



PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023

#STRONGERTOGETHER

West Bemis Middle School

230 D. Street Jackson, TN 38301
Office Telephone 731-988-3810

Fax Number: 731-427-3290 | **Office Hours:** 7:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Principal: Richard V. Willis
Assistant Principal: Mia Neely
Instructional Coach: Sandra Spencer
Guidance Counselor: Ricky R. Mitch

CHAIN OF COMMAND

We work hard daily to ensure that your child receives education in a safe, orderly environment. In order to do so, when questions and concerns arise, please follow the chain of command below. This will be the most efficient way to get your questions and concerns addressed.

1. Teacher

2. Principal/Assistant Principal

3. Central Office (If needed)

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival: Students arriving to school may enter at 6:45 each morning. Each grade level will report to the following areas each morning: 6th grade students will report to the cafeteria, 7th and 8th grade students will report to the gym

Car riders will enter from the cafeteria end of the building. Students will be dismissed to go to their classroom at 7:00. Students must be in the school by 7:15 each morning, or they will be considered tardy.

Dismissal: Students will start being dismissed at 2:15 each afternoon. Car riders will be dismissed from the cafeteria. Bus riders will exit the front of the building.

DESS CODE

All students must follow the Jackson-Madison County School System Dress Code Policy. Those in violation will be warned, parent/guardian will be called, and the student will be given an opportunity to change or make the appropriate clothing adjustment. If a student does not comply with the dress code, he/she will be placed in In-School Suspension. After the third dress code violation, the student will be sent home to serve Out-of-School Suspension.

Shirts

- Must be polo style – collared – Black, White or Royal Blue – short or long sleeves (sleeves must cover the shoulder)
- No writing, logos, or any type of design should be on the shirt (except a school issued shirt)
- No sweatshirts or hoodies (hoodies may be worn only on special dress code days)
- No holes, rips, or cuts of any kind are allowed- even on dress down days.
- Shirts must always be tucked in- Sized to fit.
- Turtlenecks are allowed if they are black, white, or royal blue and are worn under a polo shirt.
- Undershirts or camisoles must be black, white, or royal blue and must not be visible.

Pants/Shorts/Skirts

- NO JEANS, JOGGERS, leggings, sweatpants, wind-suit pants, or pajama pants.
- All pants MUST have belt loops.
- All pants/shorts/skirts must be flat-fronted or pleated – khaki, navy, or black in color.
- Capri pants are allowed but must be flat fronted or pleated – khaki, navy, or black in color.
- All shorts/skirts must be knee length when standing.
- No cargo pants or pants with deep pockets in the front or back.
- No writing, logos, or designs should be anywhere on the pants.
- No holes, frayed cuffs, cuts, or rips of any kind are allowed- even on dress down days.
- Pants must fit – not skintight – not sagging and must be worn at the waist.
- No underwear is to be visible.

- Tights/Leggings may be worn, under skirts, shorts, or skorts- solid in color and must be black, white or royal blue.

Belts

- Must wear a black or brown belt with a silver or gold buckle – must be kept at the waist.
- Buckle no larger than 2x2 square and no specialty, oversized, logos, or wording allowed.

Jackets/Sweaters/Hoodies

- Sweaters and ¼ Zip Pullovers may be worn, but must be solid in color (**black, grey, white, or royal blue**) with a logo no larger than a standard business card, NO designs, and NO color variations.
- Jackets and hoodies may be worn in the school building but must be solid in color (**black, grey, white, or royal blue**) with a logo no larger than a standard business card, NO designs, and NO color variations.
- Large coats must be kept inside lockers.

Other Information

- No items with spikes, large chains, key chains or other objects may be worn.
- Students may not have piercings other than on the earlobe.
- No hats, caps, do-rags, scarves, or bandanas may be worn in the building.
- No sunglasses or other non-prescription glasses may be worn.
- No bracelets, rubber bands, necklaces, etc. may be worn.
- Backpacks, string bags, and purses must remain in student lockers throughout the day.

***Students must arrive, remain, and depart school in dress code.**

SAFETY FIRST

Administration, as well as Law Enforcement, reserves the right to search students, student lockers, and backpacks for items that violate school board policy with regards to safety in schools.

DISMISSALS and CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

Parents are urged to allow their student to remain in school for the entire day. Appointments should be scheduled after school hours and on school holidays whenever possible. However, if a student has a scheduled appointment during the school day, parents are to send a written excuse and/or obtain a doctor's statement.

