

SOUTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL



MAVERICKS

2025-2026

Student Handbook

Mission Statement

The Maverick community's mission is to ensure high levels of academic and personal growth for all students.

Excellence: our tradition and your future

(Revised July 21, 2026)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Academic Activities</u>11	<u>Illness At School/Health Concerns</u> ..19
<u>Administration</u>5	<u>In-School Suspension - Student Discipline Center (SDC)</u>24
<u>Advanced Placement Courses</u>11	<u>Introduction</u>6
<u>Anti-bullying Policy</u>30	<u>Leaving Campus</u>20
<u>Arkansas Scholars</u>33	<u>Lunch</u>20
<u>Assemblies, Games & Activities</u>31	<u>Make-up Work</u>18
<u>Attendance</u> 13	<u>Parking</u>30
<u>Attendance Policy (Students 18 Or Older)</u>18	<u>Prohibited Articles In The School</u>26
<u>Backpacks</u>31	<u>RAMP</u>12
<u>Bell Schedules</u>8	<u>Restroom Breaks During Class</u>20
<u>Bus Regulations</u>29	<u>School Year Calendar</u>7
<u>Cell Phone Policy</u>27	<u>Search, Seizure, And Monitoring</u>29
<u>Cheating</u>27	<u>Semester Test Exemption Policy</u> 18
<u>Clubs And Organizations</u>6	<u>Sportsmanship Policy</u>32
<u>Controlled Substance-Related Discipline</u>21	<u>Steps To Follow When Entering Late Or Leaving School Early</u>18
<u>Discipline</u>24	<u>Suspension (Out-of-school)</u>25
<u>Dress Code For Secondary Schools</u> ..22	<u>Tardiness</u> 19
<u>Exits</u>18	<u>Testing Information</u> 33
<u>Extracurricular Activities</u>32	<u>Tobacco Policy</u>21
<u>Fire, Bomb Threat, And Tornado Drills</u>29	<u>Transcripts</u>3
<u>Grading Scale</u>11	<u>Truancy</u>20
<u>Graduation</u>10	<u>Types Of Action For Which A Student May Be Suspended Or Expelled</u>26
<u>Graduation Requirements</u>9	<u>Victor E. Stewart Library Info</u>12
<u>Hall Passes</u>19	
<u>High School Policies & Regulations</u> 12	

TRANSCRIPTS

Official transcripts are required by most colleges, universities, and places of employment. To request an official transcript, a completed Transcript Request Form must be submitted to the registrar's office. The Transcript Request Form can be obtained from the Southside High website, the office, or in the student handbook. There is no cost to current students for digital transcripts. Non-active students may request transcripts for a fee of \$2.00. *There is a 48 hour processing window to complete the transcript request. Fax number for registrar: 479-648-8287.*

TRANSCRIPT REQUEST GUIDELINES

TO REQUEST A TRANSCRIPT:

STUDENTS OVER 18

- Must have a written request faxed, mailed or brought in to include date of birth, year of graduation, dated and signed.
- Once a student is 18 and is no longer an active student, a parent cannot request a transcript without written permission.

STUDENTS UNDER 18

- Parents, guardians, or students may request without written permission.
- Schools, colleges, social security divisions, courts, military may request a transcript or proof of student enrollment but must fax or mail a written request.
- NCAA may request by fax or mail.

VERIFICATION OF GRADUATION

- Companies must fax or mail a verification request including name at time of graduation, date of birth and graduation year. No graduation information will be verified by phone.

Southside High School
4100 Gary Street
Fort Smith, AR 72903
Phone: 479-646-7371
www.fortsmithschools.org

Registrar/Fax: 479-648-8287
Registrar/email: jcarver@fortsmithschools.org

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT REQUEST

PLEASE ALLOW **48 HOURS** TO PROCESS REQUEST.

Cost is **\$2.00 per copy** for graduates. No fee for active students.

I AM REQUESTING A COPY OF MY TRANSCRIPT:

Student Name (print) _____ Maiden Name (print)
_____ Student ID: _____ **or**

Social Security Number: xxx-xx-_____

Date of Birth ____/____/____ Year of Graduation _____

If you did not graduate, provide year and grade of last attendance _____

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

PLEASE SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DELIVERY METHODS:

_____ I will pick up _____ copies Note: Please pick up in the Registrar's Office.

Circle one: In sealed envelope or unsealed

_____ Please fax a copy to: (_____) _____ - _____

_____ Picked up by designee: _____ (must show ID)

_____ Please mail a copy to the following address:

Name of College/University _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____, _____ _____

Name of College/University _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____, _____ _____

**** Please add any additional school addresses to the back****

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL MAILING ADDRESSES ON THE BACK? _____ Yes _____ No

SOUTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

Administration

Main Office

Mr. Jeff Prewitt, Principal

Tracy Person, Secretary to Principal

Angela Oxford, Finance Secretary

Jackie Carver, Registrar Secretary

Brin Boudreaux, Receptionist

Amy Williams, Receptionist

South Student Success Center

Susanna Post, Assistant Principal

(A-Dub)

Jennifer Didion, Secretary

Matt Coleman, Assistant Principal

(Duc-K)

Karen Caruthers, Secretary

Counselors

Savannah Smith (A-Cha)

Isela Avila (Che-Gi)

Stephanie Legris (Gl-K)

West Student Success Center

Rachael Foster, Assistant Principal

(L-Res)

Kacy Shingleton, Secretary

Jeff Mosby, Assistant Principal

(Ret-Z)

Kassandra Caudle, Secretary

Justin Fontenot, Dean of Students

Counselors

Cindy Lattimore (L-Nom)

Sarah Williams (Non-Si)

Trisha Yopez (Sk-Z)

Jaime Chance, Secretary to Counselors

In compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws the Fort Smith Public Schools do not discriminate in employment and education practices relative to race or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act), sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972), age (The Age Discrimination Act of 1975) or genetic information (Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008). The coordinator and contact person for all the above civil rights areas is the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Support Services, Fort Smith Public Schools, P. O. Box 1948, Fort Smith, AR 72902-1948, phone, (479) 785-2501.

INTRODUCTION

The school is a community, and the rules and regulations of a school are the laws of that community. All those enjoying the rights of citizenship in the school community must also accept the responsibilities of citizenship. A basic responsibility of those who enjoy the rights of citizenship is to respect the laws of the community. All any school has to offer is the opportunity for people to learn.

Communication: At no time should parents/guardians be in doubt of their student's progress. If parents/guardians have questions or there has been a misunderstanding, please call the school for an appointment with the teacher, counselor, and/or principal. Parents who have concerns about the school and/or their student's education should conference with classroom teachers to try to address solutions. If a solution is not forthcoming, the parent should conference with the counselors, assistant principal or building principal to work toward a solution.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Southside offers a variety of clubs and organizations in which a student can participate. Involvement in a club allows students to meet new people and work together for common goals. The more students are involved, the more pleasant their high school experience will be. All clubs and organizations are open to all students who meet the requirements.

ACTIVITIES

Drama/Thespians
Debate/Forensics
Quiz Bowl/Science Bowl

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

Art Club
Asian Culture Club
Columbians/Interact
Debate/Forensics
DECA
Drama/Thespians
Dungeons & Dragons
Earth Club
Educators Rising
FBLA
Fellowship of Christian Athletes
FCCLA
French Club
Future Medical Professionals
German Club
Girls Who Code
GSA
Habitat for Humanity
Hearts in Action
History Club
HOSA
International Club
Junior Leadership & Career Academy
Key Club
Model United Nations
Mu Alpha Theta

National Forensics League

Partners Club
Partners in Christ
Pickleball Club
Powerlifting Club
Psychology Club
Red Shoe Club
Robotics
Young Life

COUNCILS

Student Council
Senior Council
Junior Council
Sophomore Council
Freshman Council
Superintendent's Advisory Council

HONOR SOCIETIES

French National Honor Society
German National Honor Society
National Business Honor Society
National Honor Society
Quill & Scroll International Honor Society
Spanish National Honor Society

MUSIC

Band
Choir
Orchestra

SPORTS

Baseball
Basketball
Bowling
Cheerleaders
Cross Country
ESports
Football
Golf
Maverick Stars
Soccer
Softball
Southern Belles
Swimming
Tennis
Track and Field
Volleyball
Wrestling

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR



2025-2026 DISTRICT CALENDAR

ALTERNATE FORMAT*

Calendar subject to change based on legislative session.

