

STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

Dear Parents,

The administration, faculty and staff at Hardin County Middle School look forward to working with you to ensure your child has a good educational experience at our school. It is very important for us to work together throughout the school year and that your child knows that together, we always have his or her best interest first.

Please take time to access the handbook online and read it with your child. Once you have read the handbook, then you and your child sign this page and return it to school. We look forward to working with you and having a successful school year. If you have any questions, please contact me at 925-9037.

Sincerely,

Lauren Balentine, Ed.D.
Principal

I certify that my child and I have accessed the handbook online, read it with my child, and will abide by the rules set forth in the Hardin County Middle School Handbook.

Student name _____ **Grade** _____

Parent Signature _____

Date signed _____ **Homeroom Teacher:** _____

Contact Information:

Home phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

Please notify school immediately with change of address or phone # or any other contact information.

Contents

Absenteeism (Attendance and Truancy).....3-8

Be Present.....8

Arrival/Dismissal.....9

Office Procedures.....10

Behavior.....11-13

Buses/Bus Rules.....14

Cell Phone Policy.....15

Cheating/Zero Tolerance.....16

Clinic Procedures.....16

Discrimination.....17-18

Dress Code.....19

Food/Drink Policy.....20

Homework/Retakes/MakeUps.....21

InternetPolicy.....22

Lockers.....23

Clubs/Athletics.....24

Community.....25

SchoolSupplies/Revenue.....25-26

504/ADA Grievence27-28

Unsafe School Choice Policy.....28

HCMS MISSION

IT IS OUR MISSION TO EMPOWER OUR STUDENTS **TO LEARN, TO LEAD,** and **TO SERVE**

The HARDIN COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL is different from the elementary school and high school. Middle school serves as a bridge between the “protectiveness” of elementary school and the “total self-reliance” of the high school. Students move toward increasing responsibility from sixth to eighth grade.

ABSENTEEISM

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM is a part of district and school accountability as set forth by the TN Department of Education. Attendance of each and every student will be collected and reviewed by our state as well as our district and school. Students with attendance information that indicates **chronic absenteeism, which is defined as a student missing 10 percent or more of the days the student is enrolled-for any reason, including excused absences and out-of-school suspensions** will be identified and targeted, and HCMS will develop a plan to ensure parents and students are accountable for the student being present for school. We also will provide any support we can to families to prevent this situation and help them in any way possible. Excessive absences from school represent lost instructional time for a student. The department of education encourages districts and schools to carefully review attendance data throughout the school year to ensure support is in place to maximize learning time for all students.

In order to be successful in addressing chronic absenteeism, it is important that we view attendance as more than a legal or compliance issue and try to understand what factors may be contributing to a student’s absences. Furthermore, we can best serve students by viewing attendance as an opportunity to learn and chronic absences as an indication of barriers or conditions that are limiting that opportunity.

❖ **Hardin County Board of Education Kindergarten – Twelfth Grade Attendance Policy**

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal/designee. **EXCUSED ABSENCES shall include:**

- Personal Illness/injury;
- Illness of immediate family member,
- Death in the family;
- Extreme weather conditions;
- Religious observances;
- College visits;
- Pregnancy resulting in health complications
- School sponsored or school endorsed activities
- Summons, subpoena, or court order, or
- Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the student has no control.

The **principal** shall be responsible for ensuring that:

- Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;

- Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent for the majority of the day
- All student absences are verified;
- Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness; and
- System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

In order to excuse an absence from school, the **parent or legal guardian** must do one of the following:

- Call the school on the day of the absence or send a handwritten note to report a student's absence and reason. This will be accepted three (3) times each semester.
- Provide a written statement from a doctor reporting sickness or treatment.
- Talk to a school official concerning a student's illness, or provide documentation of a death or serious illness in the immediate family.

Documentation of absences must be given to the school office within three (3) school days. The first day the student returns to school after the absence will be considered day one (1). It is the parent's and/ or student's responsibility to check on absences and to be sure faxed excuses from doctors are received by the school. The fax number for HCMS is 925-0253.

Family vacations will be counted as unexcused absences unless it is preapproved by the principal.

If a student receives as many as ten (10) excused absences in a semester, the principal will review the case. If the circumstances of the absences are well known and clearly documented, no action is required. If this is not the case, however, a letter will be sent to the parent or legal guardian concerning the attendance record, asking them to do everything possible to improve the attendance of the student, and inviting them to contact the principal if they have questions relative to the matter. If necessary, the parent or legal guardian will have a meeting with the principal and attendance supervisor.

❖ **Unexcused Absence (Absences Without Adequate Excuse)**

- Parents or legal guardians must be given written notice each time a student misses five (5) unexcused days (This means an aggregate of five (5) days during the school year and not necessarily five (5) consecutive days.). Additional notices must be sent after each successive accumulation of five (5) unexcused absences (Tennessee Code Annotated 49-6-3007).
- When a student accumulates three (3) unexcused absences, a letter will be sent to the parent or legal guardian telling him/her of the unexcused absences.
- When a regular education student accumulates (5) unexcused absences, a truancy

hearing will be conducted by the attendance supervisor or his/her designee at the student's school. If the parent or legal guardian fails to attend this meeting, the student will be reported to the juvenile court for truancy.

- If a student participates in the Special Education Program, a Manifestation of Disability (M.O.D.) meeting will be arranged after five (5) unexcused absences in order to determine why the student has the unexcused absences.
- If after five (5) unexcused absences, a student continues to accumulate unexcused absences, the attendance supervisor will turn the matter over to the juvenile court.

❖ **Tardies and Early Checkouts**

Students arriving at school after 8:00 A.M. **MUST** check in through the school office. Students late will be given a pink slip for being tardy and they should show it to each of their teachers the remainder of the day. Students leaving school before the official end of the school day **MUST** always be checked out through the school office. Students leaving school early may **ONLY** be checked out by an authorized parent or guardian. If a student accumulates five (5) unexcused late arrivals to school, or has five (5) unexcused checkouts, or any combination of the two to equal five in a semester, a warning letter is sent to the parent. When a student accumulates **more** than five (5) unexcused late arrivals or checkouts, or any combination of the two, the administration of the school will impose consequences on the student accordingly. Consequences may include writing of the attendance policy, assignment to in-school suspension, and/or assignment to the alternative school.

