

Karns Middle School Student Handbook



MISSION STATEMENT:

KMS will empower students to become confident, lifelong learners and honorable, upstanding individuals who value education as the foundation for a successful future.

OUR SCHOOL MOTTO:

#TheKarnsWay
Great Students, Great People

OUR CORE VALUES:

Honesty, Respect, Empathy, Kindness, Confidence, Fairness,
Responsibility

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

#Respectful

Focusing on Positive Relationships

#Responsible

Preparing students to be college and career ready

#Receptive

Meeting the needs of all learners

ADMINISTRATION

- Executive Principal - Brent Glenn: brent.glenn@knoxschools.org
- Grade Level Administrators:
 - 6th grade- Brant Gerhardt, 6th Grade Dean: brant.gerhardt@knoxschools.org
 - 6th grade- Jack Renfroe, 6th Grade Dean: jack.renfroe@knoxschools.org
 - 7th grade- Tina Shelton, Assistant Principal: kristina.shelton@knoxschools.org
 - 8th grade- Karyn Lee, Assistant Principal: karyn.lee@knoxschools.org

ABSENCES, TARDIES, & EARLY DISMISSALS

In addition to Knox County Board of Education policy, the following procedures are in effect at Karns Middle School:

1. All notes regarding absences must be presented to the front office the day the student returns to school. For excused absences, students will be given up to three (3) days to obtain all work, then as many days as they were absent to make up the work, once the work is obtained it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher for timely completion.
2. Students may miss up to ten (10) days, excused, with a note from a parent or guardian. After ten (10) days, all absences will require a note from a doctor. (See Knox County Policy)
3. Students are expected to be on time to school and to all classes each day. Tardies and early dismissals will be recorded as excused or unexcused in the school office. Excused tardies must be due to student illness (a note from parent/guardian must be presented in the office stating circumstances), medical appointment (a note from the doctor must be presented stating circumstances), bus failure, or approval of the principal or assistant principal. A student tardy to school for reasons other than the above will be considered UNEXCUSED!

If a student must leave during the school day due to illness or medical appointment, a parent/guardian must come to the school office and sign the student out. For your child's safety and protection, the person checking the student out MUST be on the student's profile and identification must be presented. No faxes or phone calls will be accepted for early dismissal or alternative route home. Due to the demands of afternoon dismissal in the classrooms and office, we will be unable to call students for early dismissal after 3:00. A note must be sent the following school day and must be given to the front office.

You may call the school office to make arrangements to pick up books and assignments when a student has been absent. Remember to allow 24 hours for teachers to compile work. Students are encouraged to request work when they know in advance that they will be absent.

ACTIVITIES EXCLUSION

Many activities are planned each year to enrich the middle school experience for our students. These activities include assemblies, field trips, guest speakers, special television broadcasts, intramural sports, basketball games, track meets, field days, cookouts, dances, clubs, etc. **These activities are considered privileges, and student participation/attendance is based on being a student in good standing.** Exclusion from certain or all activities for some period of time may be imposed by staff or administration on students who fail to conduct themselves appropriately in classes or at previous activities. Please be advised that students serving OSS are automatically excluded from all school activities during that time. **Students receiving more than one day of RLC or any OSS are not eligible to attend after school basketball games and/or dances for the year.**

ATHLETICS

1. The only sanctioned sports/events in Knox County middle schools are boys' and girls' basketball, cheerleaders, and boys' and girls' track. Please see "Recreation League Teams" for information concerning other athletic programs.
2. Athletes, cheerleaders, and dance team members must have and maintain a "C" average in order to remain eligible for participation.
3. All KCS and school policies will be enforced at athletic events.
4. Students suspended from school are not allowed to attend after school functions.
5. If late pickup is a problem, students may be prohibited from attending future after school events.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks are permitted in the building and in classrooms. However, please refrain from using rolling backpacks as they are a safety concern in the hallways. Also, teachers may implement procedures within the classroom that ask students to place backpacks in a specific location in their classroom. Students are expected to follow the expectations of the adults in the classroom.

BAND, ORCHESTRA, AND CHORUS

Band, Orchestra, and Chorus are year-long classes. Due to the content of these classes additions and drops must be made within the first two weeks of the school year. If a student signs up for these classes he/she is expected to remain in the class with all required equipment for the entire year. Remember that by taking Band, Orchestra, or Chorus, a student will reduce the number of other related arts classes available during the school year. An additional fee may be requested for these classes.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

See Knox County Bus Code and Expectations in this handbook. **Students are only allowed to ride their assigned bus except in the event of an emergency.** In these situations, a note must be brought to the office prior to 9:00 A.M. An administrator must approve all emergency bus riding changes. **Due to bus overcrowding, students are not allowed to ride home on the bus with a friend.** Questions regarding transportation may be directed to the school or transportation at (865) 539-1550.

