Shaw Heights Middle School
Student Handbook 25-26

Shaw Heights Middle School: 8780 Circle Drive, Westminster, CO 80030.
Main Office: 303-428-9533

This handbook is more than a list of rules—it's a roadmap for success at school and beyond. It explains what we expect, why it matters, and how we all help create a safe, respectful, and empowering environment.

Each section includes clear expectations, real examples, helpful tips, and space to reflect—because when we understand the "why," we make stronger choices.

This is a team effort. Students, families, and staff—let's commit to accountability, respect, and growth, together.

Mission: Together, we build safe and empathetic relationships within our school community that encourage fun and productive learning experiences.
Vision: We foster life-long learning through inclusion, collaboration, growth mindsets, and perseverance.

Student Reflection:

What do you want to get out of your time at Shaw Heights this year?

Daily Schedule initial _____

Regular Dismissal: **Start Time:** 7:25 AM **Doors Open:** 7:20 AM **End Time:** 2:40 PM **Bus Departure:** 2:45 PM	**Early Dismissal (every Monday):** **Start Time:** 7:25 AM **Doors Open:** 7:20 AM **End Time:** 1:30 PM **Bus Departure:** 1:35 PM

Rule: Students should arrive at school on time and leave promptly unless participating in an after-school activity with teacher supervision.

Why this matters: A consistent routine sets the tone for your day. When you're on time, you're more likely to be mentally prepared and less stressed. Punctuality also shows respect for your teachers and classmates. Being on time sets you up for success in life and is a key habit to develop and uphold.

Example: A student who arrives on time can get organized, check in with friends, and mentally prepare for the day. This helps them feel calm and ready to learn. A student who shows up late might miss key instructions and feel rushed, which can make it harder to start the day strong.

Tips for Success: Prepare your backpack and clothes the night before, set multiple alarms, and aim to arrive a few minutes early. Talk with a parent or guardian to establish a reliable routine. If you aren't making this a priority, you are falling behind.

Student Reflection:

What helps you arrive on time each day?

What could make your mornings smoother?

Cell Phones and Technology Initial _____

Rule: Cell phones, smartwatches, AirPods, and headphones must be turned off and stored in a locker, backpack, or left at home for the entire school day—from **7:20 AM to 2:40 PM**. Devices should **never be visible, carried, or used** during the school day. This starts from the time students enter the building and includes lunch and recess.

Students are not allowed to take their phones to the **bathroom** or use them **in stalls**. If this occurs, students may be required to **leave their device at home** or **check it in at the front office** each morning.

If a student **uses a device without permission**, it will be **confiscated**, **labeled** with the student's name and date, and **sent to the office**. Devices can be **picked up after the final bell**. **Repeated misuse** may result in a **parent having to pick up the device** or the **student losing the privilege to carry one**.

SHMS is not responsible for lost or stolen technology items. Students bring them at their own risk of loss, damage, or theft.

Why this matters:
While technology can support learning, during school hours, it often becomes a distraction. Notifications, social media, texting, and gaming can pull attention away from lessons and relationships. Using devices during class, in hallways, or at lunch can interrupt learning and create privacy concerns, especially if photos or recordings are taken without permission. This policy helps create a focused, respectful learning environment for everyone.

Example:
A student finishes an assignment early and pulls out their phone in class. Another student sees this and does the same. Suddenly, multiple students are on devices, and the room becomes distracted. No one is ready to transition to the next activity.

Tips for Success:

- Turn off your phone before entering school, or don't bring a phone to school.
- Keep the device in your locker until the day ends.
- If you need to contact home, go to the office and ask to use the phone.

Student Reflection:
How does staying unplugged help you stay more focused, respectful, or present during the school day?

What helps you resist the urge to check your phone?

Chromebook Initial _____

Rule: Each student is issued a Chromebook and is responsible for its care throughout the school year. Students have the option to purchase insurance at the beginning of the year to help cover the cost of accidental damage. Students are to keep their Chromebooks at school, and pick them up and drop them off with their 1st period teacher. Students are responsible for dropping off and picking their device and not leave it up to a friend. If the Chromebook is lost, it's the responsibility of the student.

- **Hardcase Required:** All students are expected to use a *hard case* on their Chromebook. *Last year, the school spent nearly $10,000 on Chromebook repairs. Proper protection helps reduce damage and saves valuable school resources.*
- **Educational Use Only:** Chromebooks are to be used **only for school-related work**. Accessing non-educational websites during class time is prohibited.
- **Consequences for Misuse:** Students who misuse their Chromebook may lose the privilege of using it at school. *In such cases, students will be required to complete all of their schoolwork **without access to a device.***

Why this matters:
Chromebooks are essential learning tools. Taking care of your device, using it appropriately, and following school expectations ensures your learning isn't disrupted. Respecting school property—and using it responsibly—is part of being a successful and trusted student.