■	No School
■	Parent-Teacher (PT) Conferences 3:30 - 6:30 PM
■	School Begins & Ends

AUGUST 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

13: First Day of School

SEPTEMBER 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

1: Labor Day

OCTOBER 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

13: PT Conf. (MS/HS)
14: PT Conf. (Elem)
16: PT Conf. (All Schools)
17, 20: Fall Break

NOVEMBER 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

14: No School
24-28: Thanksgiving

DECEMBER 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

19: Semester Ends
22-31: Winter Break

JANUARY 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

1-6: Winter Break
7: Return to School
19: MLK Jr. Holiday

FEBRUARY 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27

16: No School

MARCH 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

16: PT Conf. (MS/HS)
17: PT Conf. (Elem)
19: PT Conf. (All Schools)
20: No School
23-27: Spring Break

APRIL 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

3: No School

MAY 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

14: Northside Graduation
15: Southside Graduation
21: Last Day of School
25: Memorial Day

SCHOOL DAY

Elementary School
8:00 - 3:00 (390 minutes)

Middle School
8:05 - 3:30 (387 minutes)

High School
8:05 - 3:30 (380 minutes)

SCHOOL YEAR

1st quarter: 42 days/ 266 hours
2nd quarter: 42 days/ 266 hours
3rd quarter: 44 days/ 278.66 hours
4th quarter: 44 days/ 278.66 hours

Total: 1089 hours

Inclement Weather: The District is required to show 30 hours of make-up time in the event of inclement weather or other emergency circumstances. If the Superintendent cancels school, 21 hours of instructional time are built into the calendar that would not need to be made up. If additional time is necessary to be made up, May 22 & 26 may be used or time may be added to the remaining instructional days at the discretion of the Superintendent.

In case of excessive inclement weather, please schedule summer travel after June 3rd.

*The alternate format calendar allows the district to use instructional minutes to determine the school calendar.

BELL SCHEDULE

1st Bell 8:00

1st Period 8:05-8:55 (50)

2nd Period 9:00-9:50 (50)

3rd FLEX Period 9:55-10:20 (25)

4th Period 10:25-11:15 (50)

A- Lunch 11:15-11:45 (30)

B-Lunch 11:45-12:15 (30)

C-Lunch 12:15-12:45 (30)

5A Class 11:50-12:45 (55)

5B Class 11:20-11:45 (25)

12:20-12:45 (25)

5C Class 11:20-12:15 (55)

6th Period 12:50-1:40 (50)

7th Period 1:45-2:35 (50)

8th Period 2:40-3:30 (50)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate from the Fort Smith Schools, a student must earn a minimum of twenty-two credits (beginning with class of 2026). Credits are earned at the rate of 0.5 credits per class per semester. [Smart Core graduation requirements were developed by the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education \(DESE\)](#) to prepare students for college and career post-secondary educational opportunities.

Subject Area	Fort Smith Requirements
English	4 credits
Math	4 credits 1 credit of Algebra 1 credit of Geometry 1 credit of Algebra II 1 credit of additional math or Computer Science Flex
Science	3 credits 1 credit of DESE approved Physical Science 1 credit of DESE approved Biology 1 credit of DESE approved third science or Computer Science Flex
Social Studies	3 credits .5 credit of Civics* .5 credit of economics or equivalent course** 1 credit of World History 1 credit of American (U.S.) History
Physical Education	.5 credits 0.5 credit of PE, Athletics, Cheer, Dance, or JROTC I.
Health	.5 credits*** .5 credit can be earned in JROTC II.
Oral Communication	.5 credits .5 credit can be earned in English 10.
Fine Arts	.5 credits Courses that are considered a Fine Arts credit include Band, Choir, Orchestra, Music Theory, Music Appreciation, Theatre, Stagecraft, and Visual Arts.
Career Focus	6 credits Class of 2026 and beyond .5 credit of Keystone This high school credit will be earned in 8 th grade in FSPS through Career Connections. ****1.0 credit of Computer Science OR qualifying CTE course Please click this link to all CS and qualifying CTE courses
Community Service Learning (Beginning class of 2027)	Link
Total Credits	22 credits (Beginning with class of 2026) 23 credits (Ending with class of 2025)
*ADE Act 478 requires all students to pass the civics portion of the Naturalization Test used by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services.	
**ADE Act 480 and Act 466, these acts require all students to complete a course that includes specific personal finance standards in grades 9-12.	

GRADUATION

To be a graduate of a Fort Smith high school, students must have been in attendance at that school during the final semester before graduation and have earned at least two credits in that semester. Students may not take a final requirement in a summer session and satisfy graduation requirements for Fort Smith Public Schools if all other high school work has been completed elsewhere. Enrollment must occur within the first 10 days of the final semester.

Students desiring to graduate early must do the following:

- Declare their intention to graduate by the first day of the intended graduation year
- Outline a plan in which all 23 required credits will be met
- Obtain the principal's approval

A student must have completed all required units of credit to be eligible to participate in spring commencement exercises.

Diploma Requirements

Diploma	Meet requirements for graduation.
Honors Diploma	Meet requirements for graduation; accumulate a 3.0 grade point average; pass eight units of Pre-AP and/or AP courses.
AP Capstone Diploma (Southside)	Meet requirements for graduation; earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research and on four additional AP exams of the student's choosing.

No students can participate in any Senior class or graduation activities unless they have met or are meeting all requirements for graduation. Diplomas will be awarded to students following completion of final credits. For more specific information concerning courses and graduation, students should see their counselor.

Southside posts a recognition roll at the close of the first and second semesters. To qualify for this honor, students must carry a schedule of 4 full-credit courses per semester, must have a grade point average of 3.00 or above for the quarter by the number of full credit courses taken that semester, and must have a satisfactory citizenship rating.

Credit Recovery is available to students through Schoology. Students interested in Credit Recovery should speak to their counselor.

GRADING SCALE

Grades are important to everyone, not only to the student and parent, but also to the teacher, school and community. Grades assigned to students for performance in a course shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed academic objectives of the course. Grades that reflect other educational objectives may also be given. Only AP classes and concurrent/ college classes receive additional points for rank, and rank is based on GPA. See the following grading scale and grade point scales:

Grade Scale	Non-Weighted: On Level & Pre-AP	Weighted: AP & Concurrent Credit
90 -100 = A	A = 4	A = 5
80 - 89 = B	B = 3	B = 4
70 - 79 = C	C = 2	C = 3
60 - 69 = D	D = 1	D = 2
Below 60 = F	F = 0	F = 0

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

Advanced Placement courses (AP) prepare students for Advanced Placement tests through which students may obtain college credit. AP classes are college-level classes taught in high school. AP courses are governed by the College Board Curriculum and teachers are trained to teach those courses. Course descriptions may be found at apstudent.collegeboard.org/apcourse. Individual colleges hold the final determination of type and/or amount of credit. Students are required to take the AP Test at the end of the course.

If students do not take the AP exam, or if students drop the course without completing the course, the class will then revert to the 4.0 grading scale. A corrected final transcript will be sent to post-secondary institutions.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Parents/guardians and teachers should be partners in the education of students. Their joint efforts in assigning and monitoring learning activities can provide an excellent opportunity to strengthen the home-school relationship and to help the student feel that home and school are working together for his/her best interest.

Academic activities will be assigned and used as an integral part of the teaching/learning experience for students. Teachers will provide specific homework assignments. Each school may adopt guidelines to assure balance in homework assigned to each student. General homework guidelines for grades 7-12 are 1-2 1/2 hours per day.

Homework may be assigned, clearly stated, reviewed, and feedback provided to students regularly. Each teacher should advise students how and the extent to which homework will be used in determining final grades. To develop students' independent study skills, the teacher should:

1. Discuss the skills needed to accomplish learning activities.
2. Demonstrate a simple step-by-step process of completing learning activities.

3. Model the techniques of listening, following instructions, note-taking, reading for comprehension, preparing papers and locating materials.
4. Have students demonstrate their mastery of independent skills.
5. Teach the students how to organize materials and work independently.

