



# Olive Branch Middle School

---

6530 Blocker Street  
Olive Branch, MS 38654  
Phone 662-895-4610  
Fax 662-895-7358

Dear Parents and Guardians of OBMS Students:

The handbook information is designed to provide you with information about various topics for Desoto County Schools and Olive Branch Middle School. It contains information from the school board policies about discipline, attendance, athletics, grades, and other areas. This is not designed to be a comprehensive list of all Desoto County School Board Policies. The policies are continuously updated throughout the school year, and all updated policies can be found on the Desoto County Schools website at [www.desotocountyschools.org](http://www.desotocountyschools.org). Please review the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook with your child. We look forward to a successful year.

Thank you for your continued support of Olive Branch Middle School. Please feel free to contact us with any questions. We look forward to a successful school year.

Respectfully,

Beth Turner, Principal  
Olive Branch Middle School

**OLIVE BRANCH MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**6530 Blocker Street. Olive Branch, MS 38654. 662-895-4610**

## **Administration and Staff**

Beth Turner, Principal  
Chris Harlow, Assistant Principal  
Jodi Stidham, Assistant Principal  
Lorrie Brazier, Counselor  
Sandra Jenkins, Counselor  
Tiffany Mooneyham, STC/MTSS

Michelle Bond, Bookkeeper  
Tammy Shipp, MSIS  
Alisa Davis, 6<sup>th</sup> Receptionist  
Barbara Free, 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Receptionist  
Renee VanDunse, Attendance

*DeSoto County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, age, or handicapping conditions and is an equal opportunity employer.*

Dear Parents:

As a parent of a student at Olive Branch Middle School, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the Mississippi Department of Education has licensed the teacher for the grades and subjects that he or she teaches.
- Whether the Mississippi Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed under state regulations because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major and whether the teacher has advanced degrees.
- Whether any teacher's aides or assistants provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please send a written request to my attention at the address above.

Respectfully,

Beth Turner, Pricipal  
Olive Branch Middle School

---

### **MISSION STATEMENT OF OLIVE BRANCH MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Our school motto is *Superbia Laboriose*, which means Pride with Great Effort. The people who make-up our community have always prided themselves as being responsible, hard-working citizens who have pride in their community and their schools. We strive to carry on that tradition through a challenging and meaningful curriculum.

### **ACCREDITATION STATUS**

OBMS is part of the DeSoto County School System, which is the second largest school district in the state. All middle schools in the district are fully accredited by the Mississippi State Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.



## 2017-20187 BELL SCHEDULE



**School Opens ..... 6:55 am**  
**Dismisses ..... 2:50 pm**

1 <sup>st</sup> Period	7:10-8:03
2 <sup>nd</sup> Period	8:07-8:55
3 <sup>rd</sup> Period	8:59-9:49
4 <sup>rd</sup> Period	9:53-10:41
5 <sup>th</sup> Period	10:45-12:14
(6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch)	.....10:45-11:15
(7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch)	.....11:15-11:45
(8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch)	.....11:45-12:15
6 <sup>th</sup> Period	12:18-1:06
7 <sup>th</sup> Period	1:10-1:58
8 <sup>th</sup> Period	2:02-2:50

## 2017-2018 DeSoto County Schools Calendar

August 1	Teachers' First Day
August 3	Students' First Day
September 4	Labor Day Holiday
October 9	Columbus Day Holiday
November 20-24	Thanksgiving Break
December 18 – January 1	Christmas Break
January 2	Teachers Return
January 4	Students Return
January 15	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 16	Professional Development Day
February 19	Presidents' Day
March 12 – 16	Spring Break
March 30	Good Friday Holiday
April 2	Easter Holiday
May 23	Students' Last Day
May 25	Teachers' Last Day
May 28	Memorial Day Holiday

### Scheduled Make-up Days

December 18, December 19, 2017

February 16, February 19, 2018

April 2, 2018

May 24, May 25, 2018

## Olive Branch Middle School 2017-2018 Athletic Calendars

### Volleyball

8/21 OBMS @ LCMS  
8/28 DCMS @ OBMS  
9/7 LMS @ OBMS  
9/11 OBMS @ CHMS  
9/18 SMS @ OBMS  
9/28 OBMS @ HMS  
10/2 OBMS @ HLMS

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Tournament October 3 and 5 @ LCMS

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Tournament October 10 and 12 @ OBMS

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

First game starts at 5:30

9/16 Jamboree @ DCMS  
9/19 CHMS @ OBMS  
9/26 OBMS @ LMS  
10/3 DCMS @ OBMS  
10/17 Championship Game (East #1 v. West #1)

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

Game Time 5:30

8/31 HLMS @ OBMS  
9/7 SMS @ OBMS  
9/14 LMS @ OBMS  
9/21 OBMS @ LCMS  
9/28 OBMS @ HMS  
10/5 DCMS @ OBMS  
10/12 OBMS @ CHMS  
10/19 Championship Game (#1 v. #2)

### Basketball

First game starts at 5:00

11/2 OBMS @ DCMS  
11/9 CHMS @ OBMS  
11/13 OBMS @ SMS  
11/16 OBMS @ HLMS  
11/30 SMS @ OBMS  
12/7 OBMS @ LMS  
1/4 LCMS @ OBMS  
1/8 HLMS @ OBMS  
1/11 HMS @ OBMS

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Tournament January 16, 18, 19, 22 @ HLMS

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Tournament January 23, 25, 26, 29 @ HMS

2017-2018 Soccer Schedule will be announced.

## DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS OF DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS

### Our Mission

Our school motto is *Superbia Laboriose*, which means Pride with great Effort. The people who make-up our community have always been prided themselves as being responsible, hard-working citizens who have pride in their community and their schools. We strive to carry on that tradition through a challenging and meaningful curriculum.

### Our Vision

DeSoto County Schools will be regionally and nationally recognized as a system of superior-performing schools that ignite a passion for learning, while inspiring student success through instructional excellence and exemplary leadership.

### Our Goals

1. Ensure a safe, secure, and orderly environment for all.
2. Improve student achievement through a guaranteed, viable curriculum.
3. Provide extracurricular opportunities that foster the personal growth of all.
4. Recruit, develop, and retain a workforce of individuals committed to the district's mission and vision.
5. Develop principled, strong instructional leaders.
6. Develop strategies to increase the graduation rate and reduce the dropout rate.
7. Further develop productive community and parental partnerships.
8. Assist students in developing habits that promote a healthy lifestyle.
9. Continuously replace and update technology.
10. Manage the systems' facilities in a financially responsible manner.

### **DRESS CODE** *(DCS Policy JCDB)*

Proper attire and grooming are deemed important to scholastic achievement and orderliness. The responsibility for the appearance of the students begins with the parents and the students themselves. Students' clothing, make-up, and hairstyles should reflect neatness, cleanliness, and self-respect so that the school is a desirable place in which to promote learning and character development.