CELL PHONES/ Wireless Communication Device Policy

- Wireless Communication devices include but are not limited to cell phones, wireless earbuds/headphones, non-school issued laptops, ipads, tablets, and smart watches.
- Wireless Communication devices may be used before & after official school hours. Wireless Communication Device use is prohibited from 8:25 am-3:25 pm. During this time, all devices must be in the off mode and put out of sight, off of the body.
- The steps below are consequences for students who violate the above policy:
 - **1st offense:** Student walks device to office, office staff will log the violation and place the device in a secure location. STUDENT may pick up the device at dismissal. Parent will receive an email about offense.
 - **2nd offense:** Student walks device to office, office staff will log the violation and place the device in a secure location. PARENT may pick up the device at dismissal.
 - **3rd offense and beyond:** Student walks device to office, office staff will log the violation and place the device in a secure location. PARENT may pick up at dismissal. Student will receive a major level Discipline Referral in Aspen.

****Arguing with staff and/or Refusing to walk device to the office will result in a Major Level Discipline Referral for Non-Compliance and could result in RLC or OSS****

Note about students' personal cell phones – We understand that parents want to have instant access to their students; however, students are not allowed to use their cell phones during the school day, per Tennessee State Law/KCS policy. This protects the educational environment. Students are allowed to access their phones until 8:25 A.M. and at 3:25 P.M. Please help us by not expecting your student to read and/or respond to texts and/or phone calls during the school day. If you need to contact your student, please call the front office at 865-539-7732.

COMMUNICATION

The telephone number at Karns Middle School is (865) 539-7732. Due to the large number of students at Karns Middle School, we request that parents not ask the office to relay messages to students unless it is an emergency. Students may get permission to use the school telephone. The office telephone should not be used for non-school related matters.

KMS teachers use a variety of methods to keep parents up-to-date on their student's progress (Parentsquare, Canvas pages, Aspen, phone calls, e-mail, conferences, etc.). Each teacher, at the beginning of the year, will inform parents of the method(s) he/she will use. You may schedule a parent-teacher conference by contacting the front office at (865) 539-7732, who will then relay the request to appropriate personnel. Parent Portal/Aspen is a service provided to parents so they may check their student's grades at any time via internet.

Email tends to be the quickest and best way to access teachers. Phone contact is limited during the school day due to our focus on instruction. Our goal is to respond to communication within 48 hours, but please know that emergencies and unexpected events sometimes arise that may interfere with this timeline.

For up to date information on current events, please also follow us on Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KarnsMiddleSchool/>

COUNSELORS

Each counselor is assigned a portion of the alphabet. Please use your student's last name to contact their counselor.

- Kristina Sims – kristina.sims@knoxschools.org
 - All Grade Last Names A-K
 - Related Arts Master Scheduling
 - 5th/6th grade Transition and Planning
- Michelle Williams – michelle.williams@knoxschools.org
 - All grades Last Names L-Z
 - Content Master Scheduling
 - 8th/9th grade Transition and Planning

DANCE POLICY

The following guidelines apply to all KMS dances:

1. **ONLY KARNs MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS** in good standing will be admitted. Students who are placed on activities exclusion by administration for disciplinary and/or academic reasons will not be eligible to attend. Dances shall be held from 3:45 P.M. until 5:30 P.M. unless otherwise approved by the principal. Any parent needing to pick up a student prior to that time must come to the front door and request the student.
2. All school rules and guidelines will apply for behaviors. Students engaged in inappropriate behaviors will be asked to call their parents and be picked up immediately. Students may be referred to the principal the next school day for disciplinary action, which may include exclusion from future Karns Middle School extracurricular events. School dress code will be enforced.

DEADLINES AND RESPONSIBILITY

Individual teachers, teams, and other school officials at Karns Middle School have the authority and responsibility to impose deadlines for submission of work, notes, permission slips, money, etc. Since one of our goals relates to teaching student responsibility, please do not expect school administration or teachers to extend or ignore a deadline for an individual student. This includes, but is not limited to, field trip expectations, payments for major (optional) school trips (8th grade, chorus, orchestra, band, etc.), and 8th grade dance. When we sponsor an opportunity, we must pay fees/reservations in advance by deadlines, so they must be enforced with students.