RAMP

Required Academic Monitoring and Progress (RAMP) is designed to provide more quality time for students who fail to do their work in class or at home in a timely manner. Students who willfully do not complete assignments will be identified by their classroom teacher. The teacher will assign them to a morning or afternoon session of RAMP.

Morning RAMP - 7:30-8:00am Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Afternoon RAMP- 3:30-4:00pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

The student will remain in RAMP until the assignment is completed. Math and English teachers will be available during RAMP for assistance. When the assignment is completed to the teacher's satisfaction, the student will be removed from the spreadsheet.

Consequences will be earned by students in RAMP who do not attend their assigned session, are tardy, or do not complete their work.

1st-3rd Offense: Lunch Detention until assignment is completed per teacher approval. There will be an automatic pull to the teacher's RTI.

4th Offense: SDC

5th Offense: 2 days SDC

SOUTHSIDE MAVERICK LIBRARY INFORMATION

(This Information is Subject to Change)

Patrons of the Southside Maverick Library have access to numerous print materials as well as eBooks. Links to the online card catalog, databases for research purposes, and other resources can be found on the Southside Library Website.

The book checkout limit is three books. Books not returned will result in the patron paying the replacement cost of the book.

Students are expected to abide by all classroom, school, and library policies and procedures when working, studying, or reading in the library.

HIGH SCHOOL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Students are expected to acquaint themselves with the special policies and regulations effective in the high

school. Questions concerning school policies should be discussed with the principal, assistant principals, or guidance counselors.

A pupil who graduates from a Fort Smith high school must complete the last two of his high school units in the school which grants the diploma.

THE FOLLOWING REGULATIONS APPLY TO ALL STUDENTS AT SOUTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS ALSO NEED TO REFER TO THE FORT SMITH PUBLIC SCHOOL HANDBOOK FOR POLICIES NOT COVERED IN THE SOUTHSIDE HANDBOOK.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is important to a successful school experience. Students are expected to be present for class daily.

Types of absences: Excused, Parent Permission & Unexcused

SCHOOL BUSINESS: Students who are out of the building for school business are not considered absent.

1. School Business activities are learning opportunities that are available outside of the school building.
2. Students involved in these activities are responsible for arranging to have their work from any class missed ready to turn in upon returning to class.
3. Work missed due to a School Business activity must be made up as directed by the teacher.

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

An absence is excused in the following instances:

An excused absence shall afford the student the privilege of making up all assignments and/or class activities as the teachers direct. Official written verification includes signed doctor, dentist, court or legal documents identifying the office and/or the name of the professional who provided the service.

*Note: Per FSPS policy, A written statement presented or uploaded for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation or upload will not be accepted.

1. **Excused** – An excused absence shall afford the student the privilege of making up all assignments and/or class activities as the teachers direct. Official written verification includes signed doctor, dentist, court or legal documents identifying the office and/or the name of the professional who provided the service. Excused absences are those where the absence was due to one of the following reasons:
 - a. Student's illness when medically documented or approved by the principal; Medical/Dental appointments with official written verification. Parents/guardians are urged to schedule medical or dental appointments after school hours. When this is not possible, the appointment should be scheduled during a study hall or scheduled so that the student will not miss the same class(es) repeatedly. This is especially important during days on which standardized tests are administered. Parents/guardians are strongly urged not to schedule appointments on standardized test days.
 - b. Death or serious illness in the immediate family, i.e. spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, any relative who lives in the same household as the student; documentation

is required.

- c. Observance of recognized holidays observed by the student's faith;
- d. Attendance at a medical appointment;
- e. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal;
- f. Participation on FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activities;
- g. Participation in the election poll workers program for high school students;
- h. Absence granted to allow a student to visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and has been called to active duty, is on leave from active duty, or has returned from deployment to combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the direction of the Superintendent or designee;
- i. Absences granted, at the Superintendent's discretion, to seventeen (17) year old students who join the Arkansas National Guard while in the eleventh (11th) grade to complete basic training between grades eleven (11) and twelve (12);
- j. Absences for students excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak because the student has an immunization waiver or whose immunizations are not up to date;
- k. Absences due to conditions related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitations:
 - i. Labor, delivery, and recovery;
 - ii. Parental and postnatal medical appointments and other medically necessary, pregnancy-related absences;
 - iii. The illness or medical appointment of a child belonging to a parent who is enrolled at a District school;
 - iv. A legal appointment related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitations:
 - Adopting;
 - Custody; and
 - Visitation
 - v. A reasonable amount of time to accommodate a lactating student's need to express breast milk or to breastfeed the student's child on the District's campus; and
 - vi. At least ten (10) school days of absences for both a parenting mother and a parenting father, after the birth of a child.
- l. Absences for a student who is the child of a fallen service member or fallen first responder.
 - i. Due to a mental health concern; or
 - ii. To attend an event from a sponsoring organization that provides support to families of fallen service members or first responders or provides support for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency.
- m. Parental Permission for any reason not covered above, not to exceed five (5) days per year, provided the parent has contacted the school attendance office, by note or by phone call, the day the absence occurs.
 - i. For the purposes of elementary school attendance, parent permission days will be counted in the form of five (5) a.m. and five (5) p.m. absences. For the purposes

of secondary school attendance, parent permission days will be counted in the form of periods.

- ii. No more than five (5) of either a.m. or p.m. absences will be excused as parent permission. If five (5) parent permission days are exhausted, additional days or periods will be recorded as unexcused parent permission.
- iii. Absences for parent permission shall not be granted in conflict with semester examination schedules.

n. Any circumstance not covered above which the District determines are excused.

Students who serve as pages for a member of the General Assembly shall be considered on instructional assignment and shall not be considered absent from school for the day the student is serving as a page.

Up to one (1) time during each scheduled election, a student shall not be considered absent from school for the time the student accompanies the student's parent when the parent is exercising the parent's right to vote in a scheduled election.

In order for the absence to be considered excused, the student must:

- a. Bring a written statement to the principal or designee upon the student's return to school from court or legal documents, or treating licensed health care provider identifying the office and/or the name of the professional who provided the service stating the reason for the student's absence; or
- b. If the student is attending the District's courses digitally, upload a written statement from court or legal documents, or treating licensed health care provider identifying the office and/or the name of the professional who provided the service stating the reason for the student's absence; through the District's digital course management platform for review by the principal or designee; or
- c. Provide documentation as proof of a student's participation in an activity or program scheduled and approved by the FFA, FHA, or 4-H program that is provided by a FFA, FHA, or 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the FFA, FHA, or 4-H activity or program; or
- d. The student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student provides written documentation that the student's absence is to attend an event from a sponsoring organization that:
 - Provides support to families of fallen service members or first responders or provides support for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency; and
 - May be verified as an organization that provides support to the military and first responder community by reviewing the Resources Page for Military Family Engagement on the Department of Education website.

A written statement presented or uploaded for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation or upload will not be accepted.

A student shall not be eligible to receive an excused absence for letter (l) above if:

- The student is not in good academic standing;
- The student does not have a prior record of good attendance; or
- The absence occurs during a date on which standardized testing is administered.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly's intention that students having excessive absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Excessive absences may, however, be the basis for the denial of course credit, promotion, or graduation.

An excused absence shall afford the student the privilege of making up all assignments and/or class activities as the teachers direct.