It is virtually impossible to formulate a set of regulations that adequately covers every detail of proper grooming. Violations of the Dress Code will be dealt with in accordance with the DeSoto County Schools Code of Discipline. It will be treated as insubordination and will be handled as stated in the Code of Discipline of the DeSoto County Schools. *Insubordination is a Level II violation.*

***First Violation: Administrator-Student conference, ALC if cannot be corrected***

***Second Violation: ALC, or corporal punishment***

***Third Violation: Mandatory Parent Conference***

1. Hair must be neat, clean and worn in a manner that does not interfere with vision or cause a disruption in the classroom. No combs, picks, rollers or extreme coloring will be allowed. Bright hair colors (Pink, Blue, Orange, etc...) are not permitted.
2. T-shirts with sleeves, white or colored, are acceptable. Shirts must be worn properly closed, zipped or buttoned.
3. No article of clothing that pertains to or depicts the following will be acceptable:
  - a. Substances or activities illegal by law for minors, such as, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling
  - b. Profane, suggestive or violent language
  - c. Derogatory symbols; remarks directed to any ethnic group



4. Hair must be neat, clean and worn in a manner that does not interfere with vision or cause a disruption in the classroom. No combs, picks, rollers or extreme coloring will be allowed. Bright hair colors (Pink, Blue, Orange, etc...) are not permitted.
5. T-shirts with sleeves, white or colored, are acceptable. Shirts must be worn properly closed, zipped or buttoned.
6. No article of clothing that pertains to or depicts the following will be acceptable:
  - a. Substances or activities illegal by law for minors, such as, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling
  - b. Profane, suggestive or violent language
  - c. Derogatory symbols; remarks directed to any ethnic group
7. Sufficient underclothes must be worn appropriately and must not be exposed.
8. Tank tops, tube tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti straps, thin straps, or tops that expose the midriff, any part of the bust, excessive part of the back, are excessively tight, or are distracting in class are not permitted. No slits in shirts are to be above the waistline of pants or skirts. **Boys' shirts are to be tucked in.** Blouses/tops made to be worn outside should be at least three (3) inches below the waistline and no longer than five (5) inches below the waistline.
9. Mid-Knee-length shorts are acceptable, but they must be fitted at the waist and shirts must remain tucked-in.
10. Mid-knee length dresses and skirts are allowed. No slits in these skirts or dresses above the knee caps are allowed.
11. No spandex articles of clothing are allowed.
12. Shoes must be worn at all times, and no house shoes are allowed. Shoes with laces should be laced and tied. Shoes with Velcro should be fastened at all times.
13. No visible tattoos will be allowed. Neither male nor female students will be permitted to wear rings and/or studs in their noses, tongues, or any exposed body parts other than the ear and appropriate rings on fingers.
14. Coaches, physical education classes or any organized athletics have the option to ban all jewelry due to safety reasons and violation of the Mississippi High School Activity Association regulations.
15. Sunglasses, other than prescription, must be removed when inside the building.
16. **All pants must be worn fitted to the waist, at the waist, with or without a belt. Pants should fit appropriately. No baggy pants are allowed.** No writing is to be on the seat of the pants, even the cheerleader and dance team uniforms.
17. Leggings are allowed when worn with a top that is no more than one inch above the knee.
18. **No holes, or tears above the knee will be allowed, unless they are patched (undergarments should never be seen).**
19. Hats, caps, sweatbands, or other head coverings are not to be worn in the buildings or on the grounds of the school except for medical reasons as prescribed by a physician. Head coverings as part of a religious belief will be allowed if there is sufficient proof the student is a practicing member of the religious sect. Head coverings may be worn if authorized by the faculty and/or administration, if it is part of a uniform (i.e., wearing a full baseball uniform during games or practice) or as deemed necessary.
20. Specific outfits designated for extracurricular activities and decisions concerning any questionable clothing will be left up to the discretion of the principal.
21. Local principals or their designee have the power and discretion to make all decisions on their campus.



**DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS CODE OF DISCIPLINE**  
(DCS Policy JS)

Specific provisions of the Code include:

1. A parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child enrolled in the DeSoto County Schools shall be responsible financially for his or her minor child's destructive acts against school property or persons.
2. A parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child enrolled in the DeSoto County Schools may be requested to appear at school by the school attendance officer or the principal, for a conference regarding the destructive acts of their child, or for any other discipline conference regarding the acts of the child.
3. Any parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child enrolled in the DeSoto County Schools who refuses or willfully fails to attend such discipline conference specified in paragraph (2) of this section may be

summoned by proper notification by the superintendent of schools or the school attendance officer and be required to attend such discipline conference.

4. A parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child enrolled in the DeSoto County Schools shall be responsible for any criminal fines brought against such student for unlawful activity occurring on school grounds or buses.
5. Any parent, guardian or custodian of a compulsory school age child who
  - a. fails to attend a discipline conference to which such parent, guardian or custodian has been summoned under the provisions of this section, or
  - b. refuses or willfully fails to perform any other duties imposed upon him or her under the law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction shall be fined not to exceed an amount provided by law.
6. The DeSoto County Schools shall be entitled to recover damages in an amount not to exceed an amount as provided by law, plus necessary court costs, from the parents of any minor (7-17) who maliciously and willfully damages or destroys property belonging to this school district. However, this section shall not apply to parents whose parental control of such child has been removed by court order or decree.
7. As an alternative to suspension, a student may remain in school by having the parent, guardian or custodian, with the consent of the student's teacher or teachers, attend class with the student for a period of time specifically agreed upon by the teacher and school principal. If the parent, guardian or custodian does not agree to attend class with the student or fails to attend class with the student, the student shall be suspended in accordance with this Code.

## **CODE OF DISCIPLINE GRADES K-12**

### **Student Conduct:**

#### Acts of Misconduct

These acts of misconduct include those student behaviors which disrupt the orderly educational process in the classroom or on the school grounds including the following:

#### **Level I**

- 1 – 1 Tardiness
- 1 – 2 Running and/or making excessive noise in the hall or building
- 1 – 3 Inappropriate personal contact including but not limited to pushing and shoving, inappropriate gestures and public displays of affection, recklessness, or any inappropriate contact which does not result in physical harm, or any additional contact which the principal determines to be in this level.
- 1 – 4 In unauthorized area without pass (halls, etc.)
- 1 – 5 Dress code violation
- \* 1 – 6 Displaying any behavior which is disruptive to the orderly process of education

#### Disciplinary Action

##### First Violation

Minimum: Teacher-Student Conference  
Maximum: Teacher-Student-Parent Conference

##### Repeated or Flagrant Violation

Minimum: Mandatory Student -Parent-Administrator Conference (Home Suspension)  
Maximum: Corporal Punishment, ALC, detention, and/or school suspension

- \* Students, who after having a student-teacher conference, a teacher-student-parent conference, home suspension, Teacher Support Team interventions, continue displaying behavior which is disruptive to the orderly process of education, can be suspended from school, pending a disciplinary hearing.