DISCIPLINE INFORMATION

The staff of Karns Middle School believes that good behavior and discipline are necessary for an orderly school environment. All students should be provided a safe and secure atmosphere in which to work and grow. Therefore, the staff of Karns Middle, in conjunction with students and parents, will strive to provide the necessary environment that allows students to reach their maximum potential. Our ultimate goal for students who disrupt the learning environment is to encourage a change in behavior so all students may continue with their education.

School administrators are bound by federal, state, and local regulations governing disciplinary matters. These regulations sometimes require that students be treated individually. Also, confidentiality must be protected for all students. If at times it seems that different consequences are applied for similar offenses, please be assured that administrative discretion will be utilized to ensure that all students are treated as fairly as possible, while being responsive to the individual differences of our students when necessary. Administrators and staff will ensure consequences applied will minimize the amount of instructional time lost and ensure a safe and ordering learning environment. It is considered a breach of confidentiality for us to discuss a student's discipline with anyone other than his/her parents.

At Karns Middle School, misbehaviors are categorized into two divisions: Minor and Major Offenses. Minor Offenses are entered into a Discipline Log system while major referrals will be disciplined according to Knox County School Board Policies.

DISCIPLINE LOG

KMS utilizes a Discipline Log to record incidents that occur in the classroom and school grounds that are considered minor offenses. Students are allowed 4 minor infractions with consequences by the teacher (email/phone call home, silent lunch, on-team, or off-team isolation.). Upon the 5th infraction, the student will be given an office referral with consequences according to KMS/KCS discipline guidelines.

DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS FOR MAJOR OFFENSES

A continuum of restorative interventions: Silent lunch, On grade level Isolation, Off Grade Level Isolation, Restorative Learning Center (RLC), and out-of-school suspension (OSS) are used at Karns Middle School as disciplinary options. Isolated class periods and silent lunchtime are used for the most minor infractions. RLC is used for minor violations wherein it is decided that this administrative action is more appropriate than an OSS. Students in RLC are counted present and receive work. Students serving OSS will be allowed to obtain assignments and have the opportunity to make-up grades. It is the student's responsibility to obtain these assignments and have them submitted in a timely manner as determined by the teacher. Students with a major referral resulting in RLC or OSS will not be allowed to participate in PA time for that week.

FIGHTING

The faculty and administration of Karns Middle School consider student fighting a serious violation of conduct expectations. Fighting endangers the health and safety of the participants as well as by-standers and constitutes a major disruption of the educational process. Therefore, students who fight or entice others to fight are subject to immediate suspension from school. Repeat offenders will face increasingly longer suspension for each incident.

Students who are faced with a fight or potential fight are to seek adult assistance immediately (even if that means coming directly to the office) rather than continue the conflict or retaliate. ("He/she hit me first" will NOT be considered a valid excuse.) Students who incite others to fight will face suspension from school as well as those actually fighting.

For Further Information regarding Discipline and Major Misbehavior Offenses, please see the Knox County Board of Education Misbehaviors and Disciplinary Options section of this handbook.

EMERGENCIES/DRILLS

In accordance with Knox County policy, KMS will conduct safety drills through the school year. These drills include, but are not limited to, fire drills, disaster drills, random searches, lockdowns, and evacuations. Students will follow all KMS and KCS policies during these drills and will listen to adult instructions. Student cell phone usage is not allowed during drills. If a true emergency occurs, parents will be notified according to KCS policies and procedures.

GRADES & ASSIGNMENTS

Teachers will provide a syllabus for their classes at the beginning of the year. Please review with your student the class curriculum, expectations, teacher grading/assignment policies, and supplies/materials needed for class.

Students earn grades, which are available on Aspen's Parent Portal. Progress reports are officially posted every 4 ½ weeks throughout the year. Please note that 9-week, semester, and year-end grades are cumulative from each grading period. These grades that are officially posted may or may not be the same as a daily snapshot you may view from Aspen due to timing of grade entries, weighting of assignments, and appropriate grading period assessments.

INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS

Many items, which middle school students possess, are inappropriate to bring to school. Such items include electronic devices, excessive amounts of money, skateboards, cameras, toys, jewelry and other expensive items, trading cards, playing cards, certain magazines, stuffed toys/animals, blankets, curling irons, etc. If brought to school, these items may be taken up and held until a parent/guardian picks up the item(s). In addition, if students choose to bring these types of items to school, Karns Middle School will NOT be responsible for them nor be obligated to investigate loss/theft/damage to them. All unclaimed, confiscated items are subject to loss or donation one week after the end of the school year.

LIBRARY / MEDIA CENTER

The Karns Middle School Library/Media Center offers a collection of books, periodicals, and technology to meet the academic and recreational needs of students. All materials are selected with the student in mind. The library staff is here to assist each student in locating resources for research or a book for recreational reading. Students and visitors are welcome to visit the library during school hours, 8:00 A.M. until 3:45 P.M.