PARENT PERMISSION

- a. Parental permission may be granted for any reason, including personal illness without written verification, provided the parent has contacted the office, by note or phone call, the day the absence occurs.
- b. The student may not exceed five (5) parental permission absence days for the school year. If a student exceeds five (5) days of parental permission absence in any class for the school year, all parental permission days beyond the first five (5) are classified as unexcused. For the purposes of secondary school attendance, parent permission days will be counted in the form of periods.
- c. Parental permission shall afford the student the privilege of making up all assignments and/or class activities as the teachers direct.
- d. Absences for parental permission shall not be granted in conflict with semester examination schedules.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- a. An unexcused absence shall be considered to be a willful absence (truant) from school if it is without the knowledge of the student's parent/guardian.
 - b. An unexcused absence will not be granted for the following reasons:
 1. Social or public policy advocacy; or
 2. Attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or federal level.
 - c. Any other absence not considered excused in the two preceding sections will be counted as unexcused.
 - d. Any student who is truant or has an unexcused absence forfeits the right to make up any work for credit.
 - e. Students on short-term suspension from school (not to exceed ten days) shall be considered absent, but excused for the purpose of completing make-up work, during the term of suspension. These students will be expected to make up their school work and may receive full credit upon satisfactory completion. The sole responsibility for completing assigned work rests with the student. All make-up work should be returned to the appropriate teacher upon the student's return to school. For the purposes of absenteeism, short-term suspension days (not to exceed 10 days) shall be considered unexcused.
 - f. A student with four (4) or more unexcused absences per semester may be assigned consequences. Minimum – reprimand; Maximum – suspension.
 - g. Students with ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences shall be dropped on the eleventh (11) unexcused day. Students will be allowed to re-enroll upon return. Space is not guaranteed at the same school upon re-enrollment. A.C.A § 6-18-213.
4. School Business – School business days will be excused. School business designation is limited to school sanctioned/sponsored activities and events.

COLLEGE VISITS

Absences for College Visits

Juniors and Seniors are allowed up to **three excused absences per school year** for college visits. Freshmen and Sophomores may take **one excused absence per year** for the same purpose.

To have the absence excused, **official documentation from the college or university must be submitted to the South Student Success Center within five school days** of the student's return.

Pre-approval is **not required** for these allotted college visit days. However, if the office is not notified of the absence in advance, it will be marked **unexcused** until the required documentation is received.

Students may pick up a **College Visit Form** from the South office before their visit. If used, the absence will be marked as **Parent Permission** until proper documentation is turned in.

Any additional college visit days beyond the annual allowance must be **pre-approved by the student's assistant principal**.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT

Parents/guardians should contact the school by 9:00 a.m. any day that a student will be absent. Parents/guardians should provide pertinent information to the office. In addition to assisting the school with the attendance record, parent/guardian notification to the school is a security measure to verify the locations of all students. Any other concerns over the student's attendance or tardy record should be addressed with the office.

Upon the 5th unexcused absence in any semester, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian notifying the student that upon the 10th unexcused absence of the same semester the student may be denied promotion or credit. Before a student accumulates the 10th day of unexcused absence for the semester, the student or the student's parents/guardian may petition the school principal for a conference to address the student's absences (Act 1223 of 2011). Exceptions to this rule will be made in accordance with the student's IEP or 504 plans.

Students with long-term, medically-documented illness or injury may be allowed to make up work and may be given assistance in obtaining credit for courses in which they are enrolled.

LEGAL NOTIFICATION

Upon notification by the School District that a student of mandatory school age is no longer attending school or has 10 consecutive absences in any class, the County Prosecuting Attorney or City Prosecuting Attorney will be notified that the student is no longer attending school. Students with unexcused absences in excess of 10 total days in any one semester may be considered delinquent, and appropriate notification to the County Prosecuting Attorney or City Prosecuting Attorney may be made subject to the directions of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The Fort Smith School District shall notify the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student 14 years of age or older is no longer attending school, and the Department of Finance and Administration shall suspend the student's learner permit or driver's license until the student re-enrolls and is successfully attending school.

COURSE CREDIT

Credit may be denied to students in grades 9-12 enrolled in credit courses when a student has more than 15 total days absent in a semester.

DENIAL OF PROMOTION

Excessive absences (15 days per semester) may be a basis for denial for promotion or graduation. Before a student reaches 15 days of absence in a semester, the parent or guardian may petition the principal for a conference to address the student's absences. The plan to address the absence problem will be formalized into a written agreement to include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the requirements of the agreement.

GRADING

A student who is absent from any given class will be permitted to make up "high leverage" assignments. The student must make arrangements with the teachers on the first day the student returns to class to complete work.

MAKE-UP WORK

A student who is absent from any given class will be permitted to make up major tests and major assignments if the student has an excused absence. The student must make arrangements with the teacher(s) on the first day the student returns to class to complete the work missed because of an excused absence. If a student has one excused absence they will have one day to make up the work. If they have two excused absences they will receive two days to make up the work, etc. etc. A student will *receive* a "0" or an "F" if the assignment(s) missed is the result of an "unexcused" absence. A student may forfeit the right to make up an assignment if the missed assignment is the result of an "unexcused" absence. Students suspended from school will be expected to make up their school work and will receive full credit upon satisfactory completion. The sole responsibility for completing assigned work rests with the student. All make-up work should be returned to the appropriate teacher upon the student's return to school or submitted electronically to the Schoology LMS during the suspension period.

STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN ENTERING LATE OR LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY:

1. Students should have their parent/guardian call the Main Office for an exit if needing to leave during a class period. A parent/guardian must physically sign their student out during lunch periods. Southside High School is a closed campus.
2. All students entering late will be counted as tardy. Entering after the first 20 minutes of a class or exiting prior to the last 20 minutes of a class will be counted as an absence.

EXITS:

Students are NOT allowed to leave campus unless their parent/guardian calls the Main Office for an exit. Students must physically exit through the Main Office to officially check out. Propping open exit doors is strictly prohibited.

ATTENDANCE POLICY (Students 18 or older)

Students who are 18 years old or older may be dropped from class and/or school if they fail to make adequate academic progress.

SEMESTER TEST EXEMPTION POLICY

Students who have an A, B, or C in a class and have only three (3) *absences* or fewer in that class have the option of being exempt from the semester test in that class. Students who qualify for the exemption but elect to take the test to raise their grade may not have their semester grade lowered because of the optional test.

1. Each teacher will keep records on a per class basis. The teacher will inform the students of their exemption status.
2. Students will have been enrolled during the entire semester. Students transferring in during the semester cannot be exempt from tests that semester.
3. Three (3) tardies in a class will equal one (1) day of absence.
4. ***School business and excused absences*** will not be counted.
5. During semester tests all procedures will be followed.
6. Absences as a result of out-of-school suspension or truancy will cause a student to forfeit their opportunity for semester test exemptions.

TARDINESS PENALTIES

1. Promptness is expected of all students. A pupil who is not in his/her proper place when the tardy bell are expected to be in their proper place rings is considered tardy.
2. If a pupil has been detained by a teacher, the student should ask for a note from that teacher.
3. Tardies are recorded per semester. For the purposes of semester test exemptions 3 tardies equal 1 absence.
4. Repeated tardiness to class will result in the following penalties:

1st-2nd tardy	Classroom policy applies. The teacher records and informs the student.
3rd-4th tardy	1 day of after school detention
5th tardy	2 days of after school detention
6th-7th tardy	1 day in SDC
8th-9th tardy	2 days in SDC
10th tardy	Discretion of the assistant principal, including but not limited to SDC, and/or denial of credit

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL/HEALTH CONCERNS

Parents/guardians should call the school nurse for questions or concerns over their student's health. The school nurse can provide information about the student's health if that student has previously reported any concerns or problems. Parents/guardians should allow the school nurse to share any necessary information about their student with that student's teachers.

The following procedures will be followed if students become ill at school:

1. Ill students must report to the nurse's office.
2. If students must stop by the restroom before coming to the nurse's office, they must report to the nurse's office as soon as possible or send someone to notify the office of their whereabouts.
3. Students are not to leave the building or stay in the restroom when they become sick.
4. Students who come to the nurse's office may be sent home by the nurse after a parent/guardian is contacted. A parent/guardian may give permission for the student to exit or return to class.
5. Failure to follow these procedures will result in the student being considered truant. (See Penalties for Truancy)

HALL PASSES

Students are required to have a valid hall pass from a teacher or administrator giving permission to be out of the classroom. The student handbook will serve as the hall pass for students. The classroom teacher will sign the

student out of class noting the time the student leaves and returns. When a student leaves the classroom, they will be required to place their cell phone on the teacher's desk or appropriate area designated by the teacher. *If a student is found with their cell phone in the hallway during instructional time it may result in an electronic offense and the phone may be confiscated. (See Electronic Devices)*

RESTROOM BREAKS DURING CLASS

Students should plan to use the restroom before school, between classes, during lunch, and after school. However, if a student needs to use the restroom during class they will be allowed to take a restroom break four times per semester. If a student must use the restroom in addition to the fourth time in a semester, they will serve lunch detention. IEP's and 504 plans will be observed.

