

# **Alpha Elementary School**

## **General Handbook**

### **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

Welcome to Alpha Elementary School where standards of excellence are set and vigorously pursued. The key to our success is the synergy of our students, staff, parents, and community as we focus our efforts toward an environment which provides an atmosphere for the development of the total person. We aspire to secure the future for our children by celebrating learning today!

### **STATEMENT OF MISSION**

Alpha prepares students today, so they can make a difference tomorrow.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

Alpha Elementary provides a seven (7) hour school day. Early supervision of students begins promptly at, but not before, 7:15 A.M. The 1st bell rings at 7:45 A.M., and the tardy bell rings at 8:00 A.M. Classes begin promptly at 8:00 A.M. Dismissal of car riders and daycare vans begins at 3:00 P.M. Afternoon supervision of students ends at 3:30 P.M. Students are not allowed to leave the Alpha campus by walking. Please follow all pick-up procedures as outlined in the afternoon dismissal procedure.

### **ESP**

An extended school program for childcare is available at Alpha Elementary. Afternoon care, based on need, is available at a reasonable cost. Call (423) 586-7700 for enrollment information.

### **MORNING ARRIVAL**

Doors are opened promptly at, but not before, 7:15 A.M. Students who arrive by car may not be dropped off in the school parking lot. Students are not allowed to walk unsupervised between the two schools. Grades 3-5 should be dropped off in front of the school. Students in grades K-2 should be dropped off in the primary circle. If you have students in both buildings, you may drop off in the center circle after buses have dropped students and exited the parking lot.

### **AFTERNOON DISMISSAL**

#### **Car Riders**

Staff members are assigned to load students into vehicles. Parents picking up students from both the Intermediate and Primary buildings will be picking up in the middle circle. A yellow car sign with the names of the students will be given to parents. Please stop at the red line in the middle circle until early buses have loaded and departed. Once the buses have departed, parents may use both lanes

to pick up students. Note the posted entrance and exit signs. The center lane is used to load students.

Upon arrival, the parent or guardian must display the car sign that has been provided by the school. School personnel will call the student who will then be loaded by a staff member into the correct vehicle. Students are never allowed to proceed to a vehicle unless accompanied by a staff member. Anytime a student goes home in a manner different from his/her normal procedure, the student must have a note signed by the legal guardian.

## **Bus Transportation**

School bus transportation is provided by the taxpayers of Tennessee and is a privilege extended to all eligible students. Misconduct on the bus, at bus stops, or in the bus duty area at school may result in the loss of this privilege. The privilege of riding a school bus is conditional upon students' good behavior and observation of reasonable safety rules and regulations. It is understood that the bus driver is in full charge of the bus and the students. Any student who violates the safety rules will be reported to the principal by the bus driver. The principal may issue a warning to the student, or it may be necessary for the student to be suspended from riding the bus. In this event, the parents will receive notification. All bus routes and bus stops are arranged by the Hamblen County Schools Supervisor of Transportation: (423) 586-2103.

## **ABSENSES**

Tennessee law requires children to be in school for no less than three hours and thirty-one minutes per day in order to be counted present for the day. State law in Tennessee excuses absences caused by sickness, death in the family, recognized religious holidays, and temporary family emergencies. When a student is absent for any reason, the parent/guardian must call the school on the morning of the absence to report the reason and follow up with a written parent note or doctor's excuse when the student returns to school.

Parents are allowed 3 parent notes per semester and parent notes must be submitted within 30 calendar days of the absence. If a student accumulates 5 unexcused tardies/early dismissals, it will be converted into 1 unexcused absence.

## **TARDIES/EARLY DISMISSALS**

Hamblen County Board Policy states that students arriving after 8:00 A.M. will be counted tardy. Students leaving school before normal dismissal time must be signed out in the office by the legal guardian or guardian's designee. Early dismissals will be counted the same as tardies per Hamblen County Board Policy. Unexcused tardy/early dismissal number 3 will result in the parent being contacted by mail. Unexcused tardy/early dismissal number 5 will be converted into 1 unexcused absence. Unexcused tardy/early dismissal number 6 will result in the parent being contacted by the HCBOE graduation coach. Unexcused tardy/early dismissal number 10 will result in referral to juvenile court.

## **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

School may operate on an alternate schedule due to bad weather during the year. This means that buses will run later and school will open later. Inclement weather may also cause an early dismissal of the school day. Parents should inform students and teachers as to what their students are to do when school is dismissed early. Listen to local radio and television stations during times of inclement weather. HCBOE will utilize the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in PowerSchool to send notification of school delays, closings, or early dismissals due to inclement weather and/or other emergencies. It is imperative that the school has the parent/guardian's updated contact information to receive the important messages.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

K-5 students may not possess personal communication devices. A student in violation of this policy is subject to the appropriate grade-level disciplinary action.

## **THREATS**

Any threat deemed credible will be considered Zero Tolerance and board policy will be followed accordingly.