❖ **Perfect Attendance**

In order for a student to qualify for a perfect attendance award at the end of the school year, the student must have less than seven (7) hours of missed school time due to check-ins and/or check-outs. This applies to both excused and unexcused check-ins and/or check-outs. Once a student misses seven (7) hours of school time in a given school year, he/she will no longer qualify for perfect attendance that year.

❖ **Categories for Excused Tardies of Early Checkouts**

- Personal or immediate family illness
- Head Lice
- Death in a family
- Court summons
- Weather extremes
- Family emergencies (approved by the principal)
- Other reasons deemed by the parent or legal guardian to be of sufficient importance to justify the tardy or early checkout (must be approved by the principal)

Car trouble is not considered an excused tardy or early checkout.

Students NOT properly checked IN or OUT through the school office by the parent or legal guardian will be counted UNEXCUSED.

❖ **TRUANCY**

■ **General**

Annually, the Director of Schools/designee will provide written notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) that attendance at school is required. Students shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled school day in order to be counted present. Students may attend part-time days, alternating days, or for a specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan and shall be considered present for school attendance purposes. If a student is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner. A student who is absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Director of Schools/designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's absence. If the parent does not provide documentation within adequate time excusing those absences, or request an attendance hearing, then the Director of Schools shall implement the progressive truancy intervention plan described below prior to referral to juvenile court.

● **Progressive Truancy Plan**

Prior to referral to juvenile court, the following progressive truancy intervention plan will be implemented at five (5) unexcused absences.

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Tier I

Tier I of the progressive truancy plan shall apply to all students within the district and include school-wide prevention-oriented supports to assist with satisfactory attendance. These supports shall include, but are not limited to: distribution of attendance flyers promoting good attendance, link to said flyers on the district website, "Attendance Awareness Month" promotions at schools and in the local newspaper during the month of September, daily calls to the parents of absent students, promotion of good attendance on a daily basis by school administrators and teachers, attendance incentive programs offered by schools throughout the school year, signs outside of schools promoting attendance and promptness, three-day "warning" letter sent by mail when a student accumulates three unexcused absences.

Tier II

Tier II of the progressive truancy intervention plan shall include the following:

1. A conference with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s);
2. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and an attendance supervisor or designee. The contract shall include:
 - a. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the student;
 - b. The period for which the contract is effective; and
 - c. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court; and

3. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress.
4. A school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a student has been absent from school. The employee may refer the student to counseling, community-based services, or other services to address the student's attendance problems.

Tier III

This tier shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful. Parents and students shall be required to appear in front of a truancy board which will meet at the Hardin County Board of Education.

The interventions shall address students' needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be approved by the Director of Schools/designee.

❖ **Attendance Hearing**

Students with excessive (more than five) unexcused absences or those in danger of credit/promotion denial shall have the opportunity to appeal to an attendance hearing committee appointed by the principal. If the student chooses to appeal, the student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist to excuse an absence(s) or to determine if the student has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Director of Schools/ designee and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student of any action taken regarding the excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Director of Schools/ designee.

The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.

Within five (5) school days of the Director of Schools/ designee rendering a decision, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the Board, and the Board shall review the record. Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools/ designee. The action of the Board shall be final.

The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and disseminated to all students, parents, teachers, and administrative staff.

"BE PRESENT"

As a part of our "Be Present" campaign we wish to celebrate students who are chronically present – over 90% of the time. Students who meet the said criteria may be **REWARDED** by being allowed to participate in the following types of activities and events: bowling days, party jumpers, trips to the movie theater with popcorn and drink, Savannah Tennessee Street Park trips, Halloween/Christmas/Valentines parties, field days, athletics, band, dances etc.

ACCIDENTS

Each student is to report any accident, regardless of how minor it may seem. The teacher to whom it is reported will send the student to the school nurse to fill out the paperwork.

ADVERTISING AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS IN SCHOOLS

Organizations or groups that are permitted by Board Policy 1.806 to distribute advertising or materials in schools must submit those materials to the school principal or the principal's designee at least one school day prior to the requested date of distribution. All such materials that are consistent with the requirements of Board Policy and are approved by the principal shall be placed on the "community table" located in or near the school office. Students who wish to receive the materials must pick those up for themselves. In no case will school personnel hand-deliver or otherwise distribute the materials. No student will be forced or pressured to take advertising or other materials that the student does not desire to receive. Materials that are placed on the community table will be removed after one week or after the date of the advertised event, whichever is later, but in no event may they remain on the table for more than two weeks.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

The Hardin County Board of Education operates an alternative school for students; this facility is located at 130 Sevier Street. The Alternative School is for students who are unable or unwilling to follow the general rules and regulations as outlined in their school's Student/Parent Handbook. Students placed in the Alternative School will be required to attend for an assigned number of days and adhere to any restrictions that may be specified by the Disciplinary Committee of the Hardin County Board of Education.

Attendance at alternative school programs is mandatory. Parents/Guardians of students attending the alternative school are responsible for providing their child's transportation, unless otherwise approved by the director of the alternative school. Should a new disciplinary offense be committed while a student is attending alternative school, the offense will be treated as a new and separate offense.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Parents, we, with the help of engineers, have made and maintained significant improvements to the student drop off and pick-up procedures at Hardin County Middle School. These changes have been made in the effort to make the process of dropping students off and picking them up a safer and more organized procedure. Students will now be dropped off and picked up in the back of the building, and buses will utilize the front loading and unloading areas. No students will be picked up or dropped off in the front of the building. Traffic flow will move around the building in one direction, with students being dropped off at the entrance near the gym (Breezeway). This will be the only entrance/exit students will be allowed to enter if dropped off by a parent. Parents, it is very important that we adhere to this procedure for the safety of our students and the organization of this process.