## Level II

- \* 2 – 1 Leaving the school grounds without permission
- \* 2 – 2 Skipping class
- \* 2 – 3 Insubordination- refusal to follow written or verbal school rules after receiving specific directions from a person in authority including, but not limited to breaking school or classroom rules, failure to respond to staff request, refusal to complete assigned task, or exhibiting disrespect towards adults
- \* 2 – 4 Possession and/or use of a tobacco product or substances used as smoking material, including electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vapes, vaporizers, or any alternative nicotine product
- \* 2 – 5 Exhibiting any hostile physical or verbal actions
- \* 2 – 6 Bullying (as defined in Board Policy JDDA)
- \* 2 – 7 Unauthorized use of personal electronic devices (as defined in Board Policy IJBA).
- 2 – 8 Cheating on tests or exams (The grade “0” will be assigned regardless of other punishment.)

### Disciplinary Action

#### First Violation

Minimum: Administrator-Conference, ALC, mandatory student-parent-administrator conference, corporal punishment

Maximum: School suspension (one to three days)

#### Repeated or Flagrant Violation

Minimum: School suspension (three days)

Maximum: School suspension (three days) and/or ALC for up to ten (10) days and/or Teacher Support Team interventions

\* Students who, after having a student-teacher conference, a teacher-student-parent conference, a mandatory student-parent-administrator conference, and Teacher Support Team interventions, continue displaying behavior which is disruptive to the orderly process of education, can be suspended from school, pending a disciplinary hearing.

\*\* Additional disciplinary action for unauthorized use of personal electronic devices (as defined in Board Policy IJBA):

1st Offense: First offense will result in confiscation of the device and parental contact. The electronic device will be returned at the end of the school day to the student or his/her parent/guardian as determined by the building principal.

2nd Offense: School will take and keep device for 5 school days. After the device is retained for 5 school days, the electronic device will be returned to the student or his/her parent/guardian as determined by the building principal.

3rd Offense: School will take and keep device for 10 school days. After the device is retained for 10 school days, the electronic device will be returned to the student or his/her parent/guardian as determined by the building principal.

4<sup>th</sup> Offense: School will take and keep device for 20 school days. After the device is retained for 20 school days, the electronic device will be to the student or his/her parent/guardian as determined by the building principal.

## Level III

- 3 – 1 Fighting
- 3 – 2 Gambling
- \* 3 – 3 Theft or possession of stolen property
- 3 – 4 Acts which threaten the safety and well-being of students and/or staff: engaging in any behavior (by word or act) that encourages, incites, or instigates threatening or aggressive acts which can create the risk of harm to another person.
- 3 – 5 Extortion- use of intimidation, coercion or force
- \* 3 – 6 Vandalism of personal and/or school property



- 3 – 7 Using profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, or offensive language and/or gestures, and/or possession of obscene, indecent, immoral or offensive materials
- 3 – 8 Inappropriate sexual conduct, including unwelcomed sexual contact, indecent exposure, or transferring sexually suggestive images through personal electronic devices

Action

First Violation

Minimum: School suspension from one to three days, ALC, corporal punishment  
 Maximum: School suspension (three days), report to authorities when applicable

Repeated or Flagrant Violation

Minimum: School suspension (three days), ALC (ten days), and/or Levels 3-4 and 3-8 Teacher Support Team interventions  
 Maximum: School suspension (three days) and possible assignment to DeSoto County Alternative Center pending the results of a disciplinary hearing.

\* For theft or vandalism restitution shall be made regardless of other punishment

**Level IV**

- 4 – 1 Possession, use or under the influence of alcohol, synthetic drugs, counterfeit drugs, illegal drugs, narcotics, controlled substance(s) or paraphernalia.
- 4 – 2 Assault on a student. Assault is defined as purposely or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury (including pain or discomfort) to another.
- 4 – 3 Assault on a school employee. Assault is defined as purposely or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury (including pain or discomfort) to another.
- 4 – 4 Using profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, threatening or offensive language and/or gestures directly to a staff member.

Any student in violation of the above shall be suspended by the principal for three days and ordered to appear for a disciplinary hearing before a District Hearing Officer.

Disciplinary Action

Minimum: Assignment to the DeSoto County Alternative Center and a report will be made to the appropriate law enforcement authorities  
 Maximum: Expulsion

Students below grade 6 may be given other punishment.

**Level V**

- 5 – 1 Weapon(s) possession or use

Disciplinary Action

Minimum: Possession other than gun will result in assignment to the DeSoto County Alternative Center and a

report will be made to the appropriate law enforcement authorities

Maximum: Possession of a fire arm/gun or use of other weapon will result in expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year (under certain circumstances expulsion can be from the student's assigned school to the DeSoto County Alternative Center)

For students below grade 6, the hearing officer may recommend other punishment if the behavior does not require expulsion and the student is likely to benefit from remediation

5 – 2 Sale or distribution, or conspiring to sell counterfeit drugs, synthetic drugs, illegal drugs/alcohol, narcotics or controlled substance(s)

Disciplinary Action

Minimum: Assignment to the DeSoto County Alternative Center and a report will be made to the appropriate law enforcement authorities

Maximum: Expulsion

For students below grade 6, the hearing officer may recommend other punishment if the behavior does not require expulsion and the student is likely to benefit from remediation

5 – 3 Students are prohibited from wearing, displaying, or possessing in any manner on school property or at school-sponsored events clothing, apparel, accessories, drawings, or messages associated with any gang or social club that is associated with criminal activity, as defined by law enforcement agencies.

Disciplinary Action

Minimum: Mandatory student/parent/resource officer/administrator meeting to investigate situation and determine proper discipline consequence

Repeated: Assignment to the DeSoto County Alternative Center

Maximum: Expulsion for repeated violations and/or gang activity that includes but is not limited to:

- Acts which disrupt the process of orderly education
- Recruitment with use of intimidation
- Tagging or marking
- Assault
- Battery

For students below grade 6, the hearing officer may recommend other punishment if the behavior does not require expulsion and the student is likely to benefit from remediation.

In addition to these penalties, provisions of the Mississippi Criminal Code are applicable to illegal behavior. Principals are required to report illegal activities to the police. Students committing any crime or involved with any criminal behavior are subject to arrest by local law enforcement.