Classes are dismissed at an assigned time each day. Car riders are dismissed from a designated area on the West end of the building closest the cafeteria. Every effort should be made to pick up students at dismissal if they are car riders. Students who ride the school bus will be dismissed to their bus at the end of the instructional time in the classroom.

It is important to discuss with students, before they leave home, where they are to go after school. Since it is difficult to identify parents over the phone, the school will, in extreme cases only, allow a student to change procedures for going home based on a phone call. When a student is to be transported in a different manner or if someone

other than a parent/guardian is to pick up a student from school, a written notice explaining any changes must be sent to school with a contact phone number.

Dismissal time is a very busy time of day for teachers and office staff. Please do not request dismissal of your child during the last 45 minutes of the school day.

Parents/Guardians wishing to pick their child up early must come to the office and sign them out at the front counter. Anyone other than a parent/guardian needing to sign a student out must have written permission from the parent/guardian and a phone number to verify this pick up. All persons signing a student out will be asked for picture identification – NO EXCEPTIONS. No child will be allowed to leave the school without this important information being presented. Thank you for your cooperation. STUDENTS CANNOT BE CHECKED OUT BETWEEN 1:30 – 2:15 unless there is an emergency.

VISITORS

All visitors to West Bemis Middle School are required to report to the school office upon entering the building. Visitors must follow each school's procedure by signing in and receiving a visitor's

pass for identification to be always worn inside the building. Parents are welcome and are encouraged to visit our schools. Students are not permitted to have school-aged visitors at school.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT and CONFERENCES

Parents, the Jackson-Madison County School System believes that an active partnership between the school, the home, and the student is essential for student success. We welcome and encourage family involvement at all levels of your child's education. Volunteers are needed to participate on committees, assist with school functions and projects, chaperone field trips and help with various booster clubs. We welcome you in our schools, and we ask that you follow the school's safety procedures for the sign-in process upon arrival in any of our campuses.

Your student will receive a report card four times each year and a progress report at 4 ½ week

intervals. Our teachers, principals, and counselors are always ready to discuss your student's progress. We also ask that you call to schedule an appointment so that the teacher may adequately prepare to discuss your child's work with you. Please make every effort to schedule conferences during a teacher's planning period. You may also contact your child's teacher by phone, letter or e-mail. All faculty e-mail addresses are located on the JMCSS website. Parents are encouraged to sit-in on classes, but we ask for 24 hour notice.

STUDENT SCHEDULE

All Jackson-Madison County Middle Schools will be "Departmentalized" for the 2022-2023 school year. Each student will have seven periods per day. Fine Arts/Exploratory classes include Art, Chorus, Keyboard, Band, Computer, STEM, and Physical Education.

ABSENCES

Regular attendance at school is imperative for your child's success. Each time students are absent from school; they are missing very important academic time in the classroom. It is important that students attend school daily. Absences are classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his/her designee. Each time a student is absent, the parent or guardian must send a note explaining the reason for the absence. According to school board policy, excused absences are granted for personal illness, illness of immediate family members or death of a family member, extreme weather conditions, religious observances,

or circumstances, in the judgment of the principal, which create an emergency over which the student had no control. Students will be allowed two (2) discretionary days, (elementary or middle school students) per year when prior arrangements have been made with the principal. A one-day excused absence is provided for students when their parent or custodian is deployed into active military service. A one-day excused absence is also provided for students when the parent or custodian returns from active military service. Students will be permitted to make up schoolwork missed during the excused absences.

GRADING SYSTEM

Our primary goal for your child is that he/she becomes the best student possible. Teachers, principals and former students take pride in our tradition of academic excellence. Check with your child's school to inquire about the curricula, honors classes, fine arts program, middle school exploratory classes, physical education, gifted and enrichment programs, tutoring, services for students with special needs, and any other services that you may need or desire for your child.

Numerical value of letter grades for core subjects is as follows:

- A.....93-100
- B.....85-92
- C.....75-84
- D.....70-74

F.....Below 70

A numerical grade of seventy (70) is required for passing in the core subject areas of language arts/reading, mathematics, science and social studies. A student passes or fails on a yearly basis.

All Middle School students must pass 3 of the 4 core subjects in order to be promoted to the next grade. A numerical grade will be assigned to Fine Arts/Exploratory classes, but these subjects are not included in the academic core.

Conduct will not be used as a basis to determine a student's grade. Cheating is a serious compromise of a student's integrity and will not be allowed.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Teachers will communicate regularly about student progress. Parents can keep up with student progress by viewing grades on PowerSchool. Progress will also be shared with parents through progress reports, report cards, parent/teacher conferences, and other meetings as needed. Parent/Teacher conferences will take place during September and February of each school year.