In the afternoon hours, cars will line up at the rear of the building, and students will be picked up at the exit near the gym. No student will be allowed to exit the building to a vehicle from any other exit. This is extremely important for the safety of the students. There will be school personnel stationed around the back of the building to give directions and to assist with the traffic flow. Students will be dismissed from the Commons area to move to the breezeway and be picked up in an orderly fashion when their name is called.

Each parent may request student pickup cards for their vehicle, and these will be utilized in calling for students to be dismissed from the Commons area. Parents may request several of these for others to pick-up their students, (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.). These will need to be prominently displayed in the driver's side window of the vehicle so that school personnel can radio for your student to be ready for pick-up when you arrive at the gym exit. The efficiency of the process will be increased if all parents have their cards ready and visible. These cards will be produced by the school and distributed upon request. This will also serve as a safety measure, ensuring that students only get into vehicles of persons authorized to pick-up the student. There will be signs and arrows displayed around the building and on Lacefield Drive to help direct the flow of traffic around the building.

Bus riding students will enter the doors at the Commons area of the building. Bus loading in the afternoon will remain the same, with exception that all buses will load in the front of the building.

Students being dropped off late or checked out early may utilize the front office entrance. Students who are late or check out early will need to sign in and out, respectively, through the front office. This entrance will be available after 8:00 a.m. and before 2:45 p.m. for this purpose. All visitors throughout the day may also utilize this entrance and check in with office personnel.

Parents, our #1 priority is the safety of your child. This procedure has been enacted to ensure that very thing. With your cooperation, we can make these adjustments, improve the efficiency of our process, and ensure the safety of the most important aspect of our school, our students.

VISITORS

Parents are encouraged to visit our school. **All visitors must enter the building through the MAIN ENTRANCE AND IMMEDIATELY REPORT TO THE MAIN OFFICE AND OBTAIN A VISITOR'S PASS. THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD.** Any visitor to Hardin County Middle School who does not have a visitor's pass will be asked to leave the school grounds. This is strictly enforced for the safety of all.

Any vehicle on school premises is subject to search per Tennessee Code Annotated 49-6-4204.

TELEPHONE

The office telephone is for school business only. In case of an emergency, a student may be granted permission from his/her teacher to use the phone located in each classroom. Forgetting homework, checking on doctor's appointments, forgetting after-school practices, etc., will not be considered an emergency. Students are expected to be responsible enough to remember assignments, after-school practices, etc., and make prior arrangements before school each day.

CONFERENCES

The Hardin County Middle School teachers and administration believe that parent-teacher communication is essential in the educational process of children. Report cards will be sent home four times a year. Two parent-teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year, September 12th, 2024, and February 6th, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school whenever the need arises; however, we request that parents call the school in advance to schedule a conference with teachers. **Teacher schedules do not allow time for drop-in conferences.**

COMMUNICATION

To improve communication between the school and home, we have a [Facebook page](#), **HCMS LEAD FEED**. Please join the group and experience the enthusiasm of HCMS! In addition to Facebook, our teachers use REMIND to send text messages and/or emails with important announcements to parents. Signing up to receive these texts is very simple. Teachers will send individual class codes when team and class information is distributed in upcoming days.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling services at HCMS are provided by three school counselors and by a social worker. The school counselors are assigned to grade levels and are available to meet with their students on an as needed basis. The school counselors aid with personal or school-related problems, educational planning, career information, interpretation of test scores, or any other concerns a student may have. The counselors are also available for consultation with parents and teachers. HCMS students also have access to a social worker. The social worker will meet with students who may benefit from a consistent form of intervention and counseling. In addition to the school counselors and the social worker, a behavioral interventionist will be available. The behavioral interventionist is instrumental in the development of behavioral plans that support a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

BEHAVIOR

❖ HCMS General Policies on Student Behavior and Discipline

The faculty and staff of HCMS take great pride in creating and maintaining a school environment that contributes to academic and social growth. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary for all students to know and follow the rules and policies regarding discipline and supervision as listed below:

1. As responsible young people, all students are expected to behave in a manner that is acceptable to everyone concerned – other students, teachers, administrators, and society in general. All students are under the authority of the administration, teachers, and bus drivers. An accurate record of disciplinary referrals is kept, and students are sent to the administration for stronger disciplinary action when needed. In serious cases, students may be placed in alternative school for a period of time by the administration or suspended to the Hardin County Board of Education.
2. All HCMS staff members have the right, the responsibility, and duty to reprimand or correct any student that is misbehaving. Disrespect by students toward any staff member will not be tolerated at HCMS. Strict disciplinary action will be given to any student that shows disrespect toward a staff member.
3. Boy-girl relationships are a natural part of growing up. However, obvious or open displays of affection (kissing, handholding, arms around each other, or any other inappropriate touching, etc.) will not be allowed in the school, on the school grounds, on buses, or on any school-sponsored trip.

4. Electronic games or devices, beepers, laser lights, iPods, Mp3 players, squirt guns or any other items that can disrupt the educational environment are not permitted at school. Disruptive items will be taken up and may be kept by the teacher or administration until the end of the school year, if deemed necessary.
5. Obscene or vulgar language will not be tolerated at HCMS.
6. Gambling in any form will not be tolerated.
7. Good sportsmanship on the part of all students is expected at all school activities. All school rules are in effect at all school-sponsored events.
8. **Fighting, pushing or shoving** between or among students will not be tolerated at HCMS. Students involved in pushing or shoving will be assigned to In-School Suspension (ISS). Fighting will result in an alternative school placement for a period of time as well as a court summons for disorderly conduct issued by the SRO. Continued fighting, pushing, or shoving will result in more serious disciplinary action. **All students should keep their hands to themselves at all times.**
9. Students are expected to be at school on time and in their classes on time, with the required materials and assignments ready.
10. After students arrive on the school property at the beginning of the school day, they must remain on the school grounds until dismissed that afternoon unless they are properly checked out through the main office.
11. No student shall be unsupervised in the halls during regular class time without teacher permission or a written pass.
12. Students are never allowed to visit in another classroom. If the student has a good reason for a conference with the counselor or for a visit to the office, he/she should ask his/her teacher for a written pass to the office. **DO NOT VISIT THE OFFICE OR GUIDANCE OFFICE WITHOUT TEACHER PERMISSION.** Teachers are asked to dismiss no more than one student at a time from their classes.
13. Theft will not be tolerated and will result in an alternative school placement.
14. If a student has been in trouble or owes any money at school, this may disqualify him/her from taking any field trips.
15. **Inappropriate use of gum in the building will result in disciplinary action.**

