

Hayden Elementary School

Student Handbook

2026-2027

Hayden Elementary School
4111 State Highway 160
Hayden, AL 35079
Phone: (205) 647-6578

The faculty, staff and administration of Hayden Elementary School is committed to providing a meaningful and lasting school experience for all of our students. We encourage you to join us in our efforts to make your child's experiences at Hayden Elementary exciting and memorable.

**This handbook was developed using Blount County Board of Education Policy as a guide. The policies in this handbook are at all times subordinate to official Blount County Board of Education Policies. All policies in the Blount County Code of Student Conduct are applicable to students at Hayden Elementary.*

Accidents

- All accidents on school property should be reported to the teacher in charge at the time of the accident. The teacher will determine appropriate action and will file the appropriate accident forms with the school nurse.

Arrival and Dismissal

- Students should not get out of their car in the morning if the school monitors are not present.
- Students who arrive for school by car may be dropped off between 7:35 and 7:54.
- Our morning traffic monitors transition to their classrooms when the bell rings at 7:54. Under no circumstances should a parent drop off a student at the car line area after school employees have left the car line area and entered the school building. Your child is late at this point, and you will need to drive around to the office side of the building, park, and walk your child inside the school.
- There is no adult supervision in the office parking lot, so children are not allowed to be dropped off there. If you have something to bring into the school, you may park in the office parking lot and escort your child into the building safely.
- Buses will begin unloading at 7:40 each morning.
- Students who wish to eat breakfast at school should report to the school cafeteria immediately upon entering the building. Breakfast is served from 7:35 until 7:54 each morning.
- Classes begin at 7:55 each morning. Students who are not in class by 7:55 must be checked in by a parent at the office for a pass to class. Students must be in their homeroom by 7:55 in order to be considered on time.
- Students who ride a bus that is late for school will not be counted as being tardy.
- Students who leave by car are dismissed at 2:50 from the west side of the building.
- If you are late to pick up your children, you will need to go to the office and sign them out.
- Buses normally load around 3:00 and depart for Hayden Primary shortly thereafter.
- All parents who are delivering or picking up students should enter our campus from the road that runs through the ballpark and beside the primary school. From Hwy 160, turn onto Bent Tree Drive (by the west end of the HPS playground and Vera Vaughn Park) and proceed through the ballpark. When on Bent Tree Drive, do not pass Hayden Primary traffic using the left side of the road. This is a two-way public road, and you may be fined for driving the wrong way on a two-way street. Once you are off of Bent Tree and on school property, all lanes then become one-way and you may merge to the left side.
- There will be 3 lanes of traffic as you round the curve at our playground.
 - The left lane is for cars with elementary school students (3rd & 4th) only.
 - The middle lane is for cars with elementary and primary school students. You will drop off elementary students first and then turn right at the bottom drive to proceed to the primary school. **(All cars in the middle lane will be channeled to Hayden Primary. Only cars in the left lane will go straight to Hwy 160. Cars in the far left lane will have an opportunity to turn left or right on Hwy 160.)**
 - The right lane is for primary school students only. Elementary students may not enter or exit cars that are in the far right lane. This lane merges toward Hayden Primary before reaching our loading area.
- Always place your car in park when students are loading or unloading vehicles.

- If at all possible, students should load and unload on the side of the car that is closest to the school.
- All students will load or unload their car when the traffic monitors hold up the stop signs.
- When all cars are loaded or unloaded, and all students are clear of traffic, the traffic monitor will signal for cars to move by lowering the stop signs.
- Do not take your car out of park until the traffic monitor lowers the stop sign and signals for cars to move.
- The speed limit on a school campus is 5 mph. If you are driving too fast in our loading area, you should expect to be called out. Student safety is our only priority at the car line.
- Do not allow your cell phone to be a distraction in the loading area. It only takes a moment to make a mistake that could severely injure a child who mistakenly enters the road.
- Practice patience. This process will take a little more time during the first few weeks of school. Do not do anything that could jeopardize the safety of a child. Always pay attention to what is going on around you.
- Do not park in the bus parking area in front of the school for pick up or drop off.