## **STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS**

Student progress is reported via report cards issued every nine weeks. Mid-term reports are issued at the 4.5 week mark. Report cards should be signed and returned to school promptly. Parent-teacher conferences, notes, and student work samples supplement report cards. Alpha parents/guardians are encouraged to sign up for Parent Portal. This program provides an additional way for parents/guardians to monitor their student's progress and attendance.

## **STUDENT DRESS**

The appearance of a student is primarily the responsibility of the student and parents. Alpha Elementary expects students to maintain an appearance which is not distracting to teachers or other students or in any way disrupts the instructional program or safety policies of the school.

## **MENU PRICES**

Lunch - Free for Students

Visitor Lunch - \$5.00

Breakfast - Free for Students

Visitor Breakfast - \$4.00

Ice Cream - \$0.50

Snacks - \$0.50

Other a la carte items are occasionally available from \$0.50 to \$1.00.

Paying: Please see online payment options on the Hamblen County Website, under the link "MyPaymentsPlus"

## **TEXTBOOKS/LIBRARY BOOKS**

Textbooks issued to students are the property of the Hamblen County Department of Education. Library books borrowed by students are the property of Alpha Elementary School. Both should be used with care and returned in good condition. Students are responsible for textbooks and library books which are lost, stolen, or damaged.

## **PTO**

The Alpha Elementary School Parent/Teacher Organization is our parent, teacher and community organization. Strong support by our PTO provides financial and volunteer help for Alpha. We urge you to join this organization as it works toward the educational welfare of all Alpha students.

## **MCKINNEY VENTO**

A homeless student shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. Homeless students are individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Appropriate and available services are provided for these students. Contact the office for more information.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Any student may participate in student organizations for which they qualify. Student organizations include: Student Council, Safety Patrol, FCA, KAB, Junior Beta Club, Scholars Bowl Team, Boys' and Girls' Basketball Teams, Cheerleading, Paw Pride Newspaper, Bulldog Beat, Scholastic Team, Robotics Club, 4-H, Drama Club, Kindness Club, Etiquette Club, STEAM, and Walking Club.

## **BULLDOG KINDNESS CLUB**

At Alpha, we fight against bullying through our Kindness Club. Every week various students are recognized as Kindness Stars for acts of kindness. Attached is our Hamblen County School's bullying policy.

## **SCHOOL ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The administration and staff members of Alpha Elementary School enthusiastically welcome you to the Bulldog Family! It is our philosophy that all teachers have the right to teach and all students have the right to learn. To assist us in implementing this philosophy, we have adopted a school-wide discipline plan. This plan will establish guidelines for student behavior, set limits and consequences, and provide positive rewards for behavior. All school policies are subject to change as per Hamblen County School Board decisions.

## **Our Classroom Expectations are:**

1. Follow teacher directions the first time given.
2. Be in your seat ready to work with all materials.
3. Keep hands, feet, objects, gestures, and inappropriate comments to yourself.
4. Raise your hand to be recognized.
5. Follow school-wide handbook policies.

## **Consequences:**

Students who choose not to follow expectations in the classroom will face the Assertive Discipline Plan that is unique to their grade level. Teachers will use some form of the following Level I consequences, which is teacher administered and non-cumulative.

### **Level 1 Consequences**

- 1st Level - Verbal Warning/Conference with Student
- 2nd Level - Abbreviated Time Out/Alternative Setting/Loss of Privilege
- 3rd Level - Extended Time Out/Alternative Setting/Loss of Activity or Privilege
- 4th Level - Parent Contact (note, phone call, or conference)
- 5th Level - Referral to Principal (Level II)
- Severe Clause - Immediate Referral to Principal

### **Level II Consequences**

- Level 1 - Warning
- Level 2 - 1 Day ALP (Alternate Learning Placement)
- Level 3 - Up to 3 Days ALP (Principal Discretion) and Guidance Referral
- Level 4 - 1 Day OSS (Out of School Suspension) and Guidance Referral
- Level 5 - 2 Days OSS and Guidance Referral
- Level 6 - 3 Days OSS, Guidance Referral, and Orientation at Miller Boyd Alternative School
- Level 7 - Placement at Miller Boyd Alternative School
- Severe Clause - Principal Discretion

\* It is at the principal's discretion whether a level is applied in each situation.

Tennessee state law mandates that school administrators protect the safety and educational environment of his or her students. Therefore, the Principal reserves the right and authority as outlined in Tennessee Code Annotated to declare Level I and Level II null and void should a severely disruptive behavior problem occur that mandates immediate action. While corporal punishment remains an option due to Hamblen County School Board Policy, it is administered only after less stringent measures have failed to produce the desired results.

Teachers and administrators will reward students who abide by the rules with verbal praise, notes home, public recognition, and special activities and events. It is in your child's best interest that the school staff and parents work closely together. We strongly encourage your support of the discipline plan outlined above.