requirements for each grade are outlined below.

## **Grade 9**

### **School Requirements**

Each high school must notify all grade 9 students of the opportunity to pursue an Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction no later than ten days after the first day of each semester of the school year.

## **Grade 10**

### **School Requirements**

Each high school must notify all grade 10 students of the opportunity to pursue an Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction no later than ten days after the first day of each semester of the school year.

### **Student and Parent Requirements**

Students interested in pursuing an Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction must provide the counselor or school principal with documentation signed by the student's parent or legal guardian indicating that the parent or legal guardian is aware of the requirements for the student to obtain the diploma distinction and consenting to the student's participation. Students must also register with a regional American Job Center (AJC) or other career counseling or community partner, known as a career coach, and enroll in at least one WBL or dual enrollment course for the student's junior year.

### **Career Coach Requirements**

Division of College, Career, & Technical Education • 710 James Robertson Parkway • Nashville, TN 37243 | [tn.gov/education](http://tn.gov/education) • Created Jan. 11, 2023

### **Department of Education**

- A career coach must be one of the following:
- an AJC career coach; or a career coach from a career counseling or community partner program approved by the U.S. Department of Labor's regional office for the State of Tennessee; or
- a certified licensed school counselor; or
- An educator who holds an active WBL certificate provided by the Tennessee Department of Education.
- A career coach must meet no less than once per month during the school year to help the student develop personal attributes required for success in the workforce, assist the student in applying for dual enrollment grants and other available financial aid opportunities, identify the best combination of dual enrollment and WBL courses, and help the student prepare for standardized assessments. A combination of stakeholders



who meet the career coach requirements may collaboratively provide these services to students.

## **Grade 11**

### **Student Requirements**

The student must be enrolled in at least one WBL or dual enrollment course and enroll in WBL or dual enrollment courses for the student's senior year. The student must also meet no less than once per month during the school year with a career coach.

## **Grade 12**

### **Student Requirements**

The student must successfully complete all coursework required for graduation for his/her diploma type. Students may earn at least one science credit and at least one math credit through course substitutions approved by the State Board of Education, including, but not limited to, dual enrollment and WBL courses aligned to a student's chosen career path. These substitutions may only fulfill the student's third credit of science or fourth credit of math. A list of WBL and dual enrollment courses that qualify as science and math substitutions will be published upon State Board of Education approval.

By the end of the student's senior year, the student must earn at least nine credits of dual enrollment or WBL, meet no less than once per month during the school year with a career coach, and fulfill all other graduation requirements to earn the Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction

## **HALL PASSES**

Classroom lanyards and/or student IDs/planners will be used as the official hall passes for Hancock County Middle/High School. Each student is required to carry one of these items while out of class. This applies to any student club members (student council, FFA, athletic team members, etc) and any student who finds it necessary to enter the halls. Students should always ask the teacher to issue a pass prior to leaving the room. Any student in the halls without his/her pass will be in violation of school policies.

## **ILLNESS**

Students who become ill shall report to the office for parent contact or referral to the school clinic, when available. Students with prolonged health problems such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, recent surgery, or allergies are to report to the office or school clinic (when available) at the beginning of the school term or when such a problem arises. Regardless of the prescribing physician(s), distribution of medication during the school day must be handled by parents or the School-Based Health Clinic, when available. Students must not possess medication, prescribed or over the counter, during the school day.

## **LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE**

An announced lockdown is a time when a current threat exists to Staff or Students. During such an event, teachers should:

1. Secure or lock doors.
2. Turn off the lights.
3. Move students to a designated area of the room away from windows and doors.
4. Remain calm and quiet until prompted via the intercom by a familiar voice, such as the Principal or the Assistant Principal.
5. Display red or green sheets at the door window after the prompt is given. Green – all students are safe and accounted for, Red – student is missing, injured, or danger is present.

SRO and Law Enforcement officials will check the building. After the building has been cleared, an intercom announcement of “All Clear” will be made by a familiar voice.

**Teachers are expected to have green and red cards and a class roster at all times.**

*\*All doors must be locked and clear of obstructions.*

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers will be assigned to each student. Locks will be rented from the school office. The cost is \$5.00. If other locks are used on school lockers, they will be removed. Students are to keep locks on their lockers at all times. If the lock is not on the locker, the student will be called to the office for a warning; punishment will be administered if it continues. Students cannot share lockers, switch lockers, or locks without permission from the office. Students are expected to keep their lockers clean and understand that the school has the right to inspect or search their lockers at any time. Unannounced and random drug dog searches may also be conducted. If locks are lost, the student is responsible for the cost of another lock.