Attendance

- Students should refer to the Blount County Student Code of Conduct for a full description of system attendance policies that have been updated to meet new state requirements.
- Only seven (7) days or partial days can be excused by parent/doctor notes each semester as a valid excused absence. **All absences beyond seven (7) will be documented as unexcused.**
- **Students who have more than eight (8) absences during a semester, excused or unexcused, will receive failing grades for that semester. Students who have more than sixteen (16) absences during a school year will not be promoted to the next grade.** Only students with a medical condition letter on file from a physician (as well as a medical release form) may be considered exempt from this portion of the policy. Only absences that occur after the school receives a medical condition letter and release form will be covered by the medical condition letter. New, updated medical condition letters and release forms are required at the beginning of each school year. For those with a medical condition letter, only absences directly related to the medical condition will be excused. You may contact Lora Prince to inquire about the requirements for a medical condition letter. (Note: Absences that occur as a result of a physician-documented case of the seasonal flu, coronavirus or any long-term absence caused by hospitalization or surgery may be considered exempt from this policy at the discretion of the school principal. The principal is more lenient with those who otherwise have a good attendance record.)
- Truancy proceedings will be initiated for students with unexcused absences. Truancy penalties include warning letters from the school principal and district attendance officer, required parent participation in early warning classes, and a court petition filed against the parent or guardian.
- The school principal will only approve and excuse two planned absences per school year. Any absences that are approved as excused by the principal will still count as a portion of your allowed seven absences per semester. Approval for planned absences must be requested in advance of the anticipated absences. Approval that is requested on or after the date of the absence will not be honored. Planned absences will not be approved for

students with a history of chronic attendance issues.

- Students who are chronically late for school miss valuable instructional time. If your child fails to learn the standards that are required for promotion to the next grade, as a result of being late for school on multiple occasions, your child will be retained and will be required to repeat their grade level.

Breakfast and Lunch Programs

- Breakfast and lunch will be provided for free to all students this year.
- All students will have a Personal Identification Number (PIN) assigned to them by the child nutrition staff. Students will enter this number on a keypad when participating in the school breakfast or lunch programs. Students will use the same PIN number at all Hayden schools.
- Carbonated beverages are not allowed in the school cafeteria.

Character Education

- As mandated by the State Department of Education, Hayden Elementary School will devote the beginning of each school day to character education.
- Students will be provided the opportunity to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- A moment of silent reflection and meditation, as required by law, will be provided.

Check-out Procedures

- A parent, guardian or emergency contact with check-out privileges should come to the office and sign the student out.
- Any changes to the emergency contact list must be made in person by the parent or guardian. You may not call the school and give permission for someone to check out your child if that person is not on the emergency contact list.
- State-issued photo identification is required of all individuals checking out a child.
- It is our policy to recognize both parents (as listed on the birth certificate) to have equal custodial rights unless custody papers are on file at the school. It is your responsibility to provide the school with current legal documents regarding custody.

Dress Code

- Students in third and fourth grade must follow dress code as defined by the Blount County Schools Code of Conduct.
- All outerwear should have the student's name written on the tag with a permanent marker.
- Students must have tennis shoes for P.E. class.
- Students are required to keep a seasonal change of clothes in their locker. The school does not keep extra clothing on hand. If your child has an incident of some type at school, and they do not have a change of clothes in their locker, you will be called to bring clothing for them.
- Any clothing items that remain in the lost and found area for longer than a one-month period will be donated to charity.

Emergency Communication / Closing of School

- Parents must have a plan in place for the care of their children in the event school closes early for any reason. An automated call will be made to notify parents of early dismissal.
- The school principal will also send out important information using Connect. All parents are encouraged to subscribe to receive important information from the school.

Emergency Drills

- Evacuation, severe weather, and lockdown drills are conducted regularly during the school year. Drill routes and procedures are posted in each classroom. School bus evacuation drills will also be conducted during the year. Full compliance by students is expected during all drills and procedures. Drills are never intended to frighten students. They are practiced so that students will know and understand how to react in the event of a life-threatening emergency.

