

NORTHWEST MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026



This handbook is designed to provide the students, parents, and guardians at Northwest Middle School a description of the policies and procedures required for operation and effective instruction. Each student should have a copy of this manual. It can also be found on our website. This handbook serves as a supplement to KCS policies and procedures and will not supersede the KCS policies and procedures which are available on the KCS website. Each student of Northwest Middle School is responsible for abiding by both school and district wide policies and procedures.

NOTE: The information contained in this handbook is accurate as of August 7, 2025. The requirements, rules, and provisions stated in this handbook and other publications of Northwest Middle School are subject to change or modification at any time without notice.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Northwest Middle School

5301 Pleasant Ridge Rd.

Knoxville, TN 37912

Phone: (865) 594-1345/ Fax: (865) 594-4427

<https://www.knoxschools.org/northwestms>

Our mission at Northwest Middle is to inspire students to be compassionate humans, critical thinkers, and motivated citizens who see value in themselves and others.

Contact Information

Principal	Joann Gardner	joann.gardner@knoxschools.org
6th Grade Team	Abbey Atchley, <i>Principal</i> Nicole Milsap, <i>Principal</i> Tiffany Smelcer, <i>Counselor</i>	abbey.atchley@knoxschools.org nicole.milsap@knoxschools.org tiffany.smelcer@knoxschools.org
7th Grade Team	Jeff Winterberger, <i>Principal</i> Ryan Burkhart, <i>Principal</i> Emily Fiveash, <i>Counselor</i>	jeff.winterberger@knoxschools.org ryan.burkhart@knoxschools.org emily.fiveash@knoxschools.org
8th Grade Team	Alex Walls, <i>Principal</i> Avery Padgett, <i>Principal</i> Sandi Watson, <i>Counselor</i>	alex.walls@knoxschools.org avery.padgett@knoxschools.org sandra.watson@knoxschools.org
Additional Supports	Beth Waters, <i>College/Career Readiness</i> Pete Buckner, <i>Behavior Liaison</i> Heidi Fortner, <i>Behavior Interventionist</i> April Gardner, <i>Restorative Interventionist</i> Sam Meyer, <i>Restorative Interventionist</i> <i>Assistant</i> Jani Chollman, <i>Academic Interventionist</i>	bethel.waters@knoxschools.org pete.buckner@knoxschools.org heidi.fortner@knoxschools.org april.gardner@knoxschools.org samuel.meyer@knoxschools.org jani.chollman@knoxschools.org

Hours of operation

NO DROP OFFS BEFORE 7:30 A.M.

7:30-8:00 Drop Off
(6th Grade in Auditorium; 7th Grade in Gym; 8th Grade in Cafeteria)

8:00-8:30- Homeroom

8:30-3:30- Daily Schedule

Bell Schedule	
1st	8:30 - 9:37
2nd	9:40-10:22
3rd	10:25-11:32
4th	11:35-1:10

*****NO EARLY DISMISSALS AFTER 3:00 P.M.*****

5th	1:13-2:20
6th	2:23-3:30

Adapted Bell Schedules

1-Hour Delay <i>All Grade Levels Times</i>	2-Hour Delay <i>All Grade Levels Times</i>	½ day <i>All Grade Levels Times</i>
1st Period: 9:30-10:18	1st Period: 10:30-11:03	1st Period: 8:30-9:09
3rd Period: 10:21-11:03 (8th RA)	4th Period: 11:06-12:54 (Lunch Period)	3rd Period: 9:12-9:50
4th Period: 11:06-12:54 (Lunch Period)	3rd Period: 12:57-1:44 (8th RA)	4th Period: 9:53-10:31
5th Period: 12:57-2:12 (7th RA)	5th Period: 1:47-2:34 (7th RA)	5th Period: 10:34-11:12
6th Period: 2:15-3:30 (6th RA)	6th Period: 2:37-3:30 (6th RA)	6th Period: 11:15-12:00

Early Release Days

There will be 4 Early Release Wednesdays throughout the 25-26 school year.