Key Expectations:

- If a student damages or breaks their Chromebook:
    - **Without insurance:** The student must pay the **full replacement cost**.
    - **With insurance:** The student will pay the **reduced insurance rate** based on the policy.

- If a student damages **someone else's** Chromebook, they are responsible for paying for that device's replacement.

- If a student or family refuses to pay or set up a payment plan:
    - The fee will be added to the student's account.
    - The student **will not receive a replacement device** until the fee is paid or a payment plan is arranged.

Tips for Success:

- Always carry your Chromebook in a protective case.
- Keep food and drinks away from your device.
- Do not loan your Chromebook to others or borrow someone else's.
- Report any issues with your device to a teacher or tech staff right away.

Student Reflection:

What can you do each day to take care of your Chromebook and respect others' devices?

<u>Attendance</u> Initial _____

Rule: Students are expected to attend school **every day**. A parent or guardian must call to report any absences. Documentation must be provided to excuse an absence, such as a doctor/dental note or a note written to the principal to excuse. Excessive **unexcused absences** may result in an **attendance contract**, and students may lose eligibility for **extracurriculars, field trips, and special events**.

Why this matters:
As a middle school student, it's your responsibility to show up and stay engaged. Consistent attendance builds strong routines that help you succeed, improve your grades, stay connected to friends and teachers, and keep your learning on track. Missing school leads to stress, confusion, and falling behind—so every day counts.

It's also important to know that **attendance is the law**. If absences become chronic and the school cannot reach your family, your parent or guardian may be referred to **truancy court**. This is a serious step meant to ensure every student receives the education they deserve.

Example:
A student who attends regularly is prepared for tests, joins discussions, and stays on top of assignments. A student who misses class often struggles to catch up, feels disconnected, and may fall behind academically and socially.

Tips for Success:

- Let an adult know if you're not feeling well.
- Avoid scheduling appointments during school hours.
- Communicate with your teachers when you're absent.
- Set alarms and build a consistent routine to help you get to school on time.
- Don't put a TV in a bedroom or use electronics or phones past 8 pm.

Student Reflection:
How does showing up every day help you succeed in and out of class?

What's one thing you could change to improve your attendance?

How can you support your friends who are struggling to attend school?

Tardy Policy Initial _____

Rule: Students are expected to be inside the classroom when the bell rings. Students who arrive late without a written excuse from a staff member will be marked tardy. Repeated tardiness may result in admin consequences, including detention or loss of privileges. We use a tardy to provide students a 1-minute warning.

Why this matters:
As a middle school student, it is your responsibility to arrive on time and be ready to learn. Being late disrupts the flow of the class and makes it harder for you to settle in. Consistently being on time shows respect for your teacher, your classmates, and your own education.

Example:
A student who walks in late every day misses the start of instruction, falls behind in understanding the material, and disrupts their classmates. If a student misses 5 minutes of class being late, this can add up and create truancy issues.

Tips for Success:

- Set multiple alarms in the morning.
- Go straight to class during passing periods.
- Keep your materials organized to avoid delays.

Student Reflection:

What habits can you build to help yourself arrive on time and ready to learn?

What do your friends do to arrive on time and ready?

Passing Period Initial _____

Rule: Students have 3 minutes to transition between classes. During this time, students should walk directly to their next class. Students are not allowed to access their lockers during passing periods and must not linger in the hallways.

Why this matters:
As a middle school student, it is your responsibility to use your time wisely between classes. Quick and orderly transitions help maintain a calm, focused school environment. When students waste time in the halls, it leads to tardiness, missed instruction, and unnecessary disruptions.

Example:
A student who stops to chat with friends in the hallway arrives late to class and misses important directions. Another student who transitions quickly is seated and ready to learn when the bell rings.
Tips for Success:

- Plan your route to class and stick to it.
- Save socializing for lunch or after school.
- Use restroom breaks wisely and ask if necessary before class.

Student Reflection:

How can you use passing periods to stay on time and prepared for learning?

Peanut products Initial _____

Rule: Peanut products are not allowed inside the building.

Why this matters: Some students have life-threatening allergies. Even a small exposure to peanuts can result in a serious reaction. Managing food inside classrooms helps us ensure student safety and inclusivity. It also helps maintain classroom cleanliness and prevents distractions during the school day.

Example: A student brings cookies with peanuts for a birthday celebration and unknowingly puts a classmate at risk.

