



*Holston*  
**MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**EST. 1991**

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026**

Dear Holston Middle School Student:

The administration and the faculty at Holston Middle School are excited about the opportunity to work with you this year. As we begin the school year, it is important for you to take some time to familiarize yourself with the expectations and the requirements of the Knox County School System and Holston Middle School. The student handbook is a valuable resource for you and your parents. We have done our best to determine what you will need to know, as well as what you would like to know to make this a very successful year at HMS.

The ultimate purpose of education is to help each student become a successful member of society and to develop and accept the responsibilities and the obligation of good citizenship. It is our desire at HMS that students will work hard to achieve academic success and will participate in the many activities offered at this school.

### **OUR MISSION**

High Standards  
Motivated Students  
Striving for Excellence

### **OUR VISION**

Holston Middle School champions a culture of excellence, innovation, and curiosity by providing a student-centered space where learning is prioritized. Our passionate staff and stakeholders collaborate to create engaging opportunities that empower students to expand their problem-solving and critical thinking skills and to confidently face new experiences, in preparation for the next steps in their education.

### **OUR HISTORY**

Holston Middle School serves students in the Gibbs, Fulton, Austin-East, Central, and Carter school communities. In 1991, Holston High School closed and was reprogrammed as a middle school. That same year, Gibbs Middle School, a separate wing of the original high school, was closed, and Gibbs students as well as those in the northeast edge of the city blended together to become the diverse community we know today as Holston Middle School. In Fall 2018, Holston experienced another rezoning to include students in the Burlington and Chilhowee Hills areas. Historically, Holston boasts strong STEM and arts programs, athletic teams, and academic growth. For 30 years, Holston Middle School Hurricanes have exhibited the scholarship, leadership, and citizenship necessary to succeed in high school and beyond.

## **HOLSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL**

600 N. Chilhowee Drive

Knoxville, TN 37924

865-594-1300 (phone)

865-594-4429 (fax)

<http://knoxschools.org/holstonms>

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Amber Roberts, Principal

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### **COUNSELORS**

Taylor Branson, 7th-Grade Counselor

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Anjelica Nichols, 6th-Grade Counselor

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### **FRONT OFFICE**

Gustina Miller, Lead Secretary

Angela Murray, Bookkeeper

Hope Carr, Front Office Secretary

### **FACULTY**

Please call the main office number (594-1300) or email teachers directly at [firstname.lastname@knoxschools.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@knoxschools.org)

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

KCS Transportation Office

594-1550

KCS Central Office

594-1800

KCS Superintendent's Office

594-1620

KCS Transfer Office

594-1506

KCS Health Services

594-3643

## COMMUNICATION

Holston Middle School is a Personalized Learning Environment school that utilizes 1:1 technology to transition to student-centered instruction, promote student engagement, and allow for personalized learning to occur. All of our students are issued a Chromebook to use in class and at home. Learning for Holston students can occur anywhere at any time.

HMS will do “whatever it takes” to achieve success! We can’t do that without the voice and participation of our friends and families. Here are some of the ways that you can stay connected to HMS by Internet or app:



[Holston Middle School Site](#) (Link)



[Canvas Learning Website](#) (Link)



[Aspen Grade Portal](#) (Link)



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



Instagram: @holstonmiddle



X: @holstonmiddle



[ParentSquare](#) (Link)

[StudentSquare](#) (Link)

## **GRADE REPORTING AND GRADING SCALE**

All class grades are cumulative, representing all class work from the beginning of the course to the date of the report. Each successive report is not the average of previous grade reports; rather, it represents the compiled scores of all daily lessons, homework, projects, quizzes, examinations, and other classroom assignments during the entire 22, 45, 67, or 90 days covered by the report. Progress reports and report cards will be published within 5 days of the end of the grading period. Printed copies will be distributed after each semester; all other progress reports will be published online in Aspen.

### **Grade Percentage Range**

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| A | 90 - 100 |
| B | 80 - 89  |
| C | 70 - 79  |
| D | 60 - 69  |
| F | 50 - 59* |

The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment (TCAP) results will compose 15% of final grades in math, reading/language arts, science, and social studies for students in grades 3 - 8. \*Please note that the state of Tennessee's grading scale designates the range for F being 0-59; however, at Holston, the lowest score is a 50.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING**

Students start in Homeroom at 8:10, with core classes starting at 8:30. Because all courses matter, it is imperative to be at school on time. Schedules reflect four course types: Core (ELA, math, science, social studies), Related Arts (STEM, art, band, chorus, PE, health, and computer science), Intervention (ELA and math), and Enrichment (varied per grade level). Additionally, we will have several STEM-oriented offerings, as Holston is a TN STEM-Designated school.