Students in danger of being retained will be identified during the first 9 weeks. These students will be placed on an academic progression plan.

Decisions regarding student promotion, retention, and special placement are the responsibilities of the individual school's professional staff, including the student's teacher(s), the counselor, and the principal; however, the final decision regarding student placement is the responsibility of the principal. Parents shall be notified when problems are identified and shall be informed periodically of remedial efforts and given progress reports. Before a student is retained, the parents shall be informed in writing and shall be requested to

participate in a conference at least four and a half weeks before the end of the school year.

Promotion denial determinations may include student attendance; however, student attendance may not be the sole criterion. If attendance is a factor prior to credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

1. The student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be advised if the student is in danger of credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism; and
2. Procedures in due process are available to the student when credit or promotion is denied.

ACTIVITIES

A very important part of the development of young people comes from their participation in activities other than academic classes. We encourage students of West Bemis Middle to take advantage of the social experiences available in the wide variety of interests represented in the activities and athletics of our school:

Activities:

Art Club, Band, Chorus, STEM

Athletics:

Cheerleading | Cross Country | Boys Soccer/Football | Boys Basketball | Boys Track | Girls

Softball | Girls Basketball | Girls Track | Girls Soccer | Girls Volleyball | Tennis

Clubs/Organizations

Art Club, Newspaper Club, Beta Club, Book Club

No school shall permit a student to become a member or participate in any activities of a club or organization if the parent or legal guardian of such student has tendered a written communication prohibiting such student from such membership or participation. To be valid, the written communication shall be signed and dated by the parent or legal guardian.

Art Club – Our mission is to provide every student with the opportunity to further their visual art skills outside of the regular classroom setting. Students will try-out for Art Club in August and in January. There is no fee for Art Club. The materials are provided that students need to participate. Art Club meets weekly.

Band – The West Bemis Band brings together students who share a passion for performing arts. The club promotes learning about music mainly through concerts, but also through other band activities. It also strives to foster appreciation of all forms of the performing arts.

Fees/Costs: The West Bemis Band is a self-sustained club. The only cost to participate in Band is the purchase of an instrument.

Cheer – The mission of the WBMS Cheer squad is to encourage school spirit. The purpose of the WBMS Cheer squad is to uplift self-esteem while empowering students to become strong community leaders. The cost of participation varies on the uniform and equipment costs.

Sports – The purpose of the sports program at WBMS is to provide a positive athletic experience for all student athletes, coaches, parents, and fans. WBMS athletic programs aim to instill in our student athletes that their participation in these extra-curricular teams is a privilege, not a right. With this understanding, we strive to develop a high level of competition without losing sight of educational values, such as sportsmanship, dedication, hard work, determination, commitment, team-work, scholastic achievement, and a strong sense of respect for self and others. Athletes who are not passing all academic classes may not participate in extracurricular activities.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students should not mark school furniture, walls, ceilings, floors or equipment with pen, pencil, paint or any other instrument. They are not to tamper with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or any electrical systems. Anyone who willfully destroys school property through vandalism, arson, or larceny, or who creates a hazard to the safety of our students,

will be referred to the proper law enforcement agency. Also, students damaging anything at school will be liable and subject to financial obligations for repair and/or replacement. **Please see the JMCSS Code of Conduct for discipline and consequences.**

CARE OF TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are provided to students by the state; therefore, students are responsible for loss or damage regardless of circumstances. If textbooks are lost or misplaced, they must be paid for before a new book will be issued. If the original book is found, the money will be refunded.

TELEPHONE USAGE

The telephones at West Bemis Middle School are business phones and are used for emergencies only. Students without a pass issued by their teacher will not be allowed to use the phone. Materials, band instruments, homework, gym clothes, and textbooks are not considered emergencies.

Only in urgent situations should a student be called at school. Messages will be given to a student only if they are from a parent or guardian. Students will

not be called out of class except in emergency situations.

