

Hickman County Middle School



**2016-2017
Student Handbook**

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I take pleasure in welcoming you to Hickman County Middle School! In this handbook, you will find information regarding our school as well as policies set forth by the Hickman County Board of Education. This handbook is published so that all students of Hickman County Middle School may have access to information that is necessary to the understanding of the daily operation of our school. Please read this information carefully and refer to it throughout the year regarding policies and procedures. Reading and understanding the information will help prevent any misunderstandings. If this handbook does not give you the information you need, you should contact your teachers or the principal for help. We are looking forward to a great school year!

Sincerely,

Tina S. Thigpen
Principal

Hickman County Middle School Mission Statement

Hickman County Middle School is committed to a student-oriented educational program with emphasis on student achievement, good citizenship, and attendance.

Hickman County Middle School Philosophy and Goals

The educational team at HCMS recognizes that each student is unique with different backgrounds and needs. We further recognize that the student's concept of education is influenced by the school, the student's family, and the values of the local community. We are aware that the middle school student is in a developmental transition during which he / she will leave childhood and become a young adult.

As members of the educational profession, it is our responsibility to encourage rather than discourage, to include rather than alienate, and through our own example of group support and flexibility in problem solving, to lead as positive role models for our students. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to encourage in our students an acceptance of responsibility both for themselves and for each other. This shared responsibility will encourage mutual high expectations for achievement, good citizenship, and attendance, and a common concern for the overall welfare of the entire student population.

Hickman County Middle School affirms that it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Student Rules at HCMS

- All students will enter the school building through the cafeteria in the morning. If a student eats breakfast at school (breakfast and lunch are free), then the student will eat in the cafeteria before reporting to their homeroom. If the student does not eat breakfast at school, then the student should report immediately to their homeroom. Students should not go to the restroom, lockers, library or the office. Teachers will give permission for students to go elsewhere. Students arriving before 7:30 am must wait in the cafeteria until the bell rings before they are allowed to eat breakfast or report to their homerooms.
- All students must abide by individual classroom rules.
- Chewing gum is not allowed during the school day.
- Hats and sunglasses are not to be worn in the building. This include toboggans, visors and the hoods of hoodies.
- Pushing, running, and horseplay are unacceptable.
- Students should enter class prepared and ready to work (have all supplies including pencils, paper, and books. Also, get water and use restroom if needed).
- Chronic Absenteeism (35% or more school days missed) can result in a loss of reward privileges (trips/ WIN time, etc...).
- All arrangements for after-school activities should be made before the student comes to school.
- Cell phones are not to be used during the school day (7:30 am until 3:30 pm). HCMS understands that many students carry a cell phone to school; however, if a student is found using their phone (either texting, calling, playing a game, taking photographs, listening to music, using the World Wide Web, etc...), the following consequences shall occur:
 - First Offense: Phone or electronic device will be confiscated and released to a parent at the end of the school day. As a condition of release, a parent will sign a form acknowledging punishments for further violations.
 - Second Offense: Phone or electronic device will be confiscated and released to parent on the last school day of current grading period.

Third Offense: Phone or electronic device will be confiscated and released to a parent on the last day of the school year (May 12, 2017).

- Electronic devices such as tablets, music devices, and hand-held video games are not allowed to be used at school. If a student is found using an electronic device during the school day, that device will be taken up and turned into the office. The parent/guardian will be responsible for picking up the device. Students that bring such devices are at risk of having them lost, stolen or damaged. The school will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.
- Possession of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products is a violation of state law. Possession of a weapon on school grounds is a felony. Violation of any of these laws will be reported to the police. Students taking medication prescribed by a doctor are not in violation; however, they must follow the school medical administration policy or the medication will not be administered.
- Hickman County Board of Education has adopted a new Student Alcohol and Drug Testing policy. You will find a copy of this in the back of the handbook.
- All adult staff members are responsible for supervision of all students at HCMS and are responsible for seeing that all students comply with school rules and Hickman County Board of Education policies. All students should respect this.

HCMS Disciplinary Policy

HCMS has established a minor and major policy. Minors are issued for minor infractions such as chewing gum, violating a school policy, and classroom disturbances (other examples are listed below). Whenever a minor infraction occurs, the teacher issuing the infraction will contact a parent or guardian. Majors are issued for major infractions. Examples of a major infraction include: receiving 3 minors in one nine-week period, or major misbehaviors such as fighting, abusive/inappropriate language, and overt defiance (see below for more examples). When a student receives a major infraction, the school will make contact with a parent or guardian and the child will receive either a paddling (to be determined by the consenting parent), time in In-School Suspension, or assigned to the Alternative School.