## Daily Schedules

Students in all grades must be enrolled in seven classes—one Focus class (Enrichment or Intervention), four core subject classes (ELA, Math, Science, & Social Studies), and two Related Arts classes. Additionally, students are placed in a Homeroom. Eighth-graders taking Honors Spanish I will have an additional class.

### 6<sup>th</sup>-Grade

|           | 1 <sup>st</sup> | 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 4 <sup>th</sup>        | 5 <sup>th</sup> | 6 <sup>th</sup>      | 7 <sup>th</sup> |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Homeroom  | Core Class      | Related Art     | Related Art     | Core or Enrich & Lunch | Core Class      | Core Class or Enrich | Core Class      |
| 8:10-8:27 | 8:30-9:20       | 9:24-10:14      | 10:18-11:08     | 11:12-12:37            | 12:40-1:30      | 1:33-2:23            | 2:26-3:27       |

### 7<sup>th</sup>-Grade

|           | 1 <sup>st</sup>      | 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 4 <sup>th</sup>        | 5 <sup>th</sup> | 6 <sup>th</sup> | 7 <sup>th</sup> |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Homeroom  | Core Class or Enrich | Core Class      | Related Art     | Core or Enrich & Lunch | Related Art     | Core Class      | Core Class      |
| 8:10-8:27 | 8:30-9:20            | 9:24-10:14      | 10:18-11:08     | 11:12-12:37            | 12:40-1:30      | 1:33-2:23       | 2:26-3:27       |

### 8<sup>th</sup>-Grade

|           | 1 <sup>st</sup> | 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 3 <sup>rd</sup>      | 4 <sup>th</sup>        | 5 <sup>th</sup> | 6 <sup>th</sup> | 7 <sup>th</sup> |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Homeroom  | Core Class      | Core Class      | Core Class or Enrich | Core or Enrich & Lunch | Core Class      | Related Art     | Related Art     |
| 8:10-8:27 | 8:30-9:20       | 9:24-10:14      | 10:18-11:08          | 11:12-12:37            | 12:40-1:30      | 1:33-2:23       | 2:26-3:27       |

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

The function of the transportation system is to transport pupils between school and home. The KCS Transportation Department returns students to their assigned bus stops. KCS cannot take the responsibility to transport students to day care centers, babysitters, jobs, scout meetings, etc. Bus drivers will not stop at assigned bus stops when children are not present or cannot be seen by the driver. Students must pay close attention, and they must be at the proper places at the proper times. A student who wishes to ride a bus other than his/her assigned bus must bring a signed note from the parent/guardian to the office no later than 9:30 AM of the day of the request (copies of notes are located in the main office). The note must include the student's name, the requested bus number, the name of the person he/she will be accompanying, a parent/guardian signature, and a contact number for the parent/guardian for the request to be honored. For further information concerning bus transportation, please refer to the KCS website.

## **BUS CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

Bus transportation is provided for Knox County students who live outside the Parental Responsibility Zones (PRZ) for each school. A map of these zones, as well as a listing of bus stops and pick-up times, is available in the Counseling Office or the Knox County Transportation Office. Proper conduct on our school buses is a priority to ensure the safety of all children. Bus transportation provided by the Knox County School System is considered to be an extension of the school day.

Therefore, just as appropriate behavior is expected in the classroom, it is expected on the bus. Knox County bus rules are posted on each bus; failure to cooperate with the driver may result in the removal of student riding privileges and/or suspension from the bus.

## **DAMAGE TO SCHOOL OR SCHOOL BUS PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT**

Students who damage school property or equipment or bus property/equipment will be required to pay for the repair or replacement of said property. This financial restitution may be in addition to other disciplinary action taken by the school for the incident.

## **SCHOOL WORK MISSED DUE TO EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Homework assigned before an absence is due on the first day of the student's return to school. The student is responsible for contacting the teacher for make-up work and assignments immediately upon return to school. Assignments missed as a result of an absence must be made up within three school days unless it is a long-term absence of five or more days. In this event, the student will have one week to make up the missed work. Any other extenuating circumstances can be discussed with the teacher, with the final decision resting with the teacher. Students and

parents should use Canvas and Aspen to aid with assignments. Families will also need to make certain that the student has all of his/her books and computer.