Early Release dates are: September 5th,, November 19th, , January 28th, and March 25th.

Other ½ days include August 7th (first day of school), December 19th (last day before Winter Break) and May 21st (last day of school) are also ½ days for students.

Dismissal for middle school students on ½ days is 12:00 pm.

Schedule for Early Release and any other ½ day dismissal days:

All Grade Levels Times
1st Period: 8:30-9:09
3rd Period: 9:12-9:50
4th Period: 9:53-10:31
5th Period: 10:34-11:12
6th Period: 11:15-12:00



2025-2026 KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS CALENDAR

Thursday, July 31	First Day for Teachers (School Based In-Service Day)
Friday, August 1	Systemwide In-Service Day (PreK-12)
Monday, August 4	Administrative Day (Teacher Work Day)
Tuesday, August 5	Systemwide In-Service Day (½ Day School-based); Administrative Day (½ Day Teacher Work Day); 6 th and 9 th Grade Orientation
Wednesday, August 6	Administrative Day (Teacher Work Day)
Thursday, August 7	First Day for Students (½ Day)
Wednesday, August 27	Early Release Day for Students
Monday, September 1	Labor Day Holiday (Knox County Schools Closed)
Monday, September 8	End 4½-weeks Grading Period
Wednesday, September 17	Constitution Day (Knox County Schools Open), Early Release Day for Students
Monday, October 6 - Friday, October 10	Fall Break
Wednesday, October 15	End First 9-weeks Grading Period
Tuesday, November 4	Systemwide In-Service Day (PreK-12) (Student Holiday)
Friday, November 14	End 4½-weeks Grading Period
Wednesday, November 19	Early Release Day for Students
Wednesday, November 26 - Friday, November 28	Thanksgiving Holidays (Knox County Schools Closed)
Friday, December 19	½ Day for Students; End Second 9-weeks Grading Period; End First Semester
Monday, December 22 – Friday, January 2	Winter Break
Friday, January 2	Systemwide In-service Day (½ Day School-based); Administrative Day (½ Day Teacher Work Day)
Monday, January 5	First Day for Students after Winter Break (Full Day)
Monday, January 19	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Knox County Schools Closed)
Wednesday, January 21	Early Release Day for Students
Thursday, February 5	End 4½-weeks Grading Period
Monday, February 16	Systemwide In-Service Day (PreK-12) (Student Holiday)
Wednesday, February 18	Early Release Day for Students
Monday, March 9 – Friday, March 13	Spring Break
Tuesday, March 17	End Third 9-weeks Grading Period
Wednesday, March 25	Early Release Day
Friday, April 3	Holiday (Knox County Schools Closed)
Monday, April 20	End 4½-weeks Grading Period
Tuesday, May 5	Systemwide In-Service Day (School-based)
Thursday, May 21	Last Day for Students (½ Day); End Fourth 9-weeks Grading Period; End Second Semester
Friday, May 22	Administrative Day (Teacher Work Day) – Last Day for Teachers
Friday June 19	Juneteenth Holiday (Knox County Schools Closed)

School Wide Policies

Attendance

Attendance is an essential part of your child's education. State law requires a student to be in school a minimum of three hours and fifteen minutes to be counted present for the day (*Please see the [KCS Board Attendance Policy J-120](#)*). Students returning from an absence must bring a note signed by the parent, guardian, or physician stating the dates of absence and reason. **This written excuse must be received within five days of returning to school or the absence will be unexcused.**

A student may be absent, due to illness, no more than ten (10) days per school year, a medical statement will be required. If a student has accumulated ten unexcused absences in a school year, they will be referred to the School Social Worker to investigate the reasons for the truancy and determine if legal action should be taken. Additionally, students are responsible for completing their make-up work. (See policy below for make-up work expectations).

Excused absences include personal illness, illness in the family requiring temporary help from the child, death in the family, recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of the student's faith, or a verifiable family emergency.

Attendance will be taken by teachers, and parent/guardian will be notified when a student is absent.