LOCKERS

Lockers are the property of Knox County Schools and are subject to search. Students are to take care and use their assigned lockers only (only magnetic decorations on the inside of the locker are permitted.). Students are not permitted to share lockers. Any decorations on the exterior are **NOT** permitted. Students wishing to use a locker, must purchase a Karns Middle School lock for \$7.00. No other locks are to be used on lockers.

LUNCH

All information and applications for KCS lunch programs are available online through the Knox County Schools website under the tab For Families. **Parents may bring students food items *for their student* during lunch time; however, parents are not allowed to purchase or share food items with other students.** If visiting during lunch, please report to the front office and your student will be called to pick up their food.

RECREATION LEAGUE TEAMS

The Karns Community is fortunate to have a thriving, year round sports program run by the Knox County Recreation Department. However, please be aware that these teams (soccer, baseball, softball, football, volleyball, community basketball, MAC cheer/football, youth fishing, etc.) ARE IN NO WAY SPONSORED, APPROVED, GOVERNED OR CONTROLLED BY KARNs MIDDLE OR KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS. Though many of these teams use the name Karns Middle School, the school or system disclaims any affiliation or responsibility for these teams and/or any problems arising from someone's participation therewith. Any and all concerns regarding these teams should be made to the coaches involved or the governing body of the program.

SALE OF SCHOOL ITEMS

School pictures, yearbooks, etc., are available at appropriate times of the year. The price of these items is determined yearly by the cost of production. **Students are not permitted to sell possessions or private items at school, as per school board policy.**

SCHOOL HOURS

- Official School hours are 8:30am - 3:30pm. Students will be dismissed to homerooms at 8:00. Car riders will be dismissed at 3:25pm. Walkers will be dismissed when traffic is deemed safe.
- Doors will be unlocked at 7:30am. **Please do not leave students unattended before this time as no supervision will be provided until 7:30am.**
- All students must be picked up by 4:00 pm. Any students remaining after 4:00 pm will be escorted back inside the building. Please keep in mind that school staff contracts end at 4:00 pm, so please be respectful and pick up students on time.
- School office hours are 7:30am - 3:45pm.

SNACKS/DRINKS/WATER

Snacks, drinks, etc. are permitted only with permission of staff/administration. Individual teachers will have the final decision on whether these food items may be consumed in their classroom. Eating and drinking in hallways is prohibited. Water bottles are permitted, but must have the ability to be completely closed. No disposable, "fast food" cups, or cups with straws will be permitted. Refilling stations are located throughout the building.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Knox County Schools provides a continuum of services for students who qualify for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) or Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. If you feel your child might require special services and want Knox County Schools to provide services, contact the school to which your child is zoned or call Pupil Personnel Services at (865) 539-1535.

NOTE: Laws/regulations pertaining to IDEIA/504 students may affect some Karns Middle School policies/procedures.

STUDENT SCHEDULES

Schedules are available on Aspen's Parent Portal. Printed copies will also be provided for students the first day of school. Please know that schedules are subject to change within the first weeks of school due to student needs and enrollment. Academic assignments for students are determined using various data and KCS guidelines. Information considered for academic placements includes, but are not limited to: previous placements, teacher recommendations, standardized assessments, universal screenings, IEPs, 504s, the need to balance classes, and other considerations as deemed appropriate by administration.

VISITATION POLICY

Parents are welcome to visit and observe our classes. However, for sound educational planning, we request that a visitation appointment be for one class period only and be made by calling the school office at least 24 hours prior to the planned visit. ALL visitors MUST report to the office, obtain a "VISITOR PASS" and sign a confidentiality agreement before being permitted into a classroom. If a parent/guardian needs to see his/her child during the school day, identification will be required **AND** the individual must be listed on the student profile.

WALKERS AND CAR RIDERS

Students who walk to/from school or who are transported by car must enter and exit the building through the front lobby. Students are to enter the building immediately upon arrival and go to the designated area. Doors open at 7:30AM. Walkers are expected to leave the campus immediately upon being released at 3:25 P.M. Car riders will be released to the front parking lot for departure at 3:25 P.M. Karns Middle School uses an electronic system in order to safely dismiss car riders. Please have your car rider hang tag displayed at all times when picking up a student in the car rider line. Parents should not drop off or pick up students in the bus rider lanes or the staff parking lot. Please be aware that supervision for students awaiting their afternoon ride ends at 4:00 P.M. After 4:00, for safety reasons, students must wait for parents in the front lobby.