### **STUDENT USE OF THE TELEPHONE**

Students must obtain permission from a teacher to use the classroom telephone. Students will no longer be permitted to leave the classroom to use the phone to call home, as there are phones in each classroom. The only two reasons for students to use the school phone would be to ask for a change of clothes or for transportation changes when the school has altered after-school plans. Students should not use personal phones to contact family members unless specifically directed by a staff member. Lastly, students will not contact home for a medical need because the nurse will conduct those calls. However, the office staff will relay messages to students in cases of emergency.

### **FEES**

A student fee is requested at the beginning of each school year to pay for supplemental materials in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, reading, and health. Additional fees may be requested for students enrolled in art, technology, etc. **The standard Knox County middle school fee this year will be \$35.** We will allocate the fee money in the following manner:

Technology: \$20 (technology, non-consumable materials, equipment, calculators, and batteries)

Instructional Support Fee: \$15 (consumable materials to support class work in all subjects)

\*Though there is no fee for using the Chromebook, parents can purchase insurance for \$20 via SchoolCashOnline: [knoxschools.schoolcashonline.com](http://knoxschools.schoolcashonline.com).

Additional classes, activities, and clubs that students elect such as year-long Band, year-long Chorus, Year-Long Art, Technology, Basketball, Cheerleading, etc. may require additional fees since they are elective courses or activities.

### **STUDENT ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS**

All accidents that occur on school property, during field trips, or during other school-approved activities must be reported to the office. If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student will be permitted to report to the clinic, and an attempt to notify a parent/guardian will be made by the nurse. If there is a clinic referral, a phone call to the parent or guardian will be made.

### **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

Accident insurance is available to any student who wishes to purchase it. The insurance can be purchased only at the beginning of the school year. The principal will ensure that each student, before participating in interscholastic athletics,

purchases the athletic insurance policy provided by the vendor approved by the Board of Education.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER**

Any change of address, telephone number, or employment location/number must be reported to the school office immediately. Should an emergency arise, the school must know where and how to reach parents/guardians at all times.

### **SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE**

Counseling services are available to all students. Problems concerning both school and personal needs can be helped by talking with a counselor. Students who wish to speak with the school counselor may make an appointment by notifying their teacher or contacting their counselor through Canvas. The counselor will send for the student as soon as possible. Students are not allowed to wait in the counseling area unless specifically instructed to do so.

### **CAFETERIA AND FOOD SERVICE**

Breakfast and lunch programs will be offered each full day of school. Both meals are free for every student at Holston because of a Community Eligibility Provision grant. Since classes are in session during each lunch period, an orderly atmosphere must be maintained. Therefore, students are expected to comply with the following regulations:

1. Delivery of “fast food” is prohibited unless the student and parent have lunch together at an area designated by the principal.
2. No food or drinks may be taken from the cafeteria.
3. Teachers will escort classes to and from the cafeteria.
4. Students will sit at assigned tables.
5. Silent lunch may be assigned to students with an infraction to the regulations.

### **SCHOOL-WIDE GUIDELINES AND RULES FOR FOOD AND DRINK**

- All food and drinks must be consumed in designated areas only, unless by special permission.
- Eating areas are to be left clean and trash-free, and trays properly returned to the designated area.
- Visitors are not permitted in the cafeteria during lunch periods without administrative approval.
- All school behavior guidelines should be followed during lunch.
- No food and drink (except water) are permitted in classrooms or other instructional areas except by special permission.

## **LIBRARY**

Students are encouraged to use the library. Students may check out books for a two-week period of time. Check-out times are from 8:10 a.m. until 8:25 a.m. and from 3:30 p.m. until 3:45 p.m. each school day with permission from staff members. Students may also check out books during the school day with a pass from a teacher. Reference materials may be checked out for overnight use only. Failure to return books or to pay fines for books/materials will result in accumulating fines from year to year. In addition, students are financially responsible for lost books.

## **ATHLETIC EVENTS**

The following guidelines should be observed for athletic events:

1. Students, athletes, and spectators are expected to display good sportsmanship.
2. Athletes and cheerleaders must have and maintain a "C" average to remain eligible for participation and must maintain acceptable behavior.