The DeSoto County Board of Education permits individual schools to adopt additional regulations governing actions not covered by Conduct Code. However, such additional regulations may neither substitute for nor negate any of the provisions, in spirit or intent of the Conduct Code, and **must be approved in writing by the School Superintendent.**

DUE PROCESS

In cases where the imposition of punishment is for a suspension of three (3) days or less, the student will be orally

informed of the charges lodged against him. The student shall have a right to respond and refute these charges. There may be a delay between the time that “notice” is given and the time of the parent/student right to respond. A parent will be notified of the suspension by telephone, if possible, and in writing. The student’s parent/guardian has a right to discuss this matter further and have the charge and punishment explained by the administration along with all other rights provided by board policy.

### **DISCIPLINARY HEARING**

When a student appears before a disciplinary hearing, the student will be subject to additional punishment up to and including suspension of more than three (3) days, assignment to an alternative educational setting for more than ten (10) days, or an expulsion from school.

For additional information on due process and disciplinary hearings, please refer to Board Policy JDD – Disciplinary Procedures.

### **ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT PROCEDURES**

After a student is referred for consideration of placement at DeSoto County Alternative Center (DCAC), the District Review Board and Transition Team will determine appropriate placement for the student. Once a student is accepted into DCAC, the District Review Board and Transition Team will develop an Individualized Instruction Plan (IIP) for each student. The plan will follow the program and class schedule of the home school. DCAC follows the frameworks that are established by the state of Mississippi for the subject matter to be taught in each course. Certified personnel will send a daily feedback sheet home that requires a parent signature for all students attending DCAC.

An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) committee meets to determine every change of placement for our special education students. Students with special education rulings follow their IEP while at DCAC.

Parents are notified of the recommendation for placement at DCAC during the disciplinary hearing. The home school will contact the parent once acceptance is granted by the District Review Board. All parents and students will meet with a DCAC administrator to discuss the DCAC program and requirements. The minimum time that is required to complete DCAC is 30 school days, but the stay can be longer if the student does not progress properly.

The District Review Board consists of school-level administrators, district-level administrators, and counselors as determined by the Director of Pupil Services.

### **OBMS Electronic Device Policy**

#1 Cellphones must be powered off and out of sight at all times.

#2 If a teacher wants to allow her students to use their cellphones/devices during class she must receive approval from administration. The plan for use must be indicated on her weekly lesson plans.

#3 Students are allowed to use tablets 7” or larger (ipads, nooks, kindles, etc...) for the purpose of reading during in-class reading times.

#4 Students are never allowed to text, make phone calls, take pictures, use social media, listen to music, watch videos, or record videos with any device during school hours.

\*During times when cellphone use is allowed, a sign will be placed on the classroom door indicating use is acceptable so students will know once they enter the classroom. Also, administrators will also be informed.

## **DEFINITIONS OF SUSPENSIONS**

Students may be suspended from school at the discretion of the principal for improper conduct. Parents must be informed in writing about the suspension and the reason(s) for the suspension must be given. Suspensions are also reported to the Superintendent of Education and to the Board of Education.

**Mandatory Parent Conference** A home suspension is the suspension of a student from school until he/she returns with a parent to discuss with the appropriate administrator the problem which has resulted in the suspension. It may be cleared on the day assigned if the appointment can be scheduled. Principals are expected to clear the majority of home suspensions the following day; thereby eliminating the student's loss of class time. Home suspensions should be cleared by the principal who issued it, following a personal conference with one or both parents. The student may return to school after one day if the home suspension is properly cleared. The student may return to school after three days if the home suspension is not properly cleared.

**School Suspension** A school suspension is for a period of one to three days. Suspensions of more than three days can be issued by a disciplinary committee or a school district hearing officer. The student is responsible for completing all assignments missed due to home or school suspensions. In most cases, a home suspension should be issued prior to this action.

**Disciplinary Committee Suspension** A disciplinary committee suspension is a suspension from school imposed by the principal or his/her designee pending a hearing and possible additional punishment by an appropriate hearing officer. This suspension will be imposed only after procedures for a short term suspension have been met.

**Board Suspension** A board suspension shall be issued in cases of vandalism where this action is deemed necessary by the principal. Procedures for the issuance of the board suspension and clearing the suspension are described in Policy JDD.

## **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT OF STUDENTS** *(DCS Policy JCBC)*

Students in the DeSoto County School District are to be protected from sexual harassment. This protection includes any combination of relationships including student to student, staff member or teacher to student or harassment from any adult or other student.

Further, the DeSoto County School District prohibits sexual harassment of or by any student. This policy applies to conduct during and relating to school and school-sponsored activities. Sexual harassment is inappropriate behavior and offensive. Any student who engages in the sexual harassment of anyone in the school setting may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any employee of the DeSoto County School District who has any inappropriate sexual behavior will not only be subject to punitive measures up to and including termination but also subject to prosecution in accordance with the Mississippi Codes.

## **COMPLAINTS OF BULLYING AND HARASSING BEHAVIOR** *(DCS Policy JDDA)*

Students and employees in the DeSoto County School District are protected from bullying or harassing behavior by other students or employees. It is the intent of the Board and the administration to maintain an environment free from bullying and harassing behavior. This complaint procedure provides a process for filing, processing, and resolving complaints of such conduct. Adherence to these procedures is mandatory. The failure of any person to follow these procedures will constitute a waiver of the right to pursue a complaint at any level, including review by the Board.

### **Definitions**

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of personal harm or damage to personal property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits.

A “hostile environment” means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person’s presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

### **Procedures for Processing a Complaint**

Any student, school employee, or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, or has witnessed or has reliable information that a student, school employee, or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor or other school official. The report shall be made promptly after the alleged act or acts occurred. The school official shall complete a “Bullying/Harassing Behavior” complaint form which shall include the name of the reporting person, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the name of the victim(s) of the misconduct, the names of any witnesses and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the complaint. The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints against the principal shall be made to the superintendent.

The complaint shall be investigated promptly. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The District official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties after the initial receipt of the complaint by the District.

### **GANG POLICY (DCS Policy JCBB)**

The DeSoto County School District prohibits gang activity. Students who engage in gang activity will be subject to discipline pursuant to the District’s Code of Discipline, up to and including possible expulsion.

A “gang” is defined as a group that initiates, advocates, or promotes illegal activities, activities that threaten the safety or well being of persons or property on school grounds, or at supervised school functions, or activities that are harmful to the education process.

Prohibited “gang activity” includes, but is not limited to:

1. Soliciting students to become gang members;
2. Participating in gang initiation or other gang ceremonies;
3. Deliberately wearing, displaying, or possessing prohibited gang symbols;
4. Engaging in gang-related violence or threats of violence;
5. Threatening others, including threats by brandishing a weapon or a replica of a weapon on school campuses, or at supervised school functions; or
6. Engaging in any behavior undertaken in such a manner as to be reasonably likely to incite violence or endanger persons or property.