Grading Scale, Late Work, & Make-up Work

Knox County Schools Grading Scale

100-90	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59-0	F

Late work: Students are encouraged to turn in late work since practice is important to mastery. Late work will be accepted up to **5 days after a module/unit ends**.

Absent Student Make-up Policy: Northwest follows KCS School Board Policy, which states: *If a student must be absent from school for any reason, excused or unexcused, up to ten (10) days upon returning to school, he/she shall be given the opportunity to make up any and all assignments that were missed during the student's absence. The student must request make-up assignments within three (3) days after returning from the absence. Teachers shall set a reasonable time for the completion of the work. Failure of a student to initiate a request for make-up work within three (3) days will result in a lost opportunity for credit for that assignment.*

Cafeteria Procedures

NMS is part of the CEP grant. The grant allows for each student to receive breakfast and lunch at zero cost. Students have the opportunity to purchase additional snacks and ice cream, however these items are not part of the free lunch program.

Students will be given 25 minutes to eat lunch each day.

Lunch will not be provided on half days.

Medications

Northwest abides by the KNOX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD POLICY, which reads:

No medication of any kind shall be self-administered by students, even with assistance from school nurses or other school personnel, except when medication must be given on a long-term basis and is necessary to affect an improvement in, or control of, a health problem during the school hours. Medications such as Tylenol, aspirin, and other over the counter (O.T.C.) medications are included in these regulations. Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school hours must comply with the medication policy.

Early Dismissal Procedures

To ensure the safety of all students, no one may check a student out of school unless the name appears on the emergency card or is listed in the ASPEN System and photo identification is presented. **IMPORTANT: PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CHILD'S EMERGENCY INFORMATION PERIODICALLY AS NEEDED.**

You **MUST** show a photo ID in order to check a student out before dismissal time.

****No early dismissal after 3:00PM.**

Car Rider Procedures

Car riders are dropped off and picked up at the front of the school building. Students should wait until their car is under the portico before exiting or entering their car. Students should not run through the parking lot. The route is highlighted in the image below for cars dropping off and picking up students.



Bus Procedures

Riding the bus is a privilege that can be taken away at any time if students fail to meet bus expectations.

From the time a student arrives at the bus stop, school expectations should be followed. Students must ride the bus in which they are assigned through Knox County's Transportation department. Bus numbers and routes can be found at <https://busapp.knoxschools.org/liveweb/webquery/> Students should appreciate and help maintain the school bus. It is vandalism to deface any part of the bus.

Expectations of Student Behavior

Expectations for Student Behavior

The "Ranger Way" for Student Behavior is focused on following the 3 R's:

1. Be **R**espectful- at Northwest Middle, the expectation is that we treat each other with respect.
2. Be **R**esponsible- at Northwest Middle, the expectation is that students will come to class prepared and ready to learn, and leave the classroom better than they found it.
3. Make **R**ight Choices- at Northwest Middle, the expectation is that students will think before they act and consider the outcome of their choices.

Restorative Practices

In collaboration with the district, Northwest places emphasis on working with students through the support of restorative practices. In an effort to reduce exclusionary practices, students will participate in creating and implementing strategies that improve behaviors and develop necessary coping skills that lead to greater academic success and opportunities.

Ranger Rewards

To reward students for following expectations, students will be rewarded Ranger Rewards Points by staff. Students can earn up to 3 points per class period and may earn more points at staff discretion. Students will have the opportunity to "spend" points every other week at the Ranger Store.

Discipline Procedures

Students are expected to follow general school and classroom expectations and procedures. Violations of these expectations will be handled depending on the severity of the violation. In addition, progressive discipline will be followed as outlined by [KCS policy](#).

Level I – Handled by classroom teacher or other staff members. These behaviors may hinder the daily classroom instruction or school operation and may escalate to a more serious level or cause the development of very inappropriate behavior patterns if unmodified. If a student refuses to accept the staff member's assignment of consequences, the violation moves immediately to an administrative level.

Level II – Handled by the classroom teacher, administration, and/or administrative designee. These behaviors, either by frequency or seriousness, indicate a pattern of misbehavior or a behavioral problem that may hinder the student's personal or academic progress or disrupt the learning climate of the school.