## **MEDICATION**

Regardless of illness or prescribing physician, distribution of medication during the school day must be handled by a parent or the School-Based Health Clinic when available. Students must not possess medication, prescribed or over the counter, during the school day.

## **MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS**

If messages are of an urgent nature, the office staff will make every effort to deliver them without delay. However, with limited office staff, it is not possible to deliver “reminder” messages. Please make necessary transportation arrangements with your child before they arrive at school. If you need to get a message to your child through the office, call before 2:00 p.m. to ensure delivery.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Students who hold a yearly class average **below 60%** in any of the Core Subjects (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies) will be **required to attend Summer School** to be promoted to the next grade level.

Students who fall below a yearly class average **below 40%** in any of the Core Subjects (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies) will be ineligible to attend Summer School and will be **required to repeat the current grade level.**

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

Be informed that the school is not responsible and will not attend to any problem concerning prohibited items brought to school. Aerosol sprays are not permitted. Many students have allergic reactions, and some may suffer asthma attacks as a result of these sprays. Any dangerous weapon, such as guns, apps that reflect gun violence or make gun noises, pocket knives, box cutters, large knives, lasers, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, dab pens, or anything that is used to inhale substances, illegal to anyone, including minors, and also drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or non-prescribed medication. Fireworks are not permitted. **The school is not responsible for stolen or misplaced purses or wallets and their contents or any electronic devices that are brought to school.**

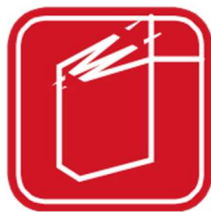
## **PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION**

Demonstration of affection between students is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting, kissing, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Discipline will be issued if caught in the act of PDA.

## **RTI**

### **Parent Brochure**

**Hancock County Schools  
A Family Guide to Response to Instruction and Intervention  
(RTI<sup>2</sup>)  
2020-2021**



**Director of Schools  
Charlotte Mullins**

**Hancock County Schools  
P.O. Box 629  
Sneedville, TN 37869  
(423)733-2591  
hancockcountyschools.com**

Hancock County is committed to helping all children succeed. We have many ways to help children who are struggling to learn and who need additional support to be successful. Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>) is one form of support.

### **What is RTI<sup>2</sup>?**

A multi-tiered delivery system that uses a data-driven problem-solving model to identify specific student needs and match appropriate instructional strategies.

In Tennessee, the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>) Framework is a component of TNCORE. The TNCORE implementation plan has three legs with student achievement at the center:

- Assessment alignment and transparency
- Instructional materials and curriculum
- Quality training and meaningful support

### **What does the RTI<sup>2</sup> Framework look like?**

The RTI<sup>2</sup> Framework has three tiers. Each tier provides differing levels of support.

- In Tier I, all students receive research-based, high-quality, general education instruction that incorporates ongoing universal screening and ongoing assessment to inform instruction.
- In Tier II, intervention is implemented when assessment indicates that a student is not making adequate gains from Tier I instruction alone. In addition to Tier I instruction, students are provided with small group interventions designed to meet their specific needs. These students are progress monitored weekly or every other week using a tool that is sensitive to measuring changes in the student's individual skills.
- In Tier III, more intensive interventions are provided to students who have not made significant progress in Tier II, who are more than 1.5 grade levels behind, or who are below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile. These students are progress monitored weekly or every other week using a tool that is sensitive to measuring changes in the student's individual skills.

### **What are the key components of the RTI<sup>2</sup> Framework?**

A key component of RTI<sup>2</sup> is that all children receive high quality curriculum and instruction in the general education classroom (Tier I).

Another component of RTI<sup>2</sup> is that the school conducts universal screenings. Universal screenings review the performance and progress of all students through brief assessments. Universal screenings help schools identify students who may need more support or other types of instruction.

As a result of universal screenings, students may be identified as needing targeted intervention (Tier II) in addition to the high quality instruction they are receiving in Tier I. Research based interventions are used to support students in the area(s) in which they are struggling. Research

based interventions are teaching strategies or methods that have been proven effective in helping children learn.