## **AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Students must be in attendance for the school day to attend after-school activities. Students must be picked up no later than 15 minutes after an activity has ended. If a student cannot be picked up in this time frame, he/she will not be allowed to attend the next similar school activity. If late pick-up is a problem, the school administration reserves the right to prohibit a child from attending after-school functions.

\*\*\*Students absent or suspended from school ARE NOT allowed to attend ANY after-school functions on the day(s) they are absent/suspended.\*\*\*

## **ACTIVITIES EXCLUSION**

Many activities are planned each year to enrich the middle school experience for students. These activities include assemblies, field trips, guest speakers, special television broadcasts, intramural sports, interscholastic basketball, cheerleading, field day, cookouts, dances, clubs, etc. These activities are considered privileges, and student participation is based on proper conduct. Exclusion from activities for a period of time may be imposed by the staff or the administration on students who do not conduct themselves appropriately. Students who serve out-of-school suspensions are excluded from all school activities during the suspension time. Fees assessed before the suspension are not refundable. In addition, participation in social incentives, academic incentives, and field trips will reflect behavioral expectations. Letters will be sent to parents outlining these expectations.

### **RESTORATIVE LEARNING CENTER (RLC)**

This classroom promotes behavior modification and accountability through completion of classwork, behavior reflections, and counseling by the Restorative Interventionist and her assistant. Students are assigned to the program by a building administrator and are referred for committing certain infractions of the school rules and regulations. Multiple strategies are used (videos, role play, group/one-on-one discussions, etc.) to ensure that students learn modifications to misbehaviors.

### **ALTERNATIVE-TO-SUSPENSION (ATS)**

For infractions requiring a total separation of the student from the environment, an assignment of Alternative-to-Suspension may be warranted. While classwork completion and reflective writings are employed in this setting, one-on-one discussions of frequent misbehaviors are a necessary component. Disruption in ATS may result in an assignment of Out-of-School Suspension (OSS).

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost items are sometimes turned in to the school office. Students may check the cafeteria during lunch for such items. However, the school cannot and does not assume any liability for personal items misplaced, lost, or stolen. It is strongly suggested that valuable items and large amounts of money not be brought to school, and outerwear clothing and backpacks be labeled with the student's name. At the end of each month, Lost and Found items will be purged.

### **INCENTIVES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR/HURRICANE STATION**

Incentives and rewards will be established by the academic teams and/or the administration to encourage and recognize appropriate student behavior and academic success. Students who choose to comply with school rules are rewarded by being allowed to participate in special activities and events. In addition, our school store, Hurricane Station, carries snacks, school supplies, Holston gear, and other incentive items for students who have earned Cane Cash throughout the day. Cane Cash can be earned through the PBIS Rewards App by modeling the Holston Habits.

## **APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES/HOLSTON HABITS**

Students must adhere to these general behavior guidelines:

### **BE READY**

- Be on time.

### **BE RESPECTFUL**

- Treat others with respect.
- Refrain from horseplay.
- Use good manners at all times.

### **BE RESPONSIBLE**

- Be in the appropriate assigned area at all times.
- Report to classes with appropriate materials. Obey the first request of any staff member.
- Complete all assigned work.

### **BE SAFE**

- Always obtain a written pass from your teacher to be anywhere other than your assigned area.

Holston Habits are specific expectations for the following areas of the building: classroom, bus rider area, outdoor area, auditorium, cafeteria, bathrooms, and hallways. These expectations for students to be ready, respectful, responsible, and safe are taught and modeled at the beginning of the year and must be followed throughout the school year.

## **INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS**

Students may not bring toys to school. Toys of any kind will be confiscated and returned at a later time. Repeatedly bringing toys will result in further disciplinary action. No student can have in his/her possession at school such items such as drugs, tobacco, e-cigarettes, matches, cigarette lighters, razor blades, knives, box cutters, guns, or any items judged capable of inflicting harm to others or causing property damage. These items will be confiscated and not returned. Possession, use, and/or distribution of pyrotechnic devices such as firecrackers, smoke bombs, matches, lighters, ammunition, “snappers”, or related materials at school, at a school function, or on a bus is prohibited. Possession of any of the above items will result in out-of-school suspension.

## **RESTRICTED AREAS**

Students are not allowed in the following areas:

- Parking lots during school hours without administrative permission.

- Rooms or areas designated “Staff Only.”
- Any unsupervised area during classes w/o permission.
- In the building after 4:00 without staff supervision for a school activity.