Below are a variety of misbehaviors and their possible consequences. The school's administration reserves the right to handle discipline on an individual basis. Every disciplinary situation is different; therefore, consequences may be different.

The following is only a guide for parents, teachers, and students. For more information on student discipline, please review the Code of Behavior and Discipline policies from the Hickman County Board of Education in the back of this handbook.

Examples that may constitute a Minor Infraction:

MISBEHAVIORS

- Classroom disturbances
- Classroom tardiness
- Inappropriate verbal or nonverbal language
- Defiance or failure to follow rules or instructions
- Gum
- Irresponsible Acts/Disrespect
- Physical Contact/Horseplay
- Disruption in School Setting
- Cutting class
- Property Misuse
- Taunting and teasing

Examples that may constitute a Major Infraction:

MISBEHAVIORS

- Fighting/Physical Aggression
- Theft/Forgery
- Abusive Language/Inappropriate symbolism
- Pornography
- Harassment/Threat to others/Bullying
- Overt Defiance
- Repeated Disruption of the Classroom Environment
- Property Damage (such as marking or scratching walls)

Examples that may constitute Suspension, Expulsion, or Placement in the Alternative School:

Misbehaviors

- Fighting
- Bullying/Harassment
- Pornography
- Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons

Bomb Threats
Furnishing/selling/possession of unauthorized substances

Bullying/Harassment

The faculty and staff of HCMS strive to create a positive learning environment. Bullying and harassment of any type will NOT be tolerated. Students who engage in bullying or harassing behaviors on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity off school premises will be subject to appropriate discipline, including suspension or expulsion. Sexual harassment is any activity of a sexual nature that is unwanted or unwelcome. The school's normal disciplinary procedures will be followed in determining the appropriate consequence for the harassment. In the event the administration recommends suspension or expulsion as a result of the conduct, due process will be afforded to the student in accordance with the district's established procedures.

All students will receive training through their Guidance class on identifying and reporting bullying or harassment situations.

Rewards

HCMS believes in rewarding positive behavior and attendance through the use of "WIN" time every third Friday. Students who do not receive any minors or majors during this three week period are eligible to participate. In addition, other eligibility requirements include: 1. The student has no unexcused absences. 2. The student has no make-up work for an academic class. 3. The student is not currently failing a class.

Student of the Week

Students who receive the "Student of the Week" award (awarded by grade-level teachers each week) will have their name put in a drawing for special prizes to be awarded at the end of the school year. Also, these students will have their picture taken and placed on the bulletin board in the front lobby. Students who are not chosen for Student of the Week but do not receive any minors or majors for the year will also have their name placed in a drawing for prizes to be given out at the end of the school year.

8th Grade Trip

A reward trip to Beech Bend Park in Kentucky at the end of the school year will be awarded to any 8th grader meeting the following guidelines. Any student receiving Two Major Infractions during the school year will not be allowed to attend the trip.

1. A visit to the Alternative School or a suspension exempts you from qualifying to attend the trip.
2. The cost of the trip may be paid by the student or the student can choose to participate in a fundraiser sponsored by the school.
3. Once a student pays for the trip and then loses his/her privilege to attend, the student will be refunded their money if the money has not been sent in to reserve buses and tickets. If the money has been sent for the buses and tickets, then the student will forfeit their money.
4. Any student who is enrolled at HCMS and misses more than 35% of the school year due to absences will not be allowed to attend the trip. (Example: there are typically 180 days in a school year. If a student misses 63 days or more of school for any reason, they will not be eligible to attend.)
5. Students who enter our school during the school year must abide by the same guidelines as current students.

A- Club, Honor Roll:

A Club = 93 or above in all subjects for a nine-week grading period.

Honor Roll = 85 or above in all subjects for a nine-week grading period.

Academic & Attendance Reward Trips

After the first three recording periods, students who meet the requirements for A-Club, Honor Roll, and Attendance (has not been absent more than 35% of the time) will be eligible to attend a Reward trip. A note will be sent home with all eligible students.

Academic, A-Team, & Citizenship Awards

(to be awarded during our Awards Day Ceremony at the end of the school year)

Academic Award = 93 or above average in one subject each nine-weeks.

A-Team Award = 93 or above average in every subject each nine weeks.

Citizenship Award = Students will receive a Citizenship award if they go the entire school year without receiving a minor or major.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are expected to help maintain the school environment, preserve school property, and exercise care while using school facilities. Students who damage and destroy school property shall be responsible for the cost of repairs or the replacement of such materials or equipment.

IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Any student in ISS (in –school suspension) will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities and will not be permitted on campus for any after school activity.

HCMS GRADING POLICY

The basic grading system for subject-area grades is expressed by a numerical value. The numerical values are equivalent to the following letter grades:

- A.....93-100
- B.....85-92
- C.....75-84
- D.....70-74
- F.....UNDER 70

Grades given at the end of each nine-week period will be determined from daily work, oral and written assignments, and assessments.

Semester grades will be determined by an average of grades for each of the nine-week periods. The final grade for the year will be determined by averaging the two semester grades. TCAP scores will reflect 15% of the second semester average.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued every nine weeks. They are to be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the homeroom teacher by the date assigned by the homeroom teacher. The district calendar has dates for report card distribution.

TEXTBOOKS

All basic texts are loaned to students for their use during the school year. All other school supplies are paid for by the student. Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. The student will be required to pay a designated price of any book lost, damaged, or stolen.

BACKPACKS, LOCKS, LOCKERS, AND LOCKER INSPECTION

Backpacks are to be emptied during the first locker bell and left in the lockers at all times. Backpacks will not be allowed to be carried from class to class throughout the day.

The first locker bell will ring at 7:55 a.m. Locker assignments are made by the homeroom teacher. A copy of all locker assignments is kept in the office. A student is expected to use only the locker assigned to him/her. **DO NOT SHARE LOCKERS.** It is the sole responsibility of the student assigned a locker to secure and be responsible for personal possessions and school property on loan to him/her. The principal or other school official has the right to search a locker, independently or in the presence of the student, to assure that items contained are related to the school program. Locks are not allowed on lockers.

VISITORS

Visitors are not allowed in the classrooms during instructional time. Exceptions to this policy must be cleared in advance through the principal's office. **Any parent, family member, or visitor entering the school must report to the office before visiting a classroom. All parents are encouraged to visit our rooms and teachers by appointment!**

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Hickman County Middle School follows the Hickman County Board of Education attendance policies. *Please read over these policies at hickmank12.org under “School Board Information.” Attendance policy 6.200 may be found under the “Student” section of the Board Policy Manual.*

Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and academic success, therefore, students, parents/or guardians are expected to assume the responsibility of attending each day that school is in session. The official school day for students begins at 8:00 a.m. and continues until 2:48 p.m.

ABSENCES

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

1. Personal illness;
2. Serious illness or death of an immediate family member;
3. Doctor or dental appointment;
4. Family emergency;
5. Extreme weather conditions;
6. Religious observances; 2
7. Driver's license examination (documentation accepted, one [1] time only);
8. Unusual situation approved by the principal; or
9. Military deployment or return of parents or custodian

If a student is absent from class, a parent or guardian must provide the principal's office with a written explanation of the child's absence. Written explanation of absences must be made within three (3) school days of the student's return. Any absence for which a written explanation is not provided within three (3) school days will be considered unexcused. *Students are allowed to use 3 parent notes or have 5 days absent (whichever comes first) during each semester of school.*

CONFIDENTIALITY

Student attendance records are confidential. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may access student information without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.

TRUANCY/TRUANCY COUNCIL

Truancy is defined as an absence without adequate excuse for an entire school day, a major portion of the school day or the major portion of any class, study hall or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled. Students who accumulate five (5) unexcused absences will be reported to the principal or his/her designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the director of accountability. The student and parents/guardians will receive a written notice from the school regarding the mandatory school attendance law in Tennessee and will appear before the Truancy Council. Failure to comply with the written notice within three (3) days of receiving such notice will result in the filing of a petition in juvenile court. A written notice will be issued each time a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences. The Truancy Council, under the direction of the director of accountability, will convene weekly to hear truancy issues with the students and their parents/guardians. The council will establish a plan of recommendations for improving attendance and establish consequences should absenteeism continue to be an issue. For more information on truancy, please review the Hickman County Board of Education Policy manual at hickmank12.org.

MAKE-UP WORK

All missed class work or tests (whether from excused or unexcused absence) may be made up provided the student makes the request immediately upon returning to school and provided instruction time is not taken from other students.

A grade of incomplete will be received for any work missed until the work is completed. A student may have up to three (3) days to make up work from a single absence and up to five (5) days to make up work from an absence longer than a single day. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements for makeup work, and if not completed in the allotted time, a grade of zero (0) will be recorded for the assignments.

