



# **2024-2025 STUDENT HANDBOOK**

# DARBY MIDDLE SCHOOL

## ADMINISTRATION

**Jason Meharg**  
Principal

**Maleb Kelley**  
Assistant Principal

**Kerbi Lowther**  
Assistant Principal

## COUNSELING STAFF

**Cherri Byford**

**Stephanie Garcia**

*(Revised July 2024)*

*\*Parents will be notified of any policy changes  
made after printing of the handbook*

# Darby Middle School Bell Schedule

8:00- First Bell

8:05-8:52- 1<sup>st</sup> period (47)

8:56-9:45- 2<sup>nd</sup> period (49)

9:49-10:33- 3<sup>rd</sup> period (44)

10:37-11:24- 4<sup>th</sup> period (47)

11:28-12:58- 5<sup>th</sup> period (90)

**11:28-11:58- A Lunch**

**11:58-12:28- B Lunch**

**12:28-12:58- C Lunch**

1:02-1:49- 6<sup>th</sup> period (47)

1:53-2:40- 7<sup>th</sup> period (47)

2:44-3:30- 8<sup>th</sup> period (46)

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Empowering all students to  
grow and learn with the  
mindset of a Ranger*

## **VISION STATEMENT**

*To “Lead the Way” in  
student academic growth,  
attendance,  
physical/social emotional  
well-being,  
extra-curricular activities,  
career preparation, and  
community involvement in  
order to prepare students  
for future success.*

# **DARBY MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS**

All Darby students are expected to practice self-discipline and to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for the institution of learning. These three expectations should always be followed:

1. Be Responsible
2. Be Respectful
3. Be Safe

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

The Darby staff will be alert for any student behavior violating school regulations. Students should behave in a manner that will be a credit to our school. Students are to refrain from the following:

- 1.** Possession or the use of any tobacco products, vapes, lighters, or matches on school property at any time.
- 2.** Fighting on or near school property.
- 3.** Play fighting, including slapping, shadow boxing, dunking, or any behavior that can be considered a fight.
- 4.** Disrespect to Darby staff will not be tolerated.
- 5.** Willful refusal to follow reasonable instructions.
- 6.** Profanity
- 7.** Stealing
- 8.** Sexual Harassment
- 9.** Extreme dress or appearance which is disruptive to class.
- 10.** Disruptive behavior or running in the building.
- 11.** Littering on school property. This offense may result in collecting trash after school.
- 12.** Physical displays of affection or touching other students.
- 13.** Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, drugs, THC vapes, or “look-alikes” on school property, before school or before any school activity will result in a 5-day suspension and a citation by our SRO. A 2nd offense may result in a recommendation for expulsion.
- 14.** Possession or use of anything that might be considered a weapon
- 15.** Any activity or behavior that might be considered gang related.
- 16.** Any behavior that is not conducive to good order and discipline.

**17.** inappropriate behavior at school activities may result in the loss of privilege to attend school activities.

**18.** No food/drinks other than water will be allowed in any classroom without administration's prior authorization.

## **DRESS CODE FOR DARBY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

In order to enhance high standards and promote the teaching and learning process in our schools, we encourage neatness, cleanliness, and decency in personal dress and appearance of all students and staff.

### ***Specific Prohibitions:***

1. Clothing styles that are revealing to the point of disruption or distraction. - Examples include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Spaghetti straps - Shirts must have 4” of material from shoulder seam.
  - b. Any type of strapless or excessively tight apparel
  - c. Shirts, blouses or tops that expose any part of the midriff - Shirts must extend 4” below the navel.
  - d. Any type of spandex apparel or clothing that is tight to the point of being inappropriately revealing
  - e. All students must meet dress code after practices that end before 4:00 p.m.
  - f. Jeans that have holes above the fingertips, bike shorts.
  - g. Blankets, onesies, house shoes, pajamas or gloves, and costumes.
2. Clothing or body art that advocates poor standards of character:
  - a. Advertisements for alcohol, drugs or tobacco
  - b. Displays of excessive violence - Slogans associated with death, suicide or killing are included.
  - c. Suggestive language, slogans or sexual connotations
3. Shorts or Skirts must be “Mid-Thigh” in length.
4. Hats and Hoods are prohibited to be worn inside campus buildings. Bandanas (look-like) and dew rags are prohibited at all times.
5. According to Arkansas House Bill 1936, it is prohibited that



students wear clothes that are too revealing or sagging,  
Underwear cannot be exposed.