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

- **No** pushing, scuffling, or horseplay
- **No** harassing or name-calling
- **No** P.D.A (public display of affection)
- **No** Fighting (unacceptable)

## **GUIDELINES FOR PACKAGES, MESSAGES, FLOWERS, BALLOONS, ETC.**

To avoid excessive announcements, interruptions, and the overloading of office personnel, only emergency messages or packages (such as forgotten lunches, lunch money, etc.) from parents or guardians will be accepted for distribution to students during school hours. Students will be called to the office between classes only. The school will not accept deliveries (i.e., Valentine’s Day and awards days).

## **NOTABLE SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES**

### **Student Discipline**

According to Knox County Board Policy Handbook J-191:

When students are disruptive or act inappropriately, school staff and principals are expected to respond logically, appropriately, and consistently to ensure a safe, orderly school environment for all students. The Knox County Schools Discipline Guidelines describe five levels of behavior, increasing in seriousness from a Level 1 Behavior to a Level 5 Behavior (see chart below). The KCS Student Support Guidelines will be utilized in addressing discipline consequences. The use of Restorative Practices shall be used to the greatest extent practicable in schools where the training has been completed. The KCS Discipline Guidelines also include levels of possible responses to inappropriate behavior (Response A through E). Each behavior is assigned to one or more of these levels of response. Principals and school staff should use the levels suggested for each behavior. If a behavior is assigned to two or more levels of response, the lowest level of intervention should generally be used first. Behaviors are defined in the KCS Behavior Definitions Table attached to this policy. In each case, KCS administrators and staff will ensure consequences applied will minimize the amount of instructional time lost and ensure a safe and orderly learning environment. School principals must administer and implement the school behavior and discipline code. Principals and school faculty shall use these guidelines for responses to behavior. Responses and interventions are at the discretion of the school principals. Suspension is required if the behavior is a Level 5, Zero Tolerance Offense. Administrators may consider an extended suspension (suspension over 45 days) when a student’s behavior or culmination of behaviors poses an ongoing safety concern to the school, staff, and/or students.

**To view this policy (J-191) in its entirety, visit: [www.knoxschools.org](http://www.knoxschools.org).**

**\*\*At Holston, we have two methods to document progressive misbehavior: tickets (Level 1) and conduct referrals (Levels 2-5). We also have two methods to document positive behavior: PBIS and positive referrals (explained above). Please see the chart below for more details about how we process misbehaviors in**

accordance with Knox County Board Policy J-191.\*\*

## Zero Tolerance Policy

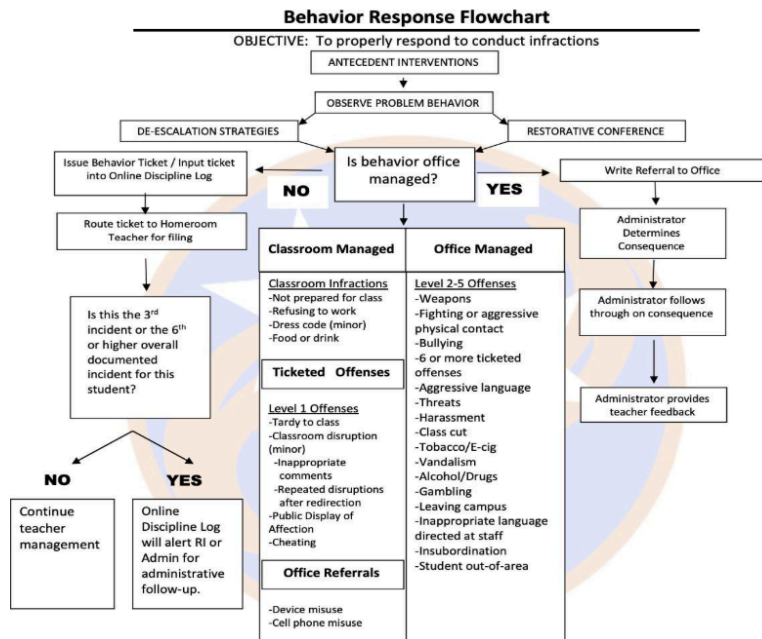
According to Knox County Board Policy Handbook J-194:

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 a legend drug or any other controlled substance;
- b) knowingly possesses a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921;
- c) commits aggravated assault or, commits assault and intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causes bodily injury, on a teacher, principal, a School Security Officer (SSO), a teaching assistant or any other employee of the school system, or a School Resource Officer (SRO);
- d) threatens mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity pursuant to T.C.A. § 39-16-517;
- e) is in possession of an explosive or incendiary device.