Prohibited “gang symbols” may include any type of clothing decoration, jewelry, patches, bandanas, gang names, depiction of gang signs or symbols, and/or body signal/movement which is recognized as denoting a gang or is a sign, signal or movement utilized in connection with gang communications. School officials will keep a booklet containing known “gang symbols” in each school office. Students and parents who may have questions regarding this policy should contact the school principal for further clarification of any part of the policy.

Students may be disciplined for engaging in any activity prohibited by this policy including the prohibited “gang activity” enumerated in the above list. District officials will cooperate with local law enforcement to provide the school with gang information to aid in the prevention of violence, gangs, and drugs in our schools. This information shall include, but is not limited to: gang names, colors, symbols, signals, and gestures associated with

gangs (all of which are prohibited gang activity). School officials will publish notice of these prohibited names, signals, gestures, colors and symbols in the school office as made available by local police department and government authorities or otherwise made known to school officials. The school will continually update the information posted in the school office relating to prohibited gang symbols and gang activity. Notice of updated prohibited gang activity and/or gang symbols will be maintained in the school office and the District website.

Each school shall make regular announcements to the student body advising that gang activity and gang symbols are strictly prohibited.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, nothing herein prohibits the display of recognized religious symbols such as the Star of David or the Crescent or the Cross unless these or other religious symbols are altered or augmented in some way.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, wearing of clothing or particular colors in and of itself is not prohibited unless the clothing (color or otherwise) is worn in combination with other prohibited gang signs or symbols. The wearing or displaying in any manner of gang names however, is prohibited.

## **INTERROGATIONS, SEARCHES, AND ARRESTS** *(DCS Policy JCAB)*

### **Interviews**

Principals or his/her representative in the schools of the DeSoto County School District may question students regarding matters incident to school without limitation. The School Resource Officer (SRO) is an employee of either the DeSoto County Sheriff's Department or one of the city police departments. The SRO, present at the request of the school for the continued maintenance of safety and order, may assist with the interview as necessary regarding school related issues as determined by the Principal or his/her representative and parents will be contacted if the student is subsequently taken into custody or if the student is subject to disciplinary action.

If a Department of Human Services (DHS) worker enters the campus requesting to interview a student attending the school, the Principal or his/her representative shall be notified. Access to interview shall be granted and the personnel of the DeSoto County School District shall cooperate with the investigating DHS worker. The DHS worker shall be requested to establish proper identification.

If the DHS worker or Law Enforcement Officer directs that parents are not to be contacted because the interview is related to criminal activity of the parent(s)/guardian(s), the school official shall comply with the request. In all other circumstances, the parents should be contacted and this contact is to be documented.

### **Searches**

School officials have the right to search and seize property, including school property temporarily assigned to students, when there is reason to believe that some material or matter detrimental to health, safety and welfare of the student(s) exists.

Items provided by the DeSoto County School District for storage (e.g., lockers, desks) or personal items are subject to its control and supervision. Students have no reasonable expectancy of privacy, and lockers desks, etc., may be inspected at any time with or without reason, or with or without notice, by school personnel.

Disrobing of a student is overly intrusive for purposes of most student searches and is improper without gaining permission from the principal, from the parent and without gaining express concurrence from the DeSoto County School District attorney.

### **Arrests**

When a student is subject to arrest regarding incidents unrelated to the school, the following procedure shall be followed. The Law Enforcement Officer shall be requested to establish proper identification. Based on a

warrant, subpoena, or other similar document expressing the intent to take a student into custody, the Principal or his/her representative shall cooperate with the law enforcement officer in locating the child within the school. The Principal or his/her representative should attempt to contact parents and respond to parental inquiries about the arrest or may, if necessary, explain the relinquishment of custody by the school to the arresting officer. The Principal may also disclose the location, if known, where the student will be held pending further action by law enforcement officials.

### **BUS CONDUCT** **(DCS Policy JCDAD)**

The DeSoto County School District Transportation Department operates as an extension of the school(s) and student conduct is governed accordingly. Students who do not conduct themselves properly are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the DeSoto County School District policies. Punishments may include but are not limited to suspension and expulsion from school or from the bus for misconduct on the bus.

#### **Responsibilities**

1. Bus drivers and aides are responsible and authorized to maintain student order and discipline at all times.
2. Principals are responsible and authorized to administer any and all necessary student discipline. Principals shall also ensure that all bus rules are communicated to eligible riders.
3. Students have the responsibility to obey all policies and procedures established by the DeSoto County Board of Education, their respective schools and the Transportation Department while waiting for, boarding, riding or off-loading a DeSoto County School Bus.
4. The Transportation Department shall post rules clearly on every school bus and shall include but not be limited by the rules listed below.

#### **Rules of Conduct**

1. Be waiting at your stop 5 minutes early.
2. If you need to cross the street, wait for traffic to stop; driver will motion to you when it is safe to pass in front of the bus to load or unload.
3. Obey the bus driver.
4. No unauthorized items on bus. (No weapons, tobacco, combustibles, pets, large items, etc.)
5. Be nice and courteous.
6. Keep the bus clean.
7. No profanity and no fighting.
8. Keep hands and head inside of bus.
9. Do not throw anything, anywhere.
10. Stay in your seat. Driver may assign seats.
11. No eating or drinking.
12. Damage to bus interior may result in student paying for damage.
13. Emergency door/windows may only be opened in case of emergency.
14. Do not distract or bother the driver through loud talking or misbehavior.
15. Report any problems you may have to the bus driver as soon as possible.
16. School District and drivers are not responsible for articles left on the bus.
17. Use or possession of gang graffiti, gang drawings, gang writings, gang dress, or gang activity of any kind may result in expulsion from school.



#### **Failure to comply with the above**

Penalty will be at the principal's discretion depending on circumstances. Punishment may be up to and including daily or permanent suspension of bus privileges.

**SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**  
*(DCS Policy JBC)*

**General Eligibility**

1. Except for students who have been legally transferred, each minor child seeking to enroll in the district shall be a resident. All students shall register at the school they are assigned to attend.
2. Any new student enrolling in the DeSoto County School District or any continuing student whose residence has changed shall be accompanied to enrollment by the custodial parent/legal guardian, who shall register the child for admission. The accompanying adult shall be required to verify his/her residence as part of the registration process. At the time of enrollment, the student's social security number will be requested. If no social security number is available to the district, the student's Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) number will be used to identify and track the student.
3. No child will be allowed to enroll in any grade (K-12) or attend any school without a certified birth certificate. No child (K-12) shall be allowed to enroll in or attend any school without a valid immunization certificate. Valid certificates include:
  - a. Form 121 – Certificate of Compliance (**All shots must be on 1 form**)
  - b. Form 121-A – Medical Exemption Certificate
  - c. Form 121-T- Temporary Compliance Certification(not valid if expired). **All students entering the seventh grade must have documentation (short record) from a physician verifying that they have received a recent Tday vaccination (at age seven or later).** This includes new students, current students and transfer students in both public and private schools.