❖ **Hardin County Board of Education's Code of Conduct Policy (6.300)**

The following levels of misbehavior and disciplinary procedures and options are standards designed to protect all members of the educational community in the exercise of their rights and duties and to maintain a safe learning environment where orderly learning is possible and encouraged. These misbehaviors apply to student conduct on school buses, on school property, and while students are on school-sponsored outings. The Board of Education has identified the following as "Level III and Level IV" misbehaviors. As the type of behavior escalates, so too do the disciplinary options.

Level III & IV Misbehaviors - Include acts involving alcohol, drugs, and tobacco.

- Use, possession, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of tobacco or alcohol
- Use, possession, sale, or distribution of drug paraphernalia
- Use, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of drugs
- Possession, use, and/or transfer of dangerous weapons
- Assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or a school resource officer*
- Aggravated assault*

- Possession of unauthorized substances (e.g. any controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug)*
- Use or transfer of unauthorized substances

Any disciplinary option must be implemented within the trauma-informed discipline framework used by the school and may include the following:

Disciplinary Options

- In-school suspension (ISS)
- Disciplinary hearing
- Alternative School
- Expulsion

* Designates zero tolerance offenses. Electronic cigarettes and/or vapes are considered the same as tobacco products and the appropriate disciplinary and legal actions will be taken. Law enforcement will be notified if a student possesses tobacco products and the SRO will issue a court summons.

Students will not market or distribute any substance which is represented to be or is substantially similar in color, shape, size, or markings of a controlled substance in school buildings, on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at any school sponsored activity, function or event, whether on or off school grounds.

In-School Suspension (ISS)

- ❖ ISS is monitored by a trained paraprofessional and is held in a designated room separate from the general student population. While in ISS, students complete their regular classroom assignments and have access to all school services provided during a typical school day (restroom breaks, lunch, IEP accommodations, etc.)
- ❖ The maximum number of days a student may spend in ISS (over the course of the semester) is six days. Once the six-day limit is reached, the next step of the disciplinary process is implemented; this may result in a student's assignment to alternative school. While some behaviors/actions may result in anywhere from one to six days of ISS, depending upon the weight of the incident.

BUSES

(HARDIN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD POLICY)

The Hardin County Board of Education has outsourced all bus transportation to **Durham School Services**. It is still the desire of the Board of Education that all students wanting transportation to and from school be provided this service in a safe and efficient manner. However, bus transportation is a privilege that must be respected by all, and standards of conduct must be observed. Disruptive behavior can result in students being suspended from riding the bus for a period of time. For any questions or concerns with bus transportation, **please contact Durham School Services at 925-1410.**

It shall be the policy of the Hardin County Board of Education to enforce fair and consistent standards of behavior as follows:

- 1.) Drivers are charged with the responsibility of maintaining control over student behavior. Students are required to give drivers the respect due their position and to obey all reasonable directions given by the driver. Drivers are expected to deal with minor misbehavior by using options available to them.
- 2.) Refusal to obey the instructions of the driver or serious misbehavior that adversely affects the safe operation of the bus will result in the student being referred to the principal for disciplinary action. For the first offense, the principal (or designee) will record the offense in the school's discipline program; a notice of the offense will be sent home with the student. Should a second offense occur, the principal/designee will record the offense and will notify the parent that any future misbehavior will result in a bus suspension.
- 3.) Upon the student being found guilty of further misbehavior, he/she may be suspended from riding the bus by the principal for up to ten (10) days in accordance with policy governing suspension.
- 4.) If the student continues to misbehave, the principal will suspend the student from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year (This, as all suspensions, may be appealed to the Hardin County Board of Education.)

❖ **Bus Rules**

1. All students are required to be ready and by the road; buses will not wait.
2. The bus driver may assign seats.
3. Be courteous.
4. No profanity.
5. Do not eat or drink on the bus; keep the bus clean.
6. Violence is prohibited.
7. Remain seated.
8. No smoking.
9. Keep your hands and head inside the bus.
10. Do not destroy property.
11. For your own safety, do not distract the driver through misbehavior
12. Cross the road in front of the bus, never behind the bus, make sure all traffic stops.
13. Do not ask the driver to let you off at stops other than your own.
14. Go directly to your home.
15. Cameras and video cameras may be used on school vehicles transporting students to and from school or extracurricular activities. Students will not be notified when a video camera is on board and in use on a district vehicle.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the proper care of all lockers, books, supplies, furniture, and equipment supplied by the school. Students who damage or disfigure school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage or replace the item. **All damages to books, school property, or equipment must be paid before the student can receive his/ her final report card.**

CELL PHONE POLICY

Students may possess personal communication devices, such as cell phones and smart watches while on school property. Electronic devices can **only be used for educational purposes** and at the discretion of each teacher or administrator. **The personal communication device must be in the “off mode” and must be kept in a backpack, purse, or similar carry-all, and may not be used without permission during school hours. The devices must be stored away and not be visible when the student arrives at school until the student vacates the school premises.** The principal or his/her designee may grant a student permission to use a personal communication device at his/her discretion. A device used outside these parameters shall result in confiscation of the device. Use of cameras on personal communication devices is strictly prohibited on school property or at school functions.