Another key component of RTI<sup>2</sup> is progress monitoring. Progress monitoring is a way for teachers to take a snapshot of how children are doing on a specific skill. It shows how well the intervention is working. It includes formal and informal assessments. Progress monitoring helps determine whether an intervention is successful or needs to be changed. This information is shared with parents on a regular basis.

When progress monitoring indicates that the intervention is no longer needed, the child continues to receive support from the general education curriculum (Tier I). When progress monitoring shows that a child is not responding to the intervention, another approach or intervention may be tried. If a higher level of support is needed, students may be given more intense intervention that further focuses on the supporting skills they need to be successful learners (Tier III). Students who do not respond to Tier III interventions may be referred for special education.

### **What if I think my child needs special education?**

If at any time parents become concerned that their children need special education, they should contact the teacher or administrator. Other forms of evaluation, in addition to information gathered through the RTI<sup>2</sup> framework, are needed to determine if a student is eligible for special education services. In order for these evaluations to be conducted, a parent's written consent is required.

### **Here are a few ways parents can support what their child is doing in school:**

- Make reading an everyday habit at home
- Communicate with your child's teacher
- Monitor and assist with homework assignments
- Review progress monitoring data
- Share your child's successes
- Learn more about the curricula and interventions being used in your child's school
- Attend parent/teacher conferences and other school meetings about your child

Talk to your child's teacher, principal or school's RTI support team for more information about how RTI<sup>2</sup> is being implemented in your child's school.

**For more information, please contact:**

**Hancock County Elementary**

**423-733-2534**

**Hancock County Middle/High School**

**423-733-4611**

**Adapted from: A Parent Advocacy Brief written by the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)**

## **INFORMATION for School-Age Youth**

### **IF YOU LIVE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:**

In a shelter, in a motel or campground due to the lack of an alternative adequate accommodation

In a car, park, abandoned building, or bus or train station

Doubled up with other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship

### **School-Age Youth Eligible students have the right to:**

- Receive a free, appropriate public education.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment.
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents.
- Enroll in the local school; or continue attending their school of origin (the school they attended when

permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled), if that is their preference.

\* If the school district believes that the school selected is not in his/her best interest, then the district must provide the student with a written explanation of its position and inform the student of his/her right to appeal its decision.

Contact the Guidance Counselor/Principal at the school you want to enroll in or are already enrolled in or call the school district liaison (Deb Southern): 423-733-4403.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

School authorities are charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, upon reasonable suspicion, school authorities may search a student's property (including vehicles, purses, backpacks, gym bags, lockers, etc.) or a student, with or without the student's consent.

## ***SUMMARY OF BILL AS AMENDED (004680): SB 290 - HB 764***

Specifies that certain physical searches of students, lockers, vehicles, or other property on school grounds must be conducted by a school resource officer (SRO), school security officer, or school administrator who has completed training pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-4212. Requires a principal to notify the parent or legal guardian of a student under 18 years of age within a reasonable amount of time of the need to conduct a physical search of the student.

## **STATE ASSESSMENTS**

### **Tennessee Strategic Assessment Process**

Tennessee's strategic assessment process includes early and regular evaluations of student learning. The goal of these assessments is to measure what students know, identify where more instruction is needed, and design their education plan accordingly.

Students in Grades 3-8 take the TNReady Achievement Test. The Achievement Test is a timed assessment that measures skills in Reading, Language Arts and Mathematics. Questions are Interactive, Open Ended, 2-part evidence based supporting their answer and selection of one correct or multiple correct answers. Student results are reported to parents, teachers and administrators. These exams will count as 25% of the student's 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester grade.

- The **English language arts (ELA)** assessments will be administered in **four subparts** for grades 3-8 and in **three subparts** for high school end-of-course exams.
- **The time allotted for each subpart and the total time for ELA is similar to last year.**
- The first subpart is the writing portion of the assessment, which must be completed during the first week of the testing window because student responses are scored individually by hand.
- The **ELA** assessment will assess the Tennessee Academic Standards through literary and informational texts requiring students to demonstrate the ability to **read closely, analyze text, answer text-dependent questions, provide a written response to a prompt, and demonstrate command of the English language.**