It is the Board's intent that the Director of Schools exercise his 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, or his/her designee, shall consider each zero tolerance case for placement in the alternative school program; however, placement in the alternative school program is not mandatory for zero tolerance cases in grades seven through twelve (7-12).

To view this policy (J-211) in its entirety, visit: [www.knoxschools.org](http://www.knoxschools.org).



## Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying or Cyber-bullying

According to Knox County Board Policy Handbook J-211

Knox County Schools prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and cyber-bullying. 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:
  1. 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
  2. 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.

## **REPORTING AND RESPONSE**

Students who feel they are being harassed, bullied or intimidated may report this concern to any teacher or school administrator or the office of the Superintendent using any means of communication with which they feel comfortable. Students may report anonymously, and anonymous reports will be treated with the same level of urgency as all other reports. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal's designee for investigation and appropriate action. Submission of a written incident report to the principal is required by all district employees. Oral reports will also be considered official reports. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Once a report is received, the principal or his or her designee must initiate an investigation with forty-eight (48) hours unless the need for additional time is appropriately documented. An appropriate intervention must be initiated within twenty (20) calendar days from the receipt of the report unless the need for more time is appropriately documented. Parents must be immediately informed if their student is involved in an act of harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyber-bullying.

A school employee, student or volunteer who possesses reliable information that a student has electronically transmitted a credible threat to cause bodily injury or death to another student or school employee shall report such information to the Principal or other school administrator. The Principal shall, in consultation with the appropriate district administrative personnel, make a

determination regarding the disposition of the report with respect to appropriate investigations and disciplinary actions.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. The appropriate action will be consistent with established Board policy, case law, and federal and state statutes.

**To view this policy (J-211) in its entirety, visit: [www.knoxschools.org](http://www.knoxschools.org).**

## **Guidelines for Medication**

According to Knox County Board Policy Handbook J-352:

Students who are required to take medication(s) during school hours must comply with the regulations established by the Tennessee Department of Health and Education. Over the counter medications are included in these regulations. The regulations are as follows:

1. Knox County Schools has the final decision-making authority with respect to the administration of and/or to reject requests for administering medications.
2. Written orders must be provided by a licensed health care provider. The order must include, student name, prescription number, name of the drug, dosage, frequency, route, and time administered, potential side effects, discontinuation date, and method of storage.
3. Medications administered at school should be limited to those required during school hours which are necessary to maintain the student's health and those needed in the event of an emergency.
4. Each medication requires a separate Medication Administration Form, signed by the prescribing health care provider and parent/guardian. The Medication Administration Form must be renewed yearly. Medication(s) changes during the school year require a new Medication Administration Form.
5. Medication(s) must be brought to the school by an adult. Students may not carry medications of any kind on their person with the exception of asthma inhalers, Epi-Pens (anaphylaxis medications), pancreatic enzymes or insulin delivery systems with written permission from a parent and authorization by a medical health care provider. Failure to properly register medication shall lead to a presumption that any such medication is not lawfully in the possession of the student.
6. Medications must be in appropriate containers, properly labeled by a licensed medical care provider or pharmacy. Over-the-counter (OTC) medication(s) prescribed for a student must be provided in its original unopened, labeled, unexpired container and identified student's written name.
7. If included in the student's medical management plan and in the Individualized Health Plan (IHP), a student with diabetes shall be permitted to perform blood glucose checks, administer insulin, treat hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, and otherwise attend to the care and management of the student's diabetes in any area of the school or school grounds and at any school-related activity, and shall be permitted to possess on the student's person at all times all necessary diabetes monitoring and treatment supplies, including sharps. Any sharps involved in diabetes care shall be stored in a secure but accessible location, including the student's person, until use of the sharps is appropriate. Use and disposal of sharps shall be in compliance with the guidelines set forth by the Tennessee Occupational and Safety and Health Administration (TOSHA).
8. Upon receiving, the quantity of medication must be confirmed and documented by the school nurse or designated school employee and parent/guardian. A secure/locked location must be provided for medication storage.
9. All medications self-administered must contain the following documentation on the Medication Administration Record: time, date of administration, and signature of person

administering. Medication records will be kept in the student's cumulative record when completed.