Field trips

- Field trips are planned for the educational benefit of students. Depending on the nature of the trip, parents may or may not be allowed to attend, or a limited number of parents may attend.
- Any parent attending a field trip is expected to act in a way that reflects positively on the school and its students.
- Students who attend field trips will not be allowed to check-out while away from the school campus without prior approval. **You must provide a written request to your child's teacher prior to an established deadline if you plan to checkout your child while on the field trip.** This is necessary so that every teacher has an opportunity to ensure that the individual checking out the student is on the approved checkout list prior to the day of the trip. It is difficult for some to understand this practice, but not all parents have the legal privilege of being able to check their child out of school.
- Students must stay with his or her class and follow teacher directions while on a field trip, even if the parent is attending, unless otherwise directed by the teacher.
- **Strict deadlines for permission forms, payment, checkout notes, financial assistance, etc. will be established and enforced for all field trips so that trips may be planned in an efficient and safe manner. Do not ask to be exempt from deadlines.** We present all deadlines to parents well in advance. When payment is due on Wednesday, please do not try to explain to us that you get paid on Friday when you have been aware of a deadline for 4-6 weeks.
- School-aged siblings may not attend field trips. If you bring a school-aged sibling to a field trip, you should expect to be asked to leave the field trip and should understand that you will be forfeiting your payment.
- Parents are encouraged to find childcare for younger siblings that are not yet school-aged so that you may enjoy a meaningful experience with your third or fourth-grade student. However, siblings that are not yet school-aged may attend field trips if doing so is the only way that you will be able to attend. Please note that the presence of a younger sibling could

cause a parent to be excluded from certain space-limited activities within a given field trip experience.

- Students who have an annual conduct average lower than 75 will lose the privilege of attending field trips.

Grading Periods

- Hayden Elementary School operates on the grading schedule established by the Board of Education. Report cards will be issued every nine (9) weeks. Progress reports will be sent home in the middle of each grading period.

Head Lice

- Pediculosis checks will be conducted regularly as mandated by the Blount County Board of Education.

Health Room and Medications

- Our health room is supervised by a licensed professional.
- Students may not remain at school if they have a fever of 100 degrees or higher, or if they are vomiting.
- Students are not allowed to return to school until they have been fever free and/or vomiting has stopped for 24 hours.
- See the Blount County Schools Student Code of Conduct for prescription and over-the-counter medication policies.

Homework

- Our school has a homework policy that limits the amount of time spent on homework to 45 minutes per night. If work is not completed after this amount of time has been spent actively working, parents should sign the homework, state the amount of time spent on homework that night, and the student should return it to the teacher the next day. Grades will not be negatively affected by homework being incomplete if this process is followed.

Image Release

- Please be informed that all student pictures with accompanying names are printed in our school yearbook each year. Pictures and video clips may also be taken of students and/or student work and may be published in public formats such as newspapers, newsletters, on the school or school system website, through social media platforms, or on the Connect app. You must notify the school in writing if you wish for your child's photo to be excluded from publication. If you do not send such notification for exclusion, you are giving permission for your child to be photographed in connection with Hayden Elementary School, and you waive and release any rights that you may have to said photographed materials.

Internet Safety

- All students at Hayden Elementary receive internet safety training at the beginning of each school year.
- Students will be provided with access to online books that have been screened and purchased by Hayden Elementary. Students will not be provided with unlimited access to online sites that may contain books that would not be considered age-appropriate.
- Students may not add Google extensions to their devices without teacher permission.
- Students may not blindly search for images, web content, website links, GIFs, videos, or music in Google (or other search engines) YouTube, or inside of Padlet (or similar applications).
- Students may access specific YouTube videos using a direct link from their teacher.
- If teachers must allow students to perform a search in order to meet a specific technology standard, the teacher will provide students with explicit terms that should be used within their search.
- Students are not allowed to utilize email, chats, or other online or electronic communication for the purpose of communicating with anyone outside of our school.
- Teachers will display a daily list of sites or apps that students are allowed to utilize. This may be accomplished using a list displayed in the classroom or through Clever. Students may not access sites or apps that are not displayed in this list.
- Student activity on school devices is tracked and may be reviewed by school personnel at any time.
- Students who are found to be in violation of these guidelines will be referred to the school principal and will be disciplined accordingly.
- Students who search for inappropriate content will be subject to significant disciplinary sanctions.