- The **math** assessments will be administered in **three subparts, the first of which is without a calculator.**
- **The time allotted for each subpart and the total time for math are similar to last year.**
- The **math** assessments measure student mastery of the Tennessee Academic Standards and require students to demonstrate a deep conceptual understanding of mathematics, number sense, fluency, problem solving, and an understanding of the grade-level horizontal coherence embedded within the standards.
- The **math** assessments will focus approximately 70 percent of the assessment items on the major work of the grade and approximately 30 percent of the items on supporting work.
- For **grades 5 through 8**, the **science** assessment consists of one 75-minute subpart.
- The **science** assessments will assess the current Tennessee Academic Standards, requiring students to demonstrate a deep conceptual understanding of scientific concepts in Life Science, Earth and Space Science, and Physical Science.
- The **social studies** assessments in grades 6 through 8 will assess the current Tennessee Academic Standards for **social studies**, which require students to demonstrate historical awareness, geographical understanding, and the ability to analyze primary source documents.
- The test will consist of two subparts (50 minutes each).
- The test will include 2-point and 4-point written response items, which provide the opportunity for students to showcase their knowledge and ability to respond to historical questions in writing, as well as multiple-choice and multiple-select items.

TNReady assessment will provide students, teachers, and parents with more detailed, accurate, and authentic information about each student's progress and achievement in the classroom.

More information can be found at: [www.tennessee.gov/education/assessment](http://www.tennessee.gov/education/assessment)

In high school, end-of-course tests will be administered for core subjects. These exams will count as 25% of the student's 2<sup>nd</sup> 9 weeks grade. The subjects with end-of-course tests are:

- English I and II
- Algebra I
- Geometry
- U.S. History
- Biology I

## ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

In the 2025-26 school year, the TN Ready/EOC\* results will be reported based on the four achievement levels.

1. **BELOW** – Students who perform at this level **have not** demonstrated mastery in academic performance, thinking abilities, and application of understandings that reflect the knowledge and skill specified by the grade/course level content standards and are not prepared for the next level of study.

2. **APPROACHING** – Students who perform at this level demonstrate **partial** mastery in academic performance, thinking abilities, and application of understandings that reflect the knowledge and skill specified by the grade/course level content standards and are minimally prepared for the next level of study.

3. **ON TRACK** – Students who perform at this level demonstrate **mastery** in academic performance, thinking abilities, and application of understandings that reflect the knowledge and skill specified by the grade/course level content standards and are prepared for the next level of study.

4. **MASTERED** – Students who perform at this level demonstrate **superior** mastery in academic performance, thinking abilities, and application of understandings that reflect the knowledge and skill specified by the grade/course level content standards and are significantly prepared for the next level of study.

## STUDENT CAR/TRUCK RIDERS

All students who are transported to school by parents, grandparents, etc., should be dropped off in front of the building.



In the afternoon, when school dismisses, students who are being picked up will be picked up in the front parking lot closest to the main road.

### **STUDENT DRIVING AND PARKING**

1. Students must be 16 years old and have a valid driver's license and proof of insurance when getting a parking pass.
2. Students will register any vehicle they intend to drive to school with the administration and obtain a parking pass in order to park on school property.
3. Parking passes are on a first-come, first-served basis.
4. No vehicle is to park on any curb or any unmarked space (unless given permission)
5. Students are to obey the 5 MPH speed limit in the parking lot during school hours.
6. Students are not to throw litter in the parking lot.
7. Parking lots are off limits during the school day unless written permission is granted by the administration or SRO.
8. Any student who drives a vehicle to school is totally responsible for it; no one else is allowed to be in it, around it, or drive it.
9. Once a student enters school property, they are a student! Vehicles must be parked, locked, and exited. If you drive through, you are considered to be leaving school property without permission! No Exceptions!
10. Student drivers must arrive on campus before the 8:00 a.m. bell. If 10 or more late arrivals occur during a 9-week grading period, driving privileges will be revoked for 1 week.
11. Any student who is caught parking without permission and without a parking pass will be called to the office and given the opportunity to purchase a pass within a week. If a student does not purchase a pass, their vehicle is subject to being towed at the owner's expense.
12. Driving privileges can be revoked by the principal for disobedience of parking rules or unsafe driving.
13. Students must agree and sign the terms/conditions contract with the administration to obtain a parking pass.
14. The K-9 dog unit will check the parking lot once a month on a random day they pick. Any unauthorized weapons, drugs, tobacco, or prescription medicine will be confiscated and could result in expulsion from school if drugs or weapons are found. (Please make sure all of these items are not in your vehicle.)