Level III – Handled by the administration and/or administrative designee. These behaviors include acts directed against a person or property. Level III behaviors are a result of a student’s unwillingness to take responsibility for or to correct previous behaviors.

The actions listed are non-negotiables for student behavior. Please pay special attention to the consequence that matches the action.

Action	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Profanity to Staff	2 days ATS	2 days OSS	4 days OSS
Fighting	4 days OSS	10 days OSS	30 days OSS
Filming Fight/Conflict	2 days OSS	3 days OSS	4 days OSS

Wireless Communication Device Discipline

1st Offense- parent phone call, WCD will be placed in WCD lock box in front office, and returned to student at end of day

2nd Offense- parent phone call, WCD will be placed in WCD lock box in front office, returned to student at end of day, and silent lunch (2 days)

3rd Offense- parent phone call, WCD will be placed in WCD lock box in front office, parent pick up of WCD required, and silent lunch (5 days)

4th Offense- parent phone call, WCD will be placed in WCD lock box in front office, parent pick up of WCD required, ATS (1 day), and WCD restriction for 10 days (turned in every morning to front office and placed in WCD lock box)

5th Offense- parent phone call, WCD will be placed in WCD lock box in front office, parent pick up of WCD required, ATS (2 days) & WCD restriction for 30 days (turned in every morning to front office and placed in WCD lock box)

***Please note:** Wireless Communication Devices (WCDs) include cell phones, smartwatches, and wireless headphones or earbuds.*

*Students may only use **wired headphones** that connect directly to their Chromebooks—and only for instructional purposes. **Wireless headphones or earbuds will not be permitted at any time during school hours.***

Restroom Policy

Students will be expected to fill out an E-Hall pass in order to get a restroom break. Students will be allowed a set number of passes to use each day. The number of passes can be adjusted based on the needs of the students. Students will use the restrooms assigned to each classroom.

Any vandalism to the restroom will be pursued and vandals will be responsible for paying for any damages. Knox County Vandalism Cost List:

VANDALISM COST MASTER

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION	COST	LABOR COST \$30.00 PER HR.	FLEET COST \$60.00	TOTAL COST
REINSTALL DRINKING FOUNT. REG.		\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00
REPLACE DRINKING FOUNTAIN REG.	\$ 505.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 595.00
REINSTALL DRINKING FOUNT BOTTLE FILL		\$ 45.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 105.00
REPLACE DRINKING FOUNTAIN BOTTLE FILL	\$ 925.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 1,030.00
REINSTALL FLUSH VAVE		\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00
REPLACE FLUSH VALVE	\$ 90.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 180.00
REINSTALL TOILET SEAT		\$ 15.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 75.00
REPLACE TOILET SEAT	\$ 20.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 95.00
REINSTALL TOILET BOWL FLOOR MOUNT		\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00
REPLACE TOILET BOWL FLOOR MOUNT	\$ 90.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 180.00
REINSTALL TOILET BOWL WALL MOUNT		\$ 45.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 105.00
REPLACE TOILET BOWL WALL MOUNT	\$ 85.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 190.00
REINSTALL TOILET & TANK		\$ 45.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 105.00
REPLACE TOILET & TANK	\$ 125.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 230.00
REINSTALL GENTEX WALL MOUNT STROBE		\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00
REPLACE GENTEX WALL MOUNT STROBE	\$ 27.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 117.00
REINSTALL WALL MOUNT SINK		\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00
REPLACE WALL MOUNT SINK	\$ 67.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 157.00
REINSTALL FAUCET		\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00
REPLACE FAUCET	\$ 73.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 163.00

Bullying & Harassment & Hazing

Northwest Middle School will follow KCS Board Policy J-211 in relation to harassment, intimidation and bullying, or cyber-bullying.