6. Sunglasses cannot be worn inside the building.

7. All students must visibly wear their ID's with a lanyard at all times.

**Students may not be allowed to return to class until dress code violation is corrected.**

## **BACKPACKS**

Students will be allowed to carry their own backpack for the 2024-2025 school year. When purchasing a backpack, it is important to purchase one that fits easily under your chair during class and at lunch. Also, the backpack should include a padded laptop compartment designed to protect technology tools.

## **BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Students attending Darby are transported by several different buses. Students must ride the bus route they are assigned. Each student who rides the bus will be provided a copy of the transportation rules to be read and signed. All students who ride the bus will quietly wait in the designated area when loading in the afternoon.

## **VEHICLES**

Motorcycles, mopeds and bicycles are to be parked in the designated area upon arrival to school and are not to be used until the end of the school day. Middle school students are not permitted to drive automobiles on school property. Motorcycles may be ridden and are to be registered with the assistant principals.

## **DUE PROCESS**

Appropriate due process will be given to all students. Disciplinary actions may be appealed. All appeals must begin with the building principal.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

It is important that students and parents recognize the importance of school and the use of instructional time. Disruption and interruptions must be kept to a minimum. Darby Middle School will not be responsible for damaged, lost or stolen electronic devices when they are confiscated due to misuse. **PHONES WILL REMAIN TURNED OFF AND IN A BACKPACK DURING INSTRUCTIONAL CLASSROOM TIME.**

**When earbuds and/or headphones are used, in common areas, only one ear should be covered.**

**Violation of this policy will result in:**

**1<sup>st</sup> offense:** Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. The student can pick up the electronic device in the office at the end of the school day.

**2<sup>nd</sup> offense:** Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. The parent will be contacted by office staff, and the student can pick up the electronic device in the office at the end of the school day.

**3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> offense:** Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. The parent/guardian will be notified and required to pick up the electronic device at the end of the school day.

**5<sup>th</sup> offense** – Meeting with Administration the team to determine future cell phone use on campus. A day of SDC for each infraction after the fifth offense may be issued.

**Any exception may only be granted by an administrator.**

## ATTENDANCE

Call Darby at **783-4159** between the hours of **7:30- 9:00 a.m.** on the day of the absence. There are three types of absences: Excused, Parental Permission and Unexcused.

***Excused Absence-*** An absence is excused when there is: a personal illness with official written verification, a school sponsored activity, a court appearance with official written verification, a medical or dental appointment with official written verification, or a death, or serious illness, in the immediate or extended family.

***Parental Permission Absence-*** A parental permission absence may be granted for any reason, including personal illness without written verification, provided the parent has contacted the attendance office, by note or phone call, the day the absence occurs. A student gets five (5) parental permission absences.

***Unexcused Absence-*** Any other absence not considered excused in the two preceding sections will be counted as an unexcused absence. If a student returns to school without a parent or guardian notifying the attendance office of the reason for the absence, the absence will be considered unexcused.

### ***Exiting and Returning to School:***

All requests to leave the building while school is in session, including the lunch period, must be cleared through the attendance office. Leaving school without permission is classified as truancy. If a student needs to leave school, the student's parent, guardian, or someone listed on the student's emergency permission form may check out a student. Students will be called out of class when the parent/guardian arrives. Students returning to school on the same day of check-out should check in at the main office to get an attendance slip. Students are not permitted to leave campus with other students and their parents for lunch.

## **TARDY POLICY**

If a student is tardy to first period, the office will record the tardy. If a student arrives after 8:30 a.m., they will be counted absent for 1<sup>st</sup> period. Tardies are recorded each 9 weeks by teacher per class, if a student is less than 10 minutes late. A tardy is defined as students not in the classroom when the bell rings. The consequences for tardiness per class per 9 weeks are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> tardy Teacher - Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> tardy Teacher - Parental phone contact
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> tardy Teacher –Teacher detention
- 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> tardy Chronic Minor – LiveSchool AP - 20 min. detention
- 7<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> tardy 1-45 minute office detention
- 10<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> tardy 1 day of SDC issued by office
- 15<sup>th</sup> tardy Administrative Action