For school-sponsored activities, the student will be required to make up all work missed and will receive full credit for the assignment or upon completion of a test. The student will not be counted absent for a school sponsored event (school planned, school-directed, and teacher supervised).

CREDIT/PROMOTION DENIAL

Credit/promotion denial determinations may include student attendance, however student attendance may not be the sole criterion. If attendance is a factor, prior to credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

1. A school-based attendance committee appointed by the principal will conduct a hearing to determine if extenuating circumstances exist and to allow for the procedure of due process.
2. The parent or guardian of a student failing to receive credit for any nine-week grading period or semester because of absenteeism may appeal to the attendance committee. The appeal must be made in writing to the principal within five (5) school days following the issuance of the report card which provides notice of the failing grade.
3. The principal shall be responsible for notifying, in writing, the director of accountability and the parents of the student of any action taken by the school.
4. Any administrative decision regarding attendance may be appealed initially to the director of schools and ultimately to the Board. The appeal shall be made in writing to the director of schools within five (5) days following the action or the report of the action, whichever is greater.

TARDIES AND EARLY DISMISSALS

Chronic tardiness and early dismissals are considered attendance issues. Students demonstrating an unusual attendance pattern can be required to appear before the school attendance committee. A continued practice of tardiness/early dismissals may require appearing before the Truancy Council.

Reminders: In order to be counted present, students must be in attendance at school for 3 hours and 16 minutes. When a student is absent, that student must come to the office to receive an admission slip. A student who was absent the previous day will not be admitted to class without a note.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

1. If a student is at school for 3 hours & 16 minutes (half day), they will be counted as having attended that day.
2. Unexcused tardies and unexcused early dismissals when accumulated to add up to one or more days will result in that student losing their Perfect Attendance status.

3. Students who have been home-schooled or transferred from another system which would have started after our school year starts will not be eligible for Perfect Attendance (if they did not start school in their old system and enrolled with us after Oct. 1.)
4. Students who transfer into our system from another system will be counted as having Perfect Attendance if documentation is provided from the previous school system that they had Perfect Attendance at their previous school.

TRANSPORTATION OF MEDICATION POLICY

Hickman County Middle School follows the Hickman County Board of Education medication policies. *This policy may be viewed in its entirety at hickmank12.org. Please read over this policy carefully.*

No medication may be transported on school buses or kept on a student's person unless directed by a physician. If medication must be taken at school, a parent or guardian must bring it to the office.

HOMEWORK REQUEST

If your child is absent, you may call the school to request your child's homework **before 11:00 a.m.**

CHECK-OUT POLICY

Only parents or legal guardians may authorize a student to leave school during the school day. Any parent who wishes to personally check a student out during the school day must come to the school office to do so. Any person picking up a child must show valid driver's license before a student will be released. Teachers are not to release a student from a classroom until notified by the office to do so. The student will be required to sign out in the office. If there is a question of legal custody, school officials reserve the right to require proof of custody before releasing a student.

Check-outs by phone will be allowed only in cases of emergency. A school official must speak personally with the parent or guardian before the student will be released. Notes

from a parent or guardian will be required to check out for any reason. The note should contain the following information:

- Date
- Student's first and last name
- Phone number where parents can be reached during the day
- Reason for check-out
- Time of check-out
- Parent's signature

School officials will check the validity of any questionable note. Any such note that cannot be verified will not be accepted, and permission to check out will be denied. Any student checking out for any reason must sign out through the office. Students returning to school the same day must sign back in through the office.

TARDINESS

School hours are 8:00 a.m.- 2:48 p.m. All students are expected to arrive at school before 8:00 a.m. Any student arriving after this time must sign in through the office.

Promptness to each class period is also important. With four minutes between classes for all grades, all students have adequate time to reach their classrooms. Students with excessive unexcused tardies will be referred to the office for disciplinary action.

CHANGE OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Please report any change of address, phone numbers, or email address to the school office immediately upon the change.

TRANSFER POLICY

A withdrawal form should be filled out by a student intending to transfer. All books need to be returned to school and all bills paid before records will be forwarded to the new school.

CAR RIDERS

Students may be dropped off at 7:15 each morning through the cafeteria. Doors do not open until then. If you plan to pick up your child instead of letting him/her ride the bus on a certain day, you must send a note or call the school before 2:48 p.m.; otherwise, your child will be sent home on the bus. If someone else will be picking up your child during school hours, a note must be sent and/or that person's name must be listed on your child's pick-up sheet that is filed in the office. Parents may pick up car riders beginning at 2:48 in the front parking lot. Please pull into the far left car lanes (two) and proceed down to the crosswalk in front of the cafeteria doors. Students will be dismissed from the cafeteria.