10. Only a school nurse can make changes to the Medication Administration Record. A written authorization from the licensed prescriber and parent is required.
11. School Nurses will monitor the administration, documentation, and storage of all medications on a regular basis. Only school nurses, trained school personnel, or a pictured-identified parent/guardian can administer medication(s) during school hours. A school nurse must train school personnel on medication administration yearly and as needed for reinforcement.
12. The parent/guardian is responsible for picking up any unused medication at the end of the treatment, out-of-date medication, or at the end of the school year. The parent/guardian will be notified to pick-up the medication. After notification attempts, if not picked-up in 14 days, the medication shall be destroyed per Knox County Schools procedures.
13. Medications must be destroyed by the school nurse or school administrator to include documentation and witnessed by at least one other school employee.
14. In the event a dosage is not administered as ordered or any other medication error occurs, a Medication Error Form must be completed and submitted to the Health Services Supervisor. The school nurse and parent or legal guardian must be notified.
15. If the medication is not time-critical (stat doses, one-time, loading doses, PRN medications) medications can be administered 30 minutes before or after the scheduled time.
16. Any person assisting in self-administration shall not be liable in any court of law for injury resulting from the reasonable and prudent assistance in the self-administration of such medication, if performed pursuant to the policies and guidelines developed by the Tennessee Departments of Health and Education and approved by applicable regulatory or governing boards or agencies.

**\*\*If your child has a medical condition or must carry an Epi-Pen or inhaler, a form is required to be on file with the nurse.\*\***

## **Attendance**

According to Knox County Board Policy Handbook J-120:

The Board recognizes that good attendance at school is basic to student learning. Attendance is a key factor in student achievement; therefore, students are expected to be present each day that school is in session. Parents have both a legal obligation and a moral responsibility to see that children are present every day that school is in session. For these reasons, the Knox County Board of Education has adopted the following policy regarding student absences.

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

1. Personal illness;
2. Illness of immediate family member;
3. Death in the family;
4. Extreme weather conditions;
5. Religious observances;
6. College visits;
7. Pregnancy;
8. School sponsored or school endorsed activities;
9. Military active duty/deployment: a) An excused absence for one (1) day when the member is deployed; b) An excused absence for one (1) day when the service member returns from deployment; and c) Excused absences for up to ten (10) days for visitation when the member is granted rest and recuperation leave and is stationed out of the country.

10. Summons, subpoena, or court order; or
11. Circumstances which in the judgment of the school leader create emergencies over which the student has no control.

Annually, the Director of Schools/designee will provide written notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) that attendance at school is required. Students shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled school day in order to be counted present. Students may attend part-time days, alternating days, or for a specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan and shall be considered present for school attendance purposes.<sup>9</sup> If a student is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner. Excuses for absences must be made in writing to the principal or administrative designee by a parent or guardian and must be submitted within five (5) days of the student's return to school. All absences, and/or corrections to absences must be recorded within the respective 20-day attendance reporting period or no later than ten (10) days following the end of each 20-day attendance reporting period.

**To view this policy (J-120) in its entirety visit: [www.knoxschools.org](http://www.knoxschools.org)**

### **Middle and High School Dress Code**

The following expectations for student dress have been established to promote a safe and optimal learning environment. Apparel or appearance that 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:

1. Pants must be worn at the waist. No sagging allowed.
2. Shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, and 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.
3. Head apparel, except for religious or medical purposes, must not be worn inside the school building.
4. Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor and outdoor activities.
5. 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, and illegal drugs.
6. Skirts, dresses, and shorts must be beyond mid-thigh length.
7. Sleepwear, pajamas, and/or blankets cannot be worn in school.
8. Prohibited items include (1) large, long, and/or heavy chains, (2) studded or chained accessories, (3) sunglasses, except for health purposes, (4) sleepwear, and (5) skin-tight outer materials without appropriate coverage.

**\*\*In addition to the above standards, bonnets, hoods, hats, or bandanas will not be worn indoors.\*\***

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 evenhandedly 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."

To view this policy (J-260) in its entirety visit: [www.knoxschools.org](http://www.knoxschools.org)

## **Personal Communication Devices and/or Electronic Devices**

Public Chapter 103 took effect on July 1, 2025, at which time local Boards of Education were charged with adopting a wireless communication device (WCD) policy prohibiting students from using WCDs during instructional time, with the exception of a few circumstances outlined in the law. On July 10, the Knox County Board of Education (KCBOE) revised Policy J-240 "Use of Wireless Communication Devices in School" to align to the changes in Public Chapter 103 and further define appropriate use of WCDs during the school day.