CELL PHONES ARE NOT PERMITTED TO BE USED DURING THE SCHOOL DAY IN JACKSON-MADISON COUNTY SCHOOLS. Students caught using a cell phone, even to call a parent, will be disciplined accordingly and the phone will be confiscated. Parents, please do not call or text your child during school hours. This causes classroom disruptions and will result in your child breaking school policy, thus facing a consequence.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Jackson-Madison County Board Policy 6.312 states that "students who possess an electronic device, such as a cell phone, cannot display the phone or turn it on during the school day. If an electronic device is seen, it is considered operational (in-use), and will be confiscated." Violating this policy may result in further disciplinary consequences at the

discretion of the administrator. A parent or guardian will need to reclaim the phone from the principal's office. **School employees are not responsible for recovering lost or stolen electronic devices: cell phones, iPods, PSP's, etc. Cells MUST be kept in lockers the entire school day. Please see the JMCSS Code of Conduct for discipline and consequences.**

MEDICATIONS

West Bemis Middle School follows the Jackson-Madison County School Board Policy 6.405 (in the back of this handbook) for administering medications.

If a student must have prescription medication at school, the parent/guardian should follow these guidelines:

- An authorization form must be fully completed and signed by the parent/guardian for each medication given.
- The parent/guardian must bring medication to school in the original container; one medication per bottle.
- The prescription bottle must include the pharmacy label.

If a student must have non-prescription medication at school, the parent/guardian should follow these guidelines:

- The parent/guardian must bring non-prescription medication to school in an unopened, original container accompanied by a fully completed authorization form.
- The medication will only be given for a 2 week period. After the 2 week period, the parent/guardian must pick-up remaining medication or it will be disposed of.
- If a student requires non-prescription medication longer than a 2 week period; a physician's statement will be required including the student's name, the non-prescription medication's name and why needed.

It is the responsibility of the parents to inform school officials of the existence of severe or chronic medical problems which students might have, even though this information might be included in a student's records.

It is also the responsibility of parents to provide school officials with a physician certified plan of

care for students who may require special treatment or care while at school.

Communication of medical problems and questions about care of students at school should be directed to the school nurse or the guidance counselor.

FOOD/DRINKS/GUM

No GUM is allowed at West Bemis Middle School. Students may not take food or drinks into their classrooms at any time. **Drinks brought for lunch must be nutritional.** No "energy drinks" may be brought to school.

Parents are not allowed to bring fast-food items to students at school that do not follow the guidelines of our school nutrition program.

BREAKFAST and LUNCH

Breakfast is served in the classroom (homeroom) to all students free of charge. Every student will receive lunch at no charge this year. You can purchase additional items at the prices that can be found on the Jackson Madison County Schools Website.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FIRE DRILLS AND TORNADO DRILLS: Fire drills and tornado drills are required by Tennessee Law as an important safety precaution. The teacher in each classroom will be given directions in accordance with Tennessee State Law. As directed, it is essential that everyone move promptly and follow directions as given.

LOCK DOWNS: West Bemis Middle School, in collaboration with the Jackson Police Department and the Madison County Sheriff's Department, has developed a Critical Response Plan. Lock-downs will be handled in accordance with the critical response plan. Each teacher will be trained to handle all situations found in this plan.

CANCELLATION/DELAYED OPENING OF SCHOOL

Cancellation of school, the delayed opening or early dismissal of school will occur at the direction of the Superintendent unless life threatening emergencies occur. Tune to local radio and television stations for information on altered schedules. Depending on the timeliness of the delay, cancellation or release, the student 'all-call' messaging system will be used to notify parents and/or legal guardians.

DISCIPLINE

We strive to spend our time modeling positive behaviors and rewarding students for making decisions that positively impact our school. We implemented a school-wide positive behavior program (RTI²-B) and we implemented the new district code of conduct. This year we will continue to follow the perimeters outlined in each program. Communication is a key component to making this work! Please help us by keep all of your contact information current and up to date so that we can keep in touch with you concerning student progress.