LEAVING CAMPUS

Southside has a closed campus. After arriving on campus, no student may leave the campus for any reason without checking out through the office. Failure to follow the below procedures will result in an unexcused absence.

1. In order for a student to leave campus during lunch periods, a parent/guardian must pick up the student in person through the front office.
2. If a parent/guardian wishes their child to leave school during the day, the parent/guardian must call or the child must bring a note to the ATTENDANCE OFFICE before school starts stating the time and reason for leaving. The student will then be given an exit permitting them to leave at the specified time.
3. Unexpected or emergency requirements to leave school can be arranged by telephone with the assistant principal or with the parent/guardian coming by the office to check the student out of school.
4. Students are not to go out to the parking lots without permission from an assistant principal.
5. Failure to follow the above procedures will result in an unexcused absence and disciplinary action.

TRUANCY

Students absent without the consent of their parent/guardian are truant. Truancies are recorded per year. Students are also considered truant if they:

1. Leave school without checking out through the office
2. Are absent from a class without permission
3. Obtain a pass or transfer to go to a certain place and do not report there
4. Become ill and go home or stay in a restroom instead of reporting to the nurse's office
5. Are not where they are supposed to be when they are supposed to be there (including lunch)

Truancy will result in the following penalties:

1st Offense	Parent/Guardian notified of the truancy Student assigned 1 day in SDC and warned of the penalties for future truancies
2nd Offense	Parent/Guardian notified of the truancy Student assigned 2 days in SDC
3rd Offense	Parent/Guardian notified of the truancy Student assigned 3 days in SDC

Subsequent offenses will be left to administrator discretion.

Note: Truant students forfeit their right to exemption from semester tests.

LUNCH

Southside has a cafeteria where students can purchase a regular plate lunch or a variety of foods. The following

rules must be observed when using the cafeteria:

1. ***Parents or guardians may hand-deliver lunches to their child in the front office. Any other outside deliveries will not be permitted.***
2. Do not leave trays, paper, milk cartons, paper cups, or silverware on the tables. Return them to the dishwashing area and deposit them in the proper place. Disciplinary action will be taken if students' items are not picked up and put away in the proper area.
3. Students are discouraged from taking food into hallways, stairwells, or classrooms. Students are expected to manage their own trash.
4. It is not the responsibility of cafeteria personnel or custodians to clean up after students; it is the students' responsibility to do so.
5. ***Students must remain in the cafeteria, commons, main hallway, learning stairs, south courtyard, or Karen Bradbury Davis Memorial Atrium during lunch. Students in other areas during lunch without permission will be considered truant.***
6. Failure to abide by the above rules will result in disciplinary action.

TOBACCO POLICY

Smoking and/or possession of tobacco, ***tobacco/nicotine-related products***, or electronic nicotine delivery systems (vape) or related paraphernalia of any kind are not allowed on the Southside campus, parking lot, in the building, or at any school sponsored activity. Further, it is against the law in the state of Arkansas.

Violation of tobacco rules will result in the following penalties:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st Offense | Parent/Guardian notified of the offense
Student assigned 3 days out of school suspension |
| 2nd Offense | Parent/Guardian notified of the offense
Student assigned 5 days of out of school suspension |
| 3rd Offense | Parent Guardian notified of the offense
Student assigned 5 days of out of school suspension plus citation
Possible recommendation for expulsion |
| 4th Offense | Student assigned 10 days of out of school suspension
Recommendation for expulsion |

Subsequent offenses will be left to administrator discretion.

Note: Students *may* be issued a citation at any time.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE RELATED DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

(A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, beverages containing alcohol, other intoxicant or mood-altering substance of any kind, or other controlled substances, as defined in the State of Arkansas Uniform Controlled Substances Act 5-64-101. A student may not possess any substance represented to be a controlled substance. A student may not possess any drug or alcohol paraphernalia.) Students who are involved with illegal controlled substances (including alcohol) and participate in school activities are not appropriately fulfilling their responsibilities to properly represent their school and set good examples for others. Therefore, the following

policy has been developed for school administrators to follow when controlled substance problems are encountered:

1. DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN TOWARD STUDENTS WHO ARE INVOLVED WITH CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES:

1st Violation: The student will be subject to disciplinary action which will include a 5 day suspension from school and/or possible recommendation for expulsion. The SRO will be notified and a citation will be issued to the student.

2nd Violation: The student shall be suspended for a minimum of 10 days with a recommendation for possible expulsion. The SRO will be notified and a citation may be issued to the student.

Controlled Substance Activity Program

The activity program acts as an extension of the school curriculum and is an integral part of the educational program. Participation in activities helps prepare students for responsible roles in society, allows students the privilege of representing their school, and affords these students the opportunity to set good examples for others to follow.

2. DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN TOWARDS STUDENTS WHO ARE INVOLVED WITH CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES AT SCHOOL OR WHILE PARTICIPATING IN A SCHOOL ACTIVITY AND ARE INVOLVED IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

1st Violation: The student shall be removed from that said activity until all the requirements are met in Number 1, 1st Violation.

2nd Violation: The student will be removed from all extracurricular activities and shall not be allowed to participate in any school activities for the remainder of that school year. Also see Number 1, the 2nd violation above.

3. DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN TOWARD STUDENTS WHO ARE INVOLVED WITH CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES BUT NOT AT SCHOOL OR WHILE PARTICIPATING IN A SCHOOL ACTIVITY AND ARE INVOLVED IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

1st Violation: Allow the coach or sponsor to handle individually. Students will not be suspended from school but may be suspended from the activity for a period of time, or suspended for a certain number of games or activities. Parents will be notified.

2nd Violation: The student will be dropped from the activity for the balance of the year and their parent/guardian will be notified.

The administration reserves the right to recommend long term suspension or expulsion when the offense is serious enough to warrant a more severe penalty.

DRESS CODE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

In order to enhance high standards and promote the teaching and learning process in our schools, Fort Smith Public Schools must encourage neatness, cleanliness, and decency in the dress and appearance of all students and school personnel. As such, all students and school personnel will be expected to be dressed and groomed to present a respectable image by keeping with current styles and good taste during the school day and at school activities. Some exceptions may be applicable in the event of spirit dress-up days. Dress code will be checked every day 1st period for violations.

General:

1. Students will be expected to wear school clothing and not recreational apparel to school.
2. Styles must not infringe on the rights of others or pose a hazard to personal safety.
3. State health laws require that shoes be worn at all times.
4. Hair must be neat and clean.

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 or tank tops. Shirts must cover the space from the edge of the neck to the tip of the shoulder.
 - b. Any type of strapless apparel.
 - c. Shirts, blouses or tops that expose any part of the midriff.
 - d. Any type of spandex apparel or clothing that is tight to the point of being inappropriately revealing.
 - e. Low-cut attire, bare backs, halter tops, mesh attire, or shirts, tops or blouses with wide open sides, tank tops, see-through clothing, etc.
 - f. Underwear cannot be exposed. "Sagging" or "bagging" is prohibited.
2. Clothing or body art that advocates poor standards of character and citizenship. Items include:
 - a. Advertisements for alcohol, drugs, tobacco or pornography.
 - b. Displays of excessive violence. Slogans associated with death, suicide or killing are included.
 - c. Suggestive language, slogans or sexual connotations.
3. Clothing, drawings, body art, or items that denote or suggest membership in a public school fraternity, sorority, secret society/organization, or gang.
4. Shorts, skirts and skorts must be mid-thigh length all the way around the body. Holes and/or rips in shorts or pants may not be above the mid-thigh. Spandex or form-fitting shorts are not allowed regardless of the length.
5. All clothing must be worn in the manner in which it was intended. Clothing with straps, suspenders, etc. must be worn with all straps properly fastened.
6. Hats, hoodies, or other head coverings are prohibited in the building except at athletic events or outdoor activities. Exceptions will be made for students whose religion requires head coverings.
7. Sunglasses may not be worn in the building.
8. Any type of chain, including wallet chains, dog chains or collars, or studded apparel is prohibited.
9. Trench coats or overcoats may not be worn during the day.
10. Any clothing resembling costume attire including make-up and head/face coverings are prohibited.
11. Pajama pants, sleepwear, blankets, house shoes, flannel pants, etc. are prohibited.
- 1.2 The dress code will be checked every day during 1st period.
13. Students will have the opportunity to correct their attire or work with the office to obtain proper attire.