Tips for Success: Avoid bringing snacks unless given permission. Celebrate with non-food items or talk with staff about safe alternatives.

Student Reflection:

What steps can you take to help ensure the safety of your classmates?

Classroom Phones Initial _____

Rule: Students may use the main office phone during school hours only with a pass from a teacher or staff member. Students should not rely on calling home during the day for rides or forgotten items. Students feeling sick must use the office phone to contact home, so staff are aware of health concerns. Students should use office phones when calling home.

Why this matters: Office phones are limited and meant for important or emergency communication. Requiring a teacher pass helps manage phone traffic and ensures students are using time appropriately. When students bypass these expectations, it can disrupt the front office and cause confusion about student safety or illness.

Example: A student who feels sick contacts their parents directly without telling the office, which causes concern when staff can't confirm the student's location or health issue.

Tips for Success: Make after-school plans ahead of time. Let your teacher or an adult know if you truly need to make a call. If you're ill, always report to the office first.

Student Reflection:

How can you take responsibility for managing communication in a respectful and safe way?

Classroom Behavior Initial _____

Rule: Students are expected to **follow directions**, **participate respectfully**, and **support a positive learning environment**. They are also encouraged to **advocate safely and appropriately** for themselves, their friends, and their teachers.

Falcon 4+ Behavior Process

This process should be used for behaviors managed at the classroom level (80%) and for those that may escalate and require follow-up (15%).

Step 1 – Redirect and Reinforce (First Warning)

Teachers will let the student know this is their **first redirect**. If needed, the teacher may write the student's name on the board to signal that the behavior has been noted.

Step 2 – Redirect Again (Second Warning)

Teacher will state that this is the student's **second redirect**.

Step 3 – Private Conversation

Teacher will let student know this is **step three,** and they will be having a **private conversation**.
Teacher will let them know: "If I need to speak with you again, I will complete a referral. They'll either visit with Mr. Sanner or go to a buddy classroom, depending on availability.

Step 4 – Referral and Documentation (Kickboard + Infinite Campus)

If behavior continues after the above steps, the teacher will submit a **referral in Kickboard**.

Why This Matters: Disruptive behavior affects everyone's ability to learn. Even small disruptions can build into larger issues, creating stress for students and teachers. Respectful, engaged behavior helps create a classroom where everyone feels **safe, supported, and heard**. When students speak up for their needs—or the needs of others—they help shape a learning space that values teamwork, communication, and care.

Example: A student who refuses to follow directions during group work may create tension and delay learning for everyone. On the other hand, a student who calmly asks for help or reminds a friend to stay on task contributes to a respectful classroom.

Tips for Success:

- Ask for a break or help before frustration builds.
- Speak up if you or someone else feels uncomfortable or unheard.
- Treat others the way you want to be treated.
- Advocate for a classroom where **everyone can succeed**.

Student Reflection:

What helps you stay focused and respectful during class?

How can you advocate for the safe and successful environment you and your friends need?

Defiance and Disruption to the Learning Environment Initial _____

Rule: Students follow directions from the staff and behave in a way that supports a positive and focused classroom.

Why this matters: Defiance and disruption undermine the learning process, creating stress for both students and staff. Every student deserves the chance to learn in a respectful, distraction-free setting. Repeated disruptions may result in disciplinary action, including removal from class.

Example: A student who repeatedly talks out of turn and ignores redirection prevents others from focusing and derails the day's lesson.

Tips for Success: Use positive communication, ask questions respectfully, and if you disagree with a rule, talk about it calmly after class.

Student Reflection:

How can your actions help create a stronger learning environment?

How can you advocate for peaceful solutions or prevent disruptions (yours or a friend's) before they become a bigger problem?

Hallway and Pass Expectations Initial _____

Rule: Students must have a hall pass and teacher permission to leave class. Only one student out per class at a time.

Why this matters: Limiting hallway traffic during class reduces distractions and helps ensure student safety. It also minimizes disruptions and allows staff to monitor who is where.

Example: If too many students are in the hallway at once, it's harder for adults to know who may need help or who is avoiding class.

Tips for Success: Use the restroom and go to your locker before class starts. Ask only when necessary.

Student Reflection:

How can you use your class time more effectively and reduce hallway time?

ID Badges Initial _____

Rule: Students must wear their school-issued photo ID on a lanyard around their neck at all times.

Why This Matters:
Student IDs help keep our school safe. They are also required for lunch, classroom check-in/out, library access, and bus boarding. Wearing an ID daily allows staff to quickly identify who belongs in the building.