<p>TEASING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is having fun • No one is getting hurt • Everyone is participating equally 	<p>CONFLICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one is having fun • There is a possible solution to the disagreement • Equal balance of power
<p>MEAN MOMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone is being hurt on purpose • Reaction to a strong feeling or emotion • An isolated event (does not happen regularly) 	<p>BULLYING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attacked physically, socially, and/or emotionally • Unequal balance of power • Happens more than once over a period of time • Someone is being hurt on purpose

Section J:	Knox County Board of Education Policy		
Students	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
	Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying or Cyber-Bullying	J-211	6/05
		Reviewed:	Revised:
		11/21	8/17

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GENERAL

Knox County Schools prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and cyber-bullying.^{1, 2} A safe and courteous environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate students in a safe and orderly environment; and since students learn by example, administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be positive role models in demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying. All Knox County Schools teachers and administrative personnel are responsible for ensuring this policy is faithfully implemented in all areas under their purview or direct supervision.

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices;

“Electronic devices” include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones or other wireless telecommunication devices, personal digital assistants (PDAs), computers, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, and web sites;

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any act that substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities or performance; and:

- (A) If the act takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation or at any official school bus stop, the act has the effect of:
 - (i) Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property;
 - (ii) Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student’s property;
 - (iii) Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or
 - (iv) Creating a hostile educational environment; or
- (B) If the act takes place off school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity, it is directed specifically at a student or students and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption to the education environment or learning process.

All students are expected to refrain from acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying or cyber-bullying in any form and to be aware that such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned in Board policy J-191 will be utilized for the unacceptable behavior described above.

1 **PREVENTION AND TRAINING**

2
3 At the beginning of each school year, principals will provide this policy to parents and ensure that
4 students are aware of the expectations for their behavior under this policy. This policy shall also be
5 posted in the Board of Education policy page of the Knox County Schools website.
6

7 To promote and foster intergroup awareness, appreciation and understanding by students and staff of the
8 diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups represented in the school district, United States, and the world,
9 the Knox County Schools shall:

- 10
11 1. Provide on-going professional development for staff to prevent harassment, intimidation and
12 bullying.
13
14 2. Implement practices to achieve safer and less violent schools for students, teachers and
15 administrators through Restorative Practices, Positive Behavior Intervention Support, and
16 professional development regarding implicit biases. Unless the schedule is modified, training is
17 expected to continue through 2019.
18
19 3. Endeavor to ensure that the curriculum does not promote stereotypical views of any group and
20 recognizes the accomplishments and contributions of all peoples.
21
22 4. Provide a comprehensive digital citizenship training program at all levels.
23

24 **REPORTING AND RESPONSE**

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26 Students who feel they are being harassed, bullied or intimidated may report this concern to any teacher or
27 school administrator or the office of the Superintendent using any means of communication with which
28 they feel comfortable. Students may report anonymously, and anonymous reports will be treated with the
29 same level of urgency as all other reports.
30

31 All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the
32 principal's designee for investigation and appropriate action. Submission of a written incident report to
33 the principal is required by all district employees. Oral reports will also be considered official reports.
34 Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of
35 an anonymous report. Once a report is received, the principal or his or her designee must initiate an
36 investigation within forty-eight (48) hours for student well-being unless the need for additional time is
37 appropriately documented. An appropriate intervention must be initiated within twenty (20) calendar days
38 from the receipt of the report unless the need for more time is appropriately documented.² Parents of all
39 students must be immediately informed if their student is involved in an act of harassment, intimidation,
40 bullying or cyber-bullying. Restorative practices will be used to the extent practicable in those schools
41 where training has been completed.
42

43 A school employee, student or volunteer who possesses reliable information that a student has
44 electronically transmitted a credible threat to cause bodily injury or death to another student or school
45 employee shall report such information to the Principal or other school administrator. The Principal
46 shall, in consultation with the appropriate district administrative personnel, make a determination
47 regarding the disposition of the report with respect to appropriate investigations and disciplinary actions.³
48

1 Failure to report reliable information about an electronically transmitted credible threat to a student or
 2 employee may result in disciplinary action for the student or employee withholding the information. If a
 3 volunteer fails to report such information, the volunteer may be restricted from volunteering at any further
 4 school related activities.