**Residence Verification Procedure**

The definition of residence for school attendance purposes is: the student physically resides full time, weekdays/nights and weekends, at a place of domicile located within the limits of DeSoto County and is in a designated school attendance area that corresponds to the domicile. Students must establish residency in the following manner:

***Students New to DeSoto County and Living With Parent/Legal Guardian*** -- must provide the following 2 documents as verification of address. A document with a post office box as an address will not be accepted. Affidavits are not accepted as a proof of residency.

1. Mortgage documents or property deed, filed Homestead Exemption Application Form, a tax receipt or apartment/home lease
2. A current utility bill, government mailing, or Desoto County Automobile registration receipt

***Returning Students*** -- must provide proofs of residency on a yearly basis in order to complete the registration process. Proofs required will be as follows:

1. Current mortgage document, property deed, filed homestead exemption application form, a tax receipt or apartment/home lease only if any changes have been made on the previous presented agreement.
2. Current utility bill, government mailing, or Desoto County Automobile registration receipt

**COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**  
*(DCS Policy JBA)*

DeSoto County School District shall comply with the requirements of the "Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law" (**Ms Code 37-13-91**). Appropriate reports as required by law shall be provided to the Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement.

**Compulsory School-Age Child**

A "compulsory-school-age child" is a child who has attained or will attain the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year. **Ms Code 37-13-91 (2) (f)**

Compulsory-school-age children must be enrolled in school unless the child is:

- a. Physically, mentally or emotionally incapable of attending school as determined by the appropriate school official based upon sufficient medical documentation;



- b. Enrolled in and pursuing a course of special education, remedial education or education for handicapped or physically or mentally disadvantaged children; or
- c. Being educated in a legitimate home instruction program. **Ms Code 37-13-91 (3)**

### **Reports**

If a compulsory-school-age child has not been enrolled in school within fifteen (15) calendar days after the first day of the school year or if a child has accumulated five (5) unlawful absences during the school year, the superintendent shall, within two (2) school days or within five (5) calendar days, whichever is less, report, on the form provided by the State Department of Education, the absences to the school attendance officer. The superintendent, or his designee, shall report any student suspensions or student expulsions to the school attendance officer when they occur. **Ms Code 37-13-91 (6)**

School districts shall maintain accurate records documenting enrollment and attendance in a manner that allows the State Department of Education to make an assessment of changes in enrollment and attendance, including dropout rates.

The State Department of Education shall compile annually a statewide report on school district effectiveness in reducing absentee problems, dropout rates, and other attendance-related problems during the previous school year, incorporate the information into the annual Mississippi Report Card required by Section 37-3-53, Mississippi Code of 1972, on school district performance and offer technical assistance and coordination services to assist districts in improving performance.

### **ABSENCES AND EXCUSES (DCS Policy JBD)**

An "unlawful absence" is an absence during a school day that is not valid for temporary nonattendance. Days missed from school due to disciplinary suspension shall not be considered an "excused" absence under this section. Each of the following shall constitute a valid excuse for temporary nonattendance, provided satisfactory evidence of the excuse is provided to the superintendent or his designee:

1. Attendance at an authorized school activity with the prior approval of the superintendent of the school district or his designee.
2. Illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
3. When isolation is ordered by the county health officer, by the State Board of Health or appropriate school official.
4. Death or serious illness of a member of the immediate family, which includes children, spouse, grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters.
5. A medical or dental appointment with prior approval of the superintendent or his designee, except in the case of emergency.
6. Attendance at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
7. Observance of a religious event, with the prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. (Approval should not be withheld unless, in the professional judgment of the superintendent or his designee, the extent of the absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
8. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel including vacations or other family travel, with the prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. (Approval shall be based on the professional judgment of the superintendent or his designee but shall not be withheld unless the extent of the absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
9. Other conditions sufficient to warrant nonattendance, with prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. However, no absences shall be excused when any student suspensions or expulsions circumvent the intent and spirit of the compulsory attendance law. **Ms Code 37-13-91 (4)**

### **Middle School Students (6-8)**

Seven (7) absences may be excused by a note from a parent/guardian.

**Any** additional absence after the seven (7) excused by a parent/guardian note **must** be excused by a note from a doctor or other documentation excusing said absence.

Any documentation being given for excuse of absence(s) **must** be submitted to the principal or his/her designee within three school days of returning to school, unless granted an exception by the principal for extenuating circumstances.

When a student has exceeded five (5) unexcused absences, the DeSoto County Attendance Officer shall be notified in writing within two (2) days by the school principal or his/her designee.

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER**

The superintendent and principals shall cooperate with the school attendance officer employed by the State Department of Education, pursuant to **Ms Code 37-13-85**. Standard 16 is as follows:

16. The school district implements procedures for monitoring and reporting student absences as specified in the Mississippi Compulsory Attendance Law. **Ms Code 37-13-91**

### **TARDY POLICY**

Our tardy policy is based on one semester.

#### **Morning Tardies**

1. School begins at **7:10**. Any student who is not in the classroom door when the bell stops ringing, is considered tardy.
2. Tardies 1 through 5 – No punishment and no parent notification.
3. Tardy 6 – Parent will be notified.
4. Tardy 8 – Mandatory Parent Conference
5. Tardy 9 through indefinite – Student will be placed in ALC for the remainder of that day.
6. Parents may present themselves to the principal or appropriate staff 3 times for an excuse if their child is late and it is not the child's fault, no exceptions.
7. Three tardies will be considered as one absence for each class.

#### **Period Tardies**

1. Students who are not in the room when the bell stops ringing are tardy.
2. Students are allowed 3 tardies with no punishment and no parent notification.
3. On the 4<sup>th</sup> tardy – Parents will be notified.
4. On the 6<sup>th</sup> tardy, students will be assigned a choice of corporal punishment or cafeteria duty.
5. On the 9<sup>th</sup> tardy, students will receive a mandatory parent conference.
6. On the 12<sup>th</sup> and consecutive tardy, students will be given 2 days of ALC.

### **MAKE-UP WORK POLICY**

When a student is absent from school (excused or unexcused), the number of days allowed to complete any required make-up work is commensurate with the number of days missed to a maximum of five (5) days.

For example, if a student is absent from school for one (1) day, the student has one (1) day to complete the required make-up assignments. If the student is absent for five (5) days, he/she will have five (5) days to complete his/her make-up work. If the student is absent for twelve (12) days, the student has five (5) days to complete the missed work.