ID Replacement Policy:
If a student forgets or loses their ID, a replacement will be issued at a cost of $5 for the ID and $2 for the lanyard with case.

- The first student ID is issued at no cost. A second ID will require a $5 replacement fee, plus $2 for a lanyard. After two IDs have been issued, no additional IDs will be printed until the replacement fee is paid or a plan has been arranged between the student, their parent or guardian, and school staff.
- **Important Transportation Note:** Students who ride the bus must have a valid ID to board. If a student is unable to pay the fee at the time of request, they will need to call a parent or guardian to arrange transportation home.
- IDs will not be issued **without payment or a pre-approved plan**. Last year, the school spent several thousand dollars on ID replacements.
- To help reduce costs, students who do not ride the bus are encouraged to **store their ID in a safe place, such as their locker, when not in use.**

Example: A student forgets their ID and can't check in for a bus, class, take a break, go to the restroom, or go outside for recess

Tips for Success: Store your ID in your backpack or lay it out the night before. Pick a spot that you will use over and over again when storing the ID. If lost or damaged, see the office immediately.

Student Reflection:
What's your routine for remembering your ID? Why is it important?

Lockers Initial _____

Rule: Students may only use the locker assigned to them. Sharing lockers or combinations is not allowed. Lockers are only to be used before school, before and after lunch, and after school.

Why this matters: Lockers are school property and must be used responsibly. You are accountable for what's inside your locker, and sharing it puts your belongings—and others'—at risk.

Example: A student shares their locker, and their Chromebook is damaged. Both students may face consequences.

Tips for Success: Memorize your combination, don't share it, and report any issues right away. Write it down on a notecard, and give it to your favorite teacher.

Student Reflection:

What helps you stay organized and keep your belongings secure?

Medications Initial _____

Rule: All medications—prescription or over-the-counter—must be stored in the school office with a completed medication form signed by a doctor and a parent.

Why this matters: Carrying medications at school without permission is a safety concern. It ensures that medicine is taken correctly, by the right person, and in the right dose. The health office is trained to manage these needs in a way that protects everyone.

Example: A student brings ibuprofen in their backpack and shares it with a friend who has an allergic reaction. This situation could have been avoided by following the medication policy.

Tips for Success: If you need medication during the school day, ask your parent or guardian to coordinate with the school nurse.

Student Reflection:

What can you do to take charge of your health needs while staying safe?

Field Trips & Special Events Initial _____

Rule: Participation in school-sponsored field trips and special events is based on students maintaining good academic standing, consistent attendance, and positive behavior. Students who receive suspensions or have a high number of unexcused absences may be ineligible.

Why this matters: Field trips and celebrations are privileges, not entitlements. They represent your growth, reliability, and ability to function well in community settings. When students demonstrate responsibility and engagement at school, they earn the opportunity to participate in these meaningful and often off-campus experiences that deepen learning and build school spirit.

Example: A student who is passing all classes, attends regularly, and treats staff with respect is invited to a reward trip to a local museum. A peer who misses several days and receives multiple behavior referrals does not qualify to attend.

Tips for Success: Track your attendance and grades, stay on top of your assignments, and ask for help when things get tough. Be responsible for yourself—and look out for your friends, too. If someone you know is struggling, encourage them to speak up or offer to help—not by cheating or giving them the answer, but by helping them understand so they can keep up and grow.

Every day counts—show up, stay engaged, and support one another.

Student Reflection:

What choices will you make this quarter to earn the chance to attend a school event or trip?

Conferences with Teachers Initial _____

Rule: Parents or guardians can request to meet with any teacher through the front office. Teachers are not available for drop-in visits. Parents can reach out to teachers through their emails.

Why this matters: Scheduled conferences allow teachers time to prepare helpful feedback and ensure parents are heard.

Example: A parent calls ahead, schedules a meeting, and works with a teacher to support a student's academic progress.

Tips for Success: Encourage your family to reach out early if you need help. Share your own perspective during conferences.

Student Reflection:

What is something you'd like your family and teachers to talk about to support your growth?

<u>Cafeteria and Recess Rules</u> Initial _____

Rule: Students must remain with their assigned lunch group, eat in designated areas, and follow all cafeteria expectations. Fast food deliveries, energy drinks, and large outside beverages are not allowed. Once outside for recess, students must stay in supervised areas until signaled to re-enter.

Why this matters:
As a middle school student, it is your responsibility to help create a clean, respectful, and safe lunch and recess environment. Eating in the right places and staying with your group ensures student safety, protects peers with allergies, and helps maintain school order. Being responsible during recess allows everyone to enjoy their break without conflict.