## **TRUANCY**

A student absent without the consent of his parents is considered truant. Truancies are recorded per year. Truancy includes:

1. Leaving school without checking out through the office
2. Being absent from class without permission (This includes walking out of a class.)
3. Obtaining a pass to go somewhere and not reporting or staying there.
4. Becoming ill and going home or staying in a restroom over 10 minutes, instead of reporting to the attendance office or sick bay
5. Arriving 10 minutes or later after the tardy bell. Truancy will result in the following disciplinary actions:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense 1 day of SDC – parents notified
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense 2 day of SDC – parents notified
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense 3 days of SDC- parents notified
- 4<sup>th</sup> offense 3 days of SDC- parents notified
- 5<sup>th</sup> offense Administrative Action

## **DETENTIONS, SDC AND SUSPENSIONS**

**Detentions** may be given by teachers or administrators for disciplinary infractions. When the student receives a detention for misbehavior, the student must make arrangements for transportation after school. After-school detentions are *20 minutes to 45 minutes* in length. Teacher-assigned detentions can vary depending upon the circumstances. All detentions begin at 3:30 p.m. in an assigned room.

**SDC** is a self-contained room in which the student is isolated from the student body for the entire school day and serves in school suspension. Use of personal electronic devices will not be permitted.

**Suspension** from school is a penalty which may be used for chronic or serious infractions of school rules. Excessive suspension may result in a recommendation for expulsion. Parents will be contacted immediately to meet with an administrator.

## **FIGHTING**

Fighting will not be tolerated at Darby Middle School. The following penalties will be assigned to students who fight on, or near campus, and at any school related functions.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** three (3) day suspension.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** five (5) day suspension.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** seven (7) day suspension.

Recording a fight will result in a minimum of one day of SDC.

Recording and posting/sending a fight will result in suspension for a minimum of one day.

When a student is suspended for fighting, the police may be contacted, and the student may be charged with disorderly conduct.

## **HALLWAY PROCEDURES**

1. Courtesy will be shown by walking to the right side of the hallway.
2. There will be no running or horseplay.
3. A minimum noise level will be maintained.
4. Students will not congregate in groups.
5. Students will be required to have a hall pass when leaving the classroom.
6. STUDENTS ARE NOT TO COME TO THE OFFICE OR COUNSELOR AREA ON THEIR OWN. They must be sent by a teacher (non-discipline) or were called down by office staff.

## BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

### *Before School*

Upon arrival, all 7th and 8th grade students should go directly to the courtyard and 6th graders to the gym. Supervision begins at 7:30am. No student should be in the building before 8:00 a.m. unless requested by a teacher or eating breakfast in the cafeteria. Once on school grounds, students are not to leave. During inclement weather, all students will report to the auditorium.

### *After School*

No student should be in the building after 3:35 p.m. unless requested by a teacher or participating in a supervised activity. **Students who walk home should be off campus no later than 3:35pm. Students are to wait in the designated pick up area only if waiting for a ride.** The designated area is behind the pillars and off the stairs. Violators may be subject to disciplinary actions.

## ACCIDENTS

Every accident in the school building, on the school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any athletic event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the person in charge and to the school office.



## **CAFETERIA PROCEDURES**

All students deserve a place to eat in a pleasant atmosphere that is clean and where everybody is served in their turn. In order for the lunch room to be operated efficiently and kept clean, these standards of conduct have been adopted.

1. Do not throw food or other objects. This is considered a severe offense and will be dealt with accordingly.
2. Students are required to wear their identification badges at all times. If a student does not have theirs at lunch, they will be sent to the end of the line.
2. Do not cut in line. Once a student is in line, the student should not leave the line for any reason without prior approval by a duty teacher.
3. Once a student enters the cafeteria, they are not to leave unless given permission by a duty teacher.
4. When students finish their lunch in the cafeteria, they should raise their hands and be dismissed. They should then clean their eating places at the table, push their chairs in, and take their trays to the service window.
5. Students are not allowed to bring food outside the cafeteria.
6. Students are to sit in the courtyard until dismissed.

## MEDIA CENTER

The library has many printed and e-books available for assigned study and recreational reading. The media center is open for use during the entire school day plus a short time before and after school.

**Lost or Damaged Books.** We do not charge late fees. However, students must pay for lost or damaged books. The cost of lost books will be the purchase price of the material.