### **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are issued free. When textbooks are issued to a student, he or she is financially responsible for those textbooks. If a textbook is not returned or lost, the student must pay for the textbook. Replacement cost averages \$80.00 - \$100.00.

### **TOBACCO/VAPING**

Students at Hancock Middle/High School are not allowed to have in their possession or be found to use any tobacco product, any product containing nicotine, vaporizers, or electronic cigarettes. Should a student get caught with or get caught partaking of a tobacco product, vaporizers, or electronic cigarettes, the following procedures will be employed.

If a student is caught in possession of tobacco or vaping products, the student receives 3 days ISS and a court petition. The student and parent must appear in court.

If the student continues to be in possession of or in the use of one of the mentioned items above, they will be placed in the Alternative School for a set amount of time after their 3rd offense.

### ***REASONABLE SUSPICION OF SMOKING***

Any student who has a very strong odor of vape/cigarette smoke as he/she speak may be associated with recent smoking and may be disciplined for smoking on school grounds.

### **THREAT OF VIOLENCE**

#### ***SUMMARY OF BILL AS AMENDED (006397): SB946/HB1088***

Requires a local education agency (LEA) that receives credible information regarding a threat of violence or significantly disruptive behavior directed toward, or occurring on the grounds of, a public school in the LEA, and that reports the threat or disruptive behavior to a state or local law enforcement agency, to also notify the parents and guardians of students enrolled in the public school of the same threat or disruptive behavior within 48 hours of the LEA making its report to law enforcement.

### **TRANSCRIPTS**

The school provides transcripts free of charge; however, they should be requested in writing to the school counselor two weeks prior to the date needed. If they need to be mailed, the mailing address must be included.

### **VANDALISM**

It is the policy of the Hancock County School System to require any student who defaces or destroys school property to restore or replace the damaged item. A student or students who commit vandalism may also be cited to Juvenile Court. The student will also be subject to discipline upon the administration's discretion based on the offense.

### **VISITORS**

Hancock Middle/High School is a closed campus. Visitors are not permitted except for official reasons approved by the principal's office. Students should not bring guests to school, nor have visitors from outside. Any visitor who has reason to be on campus should report to the office, sign in, and receive a visitor's permit. Students are not to bring young children to school at any time.

## **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

All students on the campus are subject to drug and alcohol testing. The principal and assistant principal are authorized to order drug testing for individual students when there is a reasonable cause to believe that a violation has occurred.

### ***ALCOHOL AND DRUGS/THC PRODUCTS***

Students will not possess, distribute, or be under the influence of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, or THC products in school buildings or on school grounds, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school-sponsored activity at any time, whether on or off school grounds. If a student violates this policy, he/she will be subject to expulsion from school.

### ***WEAPONS***

Students shall not possess, handle, transmit, use, or attempt to use any dangerous weapon in school buildings, on school grounds at any time, in school vehicles and/or buses, or off the school grounds at a school-sponsored activity, function, or event.

If a student violates this policy, he/she will be cited to juvenile court and subject to expulsion from school.

## **SECTION 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures**

The Board is committed to maintaining equitable employment/educational practices, services, programs and activities that are accessible and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities.

### **DEFINITION**

*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* provides that : No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States...solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.<sup>1</sup>

*Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990* provides that: No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall be discriminated against in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement, or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.<sup>2</sup>

### **COORDINATOR<sup>3</sup>**

The Board shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504, including any investigation of any complaint alleging noncompliance with the Acts or alleging any actions that would be prohibited by the Acts.

### **NOTICE<sup>4</sup>**

The Board shall make available the name, office address and telephone number of the ADA/Section 504 coordinator.

Methods of initial and continuing notification may include the posting of notices, publication in newspapers, student and employee handbooks and distribution of memoranda or other written communications.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE<sup>5</sup>**

The coordinator will hear ADA/Section 504 complaints. Complaints shall be submitted in writing to the coordinator who will endeavor to accomplish prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by the ADA/Section 504. The coordinator will respond to all complaints within twenty (20) days with a written response as well as information on further grievance procedures that may be followed if the complaining party is not satisfied with the coordinator's proposed resolution.

### **DUE PROCESS HEARING PROCEDURES**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides the right to an impartial due process hearing if a parent wishes to contest any action of the school system with regard to a child's identification, evaluation, and placement under Section 504.<sup>6</sup> If a parent/guardian requests a Section 504 hearing, the parent/ guardian has the right to personally participate and to be represented at the hearing by an attorney or advocate at the parent's expense. Contested actions or omissions that are appropriate for a Section 504 hearing should involve identification, evaluation, or placement issues involving a child who has or is believed to have a disability.