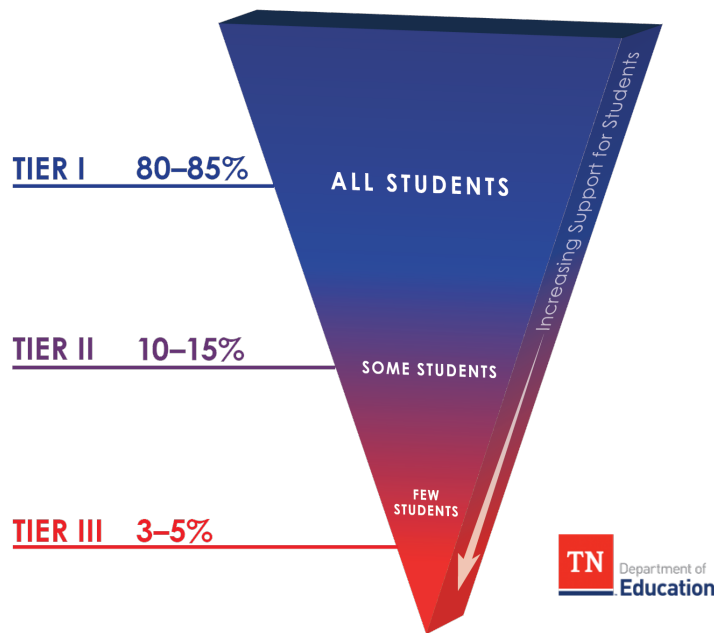
RTI²-B Overview

Response to Instruction and Intervention-Behavior (RTI²-B) is a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) that offers a powerful, evidence-based approach for meeting the behavioral and social needs of students in Tennessee schools.

RTI²-B is a promising framework for prevention and intervention within an integrated, three-tiered approach. Each tier of the framework involves careful reflection on the needs of students, the design of interventions matching those needs, and the collection of data to evaluate progress (individually for students and collectively as a school). All of these efforts require a shared school-wide commitment to teach and reinforce positive behavior. It also involves adopting an optimistic view that all students can learn appropriate behavior if sufficient and supportive opportunities to learn are provided. When using positive behavior supports in all three tiers (e.g., focusing on teaching students the behaviors we want to see, as opposed to punishing the behaviors we don't want to see, and developing relationships between students and school staff), schools create a

culture where all students and teachers are respected and included in their community. Furthermore, student and staff contributions to the school create a positive and proactive way to acknowledge, engage, and respect all stakeholders.

The purpose of RTI²-B is to empower educators to equip all students with the opportunity to meet high expectations regarding behavior and the support to reach every student. Also, students, families, and educators can work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision. Tennessee Behavior Supports Project can help schools meet that goal.



Within the multi-tiered framework of RTI²-B, each tier increases the intensity of intervention and supports so students can be best supported within their school.

Tier I: Tier I focuses on the behavioral and social needs of all students across the school environment. Approximately 80% of students typically respond to this level of support. Tier I includes establishing school-wide expectations to support a sense of safety and inclusion among students and staff, teaching and modeling those expectations within different settings throughout the school, positively acknowledging students and staff who follow these expectations, having a formal system for responding to inappropriate behavior, and maintaining a school-wide system where all stakeholders' opinions are valued.

Tier II: Tier II involves delivering more targeted interventions for approximately 10-15% of students who do not respond to Tier I supports. Tier II interventions are provided in addition to Tier I supports in place for all students in the school. Interventions at Tier II are typically systematic, evidence-based interventions that are delivered to groups of students at a time. For example, Tier II interventions typically include small-group social skills instruction, behavior contracts, self-monitoring plans, and check-in/check-out.

Tier III: Tier III includes individualized interventions for approximately 3-5% of students who do not respond to Tier I or Tier II interventions and supports. Tier III interventions involve the implementation of specialized, one-on-one systems for students. Examples of Tier III supports include individualized counseling and function-based interventions.

BEHAVIOR: DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT

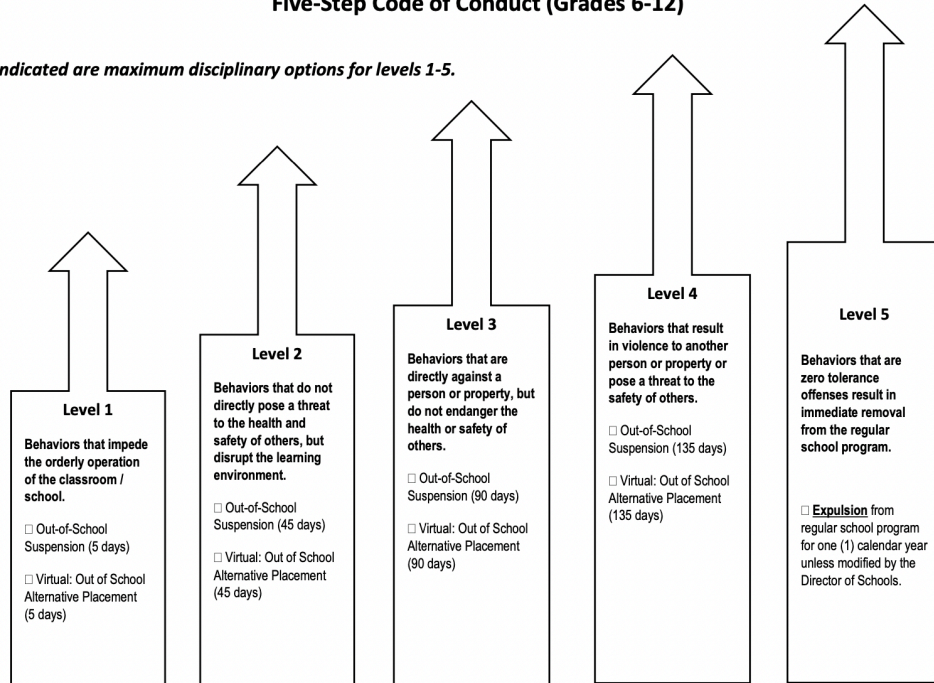
Below you will find the information we use to address discipline in our district. We will be fair with each student in the application of this program. The steps outlined below will only go into effect when a student has reached Tier II of our RTI²-B program. Any behaviors that result in a visit to the disciplinary hearing board can be appealed.