Students may wear and use smart watches, provided the watches are not used for communication purposes. Any communication device, including smart watches, may be collected by the teacher prior to a test or assessment and then returned afterwards. **Any communication device used inappropriately will be confiscated according to board policy.**

A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action as outlined below:

❖ Discipline Procedure for Violation of Cell Phone Policy

- 1st time – Phone confiscated for three (3) days
- 2nd time – Phone confiscated for five (5) days
- 3rd time – Phone confiscated for fifteen (15) days
- 4th time – Assigned to Alternative School. Phone confiscated for remainder of year.

When a cell phone is confiscated, it must be complete and intact.

If a cell phone is confiscated in the classroom during a time when a grade is given, the student may receive a failing grade and the above policy is enforced. Confiscated devices will be returned the day before Fall, Christmas, and Spring breaks unless they are confiscated within 2 days of the break.

CHEATING

When a student gives or receives information on graded work, during an examination, test, or on certain assignments, the offense will be taken seriously, and consequences will be issued. The student may receive a failing grade for the work and the penalty could lead to detention.

ZERO TOLERANCE OFFENSES

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the following offenses shall not be tolerated:

1. Bringing to school or being in unauthorized possession of a firearm on school property;
2. Unlawful possession of any drug, including any controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event;
3. Aggravated assault; or
4. Assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or school resource officer.

Committing any of these offenses shall result in a student being expelled from the regular school program for at least one (1) calendar year unless modified by the Director of Schools. Modification of the length of time shall be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students that commit zero tolerance offenses may be assigned to an alternative school or program at the discretion of the Director of Schools.

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the principal shall notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system as required by law.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The policy of Hardin County Middle School is to avoid the use of corporal punishment. While consequences for improper student behavior will be handled, a physical means of punishment will not be applied.

CLINIC AND PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS TAKING MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

Hardin County Middle School has a clinic area that is to be used by students who become ill or are injured at school. The clinic is currently staffed by our school nurse. Minor injuries can be treated, and temperatures taken. **School board policy prohibits the furnishing or dispensing of medication by ANYONE other than designated school personnel. If a student must take a prescribed or over-the-counter medication during school time, the procedures outlined below must be followed:**

1. Written authorization from the parent or legal guardian is required before any student will be permitted to take any prescribed or over-the counter medication.
2. The medication must be clearly labeled with the child's name, directions for dosage, and the physician's name.
3. The medication is to be brought to the office and left there until it is to be taken.
4. The student will be responsible for returning to the office to take the medication.
5. The parent or legal guardian must pick up any unused medication.

DISASTER/SAFETY PLAN

The Hardin County Middle School has in effect a Disaster/Safety plan. This includes a detailed plan of action in the event of an emergency. These situations include the following: fire, severe weather, bomb threats, or any other situation that would involve the safety of the students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, Hardin County Middle School has a School Resource Officer on staff. This officer is available to assist with any safety needs. To practice safety procedures, students engage in the required fire, tornado, earthquake, and intruder drills throughout the school year.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT & BULLYING OF STUDENTS

Students shall be provided a safe learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment/bullying. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to discriminate against or harass a student through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature. Student discrimination/harassment **will not be tolerated!**

Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures, or words, either written or spoken, of a sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious nature. Alleged victims shall report these incidents immediately to a teacher, counselor or building administrator. Confidentiality will be maintained, and no retaliation in any form will occur because of good faith reporting of charges concerning discrimination/harassment.

Violence can be defined as any word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, feelings, or personal possessions. Bullying occurs when someone with more power *repeatedly* hurts someone with less power. Examples are physically, socially, verbally, and emotionally. Hardin County Middle School will not tolerate any form of bullying. Students who participate in this behavior will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with school and board policy 6.300.

Harassment and bullying may also occur through internet activity. Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices. Electronic devices include—but are not limited to—telephones, cellular phones, or other wireless telecommunication devices, text messaging, emails, social networking sites, instant messaging, videos, web sites, or fake profiles.

Any individual, including but not limited to the victim, who has knowledge or suspicion of behaviors that may constitute a violation of this policy, shall promptly report such information to an administrator or a teacher. While reports may be made anonymously, an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with obligations to cooperate with police investigations and legal proceedings, therefore, while anonymity will be preferred, it cannot be promised.

The principal (or his/her designee) shall be responsible for investigating and resolving submitted complaints; this shall occur within a 48-hour timeframe. The principal/designee shall notify the parent/legal guardian when a student is involved in an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying; information on district counseling and support services shall also be provided. Students involved in an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying shall be referred to the appropriate school counselor by the principal/designee when deemed necessary.

Retaliation against any person reporting suspected discrimination, harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, or intimidation is prohibited as is the act of reporting false accusations. The consequences for retaliation will be determined by the principal (according to the nature and severity of the act) as will the consequences for false accusations, which may range from behavioral intervention up to and including suspension and expulsion.

HARDIN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ANY PERSON BASED ON RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, DISABILITY, OR AGE IN ANY OF ITS PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Ryan Miller
Hardin Co. Board of Education
155 N. Guinn St.
Savannah, TN 38372
(731)925-3943

Hardin County School System affirms that it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title States:

"No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Anyone who believes that the school system has discriminated against him/her or another individual may file a complaint. The complaint form is located in each school principal's office. The written complaint form should be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination by the complainants. This will be handled within 90 days of receipt. The completed complaint form may be sent to: Ryan Miller see above.

If the complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may forward the complaint to:

Dr. Vernon Coffey, Title VI Coordinator Tennessee Department of Education
and/or The Office of Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Education
P.O. Box 2048, 04-3010
Atlanta, Georgia 30301-2040

DRESS CODE FOR STUDENTS

Hardin County Board of Education Policy for Students Grades 6-12

All students are expected to be neat and clean with clothing properly sized. All clothing should fit the individual student. Examples of acceptable standards of dress and appearance for students are: Dresses, jeans, slacks, capri pants, and walking shorts
Jeans and slacks must not have holes above the knee. Skirts, dresses, and walking shorts must be no more than three inches above the knee. All clothing must be worn in such a way that undergarments are not exposed, and midriff areas are always covered. Clothing that expresses violence, obscenities, hatred, racism, or groups that support will not be permitted. Clothing that advertises/promotes alcohol, tobacco, illegal substances, sex, suicide, gang activities, or groups that promote such will not be permitted. No oversized coats or overcoats may be worn inside the building. Facial jewelry is limited to the ears and nose. Studs will be the only piercing allowed in the nose. Band-Aid cover-ups and clear space-savers will be allowed.