Example:
A student who throws food or leaves their group during lunch may be removed from the cafeteria. Another who wanders unsupervised during recess may miss important transitions and cause safety concerns.

Tips for Success:

- Go directly to the cafeteria and sit at your assigned table.
- Clean up after yourself and stay in your designated area.
- Respect staff, school property, and your peers.
- Bring a jacket or appropriate gear for outdoor recess.

Student Reflection:

How can your actions help make lunch and recess a safe and positive time for everyone?

How can you help a friend do this?

<u>Outside food/Fast food, Energy Drinks</u> Initial _____

Rule: Students are not allowed to have food delivered into the classrooms or school (Ex, DoorDash). Students are advised not to bring outside food and beverages (Ex, energy drinks, oversized sodas, McDonald's) into the building. Teachers will ask students to dispose of these items or place them in their lockers until the end of the day.

Why this matters:
Fast food and large drinks can become distractions in a learning environment. The smell, noise, or appearance of these items can shift attention away from class and cause disruption. It can also make classmates feel excluded or uncomfortable, especially if they didn't have access to the same food. Keeping our classrooms focused and fair helps everyone learn better.

Example:
A student brings McDonald's into class. Right away, other students start calling out, asking for food or making comments. The teacher has to pause the lesson to address the disruption, and learning time is lost for everyone.

Tips for Success:
Eat breakfast before arriving, take advantage of the school-provided meals, and keep water bottles on hand. Bring snacks only if permitted by a teacher.

Student Reflection:

How can you make food choices that support your learning and respect our shared space?

Dress Code Initial _____

Rule: To support a respectful, safe, and focused learning environment, students are expected to follow the guidelines below regarding attire during the school day:

Length & Fit

- Skirts and shorts must reach at least mid-thigh when standing. Garments that are extremely short or do not provide appropriate coverage are not allowed.
- Pants must be worn at the waist—this means the area between the bottom of the rib cage and the top of the hip bone. Sagging is not permitted. Students wearing sagging pants will be asked to use a belt. If a belt is not available, a zip tie will be provided by staff to secure the pants appropriately.
- Torn or ripped jeans are allowed only if holes above mid-thigh do not expose skin. If rips are located on the upper leg, leggings must be worn underneath for full coverage.

Coverage

- Clothing must fully cover the midriff, back, and all undergarments at all times.
- Hoodies may be worn, but hoods must stay down in all school areas—including hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, and during recess. If a student is unable to keep the hood down, they may lose the privilege to wear hoodies at school.
- Backless tops, crop tops, halter tops, strapless tops, and see-through garments are not permitted.
- Tank tops must have straps that are at least two inches wide. Low-cut tops are not allowed.

Prohibited Items

- No pajamas, slippers, trench coats, or blankets are allowed at school—including during arrival and dismissal.
- Unsafe footwear, such as slippers or high heels, is not allowed. Students must wear safe, secure shoes at all times.
- Sprays and perfumes are not allowed. Some students have allergies or asthma, and strong scents can trigger serious allergic reactions.

Messages & Images

- Clothing must not display or promote **drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, profanity, or any offensive, discriminatory, or inappropriate messages or imagery**.

Headgear

- **Hats, hoods, beanies, and other head coverings** are not allowed indoors unless worn for documented **religious or cultural purposes**.
- Exceptions may be made for school spirit days or other approved events.

Enforcement:
Students who do not follow the dress code may be asked to change or call home for a change of clothes. Repeated violations may result in further disciplinary action.

Why this matters: What we wear influences how we feel, how others respond to us, and how we engage in learning. The dress code helps create an environment that's focused, free from distractions, and safe for all students. School is a professional space, and learning to dress for the occasion is part of preparing for future workplaces.

Example: A student wearing a hoodie with offensive language may make others feel uncomfortable or unsafe, leading to a conflict and a conversation with admin.

Tips for Success: Choose clothes that reflect confidence and respect. If an admin or a teacher asks a student not to wear a particular item of clothing to school, follow those guidelines.

Student Reflection:

How does your clothing reflect your readiness to learn and contribute positively?

If a staff member asks you not to wear an item because it violates the dress code, what will you do?

Unnecessary and Inappropriate Items Initial _____

Rule: Students may not bring items to school that are considered unsafe, disruptive, or unrelated to learning. This includes but is not limited to: weapons or look-alikes, energy drinks, toys (including fidget spinners unless part of an IEP/504), trading cards, hair spray, cologne, or perfume.

Why this matters: School should be a place where everyone feels safe and focused. Items that are distracting, dangerous, or designed for recreation outside of school interfere with learning and can escalate into larger problems.