BUS RIDERS

Bus riders will be sent home on their assigned bus daily. If a student needs to ride a different bus, a note from the parent or guardian must be sent to school that states the student's name, bus number to ride, and the address of the destination. All notes should be signed by a parent or guardian. Students will give these notes to their homeroom teacher before the 8:00 am bell and receive a bus note to ride a different bus for the afternoon. All bus notes from home will be turned into the office in the mornings by the homeroom teacher.

EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

All participants will be expected to follow the rules of conduct set by the school for all students. Since they will be representing the school at public places, students will be expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner.

All participants must maintain passing grades. If a student fails one class for a semester they will be ineligible. Coaches at HCMS can enforce stricter rules for their programs.

If appropriate daily behavior is not displayed in every class, the student will be suspended for one activity.

No one fifteen or older as of August 1 will be allowed to participate in sports. Special consideration will be given to special education students.

If a student is assigned to in-school suspension, he/she will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities.

DRESS CODE

Good taste and normal standards of the community shall be maintained in dress and grooming of students. Student dress will not be detrimental to the educational environment or public image of the school. Any form of hairstyle/color or dress which is considered contrary to good hygiene, distractive or disruptive in appearance, and detrimental to the purpose or conduct of the school will not be permitted.

The dress code for grades 6-8 is as follows:

Students must wear some type of shoes. Shoes that have rollers (skate shoes) are not permitted at school.

All fasteners designed for use with an article of clothing will be used at all times with the exception of the top button on the collar.

All clothing must be school appropriate, even clothing worn in layers.

Students that wear leggings must keep their bottoms covered by either a skirt, dress, or pair of shorts that meet the length of the dress code.

The following guidelines were recommended and approved by a committee made up of parents, students, and teachers. They were then adopted by the Hickman County Board of Education.

Any clothing that is disruptive or distracting to classroom routine is inappropriate for school wear. Included as disruptive are the following:

- excessively tight clothing such as biking shorts
- clothing bearing obscene words or pictures
- clothing bearing endorsements for alcohol or tobacco products
- see-through clothing
- undergarments worn as outer garments (boxer shorts, long johns)
- sagging pants

Any item of clothing, jewelry, or insignia, which might be considered intentionally offensive, intimidating, or distracting to others may not be worn. This decision is to be made on an individual basis.

The trunk of the body should be entirely covered at all times from the shoulders to the point on the legs just below the fingertips when arms are extended at the sides. Covering the trunk of the body includes making sure that: underclothing is not exposed by slits or holes and no part of the body between shoulders and pants/skirt is exposed.

Trench coats/overcoats are to be removed upon entering the building.

Any jewelry which could be considered dangerous or disruptive will not be permitted. This includes tongue rings, nose rings, lip rings, eyebrow rings and body piercing.

Any questionable attire would be at the discretion of the principal.

The previous rules would allow shorts for both boys and girls and sleeveless tops which cover the shoulder (not tank tops). Skirts would have to be at least as long as shorts in order to be acceptable.

The following schedule of penalties will be followed for violation of the previous guidelines:

- On the first occurrence, a student who is inappropriately dressed will be issued a minor infraction and allowed to call home for a change of clothing. Students will be required to return to class immediately after changing. Students unable to acquire a change of clothing could be placed in in-school suspension.
- On the second offense, the student will receive a major infraction.

If students repeatedly disregard the guidelines, stricter consequences will be imposed by the principal. If a student must go home for violating the dress code, the absence will be unexcused.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

P.E. is required of all students in grades 6-8. To be excused, it is necessary to have a doctor's statement. If no doctor's statement is available, parents must call the principal to excuse the student from P.E. Separate gym shoes with non-marking soles are recommended for P.E.

LIBRARY

Students are expected to show respect and courtesy in the library at all times. Students should return books on time. A 10 cent fine will be charged per day for overdue books. Library grades will be affected if books are not returned and fines are not paid.

TELEPHONE

School telephones are to be used ONLY in cases of emergency. Students must have written permission from their teacher to go to the office to use the phone. Upon entering the office, the student must present the written permission to a staff member and obtain permission to use the phone. In the event a student receives a call, he/she will be called out of classes only in cases of emergency.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills are held at irregular intervals throughout the school year. Check the posted directions in each classroom for procedures and follow them quietly.

Please insert Board Policies on
Code of Behavior and Discipline as
well as Student Drug Testing Here!
Thanks!