### **Definition of a Wireless Communication Device**

Public Chapter 103 defines wireless communication devices (WCDs) as "a portable wireless device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two (2) or more parties." This definition includes, but it is not limited to: cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops, and gaming devices.

### **Authorized Uses of WCDs**

Students are authorized to use WCDs during instructional time if:

- The principal authorizes a teacher to approve the use of WCDs for educational purposes;
- A student uses the WCD in the event of an emergency or to manage the student's health;
- The WCD is included in the student's IEP, 504 Plan, or ILP; or
- The WCD is being used to operate assistive technology to increase, maintain, or improve the student's functional capabilities.

### **Unauthorized Uses of WCDs**

Students are prohibited from using WCDs while on campus at all other times during the school day (between the arrival and dismissal bell). This includes lunch and transition time between classes.

### **Exemption of Chromebooks**

Because KCS is a 1:1 District, the KCBOE chose to exempt chromebooks from the restrictions in Policy J-240.

**\*\*Students are prohibited from taking unauthorized photographs or making unauthorized recordings of others at school, on school transportation or at school-sponsored events. Engaging in this activity constitutes a disciplinary infraction and will be addressed as such within our KCS and Holston discipline procedures.\*\***

**WARNING:** In addition to the parameters established above, use of a PCD or other electronic device to bully, harass or intimidate others will be subject to related disciplinary action. Using a PCD or other electronic device for any illicit activity including but not limited to take, disseminate, transfer, or share obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images, photographs, or similar material whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise may constitute a crime under State and/or Federal law. Any student taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, illegal, or otherwise inappropriate images or photographs of other students or any other individual, particularly underage, at school, on a school bus or while attending any school event or

activity will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the school district and reported to law enforcement and other appropriate State or Federal agencies.

**To view this policy (J-240) in its entirety visit: [www.knoxschools.org](http://www.knoxschools.org)**



## 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);<br>Administrative Day (½ Day Teacher Work Day);<br>6 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Orientation |
| Wednesday, August 6                          | Administrative Day (Teacher Work Day)  |
| Thursday, August 7                           | First Day for Students (½ Day)   |
| Monday, September 1                          | Labor Day Holiday (Knox County Schools Closed)   |
| Friday, September 5                          | End 4½-weeks Grading Period  |
| Wednesday, September 17                      | Constitution Day (Knox County Schools Open), Half-Day for Students   |
| Monday, October 6 - Friday, October 10       | Fall Break   |
| Tuesday, October 14                          | End First 9-weeks Grading Period   |
| Tuesday, November 4                          | Systemwide In-Service Day (PreK-12) (Student Holiday)  |
| Thursday, November 13                        | End 4½-weeks Grading Period  |
| Wednesday, November 19                       | Half-Day for Students  |
| Wednesday, November 26 - Friday, November 28 | Thanksgiving Holidays (Knox County Schools Closed)   |
| Friday, December 19                          | Half-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);<br>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 28                        | Half-Day for Students  |
| Thursday, February 5                         | End 4½-weeks Grading Period  |
| Monday, February 16                          | Systemwide In-Service Day (PreK-12) (Student Holiday)  |
| Monday, March 9 – Friday, March 13           | Spring Break   |
| Tuesday, March 17                            | End Third 9-weeks Grading Period   |
| Wednesday, March 25                          | Half-Day for Students  |
| 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;<br>End Second Semester   |
| Friday, May 22                               | Administrative Day (Teacher Work Day) – Last Day for Teachers  |
| Friday June 19                               | Juneteenth Holiday (Knox County Schools Closed)  |

### **Calendar Summary**

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 180 | Instructional Days*                          |
| 4   | Administrative Days                          |
| 2   | Unscheduled In-Service Days                  |
| 1   | Unscheduled Parent-Teacher Contact Hours Day |
| 6   | Scheduled In-Service Days                    |
| 10  | Vacation Days                                |

*\*In accordance with T.C.A. § 49-6-3004 – 177 student instructional days plus 3 days accumulated under daily 7-hour schedule.  
Note: This calendar allows cancellation of up to 8 instructional days due to inclement weather or serious outbreaks of illness before any make up days will be required.*