- Shoes must be always worn
- Form fitting garments must be properly covered

Absolutely none of the following will be permitted:

- See-through clothing
- Open back or midriff tops
- Low cut/revealing neckline top/blouses
- Hats, caps, sunglasses, bandannas
- Trench coats

- Sagging or baggy clothing
- Spaghetti straps
- No tank tops
- Pet apparel (dog collars, leashes, etc.)

Large (“large” to be determined by the school administration) chains, wallet chains, belt chains or other objects may not hang from clothing or be worn as jewelry.

No hoods will be worn over the head at school.

When a student is dressed in a manner which is likely to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school, or in a manner that violates the developed guidelines, the principal shall take appropriate action, which may include suspension.

Note: Detention/In-School Suspension days will begin with the 5th offense (unless the student has maxed out their days in ISS). If the student is out of days in ISS, the offense will result in an alternative school placement..

FOOD AND DRINK POLICY

HCMS students are fortunate to receive free breakfast and lunch each day through the Community Eligibility Provision Grant as well as our outstanding School Nutrition Staff. For the 2022-2023 school year, the following guidelines have been established.

1. Students may bring their own lunch from home but may **not** have lunches delivered from restaurants during the school day.
2. Parents are welcome to come eat lunch any day with their child and only their child, provided they utilize the Visitor Table in the cafeteria. Parents must check in through the front office.
3. Any drinks **other than water** must be factory-sealed and for lunch only. Any portion of the drink not consumed during lunch time must be disposed of at the end of the lunch period. Absolutely no fast food beverages may be brought in at any time.
4. Students may purchase bottled water through the cafeteria or vending machines during breakfast and lunch times. HCMS has refillable water stations throughout the building. Because of this, students may bring a refillable water bottle. Students are also allowed to bring factory sealed bottled water from home.
5. No bags of candy or other food will be allowed to be brought in and shared with other students at any time. Food must be kept in the cafeteria at all times.

CAFETERIA

The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the health program of the school. To encourage good nutrition, well-balanced breakfast and lunch is offered each day. During the 2024-2025

school year Hardin County will be participating in Community Eligibility Provision. CEP allows ALL students to receive breakfast and lunch each day at no cost regardless of household income. Additional items may be purchased by students at a la' carte pricing. A la' carte items may not be charged.

The lunchroom management and your fellow students will appreciate your cooperation in:

- Depositing all lunch litter in the wastebaskets provided.
- Returning all trays and utensils to the dishwashing area.
- Leaving the table and floor around your place in a clean condition for others. (If you leave trash, you will be asked to clean the area.)

HOMEWORK: THE PURPOSE & THE PRACTICE

❖ The Purpose

As a middle school, HCMS is committed to *Serving* up the practices that *Lead* students to *Learn*. As a result, and as a necessary tool, homework can be implemented at all grade levels. The primary role of homework is to reinforce classroom instruction. It is vital that students apply the concepts and procedures of instruction *outside of* the classroom. Teaching occurs in the schoolhouse, but often learning occurs in the student's house. When students understand that lessons at school connect with practice at home, they develop a broader view of learning.

The secondary role of homework is to reinforce student responsibility. As students advance from one grade level to the next, so too do their levels of responsibility. Assigning tasks that are to be completed at home requires students to plan. Returning the completed assignments to school when they are due shows the student's ability to follow through with given tasks, resulting in developing the traits of reliability and dependability.

❖ The Plan

The assignment of homework will be reviewed by each Team and will not exceed one hour and thirty minutes. Teachers will collaborate to try to ensure multiple tests (that require study guides) are not given on the same day. Assignments may be graded, and their timely completion will be necessary for student participation in any reward-based activities.

GRADING SCALE

A = 90 - 100

B = 80 - 89

C = 70 - 79
D = 60 -69
F = BELOW 60

Classroom teachers will provide additional Information concerning how student grades for each nine-week grading period will be determined.

ReTakes

Students will only be able to retake failed summative assessments (59-0). The highest grade that a student can make on the retake will be a 60. The highest grade between the original and retake will be recorded.

MAKEUP WORK/ASSIGNMENTS PROCEDURES

It is the student's responsibility to get and complete excused/unexcused absence makeup work/assignments for 100% credit upon returning to school. Students who do not get their makeup assignments and completed within the teacher's timeline, will receive zeros for all missed assignments.

INTERNET USE AND REGULATIONS

❖ Internet Use

The Hardin County Middle School is pleased to bring Internet resources to both students and teachers. We believe the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources for our learning community. Parents, teachers, and students must understand that the "web" is a global, free (unregulated) network of computers which may contain, along with educational resources, materials that are illegal, defamatory, offensive, and inappropriate for students. The Hardin County Middle School believes that the valuable information and interactions available on this worldwide network far outweigh the possibility that users may obtain materials that are not consistent with the educational goals of the district. We have taken basic precautions to protect students from inappropriate materials, but the burden of responsibility rests on the users--the students. Please read the HCMS Network and Internet Rules and Regulations carefully. A Network and Internet Use Agreement is provided for parents wishing their children to have access to electronic data. Please understand that it is a legal, binding document. The benefits and consequences should be fully understood prior to signing this agreement. Questions should be directed to the child's teacher or the school administration.

❖ Internet and Network Access Rules and Regulations

- Students are responsible for good behavior on the Internet just as they are in the school building. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.
- Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files will always be private.
- The following are not permitted:
 - sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
 - using obscene language
 - harassing, insulting, or attacking others
 - damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks

- violating copyright laws
- using another's password
- trespassing in another's folders, work, or files
- intentionally wasting resources, including the use of "chain letters" and messages broadcasted to mailing lists or individuals.
- employing the network for commercial purposes
- revealing the personal address or phone number of yourself or any other person without permission from your teacher
- any other act deemed inappropriate as judged by community standards or the school administration
- installation of unauthorized software or viruses
- usage of unauthorized disks
- downloading unauthorized material or software from the internet
- Violations may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.
- This document may be modified by the administration. Users will be notified of changes.