Jackson-Madison County School System

Five-Step Code of Conduct (Grades 6-12)

The consequences indicated are maximum disciplinary options for levels 1-5.



Behavior Infractions	Maximum Disciplinary Options	Additional Disciplinary Supports
Level 1: Behaviors that impede the orderly operation of the classroom / school.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical aggression Horse-playing Cheating Violation of dress code Refusal to obey staff Violation of electronic devices or webservice Possession of (or drawing) obscene material Disruptive behavior / materials causing classroom disturbance Blatant defiance / insubordination Use of profanity or abusive language Bullying / Cyberbullying Excessive tardiness Skipping class Violation of school norms, Specify: _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of School Suspension (5 days) Virtual: Out of School Alternative Placement (5 days) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent/Guardian conference Trauma-Informed practices Detention Restorative practices and restitution Restricted or excluded from activities Verbal Reprimand School Counselor Referral Behavior Intervention Plan ISS
Level 2: Behaviors that do not directly pose a threat to the health and safety of others, but disrupt the learning environment.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeat / Continuation of Level 1 offenses Specify: _____ Public display of affection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLC (45 days) Virtual: Out of School Alternative Placement (45 days) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent/Guardian conference Trauma-Informed practices

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessory • Skipping school • Forged notes or excuses • Instigating a fight or altercation • Discrimination / Harassment / Intimidation of another student or staff • Pornography possession (social media, electronic, or print) • Indication of gang activity / affiliation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative practices and restitution • School Counselor Referral • Behavior Intervention Plan • ISS
Level 3: Behaviors that are directly against a person or property, but do not endanger the health or safety of others.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat / Continuation of Levels 1 and 2 offenses Specify: • Fighting • Vandalism (minor) • Threatening others • Theft • Sexual misconduct • Use, possession, distribution of tobacco / electronic tobacco smoking devices • Under the influence of tobacco / drugs / alcohol • Victimization / Harassment of any student or staff • Use, possession, distribution of alcohol / drug paraphernalia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC (90 days) • Virtual: Out of School Alternative Placement (90 days) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/guardian conference • Counseling services (outside agency) • Restorative practices and restitution • Trauma-Informed Practices • School Counselor Referral • ISS
Level 4: Behaviors that result in violence to another person or property or pose a threat to the safety of others.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat / Continuation of Levels 1, 2, and 3 offenses Specify: • Use or transfer of unauthorized substances • Bomb Threat / Arson • Intentional striking of staff • Gang activity that results in violence and bodily harm • Electronic threat to cause bodily injury / death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC (135 days) • Virtual: Out of School Alternative Placement (135 days) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/guardian conference • Counseling services (outside agency) • Trauma-Informed Practices
Level 5: Behaviors that are zero tolerance offenses result in immediate removal from the regular school program.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggravated assault / Assault that results in bodily harm* • Possession of unauthorized drugs (controlled or legend) * • Unauthorized possession of firearms* • Possession, use, and / or transfer of dangerous weapons* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expulsion from regular school program for one (1) calendar year unless modified by the Director of Schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment to alternative school or program at the discretion of the Director of Schools.

Attendance (School Board Policy 6.200)

Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and therefore, students are expected to be present each day that school is in session.

The attendance supervisor shall oversee the entire attendance program, which shall include:

1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
2. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
3. Alternative program for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance requirements;
4. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new or reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
5. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license drops out of school or withdraws.