The principal has the discretion to allow additional time or limit the number of required assignments in extreme situations.

## EXEMPTION POLICY (Grades 6-8)

Students in grades 6-8 may be exempt from final exams if the following criteria are met:

1. The student has an eighty-five (85) or above semester average in the course;
2. The student has not missed more than two (2) days/periods (excused or unexcused) prior to days designated for exams;
3. Students assigned to an Alternative Learning Class (ALC) for more than five (5) days, students who are suspended and/or students who are placed in DeSoto County Alternative Center (DCAC) at any time during a semester will forfeit the right to exemption from final exams for the semester in which the infraction occurred.

## GRADING POLICY (DCS Policy IHA)

### Minimum Standards

Students must demonstrate mastery of the content required for each grade/course. Content for grades 6-12 is determined by Mississippi College and Career Standards for Language Arts and Mathematics and the Mississippi Content Frameworks for all remaining subjects.

### Monitoring Student Progress

Content for grades 6 – 12 is determined by Mississippi College and Career Standards for Language Arts and Mathematics and the Mississippi Content Frameworks for all remaining subjects.

The following guidelines apply to all subject areas:

1. The DeSoto County School District requires that the Mississippi Curriculum Framework competencies and objectives be included in the scope and sequence of every subject area. The school district provides a curriculum manual for each teacher.
2. Required lesson plans are developed and include all of the components outlined and approved by the school district.

### DeSoto County Schools Grading Scale

A – 90 - 100	C – 70 - 79	F – 0 - 64
B – 80 - 89	D – 65 - 69	

### Grades 6-8

Each semester grade is computed by averaging the grades for that semester. Ninety percent (45%-first nine weeks; 45%-second nine weeks) of the grade will be a compilation of the grades that the teacher has for the student in his/her gradebook including but not limited to formative assessments, quizzes, homework, classwork, unit tests, etc. Ten percent of the grade will be the grade received on the nine-week/semester exam. The final grade for a course will be computed by averaging the two semester grades.

The grading policy for students with disabilities with current Individualized Education Plans (IEP's) will be consistent with policy IHFA.

## PROMOTION (DCS Policy IHE)

In order to be promoted, a student must meet the following requirements:

**6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Earn a minimum yearly average of 65 in Reading, Mathematics, English, Science, and Social Studies

**Extended School Year – ESY – Summer School**

A student who has not completed the learning objectives of one or two courses/subjects shall be allowed to enroll in the extended school year program. A student failing more than two courses/subjects will not be allowed to enroll in the extended school year program.

**TEXTBOOK FINE AND DAMAGE REPLACEMENT**  
*(DCS Policy IFAC)*

All textbooks are the property of the State of Mississippi and the public school system. Books are to be treated with care, and students are encouraged to use book covers. No writing is permitted in any textbook. Fines are assessed for misuse or loss of a book. It is advisable for students not to lend their textbooks to others. The parent, guardian, or other person having custody of a child to whom textbooks are issued, will be liable for any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from normal use of such textbook. All textbooks must be returned to the issuing school when promoted, transferred, or when attendance is terminated.

*Fines for damages are as follows:*

<b>Damage</b>	<b>Fine</b>
Missing/Damaged Barcode .....	\$2.00
Writing/drawing/scribbling in book .....	\$1.00 per page up to price of book
Torn pages .....	\$3.00
Excess wear/damage but still usable .....	10% of cost of the book
Cover of book damaged .....	15% of cost of the book
Spine damaged .....	15% of cost of the book
Water damaged but still usable .....	25% of cost of the book
Broken binding .....	30% of cost of the book
Water damaged, not usable .....	Cost of the book
Pages missing, not usable .....	Cost of the book
Non-returned book .....	Cost of the book
Obscene writing or drawing on or in the book .....	Cost of the book

**Textbook Costs**

6 <sup>th</sup> Grade English .....	\$55.47	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science .....	\$51.99
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Literature.....	\$54.00	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies.....	\$49.97
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics (red).....	\$41.49	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade English .....	\$55.47
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics (new) .....	\$57.97	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Literature.....	\$54.00
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science.....	\$51.99	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science.....	\$74.97
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies.....	\$42.77	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade History.....	\$49.33
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade English .....	\$55.47	Algebra I .....	\$64.50
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Literature.....	\$54.00	Pre-Algebra.....	\$63.47
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics.....	\$58.97		

**SPORTS ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**  
*(DCS Policy IDFA)*

To be eligible to be a member of the school’s football, basketball, volleyball, soccer, and/or track team, a student must:

**Scholastic Requirments:**

All students will meet the Mississippi High School Activities Association scholastic requirement for participation in the interscholastic sports and activities.

1. Students must maintain a grade point average of at least 2.0 or “C” average in order to participate in interscholastic sports/activities. Grade point averages will be calculated on the conclusion of the first semester using the semester averages of all courses the student is taking. Students who do not have a 2.0 or “C” average for the first semester will be ineligible for the second semester.
2. At the end of the school year, each student’s grade point average for the year will be assessed. This assessment will reflect the average for the entire year using the final grades for each course. A student who does not have a grade point average of at least 2.0 or “C” average will be ineligible for fall semester.
3. High school eligibility begins when a student enters ninth grade. To be eligible for the fall semester, a student must be promoted to the ninth grade with at least an overall 2.0 or “C” average for all eighth grade courses.
4. A student may become eligible for the second semester only once during his/her high school career if he/she fails the year-end average the previous year by achieving at least an overall 2.0 or “C” average at the end of the semester.
5. The head coach or director has the discretion to implement more stringent academic requirements. However, he or she must have the approval of the principal and must inform the students and parent of these requirements at tryouts/auditions.

**Attendance Requirements:**

A student must attend school 63% of his or her school day in order to participate in interscholastic sports/ activities practices, performances, or games.

Recognizing that occasionally unavoidable situations may arise, the principal or his designee has the discretion to waive this requirement when necessary.

**TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOL PROPERTY  
(DCS Policy EBAB)**

The DeSoto County Board of Education bans the use of all tobacco products in all school buildings and property in the district and on all school vehicles by all persons at all times.

This ban extends to all employees, students, and patrons attending school-sponsored athletic events and meetings and to school-owned or operated vehicles and facilities. The board issues this ban in a sincere appeal to all employees, students and patrons to cooperate in helping to create within our facilities a truly healthy environment for all concerned.

The Federal code states that neither a person nor a federal agency shall permit smoking within any indoor facility owned or leased or contracted for and utilized by such person or agency for provision of routine or regular kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children.

Any failure to comply with a prohibition in this section shall be in violation of this section and any person subject to such prohibition who commits such violation may be liable to the United States for a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed \$1,000 for each violation, or may be subject to an administrative compliance order, or both. Each day a violation continues shall constitute a separate violation. In the case of any civil penalty under this section, the total amount shall not exceed the amount of Federal funds received by such person for the fiscal year in which the continuing violations occurred.