Example: A student brings energy drinks to school and shares them with friends, which leads to health issues and disciplinary action.

Tips for Success: If it's not needed for school, leave it at home. If you have a question about an item, ask a teacher or administrator.

Student Reflection:

How can your choices about what to bring to school help maintain a safe and focused environment?

How can you help friends not bring "toys" with them?

Refusal to Identify Self Initial _____

Rule: All students must identify themselves when asked by a staff member or school official.

Why this matters: Knowing who students are is essential for safety, accountability, and providing support when needed. Refusing to identify yourself disrupts school operations and may escalate disciplinary actions.

Example: A student involved in an altercation refuses to give their name to a staff member, delaying resolution and increasing consequences.

Tips for Success: Stay calm in tough situations. Respectfully provide your name when asked and know that cooperation leads to quicker, more positive outcomes.

Student Reflection:

Why is it important to be honest and cooperative with staff at all times?

Lost and Found Initial _____

Rule: Lost items should be turned into the designated lost and found bin outside the counseling office. Items not claimed will be donated at the end of the semester.

Why this matters: Keeping our school organized and returning items to their rightful owners supports a culture of respect and responsibility. Unclaimed items left on the floor can create messes or even safety hazards.

Example: A student finds a lost water bottle and returns it to the lost and found, allowing the owner to retrieve it the next day.

Tips for Success: Label your belongings with your name. Check the lost and found promptly if you misplace something.

Student Reflection:

What does returning something that isn't yours say about your character?

Vaping, E-Cigarettes, and Drugs Initial _____

Rule: The **possession, use, or distribution** of vapes, e-cigarettes, tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drugs is **strictly prohibited** on school property and at all school-sponsored events.

Important Notes:

- **Admin reserves the right to contact law enforcement immediately, without parental notification,** if there is suspicion that a student:
    - Is under the influence of drugs or alcohol
    - Has provided substances to others
    - Has used or is in possession of substances (even if not using them)

- **Administration also reserves the right to conduct searches—such as backpacks, lockers, or personal items—without parental notification,** if there is reasonable suspicion that a student is using, carrying, or hiding prohibited substances.

This policy applies to all drugs, drug paraphernalia, vapes (including empty cartridges), and any substance believed to be used to alter mood or physical state.

Why This Matters:
These substances are illegal for minors and harmful to both health and brain development. They disrupt the learning environment and compromise the safety of the entire school community.
Vaping devices often contain unknown chemicals, including THC or other dangerous substances, and can pose serious health and legal risks.

Example:
If a student is caught with a vape or other prohibited substance at school, they may face **immediate suspension** and **possible involvement from law enforcement**.

Tips for Success:

- Stay away from situations where you may feel pressured to use substances.
- If you're struggling or need help, talk to a counselor, administrator, or trusted adult—we're here to support you.
- If you see someone using or sharing drugs or vaping devices at school, tell a staff member. You're helping keep your school safe.

Student Reflection:

What are your personal reasons for saying no to substances that harm your health, safety, and learning?

Fighting, Inciting Fights, and Filming Fights Initial _____

Rule: No Fighting or Violence — Physical or Online. Engaging in physical fights, encouraging others to fight, or participating in any way—**cheering**, **gathering to watch**, **recording**, or **sharing videos**—is a **serious violation** of school rules. **There is zero tolerance for bullying or violence** at our school.

Even if someone is bullying you, **it does not give you the right to fight back**. Violence only makes things worse. Instead, **tell a trusted adult immediately** so we can address the situation **safely, respectfully, and effectively**.

This includes:

- Physically fighting or trying to harm another student
- Cheering on, filming, or pressuring others to fight
- Standing and watching a fight instead of walking away or getting help
- Sharing or posting videos of fights or violent behavior

Cyberbullying is also a Serious Offense

Cyberbullying means using **phones, computers, apps, or social media** to threaten, hurt, embarrass, or exclude someone. This includes:

- Posting or sending **mean, threatening, or hurtful messages**
- Spreading **rumors or lies** online
- Sharing **private photos or videos** without permission
- Making **fake accounts** to harass or impersonate someone
- **Excluding others** from online groups or chats on purpose to cause harm

Just because something happens online doesn't mean it's harmless—it can cause **real emotional damage** and create a **toxic school environment**.

Consequences:
These behaviors may result in **immediate suspension**, **loss of privileges**, and in severe cases, **recommendation for expulsion**. Law enforcement may also be contacted depending on the situation.

Why This Matters:
Fighting and promoting violence—whether physically or as a bystander—creates an unsafe environment for everyone. It goes against the values of respect, responsibility, and community that we uphold.