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his/her designee. Excused absences shall include:

1. Personal illness;
2. Illness of immediate family member;
3. Death in the family;
4. Extreme weather conditions;
5. Religious observances;
6. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the student has no control;
7. Parents of elementary, intermediate or middle school students will be allowed two (2) discretionary days per year; or
8. A one-day absence is provided for students when their parent or custodian is deployed into active military service. A one-day excused absence is also provided for students when the parent or custodian returns from active military service. Students shall be permitted to make up schoolwork missed during the excused absences
9. Up to ten (10) excused cumulative absences per year for students to visit a parent or guardian during a deployment cycle. The student shall provide documentation to the school as proof of his/her parent's/guardian's deployment. Students shall be allowed to make up schoolwork missed during these absences; or
10. Summons, subpoena, or court order.

The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:

1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent for the majority of the day;
3. All absences are verified;
4. Written excuses from a parent or legal guardian are submitted for absences and tardiness;
5. The principal may require verification from an official or other source to justify excessive absences;
6. After each separate accumulation of five (5) unexcused absences, notification will be sent to parents/guardians. After ten (10) unexcused absences and every five (5) unexcused absences thereafter, notification will be sent to parents/guardians and legal authorities (juvenile judge, district attorney general, sheriff, and police chief);
7. Initiate meaningful communication with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in order to determine the underlying cause(s) of the unexcused absences. The principal/designee shall then develop an attendance plan and coordinate additional services designed to improve the student's attendance.
8. Upon notification that a student has been absent ten (10) days without adequate excuse, the principal/designee shall attempt to meet in person with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to determine the appropriate service needed to improve the student attendance. The principal/designee shall document all communication attempts and refine the attendance plan as needed.
9. Students who are withdrawn from school are tracked and coded correctly; and
10. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

Truancy is defined as an unauthorized absence for an entire school day, a major portion of the school day or the major portion of any class, study hall or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled.

If a student is requiring to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the parent(s) and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner.

The Board shall determine annually and include in the school calendar a plan for using the three (3) abbreviated school days and the procedures for making up missed instructional days. In addition, the Board shall determine annually whether to use flexible scheduling for kindergarten students.

Students participating in school-sponsored activities whether on- or off-campus shall not be counted absent. In order to qualify as "school-sponsored", the activity must be school-planned, school-directed, and teacher supervised. Mass exodus or early dismissal or late arrival of all students or any segment of students shall not be permitted for any reason except for emergencies such as inclement weather or other unavoidable situations, unless instruction time is made up in full.

Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.

ATTENDANCE POLICY SPECIFIC TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

Students under eighteen (18) years of age, who lack a diploma or certificate of graduation from high school, must be enrolled in school and making satisfactory progress in order to obtain or retain a driver's permit or license. For the purposes of this section only, satisfactory progress is defined as having no more than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) total unexcused absences in a semester and passing at least two (2) full units per semester (3 courses in middle grades).

1. Upon request, the school will provide a qualifying student with Proof of Attendance/Progress, to be presented to the Tennessee Department of Safety in obtaining a driver's license or permit.
2. Each semester the school will identify any student with more than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) total unexcused absences. The school will provide notice to the parents of the student, to the Attendance Supervisor and to the Tennessee Department of Safety.
3. The school's Attendance Review Board may determine if extenuating circumstances exist beyond the control of the student, verifying that a student has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to retain or obtain a driver's license or permit. For the purposes of a driver's license or permit eligibility, suspension from school, expulsion or incarceration is not a circumstance beyond the control of the student.

In order to qualify for reclaiming a suspended driver's license or permit, a student must pass at least two (2) courses or the equivalent (3 courses in middle grades) at the conclusion of a grading period.

GRADES K-8

1. Attendance records as they relate to skills mastery may be used in determining the awarding of grades or the passing of a course or promotion and retention.
2. All missed assignments or tests (whether from excused or unexcused absences) may be made up. The teacher is responsible for providing all missed assignments. The student or parent/ guardian may make the request for make-up work during the period of absence, or on the day the student returns to school. A teacher's instructional time may not be interrupted by these requests; however, information regarding make-up work will be provided within two (2) days. The student will have a minimum of two (2) days per day absent to complete the make-up work.
3. Each school will establish an Attendance Review Team for intervention purposes. This team will consist of the principal (or designee), counselor, and a minimum of one teacher. This team will review a student's attendance record after a maximum of ten (10) absences and/or tardies and discuss intervention strategies to reduce absenteeism. When appropriate, the team will refer parents to community resources to assist in alleviating problems creating truancy.

4. Any administrative decision regarding attendance may be appealed to the director of schools and ultimately to the Board. The appeal may be made in writing to the director of schools within five (5) school days following the action or the report of the action, whichever is later.

ATTENDANCE HEARING

Students with excessive (more than 5) 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 their parent/guardian shall be provided with 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 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 has been 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 is 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.