Parent Involvement Policy

- Parents are encouraged to join and participate in the PTO.
- Parents should request a conference with the teacher if they have concerns or questions.
- All students are required to have a red school-home communicator folder. This folder is used to send home agendas, graded papers, teacher notes, and event announcements. You may also use this folder to send notes to your child's teacher. Please check your child's communication folder daily.
- Parents may attend many events at school. We will send home information regarding all activities that are designed for parental involvement. Parents may also attend class field trips, unless the venue limits the number of chaperones. If we ever take a field trip and do not allow parents to attend, it is only because the venue cannot accommodate the requested capacity. Overall, we enjoy having parents along on field trips.
- Parents and/or chaperones will be asked to show photo identification and/or meet other security measures for entry into the school facility or before being allowed to join any school group on a field trip.

- Parents may not consume alcoholic beverages or use tobacco products while on the school campus or while participating in a school sponsored field trip.
- Teachers will involve parents in behavior plans for individual students when needed.
- Teachers will contact a parent when a concern or problem arises with a student.

Physical Education

- All students are required to participate in Physical Education unless documentation from a physician has been provided stating that a student is unable to participate in physical activities. It is the responsibility of the student to present this documentation to his or her teacher prior to PE class.

School Buses

- **School system transportation is a privilege and is conditional upon good behavior. A student who fails to adhere to the student code of conduct may lose transportation privileges and may be excluded from the bus.**
- Disciplinary issues that arise on the bus will be reviewed on an individual basis. Consequences for inappropriate behavior while on the bus may include, but are not limited to, bus suspension or a complete withdrawal of bus privileges.

Snacks and Recess

- Students have a 10-15 minute snack break daily. Students may bring a snack from home or purchase one at school. The cost of snacks at school ranges from \$0.25 to \$1.50.
- Snack sometimes occurs in the form of a working snack. Snack may also occur within a recess time that students have earned by displaying good behavior.
- Teachers are not required to provide a daily recess time for students. Recess is sometimes earned by classes when behavioral expectations are met. Recess is sometimes forfeited because additional instructional time is needed. However, students will always be given an opportunity to eat their snacks.
- Carbonated beverages may be periodically allowed in classrooms as a reward, but this is solely at the discretion of individual classroom teachers.
- Cupcakes, cookies, or other food items that are sent for the class to enjoy must be store-purchased and sent to school in a sealed container. Homemade food items may not be distributed to students.

Technology Responsible Use Policy (RUP)

- **Wireless Communication Device Policy**

Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year the Blount County Board of Education will implement ACT # 2025-386 to be in compliance with State Law in regards to technology used throughout the Instructional Day. No student shall use or operate a personal wireless communication device in any public elementary or secondary school building or on the grounds thereof during the instructional day. If a student is in possession of a personal wireless device it must be turned off and stored off their person in a locker, car, backpack, athletic style duffle bag, or a purse.

The following items are recognized as a personal wireless communication device according to ACT # 2025-386: a cellular telephone, tablet computer, laptop computer, pager, gaming device, smart watch, or any other portable electronic device that has the capability of exchanging voice, messaging, or other data communication with another electronic device.

A student may use, operate, or possess a personal wireless communication device in a public elementary or secondary school building or on the grounds thereof during the instructional day in any of the following circumstances: the use, operation, or possession is pursuant to the student's Individualized Education Plan, a Section 504 Plan, or an Individualized Health Plan, or during an emergency that threatens the life or safety of the student or another person. A board employee may approve a student to use, operate, or possess a wireless communication device owned by the Blount County Board of Education if it is to be used for educational or learning purposes.

Each school will clearly identify in its master schedule the time of day in which the instructional day begins (first period/homeroom) and ends. Students will have time before and after the instructional day to store or retrieve a wireless communication device from a storage location.

Students and parents must sign a technology Responsible Use Student Contract that outlines the terms of the wireless communication policy. Neither the Blount County Board of Education nor local schools are responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal wireless communication devices.

- The consequences for unauthorized use or misuse of personal devices are outlined below:

First Offense - Take the phone or other electronic device, hold until the

parent/guardian comes to the school and meets with an administrator to discuss the policy and the consequences of further violations of the policy. The parent/guardian will be asked to sign a verification/documentation form of the meeting.