Violation of the Dress Code will result in the following penalties:

1st offense	Sent to the office to correct the violation Infraction documented in eSchool
2nd offense	Sent to the office and given 1 day of after school detention
3rd offense	Sent to the office and given 2 days of after school detention

Subsequent offenses will be left to administrator discretion.

DISCIPLINE

It is impossible for teaching or learning to take place in a classroom unless good order is maintained. The staff and faculty at Southside have a positive, professional attitude toward discipline that fosters and rewards mature, responsible behavior by students. However, if a student does behave in a disruptive manner or disobeys school rules, there are certain minimum steps that will be followed that insure the involvement of teacher, parent, counselor and administrators with the student to correct the behavior problem. All discipline will be recorded in eSchool. If it becomes necessary to suspend a student for behavior problems, all entitlements of due process of the law will have been met. Disciplinary actions may be appealed. All appeals must begin with the building principal.

Note: Consequences are subject to administrative discretion based on the severity of the offense, student history, and other relevant circumstances. Legal authorities may be contacted as required.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION - STUDENT DISCIPLINE CENTER (SDC)

In an attempt to provide an alternative to out-of-school suspensions, Southside has instituted the use of SDC (Student Discipline Center). This is a means of preventing a student from being regularly suspended from school and will give the student the opportunity to carry on their regular work and be in attendance.

The following guidelines will be used when a student is assigned to SDC:

1. Students will attend the Student Discipline Center (SDC) the entire *scheduled* school day. ***Example: Students in JROTC/Athletics/Fine Arts will serve the full day in SDC thus missing their activity period. If a student is scheduled on campus for a half day they will serve two half days. Example: WATC/PEAK/Internship will serve half days adding up to full days.***
 - a. One five-minute break in the morning and one five-minute break in the afternoon is allowed.
 - b. Lunch will be eaten in the cafeteria under the supervision of the teacher.
2. If a student causes a problem in SDC, the student will be sent back to the assistant principal for additional disciplinary action.
3. Once students have been assigned to SDC, their parents/guardians will be notified.
4. If a student is sent to the assistant principal from a particular teacher's classroom for a disciplinary reason and is assigned to SDC, the student may be kept out of that class for that day and then assigned to SDC the following day.
5. All assignments will be available in Schoology and will be due on the date assigned by the teacher. ***Teachers have the option to bring paper and pencil work to the SDC room at their convenience.***
6. Students are expected to be working for the entire time they are in SDC. If students refuse to work, they will be referred back to an assistant principal for further discipline.
7. Students assigned to SDC will be excluded from extracurricular activities during school hours for that day or days. (This does not include those activities held after school -- 3:15 p.m.)
8. Electronic devices, including cell phones, are NOT allowed in SDC. Students assigned to SDC who bring an electronic device to school must leave it in their car or locker or check it in with the SDC teacher at the beginning of the day. Students in possession of an electronic device while assigned to SDC will be assigned additional consequences.
9. Students who are sent to the office for disciplinary purposes, when in SDC, will serve out of school Suspension.

TYPES OF ACTION FOR WHICH A STUDENT MAY RECEIVE SDC include, but are not limited to:

- Truancy, excessive tardiness, or excessive absences
- Skipping class
- Smoking, possession or use of tobacco/nicotine products, lighters or matches
- Possession of pornographic or sexually explicit material
- Possession of toys
- Persistent violation of school regulations
- Hazardous or reckless driving in parking areas, school grounds, or access roads
- Profanity will result in a 1-day minimum of SDC.
 - If directed toward another student, up to 5 days of out-of-school suspension will be assigned.
 - If directed toward any faculty/staff, up to 10 days of out-of-school suspension will be assigned.
- Open displays of affection or immoral conduct
- Willful refusal to follow reasonable instructions
- Theft
- Harrassment
- Being in parking lots without permission
- Extreme dress that is disruptive to class, i.e.: sagging, costumes, etc.
- Rough horseplay
- Possession of a laser light or laser pointer of any kind
- Unapproved use of cell phones or electronic devices during instruction time
- Sexual harassment
- Repeated dress code violations
- Produce misleading or false information, imagery, or any form of false outputs about themselves, other students, or staff members
- Antisemitism
- A teacher may, but is not required to, remove a student from class:
 - Who has been documented by the teacher as repeatedly interfering with the teacher's ability to teach the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or
 - Whose behavior is so unruly, disruptive, violent, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to teach the students, the class, or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.

For purposes of this Policy:

“Repeatedly interfering” shall mean three (3) or more times during a single class period or five (5) or more times during a single school week; and

“So unruly” and “so disruptive” shall mean interfering with ten (10) or more minutes of a single class period.

SUSPENSION (OUT-OF-SCHOOL)

Suspension from school is a penalty which may be used for chronic or serious infractions of school rules. Excessive suspension may result in expulsion. The following guidelines will be used when suspending a student:

1. Length of suspension will be determined by school authorities and will reflect the offense committed.
2. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the action taken.

3. Students on suspension will not be allowed to participate in or attend any school activity at or away from school.
4. Students on suspension will not be allowed on school property unless accompanied by a parent/guardian on official business. Violation of this regulation will result in students being prosecuted for trespassing and will also result in additional days of suspension.
5. When students have been notified that they are suspended from school, they shall remain away from all school district premises and any school district activities, in town or out of town, until the principal or designee reinstates them. Suspended students may return to school premises upon completion of their suspended days.
6. Students on short-term suspension from school (not to exceed ten days) will be expected to complete their school work and will receive full credit upon satisfactory completion. The sole responsibility for completing assigned work rests with the student. All work will be due on the date established by the teacher. All assignments will be available in Schoology.
7. If a student is suspended they will forfeit the right to be exempt from semester tests.

TYPES OF ACTION FOR WHICH A STUDENT MAY BE SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED include, but are not limited to:

- Possession of a weapon or an imitation of a weapon.
- Fighting - Students fighting (aggressor or defender) will result in a minimum 3 day out of school suspension. The police may be notified and both students could be charged with disorderly conduct. Conference upon return.
2nd Offense: If the student is clearly the instigator/aggressor 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion. If the student is not clearly the instigator/aggressor, 5 days OSS plus 5 days SDC upon return. Conference with guidance counselor.
- Inappropriate use of electronic device during standardized testing
- Possession of a laser light or laser pointer of any kind
- Unapproved use of cell phones or iPods during instruction time.
- In-school suspension (SDC) violations
- Insubordination- willful refusal to adhere to a reasonable request
- Sexual harassment
- Produce misleading or false information, imagery, or any form of false outputs about themselves, other students, or staff members
- Antisemitism

PROHIBITED ARTICLES IN THE SCHOOL

The following articles are hazardous to safety or disruptive to classes and are prohibited in the school. **All violators of the following prohibited articles could face prosecution. Disciplinary action will be administered at the discretion of administration. Prohibited articles include, but are not limited to:**

- Tobacco products - cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco (snuff), chewing tobacco, lighters, matches, vapors, e-cigs, etc.
- Weapons or imitation of weapons
- Firecrackers, smoke bombs, rockets, etc.
- Horns and other noisemakers
- Drug paraphernalia and literature
- Laser pointers or laser lights of any kind
- Pornographic or sexually explicit material
- Chains on billfolds

- Non-educational items such as toys, bey blades, stuffed animals, etc
- Use of skateboards and other similar devices are prohibited on school property
- No pets of any kind are allowed on school property or at any school activity without the express permission of the building principal.

CELL PHONE POLICY/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Effective for the 2025-2026 school year, the *Bell to Bell, No Cell Act* prohibits all personal electronic devices throughout the entire school day. All personal electronic devices including, but not limited to, phones, watches, and earbuds will remain in student backpacks, turned off, from 8:00 to 3:30 every day.

Violation of this policy will result in:

1st Offense – Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. A parent will be notified and the student will be allowed to pick up the device at the end of the school day.

2nd Offense – Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. A parent will be notified and the student will be allowed to pick up the device at the end of the school day. The student will be assigned one day of detention.