The School District of Jackson-Madison County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age in the provision of educational opportunities or employment opportunities and benefits. The School District of Jackson-Madison County does not discriminate on the basis of gender or disability in the educational programs and activities that it operates, pursuant to the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, respectively. This policy extends to both employment by and admission to The School District of Jackson-Madison County. Inquiries concerning Title IX, Section 504, or the Americans with Disabilities Act should also be directed to the Director of Pupil Personnel. Charges of violations of this policy should also be directed to the Director of Pupil Personnel. Complaints/inquiries regarding compliance with these regulations may be submitted in writing to:

DECLARACION DE LA POLITICA PARA NO-DISCRIMINACION

LA POLITIE OU NODISCRIMINATION

Employee or Student Related Equity Issues
Director of Pupil Personnel
Jackson-Madison County School System
310 N. Parkway
Jackson, TN 38305
Phone: 731-664-2500

Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures (School Board Policy 1.802)

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.

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.

COORDINATOR

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 non-compliance with the Acts or alleging any actions that would be prohibited by the Acts.

NOTICE

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 and student and employee handbooks and distribution of memoranda or other written communications.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The coordinator will hear ADA/Section 504 complaints. Complaints shall be submitted orally or 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. There will be no retaliation against any person who files a complaint pursuant to this policy. Failure to abide by this policy will result in disciplinary action.

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. 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.

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 an oral or written request for a due process hearing to the Section 504 coordinator. The request shall be made orally or reduced to writing 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 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.

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 of 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 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.

Jackson-Madison County Schools

District ADA / 504 Coordinator

Student Services Supervisor

310 N. Parkway

Jackson, TN 38305

Telephone 731-664-2500 Fax 731-664-2502

**Jackson-Madison County Schools
Special Education Department**

The following information is provided to meet the requirements of the Tennessee Legislature's Public Chapter 585.

Tennessee Department of Education Contact Information

Office of General Counsel
Division of Special Education, Tennessee Department of Education
710 James Robertson Parkway
Andrew Johnson Tower, 9th Floor
Nashville, Tennessee 37243
Phone: 615-741-2921
Fax: 615-253-5567
www.tn.gov/education

Child Advocacy Group Contact Information

In addition to the state and local resources available to parents and children, there are many agencies and organizations that offer support, information, training, and help in advocating for persons with disabilities in Tennessee.

A few of these organizations are listed below:

The ARC of Tennessee is on the Internet at

<http://www.thearctn.org/>

545 Mainstream Dr., Suite 100, Nashville, TN 37228

Phone: 615.248.5878 Toll-free: 1.800.835.7077

Fax: 615.248.5879 Email: pcooper@thearctn.org

Support and Training for Exceptional Parents (STEP) is on the Internet at

<http://www.tnstep.org/> 712 Professional Plaza

Greeneville, TN 37745

West Tennessee: (901) 726-4334 fatima.ellisclark@tnstep.org	Middle Tennessee: (615) 463-2310 joey.ellis@tnstep.org	East Tennessee: (423) 639-0125 Ext. 11 beth.smith@tnstep.org
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Disability Law and Advocacy Center of TN is on the Internet at <http://www.dlactn.org>

2693 Union Avenue, Suite 201

Memphis, TN 38112

1-800-342-1660 (Toll free)

901-458-6013 (TTY) 901-458-7819 (FAX)

Tennessee Voices for Children is on the Internet at <http://www.tnvoices.org/main.htm>

West Tennessee: (Jackson Area) Telephone: 731-660-6363 Fax: 731-660-6372	Middle Tennessee: 1315 8th Ave. South, Nashville, TN 37203 615-269-7751 Fax: 615-269-8914 TN Toll Free: 800-670-9882 E-mail: TVC@tnvoices.org	East Tennessee: (Knoxville Area) 865-609-2490 Fax: 865-609-2543
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These are but a few of the organizations available to help with information, training, and advocacy.

For a more extensive list visit the Tennessee Disability Services -- Disability Pathfinder Database:

<http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/tennesseepathfinder>

Parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign and return a form stating they have received and reviewed the student handbook with their child/children.

Please sign below stating that you have read the 2022-2023 WBMS handbook and reviewed it with your student.

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

School Board Policies

Click link below to access JMCSS school board policies.

[JMCSS school board policies](#)

JMCSS School Calendar

<https://www.jmcss.org//cms/lib/TN01917090/Centricity/Domain/4/calendar%202021-2022.pdf>