5 A school employee, student or volunteer may not engage in reprisal or retaliation against a victim of,
 6 witness to, or person with reliable information about an act of harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyber-
 7 bullying.⁴

8
 9 No student shall be the subject of reprisal for any report of bullying, harassment and intimidation.
 10 Students found to have perpetrated acts of reprisal shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action as
 11 described in Board Policy J-191.^{4, 5}

12
 13 Consequences for a student found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation
 14 or bullying range from behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted
 15 under Board Policy J-191.

16
 17 The following factors will be considered in determining the appropriate response to students who commit
 18 one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyber-bullying:

- 19
- 20 1. The developmental level and maturity levels of the parties involved;
- 21 2. The levels of harm as determined by the student's ability to be educated in a safe and orderly
- 22 environment;
- 23 3. The surrounding circumstances;
- 24 4. The nature of the behavior(s);
- 25 5. Past incidences or continuing patterns of behavior;
- 26 6. The relationships between the parties involved; and
- 27 7. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.
- 28 8. The efficacy of restorative practices with the students involved.
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32 Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of harassment, intimidation
 33 or bullying may range from behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. The
 34 appropriate action will be consistent with established Board policy, case law, and federal and state
 35 statutes.

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 Legal References:

- 40 1. If this concerns possible or alleged civil rights violations, please refer to Board Policy J-210. Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-6-4501.
- 41 2. T.C.A. § 49-6-4503.
- 42 3. T.C.A. § 49-6-4504.
- 43 4. T.C.A. § 49-6-4505(a).
- 44 5. T.C.A. § 49-6-4216(a)(2)(C) and § 49-6-4505(d).

45 Approved as to Legal Form
 46 By Knox County Law Director 6/7/2017
 47 /Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director

Student Dress Code

The following expectations for student dress have been established by the Knox County Board of Education to promote a safe and optimum learning environment. Apparel or appearance, which tends to draw attention to an individual rather than to a learning situation, must be avoided. In matters of opinion, the judgment of the principal/designee shall prevail.

The following standards will be observed in all Knox County Middle and High Schools:

- Pants must be worn at the waist. No sagging allowed.
- Shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, shoulders and must have sleeves. Shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts with no midriff visible. Low-cut blouses, shirts, or tops or extremely tight tops, tube tops, or any top that exposes cleavage are prohibited.
- Head apparel, except for religious or medical purposes, must not be worn inside the school building. **This includes hoods.**
- Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor and outdoor activity.
- Clothing and accessories such as backpacks, patches, jewelry, and notebooks must not display:
 1. Racial or ethnic slurs/symbols,
 2. Gang affiliations,
 3. Disruptive, vulgar, or sexually suggestive language or images; nor, should they promote products which students may not legally buy; such as alcohol, tobacco, & illegal drugs.
- Skirts, dresses, and shorts must be beyond mid-thigh length.
- Sleepwear, pajamas, and/or blankets cannot be worn in school.

Prohibited items include:

- Large, long and/or heavy chains
- Studded or chained accessories
- Bandanas
- Sunglasses, except for health purposes
- Sleepwear
- Skin-tight outer materials without appropriate coverage.

The school administration reserves the right to determine whether the student's attire is within the limits of decency and modesty. Administration should strive for consistency so the dress code is applied even-handedly to male and female students. The principal may allow exceptions in special circumstances or occasions such as holidays or special performances and may further prescribe dress in certain classes such as physical education, vocational classes, and science labs.

Any student not attired in accordance with this policy shall be subject to correction of the violation. If a correction cannot be made, the student shall be subject to additional disciplinary measures as described in Policy J-191 "Misbehaviors and Disciplinary Options."