#### *Written Request for Hearing*

A parent/guardian who wishes to challenge an action or omission with regard to the identification, evaluation, or placement of a student who has or is believed to have a disability as defined by Section 504, shall make a written request for a due process hearing to the Section 504 coordinator. The written request must be made on a form provided through the Central Office.

#### *Impartial Hearing Officer*

The director of schools or his/her designee shall appoint an impartial hearing officer to preside over the hearing and issue a decision. Such appointment will be made within fifteen (15) days of the date of receipt of a request for a due process hearing. The hearing officer will be hired as an independent contractor at no expense to the parent. The hearing officer that is appointed shall not be a current employee of the school system and shall not be related to any member of the Board of Education. The hearing officer need not be an attorney but shall be familiar with the requirements of Section 504 and the hearing procedures under Section 504. The choice of an impartial hearing officer is final and may not be presented as an issue at the due process hearing since such an issue would not relate to the identification, evaluation, or placement of a disabled child under Section 504. If a parent/guardian disputes the impartiality of the appointed hearing officer, he/she may raise such an issue in a review of the hearing officer's opinion by a court of competent jurisdiction or in a complaint to the Office for Civil Rights.

Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
61 Forsyth St. S.W., Suite 19T10  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8927  
Telephone: 404-974-9406; TDD: 877-521-2172  
Email: OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov

### Scheduling of Hearing

The appointed hearing officer shall set a date for the hearing within fifteen (15) days of his/her appointment and provide this information in writing to the parent/guardian and the Section 504 coordinator. The hearing shall take place at a mutually agreeable time and place.

### Continuances

Upon a showing of good cause, the hearing officer, at his/her discretion may grant a continuance of the hearing date and set a new hearing date.

### Legal Representation at Hearing

If a parent/guardian is represented by a licensed attorney at the due process hearing, he/she must inform the Section 504 coordinator and the appointed hearing officer of that fact, in writing, at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the hearing date, or the hearing can be continued upon the coordinator's request. The school system shall not have legal representation at the hearing unless the parent provides notice that he/she will have legal representation.

### Pre-Hearing Conference

The hearing officer may order a Pre-Hearing Conference during which the parent/guardian or his/her representative will state and clarify the issues to be addressed at the hearing. The Pre-Hearing Conference will also serve to resolve preliminary matters, clarify jurisdictional issues, and answer the parties' questions regarding the hearing process. The Pre-Hearing Conference can be held via telephone or in person depending on the hearing officer's decision based on the convenience to both parties.

### Dismissals

If, after the Pre-Hearing Conference, the hearing officer finds that the parent, as a matter of law, alleges and/or raises no factual claims or legal issues that come within his/her jurisdiction as a Section 504 hearing officer, he/she may dismiss the hearing and issue an order to that effect explaining the basis for such finding.

### Hearing

The hearing shall be conducted in an informal, non-adversarial manner. The hearing shall be closed to the public unless the parent/guardian requests an open hearing. The hearing officer may reasonably limit testimony and introduction of exhibits for reasons or relevance.

### Recording

Instead of a formal written transcript produced by a court reporter, the entire due process hearing will be video recorded. The school system shall provide a copy of the recording to the parent/guardian upon request. In order for an accurate recording to be made, the parties and witnesses shall introduce themselves at the beginning of their presentations. If a parent/guardian appeals the decision of the hearing officer to a court of competent jurisdiction, the school system shall prepare a written transcript of the hearing to be offered to the court as an exhibit.

### Witnesses

Witnesses will present their information in narrative form, without the traditional question and answer format of legal proceedings. Cross-examination of witnesses will not be allowed, but a party may request that the hearing officer, at his/her discretion, ask a witness a certain question.

#### Format of Presentation

Each side will have an equal amount of time to present their positions as determined by the hearing officer. The parent/guardian will present his/her case first by making an opening statement outlining the issues, calling witnesses, and making a closing argument. The school system will present its side next. At the end of the school system's presentation, the parent/guardian may offer a short response. Each side may present personally or through their representatives.