What You Can Do Instead:

- Walk away from conflicts and seek help from an adult
- Speak up and discourage others from escalating the situation
- Report any planned or witnessed fights to a trusted staff member
- Delete a post, don’t respond, even if someone wrote something hurtful
- Don’t share gossip or hurtful comments online or in person

Example: A student who films a hallway fight and shares it online may receive the same consequences as those physically involved, including suspension and police contact.

Tips for Success: If you see tension building, alert an adult immediately. Walk away from potential fights and encourage your peers to do the same. Never record or share conflict—seek help instead.

Student Reflection:

How can you be a peacemaker and protector in your school community?

What are you going to do to help the school community or a friend if they are experiencing conflict?

Suspension and Re-entry Initial _____

Rule: Students who are suspended may be required to participate in a re-entry conference with a parent or guardian and a school administrator before returning to school. If this meeting is required, the student may not return to school until it is completed.

We want all students to understand that suspension is a serious consequence and not a normal or acceptable part of school life. Our goal is to help students reflect, repair harm, and re-engage positively in the learning community.

Why this matters: Suspensions are serious consequences meant to provide a pause for reflection, accountability, and support. Re-entry meetings help restore relationships, reset expectations, and make sure a plan is in place for future success. They show that school is a place of second chances, but also high standards.

Example: After a fight, a student attends a re-entry meeting, writes a reflection, and commits to using peer mediation next time there's conflict.

Tips for Success: Take time to reflect on what happened and how you can improve. Come to the meeting ready to take ownership and return with a positive mindset.

Student Reflection:

What are some things you can do to prevent yourself from getting suspended?

What is an experience where you handled a difficult situation correctly?

Technology and Social Media Use Initial _____

Rule: Students must follow the district's Technology Use Agreement at all times. School-issued devices are for educational use only. Personal use—including gaming, streaming, and social media—is not allowed. Students are expected to demonstrate responsible digital citizenship at all times. This means using technology in a respectful, safe, and appropriate way. Social media must never be used to harm, bully, exclude, or spread rumors—whether during or outside of school hours. **The school is able to monitor your device.**

All district devices use a monitoring system that tracks student activity and sends real-time screenshots and alerts directly to school administrators. Misuse of technology—including inappropriate websites, searches, messages, or off-task behavior—can result in disciplinary action and may lead to the **loss of all technology privileges** if determined necessary.

Why this matters: Technology is a tool for learning, not entertainment during school hours. Social media, when misused, can damage relationships, reputations, and mental health. Cyberbullying, harassment, or inappropriate posts—even outside of school—can disrupt the school environment and lead to serious consequences.

Example: A student uses the school Chromebook to message peers during class, causing drama that spills into the school day. This leads to a conflict that must be resolved through administrative intervention.

Tips for Success: Use Chromebooks for classwork only. Save your personal messages and entertainment for after school. Think before you post—online actions have real consequences.

Student Reflection:

How can I think before I message or post?

What can I do to make better online choices? How can I help my friends stop drama/problems online before it turns into real-life drama?

Investigate, Search and Seizure Initial _____

Rule: School staff may search lockers, backpacks, and student possessions, and conduct investigations without parental permission when there is reasonable suspicion that school rules or district policies are being violated. Parents/guardians will be notified once the administration has had time to investigate the situation.

Why this matters: School is a shared space, and safety is a top priority. When there's concern about dangerous, disruptive, or prohibited items, school officials have the legal and ethical responsibility to act swiftly. Searches protect not only the student involved but the entire school community from potential harm.

Example: If a student is suspected of possessing a vape or unauthorized medication, their belongings may be searched. If an item is found, parents are contacted, and consequences follow district policy.

Tips for Success: Don't bring anything to school that could be considered dangerous or against the rules. Treat your locker and backpack as school property—use them responsibly.

Student Reflection:

What choices can you make to help keep your school safe for everyone?

Academic Integrity, Honesty, and the Use of Artificial Intelligence Initial _____

Rule: Students are expected to complete their own work, submitting AI-generated work as their own original work is not allowed.

Examples:

- Copying and pasting work from the internet or another student
- Using AI to write full assignments or responses without teacher approval
- Failing to cite sources, including AI tools, when ideas or text are not your own
- Letting someone else complete or heavily revise your work

Consequence:
If you break the rules around academic honesty, you may get a zero or failing grade on the assignment and have to meet with your teacher. If it seems like AI was used inappropriately, your teacher might ask you to redo the work without using a computer.