This policy does not preclude individual schools from implementing standardized dress policies with permission from the Director of Schools and the Board of Education after extensive consultation with parents, teachers, and students. Any deviation from the system-wide policy must be submitted in writing to the middle and high school directors for review and recommendation to the Director of Schools and the Board of Education. (See [KCS Board Policy "J-260 Dress Code"](#))

Disciplinary Terms and Definitions

CONFISCATION: Items that are prohibited on school grounds or are a distraction will be labeled as to ownership and turned over to the assigned office. These items may be returned to the student or parents at the administrator's discretion. *Note: Beepers, cell phones, etc. may be turned over to Knox County Security.*

HAZING: Name-calling, inflammatory or disrespectful remarks, harassment (verbal or physical) is prohibited at all times and is subject to disciplinary consequences.

RESTORATIVE LEARNING CENTER (RLC): RLC can be used for students to take a timed break time or may be given as a consequence for inappropriate behavior. Students are expected to complete a reflection form so students have the opportunity to reflect on their actions. RLC can be assigned for one or two class periods. Students are expected to complete regular academic assignments, participate in some form of school service, and follow the schedule and guidelines outlined by the staff member in charge.

OFF-TEAM: Off-team is a consequence sometimes given for inappropriate behavior. This consequence involves placement of the student in a different grade-level classroom. Students are expected to complete regular academic assignments, participate in some form of school service, and follow the schedule and guidelines outlined by the staff member in charge.

ALTERNATIVE TO SUSPENSION (ATS): ATS is a consequence sometimes given for inappropriate behavior. This consequence involves placement of the student in a special class for at least one day with a designated staff member. Students are expected to complete regular academic assignments, participate in some form of school service, and follow the schedule and guidelines outlined by the staff member in charge.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS): This is a consequence given for persistent misbehaviors of such a serious nature as to warrant being prohibited from school attendance. Students who receive OSS are subject to the following rules:

- The student is not allowed on campus at any time.
- The student is not allowed to attend any school function, including, but not limited to athletic events, dances, school performances, etc..

LONG TERM SUSPENSION: Any OSS that is longer than four consecutive days is considered "long term." A disciplinary hearing (DH) will be held before any long-term suspension has been given.

INITIAL HEARING/DISCIPLINARY HEARING (DH): When information is received by administration indicating that a student has committed a violation that could result in a suspension of more than four days, meetings will be scheduled for the following purposes in the order given below:

Hearing Notification (Includes Administrator and Student + Parent/Guardian)

- To present information concerning the violation.
- To hear the student's statement or statements of others who may have information relative to the violation.

IEP Team Meeting

- To determine if violation is a manifestation of the Special Ed certification.
- To determine if placement/programming is needed.

Disciplinary Hearing (DH) (All regular Ed. & Special Ed: If not a manifestation)

- To determine guilt or innocence.
- To determine the appropriate consequences for the violation.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE: According to Knox County Board Policy Handbook (JCAB), school lockers, backpacks, pocketbooks, etc., as well as vehicles parked on school grounds are subject to search. (Guidelines concerning such searches are outlined in KCS Board Policy “J-200 Interrogations and Searches”.)

Zero Tolerance Policy

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment free of drugs, violence, and dangerous weapons, any student who engages in the following behaviors shall be removed from the base school for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year and shall be offered an alternative placement to complete school work. The Director of Schools has the authority to modify this suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis. Zero tolerance acts are as follows:

Any student who while at a school bus stop, on a school bus, on school property or while attending any school event or activity:

- A. Unlawfully possesses an illegal drug or any other controlled substance;
- B. Knowingly possesses a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 9212;
- C. Commits aggravated assault on a teacher, a School Resource Officer (SRO), an officer of the law assigned to patrol a Knox County School property, or other employee of the school system;
- D. Possession of explosive or incendiary devices. It is the School Board's intent that the Director of Schools exercises his/her power to modify to ensure that no student shall be out of school for more than two semesters for a zero tolerance offense. Upon re-entry to the base school, a restorative conference shall be utilized to the extent practicable. The Director of Schools shall consider each zero tolerance case for placement in the alternative school program. (See KCS Board Policy “J-194 Zero Tolerance Offenses”)

Technology

KCS Provided Technology

A Chromebook and charger is provided by KCS to each student at the beginning of the year for the school year. This Chromebook is the property of KCS, not of the student. Therefore, students are responsible for using the technology device according to school and district policies and procedures. Be aware that it can be collected and inspected by KCS employees at **any** time. Students have no right to privacy for any material on a district technology device.