3rd Offense – Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. A parent will be required to pick up the device. The student will be assigned two days of detention.

4th Offense – Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. A parent will be required to pick up the device. The student will be assigned one day of SDC.

5th Offense – Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. A parent will be required to pick up the device. The student will be assigned two days of SDC.

6th Offense – Confiscation of the electronic device for the remainder of the day. A parent will be required to pick up the device. The student will be assigned three days of SDC.

7th Offense – Insubordination – 3 days OSS.

Note: Confiscated devices will be available for pick up only at the end of school days unless the student is checked out early at which point the device can be picked up then.

Note: If a student does not have a backpack, all personal electronic devices must be turned in to the office for the school day and can be picked up at the end of the day.

Note: The procedures listed on this document will begin after Labor Day.

CHEATING

All students need to develop the character qualities of honesty and integrity. Students need to “pass” on their own efforts and ability and through study and commitment to hard work.. To do anything less is not acceptable.

A first offense or violation of academic integrity will result in the following:

- *Student will be placed on academic probation;*
- *Student’s parent or guardian will be notified by the teacher;*
- *Student immediately will be required to demonstrate mastery through an alternative assignment; the student will receive a grade ten percent below what they earn on the alternative assignment.*
- *Five consecutive days of after school detention or 1 day of SDC*
- **Pending administrative verification, may result in the loss of honors.*

A second offense or violation of academic integrity will result in the following:

- *All first offense consequences;*
- *A meeting will be held with the student’s parents;*
- *2 days of SDC and pending administrative verification may result in the loss of honors.*

A third offense or violation of academic integrity will result in the following:

- *All first offense consequences;*
- *Student’s parent or guardian will be notified by administrator;*
- *3 days of SDC*

Subsequent offenses or violations of academic integrity will result in the following:

- *All first offense consequences;*
- *Student’s parent or guardian will be notified by an administrator;*
- *1 day Out of School Suspension*

The following represents a partial list of the actions that will be considered cheating:

During a Quiz or Test:

1. Looking at someone else’s paper
2. Talking with another student
3. Using “cheat notes”
4. Allowing another student to see one’s own work
5. Allowing another student to access one’s own electronic device or files
6. Any form of academic dishonesty in the digital environment will be subject to this policy

During Other School Assignments:

1. Passing on information after a test or quiz
2. Copying another’s homework or letting others copy one’s own homework
3. Plagiarizing another’s work as one’s own
4. Allowing another student to access one’s own electronic device or files

Theft and/or Profiteering, includes, but is not limited to:

1. Stealing a test or answer sheet

2. Stealing teacher editions of textbooks
3. Selling test or information about any test or project
4. Making copies of tests or assignments
5. Receiving copies of tests or assignments

Behavior not Covered Above:

1. Fort Smith Public Schools reserves the right to discipline student behavior which is not conducive to good order and discipline in the schools, even though such behavior is not specified in the preceding written rules.
2. Students shall make restitution of any property stolen by them and shall be subject to other disciplinary measures.
3. The following actions regarding AI tools are strictly prohibited:
 - Misuse of AI tools for cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty, including the submission of assignments that were fully generated by an AI tool and presented as original student work;
 - Altering or falsifying academic documents or records using AI tools;

SEARCH, SEIZURE, AND MONITORING

Searches of any school owned property and seizures are permissible when information exists that drugs, guns, or other contraband are present (Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-608. The Superintendent, principals, and their designees also may search students and their personal property in which the student has a reasonable expectation of privacy, including privately-owned automobiles, when there is reasonable and individualized suspicion to believe such student or property contains illegal items, other items in violation of Board Policy or items dangerous to the school community. School authorities may seize evidence found in the search, and disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence found which appears to be in violation of the law shall be reported to the appropriate authorities.

An adverse inference of the presence of suspected items will be applied to any student who refuses to be searched per Policy, and as such, the student will be suspended and/or recommended for expulsion at the discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

School buildings and campuses, including parking lots, are subject to periodic search by the canine unit of the Fort Smith Police Department in an effort to reduce the presence of illegal and prohibited items on the campus.

Fort Smith Public Schools uses video surveillance to assist in security and investigations.

FIRE, BOMB THREAT, AND TORNADO DRILLS

Fire drills are held at various times throughout the school year to prepare students to exit the building in case of fire or other dangers. The following procedures must be followed to ensure maximum safety:

1. A fire evacuation plan is posted in every room. Students should become familiar with the plan for each room they are in.
2. The fire drill signal is a continuous series of blasts on the fire alarm.
3. When the fire alarm sounds, students must obey orders promptly and leave the building according to the evacuation plan.
4. Students are not to run, talk, pass others, or engage in any “horseplay” during drills or actual alerts. Students should remain at least 100 feet from the building until the “all clear” signal is given. The “all clear” signal is a short series of blasts on the fire alarm.

For bomb threat drills, regular fire drill evacuation routes will be followed. Students will be notified by sound

system when there is a bomb threat.

Tornado drills will be signaled via an alarm over the intercom. When the alarm sounds:

1. Students will move quickly to either the east or west tornado shelter, depending on which part of campus they are in at the time.
2. Attendance will be checked.
3. Practice drills will be held prior to the tornado season.

BUS REGULATIONS

Buses are provided to transport students to and from school in certain areas of the city. This service is a privilege granted to those who do not abuse it. Failure to follow the rules set up for using this service will result in the student being suspended from using the bus service. Parents/guardians should call the school transportation supervisor for concerns over their student's bus transportation.

The following rules must be observed by those using the bus service:

1. Students should be on time at the designated pick up point.
2. Bus riders are under the supervision of bus drivers and must obey their instructions.
3. Students should keep their head and hands inside the bus at all times.
4. No "horseplay" or loud talking is permitted on the bus.
5. Do not tamper with or damage any part of the bus.
6. Do not leave one's seat while the bus is in motion.
7. Do not throw anything from the bus windows.
8. No smoking, drinking, or eating is permitted on the bus.
9. Student behavior must not violate any rules listed in other sections of this handbook.
10. Emergency exits are to be used only in case of an emergency.
11. Be courteous to fellow students and to the driver.

PARKING

Southside High School provides parking space for student automobiles in its two parking lots. Students driving cars to school must obey the following regulations. Failure to abide by these regulations will result in disciplinary action ranging from warnings to suspension, suspension of parking lot privileges, or both.

1. Students must register their vehicles with the school each year.
2. Students must park their vehicles only in the student parking lots when they arrive on campus and cannot "cruise" the lots. Do not sit in parked vehicles or loiter in the parking area.
3. Vehicles must be parked in designated parking spaces and not in unauthorized areas.
4. Do not park on any islands.
5. Do not "jump" any curb to park.
6. Do not park in grass areas or in "No Parking" areas.
7. Abide by the posted speed limit signs.
8. Do not block aisles, entrances, exits, service roads or other cars.
9. Do not park in designated teacher parking.
10. Do not park on the service road, in front or back of the school.
11. Parking lots are subject to periodic search by the Canine Unit of the Fort Smith Police Department.
12. Privately-owned automobiles parked on school property may be searched by a school administrator if there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence indicating the student has violated the law or school rules.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Fort Smith School District is committed to providing a safe learning environment for each of its students. Student achievement is best attained in an atmosphere that is free from the fear of emotional and physical intimidation and threats. Bullying is a destructive behavior that will erode the foundational principles on which a school is built. Bullying is prohibited while in school, on school equipment or property, in school vehicles, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, at school sponsored activities, at school sanctioned events; or by an electronic act that results in the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment. This will apply to an electronic act whether or not the electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic act is directed specifically at students or school personnel and maliciously intended for the purpose of disrupting school, and has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose. The District will not tolerate any behavior that is classified as bullying and will take steps to eliminate such behavior.

The District offers training and materials regarding policy compliance, the nature of bullying, its consequences, and the procedures for reporting bullying behavior to district employees responsible for reporting or investigating bullying. School employees and volunteers who have witnessed or have reliable information that a student has been a victim of bullying shall report the incident to the building principal or designee.