#### Submission of Exhibits

As part of their presentations and at the discretion of the hearing officer, the parties may submit any reports, evaluations, correspondence, notes, or any other documents that may support their positions. Exhibits submitted to the hearing officer by either party must be marked. The hearing officer may, in the exercise of his/her discretion, reasonably limit the number of documents to be submitted for his/her review, as well as the number of witnesses and the length and/or scope of their presentations or statements.

#### Closing Arguments

The hearing officer may allow or request written closing arguments summarizing and characterizing the information presented at the hearing.

#### Decision

The hearing officer may make an oral ruling at the conclusion of the hearing or take the case under advisement and issue a written opinion. Such a decision shall address all of the issues raised by the parent/guardian as well as any corrective actions, if any, the school system must take. Any issue or claim raised by the parent/guardian that is left unaddressed by the hearing officer in his/her decision will be deemed to have been denied. The decision must be issued within forty-five (45) days after the date the Request for a Due Process Hearing is received by the district. The hearing officer may not award attorneys' fees as a part of the relief granted to a parent/guardian or the district.

#### Review Procedure/Appeal

If the parent/guardian is not satisfied by the decision of the hearing officer, he/she may seek review of the decision in a court of competent jurisdiction.

### **THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

**Statute: 20 U.S. Section 1232g. Regulations: 34 CFR Parts 99.**

FERPA provides that an LEA that receives department funds may not have a policy or practice of denying parents the right to:

- Inspect and review education records  
(34 CFR section 99.10)
- Seek to amend education records

- (34 CFR section 99.20, 99.21, and 99.22).
- Consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records. (34 CFR section 99.30 and 99.31).

These rights transfer to the student when he or she turns 18 years of age or enters a postsecondary educational institution at any age (“eligible student”).

## **THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U. S. C. – 1232h, requires **Hancock County School District** to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your child out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas

### **(“protected information surveys”):**

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of students or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes (“marketing surveys”), and certain physical exams and screening.

## **School - Parent Involvement Policy Title I, Section 1118(b)**

Must be developed with, distributed to and agreed upon by parents of participating children. **What:** Describe the means for carrying out the requirements of section 1118(c) through (f) must update periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

A. Each school shall:

1. Convene an annual meeting.
  2. Offer a flexible number of meetings.
  3. Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I.
  4. Provide parents of participating children:
    - Timely information about Title I programs.
    - School performance profiles and individual assessment results.
    - A description and explanation of the curriculum, assessments, and expectations.
    - Opportunities for regular meetings.
    - Timely response to parent’s suggestions.
  5. If the school wide program plans are not satisfactory, submit parent comments to the LEA.
- B. Develop jointly with parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state’s high standard.

- C. Build capacity for involving parents; and
- D. To the extent practicable provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency or with disabilities.

### **No Child Left Behind**

**Parents** will receive notification if the district employs a teacher for over four weeks who does not meet highly qualified requirements. Contact your child's teacher or principal for more information.

**Qualifications** of teachers and paraprofessionals who instruct their child can be reviewed at the school or at the central office.

**Parents** have the right to request that their child's name, address and phone number not be released to military recruiters without prior written consent.

**The district** has a written parent involvement policy. If you have not seen one and would like one contact your school

**If a child** were to become the victim of a violent crime, parents will receive written notification that their child has the right to transfer to another school within the district.

**Parents of students** in schools identified as unsafe are notified in writing of their rights.

**If you** need assistance with interpreting your child's report card, or state assessment scores contact your school.

**This is a Title I school wide project school.**

### **STATEMENT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HANCOCK COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM RECOGNIZES THE FOLLOWING:**

**The primary intent of society in establishing the public school, is to provide an opportunity for learning, that the students have full rights of citizenship as delineated in the United States Constitution and its amendments, that citizenship rights must not be abridged, obstructed, or in other ways altered except in accordance with due process of law, and that education is one of these citizen rights.**

**And that: it is the policy of the Hancock County School System not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability in its educational programs or employment policies as required by Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX (1972) Educational Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.**

**HCMHS prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. The notice of nondiscrimination is located at <https://hancockcountyschools.com/hchs>  
HCMHS Title IX Coordinator is: Misty Rasnic, [mistyrasnic@hcsk12.com](mailto:mistyrasnic@hcsk12.com), 423-733-2953**

**Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, section 504 of the American with Disabilities Act should be directed to the office of The Director, Hancock County Schools, Main Street,**