Why this matters: Learning is about growth and effort. Using AI to generate answers without understanding the content limits your learning and undermines trust. Teachers need to see your thinking to support you well.

Tips for Responsible AI Use:

- Always be honest about where your work comes from

Example: A student copies an AI-generated essay and submits it as their own. When questioned, they can't explain the ideas, and the grade is voided.

Student Reflection:

What's one way you can show your own voice in every assignment?

Homework: Math - Show Your Thinking Initial _____

Rule:
Students will be given paper-copy math homework from their teachers, and simply writing the answer is not enough. Students must show their work and explain their thinking. Even if you're unsure how to finish a problem, you should write what you do understand and go from there. If a student forgets their math homework, it is on the student. They are responsible for their work and parents are not to bring work that is left at home. Students won't be given the opportunity to call home for homework.

Examples:

- Writing out each math step clearly
- Drawing models, labeling strategies, or using number lines
- Writing a sentence explaining what you tried
- Turning in incomplete work with visible effort—not blank pages

Consequence:
If math work is turned in without explanation or effort, you may be asked to redo it. Repeated patterns of incomplete work may lead to a check-in with your teacher or a support plan.

Why this matters:
Math is about your thought process—not just answers. Showing your steps helps your teacher understand how to help you. It also builds confidence and makes it easier to see where your thinking is strong.

Tips for Success:

- Use notebook space or workbook to show all steps
- Put your phone away and set a 20-minute timer
- Try—even if you're unsure. Effort matters more than perfection

Example:
A student turns in a worksheet with only answers. The teacher can't see their thinking and asks them to redo the assignment, this time showing each step they took to solve the problems.

Student Reflection:

How does showing your steps help both you and your teacher understand your math thinking better?

Homework: Reading - Build the Habit Initial _____

Rule:
Students are expected to read for 20 minutes every school night. Reading daily builds vocabulary, comprehension, and focus. Students should always have a good-fit book with them, especially during downtime.

Examples:

- Checking out new books from the library each month
- Keeping a book in your backpack or binder
- Reading quietly at home or after finishing classwork early

Why this matters:
Strong readers are strong thinkers. Daily reading improves every subject—not just Literacy. Creating a routine like reading each night may feel hard at first, but it becomes easier over time. The rewards show up in confidence and classroom success.

Tips for Success:

- Visit the library monthly to find books at your level
- Put your phone away and set a 20-minute reading timer
- Ask a friend, teacher, or librarian for book recommendations
- Track your reading or make a list of books you've finished

Example:
A student builds the habit of reading 20 minutes before bed each night. Over time, reading becomes easier, and they feel more confident in class discussions and writing assignments.

Student Reflection:

What time works best for you to read at home, and how can you make it part of your routine?

Door-to-Door Policy

Initial _____

Rule: Students are protected by school policies and behavioral expectations from the time they leave their home until the time they return. These protections apply on the way to school, during the school day, and on the way home, including while riding a bus, waiting at a bus stop, and other similar situations.

Why this matters: Student safety doesn't begin and end at the school door. Incidents that occur on the way to or from school—whether walking, riding a bus, or biking—can still impact school culture and student well-being. This policy ensures students are supported in making good choices during the full scope of their school-related day.

Example: A student who is involved in an altercation at the bus stop in the morning may still face consequences at school.

Tips for Success: Walk in groups when possible, stay aware of your surroundings, and represent your school community with pride, no matter where you are.

Student Reflection:

How can your actions outside of school still reflect your school's values?

Withdrawing Students Initial _____

Rule: If you plan to leave Shaw Heights Middle School, notify the office at least two school days in advance. A check-out form must be completed, signed, and all materials—including Chromebooks—returned.

Why this matters: Communicating early ensures a smooth transition for you and your family, helps us prepare your records for the new school, and ensures accountability for borrowed materials.

Example: A student who doesn't return their Chromebook or clear their locker may delay enrollment at their next school.

Tips for Success: Let your teachers and office know your plans early. Turn in materials on time and request a copy of your records.

Student Reflection:

How can planning ahead help you exit one school smoothly and enter another ready to succeed?

Acknowledgment of Policies and Responsibilities

Under Westminster Public Schools Board Policy and Colorado law, all students and families are expected to follow the policies outlined in this handbook.

Even if this acknowledgment form is not signed, students and families are still responsible for following all school and district rules.

By enrolling in Westminster Public Schools, you agree to follow expectations related to behavior, academics, technology use, attendance, and student safety.

By signing this page, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the expectations in the Shaw Heights Middle School Student Handbook. You agree to do your part to help create a respectful, safe, and positive school environment for all.

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Falcon Family Teacher: _____

Date: _____