Students who believe they have been a victim of bullying or parents/guardians who believe their students have been victimized by a bully, should file a complaint by contacting a school counselor, teacher, or principal. After an investigation of a complaint has been completed, and a record is made of the investigation, a student found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action that is appropriate to the degree of severity of the bullying behavior, the age of the offending student, and the frequency of the behavior. The person who files the complaint will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form. For the purposes of this policy, bullying means the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against another student or public school employee by a written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that may address an attribute of the other student, public school employee, or person with whom the other student or public school employee is associated and that causes or creates actual or reasonably foreseeable: physical harm to a public school employee or student or damage to the public school employee's or student's property; substantial interference with a student's education or with a public school employee's role in education; a hostile educational environment for one or more students or public school employees due to the severity, persistence or pervasiveness of the act; or substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment. Whereas "attribute" means an actual or perceived personal characteristics including without limitation race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, socioeconomic status, disability, gender, gender identity, physical appearance, health condition, or sexual orientation. Bullying behavior will generally be established when an individual has endured a pattern of offensive behavior or when a single serious act is committed depending on the surrounding circumstances (ACA 6-18-514).

Individuals who withhold information, purposely provide inaccurate facts, or otherwise hinder an investigation of a student for the purposes of bullying, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks may be carried during the school day to allow for students to carry Chromebooks. Oversized bags will not be allowed.

ASSEMBLIES, GAMES & ACTIVITIES

Assemblies are a regularly-scheduled part of the curriculum and are designed to be educational as well as entertaining experiences. They provide one of the few opportunities in school to learn formal audience behavior. Regardless of the type of program, courtesy demands that the student body be respectful and appreciative. In

live entertainment, unlike radio, television or movies, the performers are very conscious of their audience. Talking, whispering, whistling, stamping of feet, and booing are discourteous. Yelling is appropriate only at pep assemblies.

- Proceed to the assembly area quietly and promptly. Find your seat quickly.
- During pep assemblies, students are seated by grade level.
- AAA sportsmanship policies will be adhered to and strictly enforced.
- Listen to announcements for information regarding dismissal.
- All students will attend assemblies, pep rallies, etc., unless the student has specific approval from an administrator.

AAA SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY

Activities are an important aspect of the total education process in schools. They provide an arena for participants to grow, to excel, to understand, and to value the concepts of sportsmanship and teamwork. They are an opportunity for coaches and school staff to teach and model sportsmanship, to build school pride, and to increase student/community involvement, which ultimately translates into improved academic performance. Activities are also an opportunity for the community to demonstrate its support for the participants and the school to model the concepts of sportsmanship for youth as respected representatives of society. SPORTSMANSHIP IS GOOD CITIZENSHIP IN ACTION!

BASIC PHILOSOPHY

Fans are not at ball games to intimidate or ridicule the other team or its fans but to support and cheer for their team and to enjoy watching skill and competition.

Article 1: Sportsmanship includes a general way of thinking and behaving. Good sportsmanship includes the following:

- a. Be courteous to all (participants, coaches, officials, staff, fans, spirit groups.)
- b. Know the rules, abide by and respect the officials' decisions.
- c. Win with character and lose with dignity.
- d. Display appreciation for good performance regardless of the team.
- e. Exercise self-control and reflect positively upon yourself, team, and school.
- f. Permit only POSITIVE behavior to reflect on your school and its activities. Yell for your team, not against the other team.

Article 2: Specific Prohibitions

- a. Students or spectators who wear extreme or unusual clothing to the game or who paint their faces or bodies will not be allowed in the game.
- b. Negative, demeaning, or obscene yells will not be permitted at any athletic event while teams are being introduced, or when teams, cheerleaders, or drill teams are performing.
- c. Students will not be allowed to turn their backs or hold up newspapers while teams are being introduced, or when teams, cheerleaders, or drill teams are performing.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Board of Education believes that student activities sponsored by the school district program are a vital part of the total education program and should be used as a means of developing wholesome attitudes and good

human relations as well as knowledge and skills. The Board further recognizes that not all the district's goals and objectives can be met in formal classroom study. Therefore, the district's extracurricular programs will provide opportunities for student participation in activities designed to meet their leisure, recreational, social, and emotional interests and needs.

Extracurricular/non-instructional activities are defined as any school sponsored activity which is not part of a course of study including, but not limited to pep rallies, intramurals, clubs, athletic teams, cheerleaders, drill teams, and other similar groups. Student activities in the Fort Smith Public Schools will be governed by the following guidelines:

1. Student activities shall be scheduled for practices, meetings, performances, etc. outside the school day as much as is practical.
2. To participate in activities such as athletics, cheerleaders, drill teams, or similar organizations, a student must pass four academic courses and have a minimum semester GPA of 2.0 for the previous semester. Honor societies and other select activities may establish higher academic requirements for participation.
3. All students participating in activities governed by the Arkansas Activities Association shall meet applicable standards for the particular activity.
4. Students shall not be eligible to participate in any athletic event or other extracurricular/non-instructional activity while on suspension.
5. Interruptions of academic classes should be kept to a minimum.

(This policy is adopted as partial fulfillment of the requirements specified in Standard for Accreditation, Arkansas Public Schools.)

ARKANSAS SCHOLARS

Designed to reinforce that high school matters, Arkansas Scholars is a partnership between Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce and Fort Smith Public Schools. Students who maintain Arkansas Scholar standards from ninth through twelfth grades qualify for valuable community incentives. The standards are:

- Make no grade lower than a C
- Take the required courses and complete school in eight consecutive semesters

Incentives offered to Arkansas Scholars include seals on transcripts and diplomas; "Hire Me First" cards and letters of recommendation to assist in finding summer employment; a senior luncheon hosted by the Chamber of Commerce; medallions to wear at graduation; and historically a one-year scholarship to UA Fort Smith.

TESTING INFORMATION

PSAT: The PSAT/NMSQT is a national test that is administered to sophomores in October. The PSAT/NMSQT is divided into two sections, Verbal and Math. College bound juniors should take the PSAT/NMSQT because:

- It is good practice for the SAT and it gives students an idea of how they will score on the SAT.
- Students can see how they compare to other college bound students across the country.
- Students whose scores are exceptionally high are recognized by the National Merit Foundation as qualifiers as a National Merit Semi-Finalist. This recognition may lead to scholarship opportunities.

ACT: The American College Testing Program is an organization that administers an aptitude examination known as the American College Test. It is a 3-hour exam, which consists of a battery of four tests: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning. The ACT Plus Writing is available which includes the multiple-choice test plus an optional 30-minute writing test. Students can register to take the ACT Assessment with or without the plus writing test option. There are five national Saturday test dates for the ACT: September, October, December, February, April, and June. This ACT is scored in a range from 9 to 36. All five testing dates are offered at Southside High School.

State Civics Exam: A.C.A. § 6-16-149 requires students seeking a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma to pass the Arkansas Civics Exam with a score of 60% or better.

SAT I: The Scholastic Assessment Test is administered by the College Entrance Examination Board. Recent changes to the SAT added longer reading passages and the use of calculators. It is a 3-hour exam, which consists of sections that alternate from verbal to math. The SAT I is scored on a range of 200 to 800. There are seven national test dates.

SAT II: This exam is a one-hour test also administered by the College Entrance Examination Board to measure the level of achievement in specific academic subjects. Students must determine by reading the catalogs of the college to which they want to apply whether taking the SAT II is an admissions requirement. Some colleges use the test to place students in the appropriate level of work when they enroll.

ASVAB: Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. This exam is a comprehensive career exploration program relevant to every secondary school student thinking about pursuing some education or training beyond high school. The test is a tool for students to use to make education and career plans and preliminary decisions for further education and career planning. The ASVAB helps students to relate values, interests, and aptitudes to a variety of career choices. As an option, these scores can be used for enlistment purposes in the military for up to 2 years after testing.

AP Advanced Placement Exams: The College Board, a nationally recognized organization, offers students the opportunity to take an AP exam and receive credit, advanced placement, or both at participating colleges. AP courses prepare students for advanced placement tests. The AP exams contain multiple choice and free-response questions scored by college faculty and AP teachers. The assessments are given on nation-wide dates in May. The scores range from 1 to 5 on the exam, and each college determines acceptance of scores for credit and advanced placement. Students who take AP classes will not receive AP credit and the corresponding grade point equivalent, unless they take the Advanced Placement exam.