**Sneedville, TN or to the Office for Civil Right, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.**

**Title VI, Title IX Coordinator, 418 Harrison Street (Central Office), Sneedville, TN 37869, (423) 733-2591**

**Office for Civil Rights,  
U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.**

### **CONTACTS**

Homeless Liaison: Deborah Southern–(423)733-4403

Child Abuse Awareness and Suicide Prevention: Whitney Fleenor–(423)733-2534

Child Abuse Awareness and Suicide Prevention: Tara Marion–(423)733-4611

### **PERMANENT RECORD**

**According to the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the Parent/guardian or student age 18 or over is permitted to inspect and review educational records relating to the student.**

### **Child Advocacy Group Contact Information**

Answers to many questions and much helpful information may be obtained from the State Department of Education by calling 1-888-212-3162 or visiting <http://www.state.tn.us/education/speced/index.htm>.

Legal Services Division  
Division of Special Education,  
Tennessee Department of Education  
710 James Robertson Parkway  
Andrew Johnson Tower, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Nashville, TN 37243-0380  
Phone: 615-741-2851  
Fax: 615-253-5567 or 615-532-9412

East Tennessee Regional Resource Center  
2763 Island Home Blvd.  
Knoxville, TN 37290  
Phone: 865-594-5691  
Fax: 865-594-8909

## HCMHS

2700 Main Street  
Sneedville, TN 37869  
**Student Discrimination/Harassment and  
Bullying/ Intimidation**

### **Discrimination/Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious)**

Students shall be provided a learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment.<sup>1</sup> It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee or any student to discriminate against or harass a student through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic or religious in nature. The following guidelines are set forth to protect students from discrimination or harassment: Student discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated.<sup>2</sup> Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words either or spoken of a sexual, racial, ethnic or religious nature which:

1. Unreasonably interfere with the student's work or educational opportunities; or
2. Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment; or
3. Imply that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of Receiving grades or credit; or
4. Implying that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for determining the student's grades and/or participation in a student activity.

### **Bullying/Intimidation**

Updated 10/24/2011

Students shall be provided a safe learning environment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully, intimidate or create a hostile educational environment for another student, including cyber-bullying. **Cyber bullying** refers to any harassment that occurs via the internet, cell phones or other devices. **Cyber bullies** use communication technology to intentionally harm others through hostile behavior such as sending text messages and posting ugly comments on the internet. The policy addresses conduct taking place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop immediately before boarding and immediately following deboarding.<sup>3</sup>

Alleged victims of the above-referenced offenses shall report these incidents immediately to a teacher, counselor or building administrator.<sup>4</sup> Any allegations shall be fully investigated by a complaint manager (as set forth in *Student Concerns, Complaints and Grievances* 6.305).

The privacy and anonymity of all parties and witnesses to complaints will be respected. However, because an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with obligations to cooperate with police investigations or legal proceedings, to provide due process to the accused, to conduct a thorough investigation or to take necessary action to resolve a complaint, the identity of parties and witnesses may be disclosed in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know.

A substantiated charge against an employee shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. A substantiated charge against a student may result in corrective or disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

There will be no retaliation against any person who reports harassment or participates in an investigation. However, any employee who refuses to cooperate or gives false information during the course of any investigation may be subject to disciplinary action. The willful filing of a false report will itself be considered harassment and will be treated as such.

An employee disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal the decision by contacting The Federal Rights Coordinator or the Director. Any student disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal the decision in accordance with disciplinary policies and procedures.

**Legal References:**

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. TCA 49-6-3109                            | 3. TCA 49-6-1014-1019 |
| 2. Title VII; 29 CFR 1640.11;<br>1681-1686) | 4. Title IX (20 U.S.  |

*Davis V. Monroe County Board of Education*, No. 97-834

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An interest inventory shall be available to all public middle school students or ninth graders to assist students in making career choices. LEAs will submit summary data from the inventories to the state board of education, which shall consider the data in making curriculum decisions. A similar process shall be implemented for higher education.

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LEAs, at the beginning of the school year, will provide teachers and counselors a copy of the districts anti-bullying policy and provide training to teachers and counselors regarding the policy and appropriate implementation. Directs the department of education to provide guidelines for such training and provide recommendations of appropriate and free bullying and harassment prevention resources. LEAs will make information available to parents and to report to the department of education the number of bullying cases brought to the attention of school officials during the preceding year. Requires the department to annually report to the House and Senate Education Committees on the number of bullying cases.