LOCKERS

School lockers can be utilized for the 2024-2025 school year.

1. Students will be issued a locker through their homeroom teachers. They are to keep the same locker all year unless changed through the office.
2. The student will be responsible for providing a lock and must give administration access. (extra key/combo)
3. Students may not deface lockers in any way. This includes writing, painting, or gluing cards, pictures, or posters in or on them. Students may use magnets as well as tape to decorate the inside of their lockers.
4. Students are to use lockers only at designated times.
5. Books and personal items left in lockers are the responsibility of the individual student and not the school. Lockers should be kept locked at all times.
6. School is not responsible for items placed in lockers without a lock or combination lock.
7. All problems with lockers are to be reported to the school office.
8. **Lockers belong to the school and may be checked periodically by school officials for cleanliness, stolen items, and forbidden items.**
9. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO SHARE LOCKERS WITH OTHER STUDENTS.**
10. No glass mirrors are permitted in lockers.

MEDIA ACCESS FOR STUDENTS

School administrators shall be authorized to grant permission and set parameters for media access to students in their respective schools. Media representatives shall be required to report to the administration for prior approval before accessing students involved in instructional programs and activities not attended by the public. The media may interview, and photograph students involved in instructional programs and school activities including athletic events. Such media access shall not be unduly disruptive and shall comply with Board policies.

Each year parents/guardians will be given the option to withhold permission for public news media interviews or photographs of their child at school.

Specific parental/guardian permission must be obtained if the story or photograph covers topics of a sensitive nature.

If any student is to be filmed or videotaped and will be identified as a primary subject of the filming or videotaping, prior written consent/release/waiver will be obtained from the student's parent/guardian. District employees may release student information to the media only in accordance with applicable provisions of the education records law and Board policies governing directory information and personally identifiable information. Parents will be advised of this policy at the time of the student's registration.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

The National Junior Honor Society Aaron Bell chapter of Hardin County Middle School is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization. Membership is open to those students who meet the required standards in five areas of evaluation: scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship. Students are selected for membership by majority vote of a principal-appointed faculty council, which bestows this honor upon qualified students on behalf of the faculty and staff of our school each spring.

Students in grades 7 and 8 are eligible for membership. For the scholarship criterion, a student must have a cumulative GPA of 90.0 or better on a 100 scale. Each spring, those students who meet this criterion are invited to complete a Candidate Information Form that provides the faculty council with information regarding the candidate's leadership and service.

To evaluate a candidate's character, the faculty council uses two forms of input. First, school disciplinary records are reviewed. Second, members of the staff are solicited for input regarding their professional reflections on a candidate's service activities, character, and leadership. Any solicited staff input, and all Candidate Forms are carefully reviewed by the faculty council to determine membership. A majority vote of the council is necessary for selection. Candidates are notified regarding selection or non-selection according to a predetermined schedule.

Following notification, a formal induction ceremony is held at the school to recognize all the newly selected members. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance (or better) in all four criteria that led to their selection.

CLUBS

Hardin County Middle School students will be given opportunities to join various clubs and organizations during the school year. Our organizations are sponsored by teachers and are aligned with the school's mission to Learn, Lead, and Serve. As a result, the clubs promote activities that provide new learning experiences, practice leadership skills, and promote community service.

Note: Students will not be permitted to join any club or to participate in any club activity if prohibited from doing so by their parents or guardians. Parents wishing to prohibit their children from club membership or participation must submit, in writing, a SIGNED AND DATED note or letter to school officials stating this wish.

ATHLETICS

HCMS offers a variety of athletic teams for boys and girls. We compete in 7th and 8th grade football, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade boys' and girls' basketball, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade girls' softball, volleyball, golf cheerleading, dance team, and boys' baseball. We encourage all eligible students interested to try out for sports. Students may participate in more than one sport if they wish to do so.

Academics and discipline are first and foremost at HCMS. Athletes may be suspended or removed from teams due to poor academic grades or behavior. Parents must sign an agreement contract administered by the coaches, which states HCMS athletic discipline policies. In order to participate in athletics, students **MUST** be academically promoted to the next grade level each year. Our athletes must represent our school well, both on and off the field or court.

SCHOOL- SPONSORED EVENTS

All HCMS policies, rules, and procedures are enforced at any school-sponsored event, including but not limited to ball games, concerts, and other performances.

PARENT/COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A Parent/community Advisory Committee, PAC, has been formed to allow for a better line of communication between the community and the school. Members of this committee come from a diverse cross section of the community, including parents, business people, etc. Any parent wishing to be a part of the committee, or who is interested in helping improve our school, is encouraged to contact the principal.

REVENUES THROUGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

There are two easy ways to provide monetary support to HCMS through purchases many families are already making. By utilizing the opportunities offered through each of the following companies/services, "everyday" purchases can also become investments for our school.

- **Boxtops for Education:** A new era for Box Tops has begun with a simpler way to earn for your school. Families can earn cash for their school by scanning their store receipt with the Box Tops mobile app. No more clipping. No more sending Box Tops to school (though we will still accept the paper version while they last). All you need is your phone. Download the all-new Box Tops app, shop as you normally would, then scan your store receipts to find participating products. The app will automatically credit your school's Box Tops earnings online.
- **Kroger Cards:** This program makes fundraising easy by donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day. Once you link your Card to an organization, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Shopper's Card. Here's how it works:



1. Create a digital account.

A digital account is needed to participate in Kroger Community Rewards. If you already have a digital account, simply link your Shopper's Card to your account so that all transactions apply toward the organization you choose.

2. Link your Card to an organization.

Selecting the organization that you wish to support is as simple as updating the Kroger Community Rewards selection on your digital account.