### **Chromebook Damage / Repairs and Replacements**

Students should check the Chromebook regularly for any damage. Chromebooks that are broken or fail to work properly must be reported to the media center immediately. The librarian will put in the repair ticket on behalf of the student. After the district chromebook technician assesses and/or repairs the device, a charge will be added to the student's account if needed. At this time, an email will be sent to the student and the parent regarding the charge. Students and their families will be responsible for any charges incurred for repair or replacement. A list of current *Chromebook Repair and Replacement Rates* will be sent home with students at the beginning of the school year. Any student who has unpaid Chromebook charges on their account totaling over \$100 will be day users only and not allowed to take their Chromebook home unless alternative arrangements are made with administration.

### **Chromebook Privilege**

The Chromebook should be used for educational purposes only. Gaming, accessing inappropriate websites and using video/chat apps are prohibited and can result in disciplinary action. School officials may search the Chromebook at any time. A student should expect no privacy on his/her/their Chromebook/Google Account. Students and parents/guardian(s) must follow the rms, conditions, and policies communicated in both handbooks and the Parent Information and Use Agreement.

## COUNSELORS

School counselors are eager to help students regarding school, home, or personal problems. Students are to make appointments with the counselor via Schoology, preferably before school, or at a mutually agreeable time. School counselors are available for consultation with parents of students during the school day and may be contacted by calling or coming to the school.

## BALLGAME AND NIGHT ACTIVITIES

Students are highly encouraged to attend extracurricular events at school with their parents or guardians. Middle school students must be accompanied by an adult to gain entrance to all athletic events. Almost without exception, these activities will conclude by **8:30 p.m.** Removal from a ballgame and/or activity will result in disciplinary action and forfeiture of the right to attend future activities and games.

## SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

Areas of the Darby Middle School Campus are subject to surveillance by cameras to enhance student and employee safety.

## SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Search and seizure is permissible on school property or at the school activity when there is a reasonable suspicion that the search would produce evidence of a violation of the law or school rules. If a student leaves campus and returns or is found in an unauthorized area of the building, he/she is subject to be searched.

**\*\* If a student is in violation of the law, a citation may be issued by our School Resource Officer\*\***

## **FORT SMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANTI-BULLYING ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY**

As defined by Arkansas law, bullying means the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat of violence by a student against another students, or public school employee by a written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that causes physical harm to a school employee or student, interferes with a student's education, a hostile educational environment, or a substantial disruption to the orderly operation of the school or educational environment.

We take bullying very seriously, and will investigate all allegations to the fullest of our capabilities. However, not all perceived "bullying" cases are actually students being bullied. Below are the three terms used to describe students' behavior towards each other:

**RUDE:** When someone says or does something unintentionally hurtful and they do it once.

**MEAN:** When someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they do it once.

**BULLYING:** When someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they keep doing it, even when you tell them to stop or show them you're upset.

(ADD 24-25  
Calendar)

## SOCIAL MEDIA



Follow us on social media sites by searching Darby Middle School

or you can go to the FSPS Website



- Search Fort Smith Public Schools
- Our District
- Directory of Schools
- Darby

## THE RANGER CREED

**Recognizing** that I volunteered as a Ranger, fully knowing the hazards of my chosen profession, I will always endeavor to uphold the prestige, honor, and high “esprit de corps” of my Ranger Regiment.

**Acknowledging** the fact that a Ranger is a more elite soldier who arrives at the cutting edge of battle by land, sea, or air, I accept the fact that as a Ranger my country expects me to move further, faster and fight harder than any other soldier.

**Never** shall I fail my comrades. I will always keep myself mentally alert, physically strong and morally straight and I will shoulder more than my share of the task whatever it may be, one hundred percent and then some.

**Gallantly** will I show the world that I am a specially selected and well trained soldier? My courtesy to superior officers, neatness of dress and care of equipment shall set the example for others to follow.

**Energetically** will I meet the enemies of my country? I shall defeat them on the field of battle for I am better trained and will fight with all my might. Surrender is not a Ranger word. I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy and under no circumstances will I ever embarrass my country.

**Readily** will I display the intestinal fortitude required to fight on to the Ranger objective and complete the mission, though I be the lone survivor.

## Notes