Second Offense - Take the phone or other electronic device, hold for seven (7) school days. A parent/guardian must pick up the cell phone or other electronic device from an administrator and again sign the verification/documentation form. The school administration will assign the student to three days of PE detention.

Third Offense - Take the phone or other electronic device, hold for nine (9) weeks of school. The school administration will assign the student to two days of in-school suspension or a three-day placement in alternative school.

* A disciplinary hearing will be held for any student that continues to violate this policy after the third offense.

**A disciplinary hearing will be held for any student who violates the policy and refuses to give the phone or electronic device to school personnel.

- Students must adhere to all portions of the Blount County Schools Technology Responsible Use Policy. For full details of this policy, see the Blount County Student Code of Conduct.
- Students who violate any portion of the Technology Responsible Use Policy are subject to loss of privilege with respect to use of the Internet or all technology devices of any type while at school.
- The instructional day at Hayden Elementary begins at 7:50am and ends at 2:50pm.
- Personal wireless devices must be turned off and stored inside a student's locker in a backpack during instructional times.

Telephones

- Phone calls will be limited to emergency situations. Forgetting homework, sports equipment, etc. does not constitute an emergency.
- Students will not be called from class to talk with parents on the phone. The school receptionist will be happy to share parent messages with students at appropriate times when the student is not engaged in instructional activities.

Textbooks/Library Books

- Textbooks and library books are the property of the school system and are provided at no cost. Students will be assessed a fee if books are lost or damaged beyond normal wear. Students with unpaid fees for lost or damaged textbooks and/or library books will not be issued new books. This includes students who owe book fees to Hayden Primary School.

Transportation Changes

- Parents will be required to identify the primary mode of afternoon transportation for their child at the beginning of the school year.
- The parent must complete a Change of Transportation form any time that the student will be going home in a manner that is different from their primary mode of transportation.

- The Change of Transportation form must also be completed if the mode of afternoon transportation changes permanently.
- These forms must be submitted electronically through our website (www.haydenel.com) prior to 1:30PM on the date of the change and must include a security word that will be established at the beginning of the school year. Your child's security word will not be given over the telephone if we are unable to verify your identity.
- **We do not accept hand-written parent notes or phone calls for transportation changes.**
- Please be as consistent as possible with your child's mode of transportation for safety purposes.
- If your child is staying the night with someone else, make arrangements to get him/her to that individual after they ride home from school in their normal manner. Due to overcrowding on buses, the school district does not allow students to ride home with other students on the bus for the purpose of overnight visits.

Video Viewing

- Many classroom instructional activities are supported by video clips or programming that is relevant and specific to topics being studied.
- Students frequently view short video segments that are produced by their peers as a means of sharing thoughts, ideas and knowledge using modern technology tools.
- On occasion, students are rewarded with an opportunity to view animated or family-appropriate movies for good behavior.
- Our school operates on the basis of assumed parental consent regarding the use of age-appropriate video for supporting instruction and reinforcing good behavior.
- If you wish for your child to not participate in any of these viewing activities, including the viewing of PG rated movies, you must make this request known to your child's teacher in writing.
- Parents will not be allowed to view school security videos due to safety and privacy concerns for other students.

Visitors

- In order to ensure the maximum security of students, all visitors must enter the school building on the east side of the building and report immediately to the main office. Visitors will be required to present state-issued photo identification and receive a personalized badge before being granted access to classrooms, the cafeteria, physical education areas, or any other location on the campus. This printed badge should be placed on the upper part of the shirt and must be worn at all times while on campus. Any visitor without state-issued photo identification will not be allowed to proceed beyond the main office.

HES Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form

2026-2027

I understand that I may access and read the Hayden Elementary School Student Handbook by visiting www.haydenel.com and clicking on the “Forms” tab. I also acknowledge that I may access and read the Blount County Schools Student Code of Conduct by visiting www.blountboe.net. I understand that I may contact the school office if I have questions or need clarification regarding school or district policies. My signature indicates that I have received access to these documents and agree to abide by all local school and district policies and procedures.

Student Name: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Parent Signature: _____