1. Sign in to your digital account.
2. Search for Hardin County Middle School here.
3. Enter the name or NPO number of the organization you wish to support.
4. Select HCMS from the list and click "Save".

Your selected organization will also display in the Kroger Community Rewards section of your account. If you need to review or revisit your organization, you can always do so under your Account details.

Any transactions moving forward using the Shopper's Card number associated with your digital account will be applied to the program, at no added cost to you. Kroger donates annually to participating organizations based on your percentage of spending as it relates to the total spending associated with all participating Kroger Community Rewards organizations.

SCHOOL SUPPLY AND/OR GENERAL FEES

Having been approved by the Hardin Co. Board of Education, the following school fees may be requested from parents or students in our schools for the current school year:

*Approved Field Trips during regular school hours—to be determined per event

Students will not be denied participation in school-day activities or activities that are required for graduation or credit for non-payment of these fees. (Please note, however, that some fees are required, and that non-payment of required fees may result in withholding of report cards. Examples include but are not limited to fees for overdue library books, lost book fees, and costs of participation in extracurricular activities or refundable deposits for school property used in extracurricular activities.) Fee Waiver Process for all Hardin County Schools: Students who are eligible may request a waiver from payment of school fees. To request a waiver of fees, parents or guardians must meet household income guidelines set by the federal government and submit a written request to the principal of the school.

SOLICITING AND SALES AT SCHOOL

Soliciting and/or sales by individuals or non-school groups are not permitted. School clubs and organizations must secure permission from the principal to sell items of any type in school or at a school sponsored activity.

CHECKS

All checks must be made out to Hardin County Middle School for purchase only. No two-party checks are allowed. **WE DO NOT CASH CHECKS.**

DEBTS

Throughout the school year, a student may create debts through lost books, fundraising debts, unpaid fees, etc. These debts are the responsibility of the student. The student involved will be expected to pay for any lost or damaged books, equipment, or furniture, and to pay all fees authorized by his/her teacher. Money from fund raising projects must be accounted for and turned into teachers. If debts are still owed at the end of the school year, the final report card may not be received until the student's balance has been paid

SECTION 504/ADA GRIEVANCE INFORMATION

Contact: Ryan Miller
Hardin County Schools
155 Guinn Street
Savannah, TN 38372
Phone: 731-925-3943

Grievances and complaints of Section 504 policies and procedures should be directed to the contact above. Grievances or complaints will be accepted either in writing or orally.

STUDENT CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS, AND GRIEVANCES

Decisions made by school personnel: such as aides, teachers, or assistant principals – which students believe are unfair or in violation of pertinent policies of the Board or individual school rules may be appealed to the school principal or a designated representative. To appeal, students will contact the principal's office in their school and provide their name, the issue and the reason for their appeal on a printed form available at the school office within two days. The appeal usually will be decided confidentially and promptly, preferably within five (5) school days. However, if the principal does not make a decision within five (5) school days following the date of complaint, students or parents may appeal at that time by contacting the director of schools/designee at the central office. The information provided should include the student's name, the school, and description of the problem. An investigation and decision will be made within two (2) school days and communicated to the school principal and student by telephone. A written copy of the decision also will be sent to the student and the principal.

Procedures

Filing a complaint – Any student of this school district who wishes to file a discrimination/harassment grievance against another student or an employee of the district may file a written or oral (recorded, if possible) complaint with a complaint manager. Students may also report an allegation of discrimination/harassment to any teacher or other adult employed in the school who shall inform a complaint manager of the allegation. The complaint should include the following information:

- Identity of the alleged victim and person accused.
- Location, date, time, and circumstances surrounding the incident.

- Description of what happened.
- Identity of witnesses.
- and any other evidence available.

Investigation – Within twenty-four hours of receiving the student’s complaint, the complaint manager shall notify the complaining student’s parent/guardian and the principal who shall inform the director of schools. The parent/guardian shall be given notice of the right to attend an interview of the student in a non-intimidating environment in order to elicit full disclosure of the student’s allegations. This interview shall take place within five (5) days from the time the complaint was first made. If no parent/guardian attends the interview, another adult, mutually agreed upon by the student and the complaint manager, shall attend and may serve as the student’s advocate. After a complete investigation, if the allegations are substantiated, immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated. The complaint and identity of the complainant will not be disclosed except (1) as required by law or this policy; or (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint; or (3) as authorized by the complainant.

A school representative will meet with and advise the complainant regarding the findings, and identify whether or not corrective measures and/or disciplinary actions were taken. The investigation and response to the complainant will be completed within thirty (30) school days. Copies of the report will be sent to the student, principal, Federal Rights Coordinator and the director of schools. One copy shall be kept in the complaint manager’s file for one (1) year beyond the student’s eighteenth (18th) birthday. The director of schools shall keep the Board informed of all complaints.

Decision and Appeal – If the complainant is not in agreement with the findings of fact as reported by the complaint manager, an appeal may be made, within five (5) work days to the director of schools. The director of schools will review the investigation, make any corrective action deemed necessary, and provide a written response to the complainant. If the complainant is not in agreement with the director of schools’ findings of fact, an appeal may be made to the Board of Education within five (5) work days. The Board shall, within thirty (30) days from the date the appeal was received, review the investigation and the actions of the director of schools and may support, amend, or overturn the actions based upon review and report their decision in writing to the complainant.

UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE POLICY

The State Board of Education passed the Unsafe School Choice Policy (USCP) for Tennessee schools on August 22, 2003. The USCP requires local education agencies to provide any student who attends a persistently dangerous school, or any student who has been the victim of a violent crime while at school, the opportunity to attend a safe school.

All Hardin County schools have been designated as “safe” schools by the State Department of Education. However, the building administrator has the responsibility of being aware of the provisions of this policy. If there is a student who has been a victim of a violent crime while at school, the student has the opportunity to transfer to the other school within our district.

A copy of the policy as well as all related guidance can be found at:
(www.tennessee.gov/education/sp/spunsafeschoolchoice)