Before the student can be issued a device, the student and parent/guardian **must sign a *Technology Device Agreement***. You can access or obtain this form either in the school front office or digitally [here](#). Improper use, recurring damage claims, and/or acts of negligence may result in students losing take-home privileges or revoked Chromebook privileges.

Care & Usage of KCS Device

The care of district devices is the student's responsibility. Beginning school year 2024-2025, all Northwest Middle School students will be day users. All Chromebooks will be stored at school at the end of each day. This will help minimize device damage and ensure students' Chromebooks are charged and ready to go each day.

Students should not lend the device or charger to another person or leave the device unattended. It is the student's responsibility to back up any projects and content created on the device. Students should not remove any of the stickers or labels that are on the KCS issued devices.

Reporting Damages & Repair Costs

If the device is not working or damaged, students should report the problem immediately to the help desk at: <https://tinyurl.com/NMSStudentHelp>. If the student's device is lost or stolen, the student should report the loss immediately to administration. If the device is stolen off campus, a police report should be obtained.

The student is responsible to cover the cost to repair any damages made to their KCS provided device. The most common damage seen is a broken screen which is a \$35 repair cost. The cost to replace the Chromebook is \$250. The cost of a lost charger is \$20. Chargers can also be purchased at school from Mrs. Crotzer or online. ([Amazon Link](#))

Chromebook Insurance

Chromebook Insurance is a \$20 non-refundable fee that covers damages caused by accidental damage, theft, fire, electrical surge, and natural disasters. Insurance does *not* cover intentional damage* (Ex. hitting CB, graffiti, removing/adding stickers, hacking, and lost/damaged chargers).

Although this insurance is not required, it is *highly* recommended to help offset those accidental costs. If you choose to purchase the insurance, you may pay online at <https://knoxschools.schoolcashionline.com/>

Personal Technology Devices

If a student chooses to bring a personal device (*headphones, laptops, tablets, cell phones, smart watches, etc.*), he/she is bringing it at their own risk and is responsible for that device.

Personal Communication Devices (ie: Cell Phones)

Per Knox County Board Policy J-240, students are allowed to have a personal communication device such as a cell phone with them during the school day. They are allowed to utilize personal communication devices before and after school, but the device is expected to be turned off and put away during school hours.

Extracurricular Opportunities

Extracurricular Activities

In addition to typical KCS and Northwest policies, the following guidelines should be met by students and parents who attend or participate in and in-school or after school activity (assemblies, athletic events, dances, clubs, etc):

1. Good citizenship and sportsmanship should be observed at all times.
2. Students should remain in an assigned area throughout the activity.
3. Transportation should be arranged in advance. If late pick-up is a problem, the School Administration reserves the right to prohibit a student from attending after-school functions.

Athletics

The athletic department encourages participation in athletics as an extracurricular activity, and such participation is a privilege. No one is guaranteed a place on a team. Without such a guarantee, the student must be ready to meet the standards established by the school or have the possibility of being dismissed as a member of that team. The better one's talent, the better one's chance is of making the team. Rarely, however, will talent be the sole criteria. Other factors such as attitude, desire, cooperation and self-discipline will play important parts in determining placement on the team.

Students who participate in athletics are expected to:

1. Act in a responsible manner at all times.
2. Attend and arrive on time to practices and games.
3. Refrain from using profanity or obscene language or gestures.
4. Show good sportsmanship and respect for officials, coaches and fellow athletes.
5. Play fair, play hard and put forth your best effort in practice and in competition.
6. Treat other student athletes with respect and dignity.

School Sponsored teams include: Basketball, Track, and Cheerleading

Signature Page

By signing below, I am stating that I have read and agree to abide by the rules and policies as stated in the NMS Student Handbook.

Printed Student Name: _____

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____