REF: Public Law 103-227, 20 US CODE 6083 Section 1043 (a) and (c-1) and (f-1)

**ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, an Asbestos Management Plan has been developed for every DeSoto County school that has asbestos-containing materials. The Board of Education has each school’s plan on file. The plans show the locations of asbestos-containing materials and provide for preventative

maintenance, response action recommendations, and periodic surveillance of asbestos-containing materials. All interested parties may review a school's plan at the school or the Board of Education building by contacting Robert Earl Phillips at 429-5271 or 523-2729.

### **THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The DeSoto County School District will not, except for "directory information," disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without the prior written consent from the parent or the eligible student. Prior consent of the parent or eligible student is required when the school releases such information to other school officials (including teachers), officials of another school district in which the students seeks to enroll, or other federal, state and educational agencies as enumerated in FERPA.

The schools in the district will, upon occasion, use/publish personally identifiable information including honor rolls, school annuals, athletic rosters, class rolls and school-sponsored club and activity rosters. Parents who wish their children to be excluded from this practice must advise, in writing, the principal of the school no later than fourteen (14) days after the student's enrollment or receipt of this notice whichever is later. Appeals regarding the decisions of school principals regarding educational records may be made to the Superintendent of DeSoto County Schools or designee.

FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the school district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Superintendent or designee a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Superintendent or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the Superintendent or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the DeSoto County School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

## **OBMS PROCEDURES**

---

### **AREAS OF INTEREST**

**Assembly Programs** Assemblies are held periodically in the school gymnasium, cafeteria, and auditorium. Students will give respect to all speakers and not talk while a speaker is talking. Good manners are always expected of students. Everyone is required to conduct himself/herself in a manner appropriate for the program being presented. Remember: Good behavior is expected – Great behavior will be rewarded!

**Car Riders** In the mornings and afternoons, parents are requested to drop off and pick up students in front of the school (Blocker Street). Maps will be distributed.

**Car Use** No student is allowed to drive a vehicle to or from the school grounds.

**Care of Property** School property is for the benefit and use of students. It is our desire that everyone will exhibit pride in helping to keep the buildings and furniture clean and in good repair. No one should write on school desks, walls, or doors. Any student who damages, defaces, or destroys school property will be punished, and the parents will be liable for all damages. Students should not be on school property before or after school hours unless involved in a school-sponsored activity.

**Checks** The school offices will be happy to accept checks for the amount of workbooks, fees, etc. We will not be able to cash checks and provide change for students. One returned check must be cleared with cash; then no other checks will be accepted.

**Dismissals from School** No student shall be permitted to leave school without prior approval of the principal and/or person in charge. Since dismissal constitutes an absence, it should be requested only in the case of an extreme emergency. Any pupil dismissed because of an emergency will be sent home immediately or to a doctor only after the parents have been notified. If the school is unable to contact parents or guardian and the emergency warrants such, the school reserves the right to take the pupil to a competent doctor or hospital. Except in cases of illness, a student will be allowed to leave only upon request made in person to the school office by a parent or guardian. No pupil is to leave the school grounds for any reason during the school day without permission from the principal.

**Head Lice** If a student has head lice 3 consecutive occasions during one school year, the principal or administrator will notify the county health department. The county health department will charge the student's parent a fee to recover its cost of treating the child. No student sent home with head lice will be allowed to return to school without proof of treatment.

### **Make-up Work**

*The following steps must be followed to request assignments for extended absences:*

1. A student must be absent for more than 3 days.
2. Parents must contact the school's receptionist.
3. Parents must give a 24 hour notice.
4. Assignments will be available at 2:30 in the main office the day following the request.



**Inclement Weather** In case of inclement weather, school closings will be announced on TV, radio, and the DeSoto County Schools website. We will also post any information immediately on the school's webpage. Please do not call the school. This will cause more chaos for the office staff. Days missed due to weather will be rescheduled. School is in session for 180 days.

**Insurance** A low cost accident insurance policy is offered through the school. All students who do not have other hospitalization are encouraged to take out this policy. Each student will receive an insurance form at the beginning of the school year. All athletes, cheerleaders, and dance team members are required to take this policy if they are not covered by other insurance.

**Late Arrivals and Early Departures** Students arriving after 7:15 a.m. must sign in with the attendance office and receive a tardy slip before they will be admitted to class. Any student wishing to leave school early must be checked out by a responsible adult. Proper identification must be presented. If the adult is someone other than the student's parent, a note from the parents will be required. These notes must be turned in to the office before school begins each morning.

**Lost and Found** All articles found in the school and on the campus should be turned in to the main office. It is strongly suggested that each student put his/her name in any outerwear worn to school.

**Medical** It is of the utmost importance that student registration forms are filled out in full so that parents can be reached in case of an emergency. The school will not have medication such as aspirin available for students. Medication is to be left with appropriate school personnel for distribution to students along with instructions regarding the nature of the medication and the appropriate dosage and time when the student should take the medicine. Students are not to carry medications in their backpacks without prior approval. Parents need to make prior arrangements for their children in case they become too ill to remain at school.

**Prohibited Items** Students are not to have skateboards on the school grounds at any time. Students are not to have wallets connected to chains on school property. **Olive Branch Middle School will not be responsible for loss or damage to stolen or confiscated items which are not allowed on school grounds (cell phones, iPods, and anything of similar nature not listed).**

**School Hours** School hours are from **6:55 a.m. until 2:50 p.m.** The school opens at 6:55 a.m. Students must leave the campus by 3:00 unless they are involved in a supervised activity. Office hours are from 7:00 a.m. until 3:25 p.m.

**School Lunches** A menu is posted monthly. Lunches with one container of milk are available in the school cafeteria for \$2.75. Extra milk (50¢) can be purchased separately.

The federal government provides free or reduced lunches (40¢) for those who qualify. Because the school lunch program is federally funded, there can be **no** charges. However, students can pay in advance for the week, month, semester, or year. The balance is kept on the computer. If you have a balance remaining at the end of the year, the computer system will roll the balance up to the next school year. No money is lost.

If you are moving within the school district, you must notify the **Food Service Department so that the money can properly be transferred to your child's new school.** If you are moving out of our school district, you may request for your refund in writing. The Food Service Department will need your child's name, previous school, and your new address so they will be able to mail your refund. You may contact the Food Service Department at (662) 429-5271.

Students will use the Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) ID instead of the social security number for all ID purposes (including the cafeteria). Parents will also have to use this **MSIS ID** when using [www.mealpayplus.com](http://www.mealpayplus.com).

Free lunch applications will be completed on a "family" sheet. It will not be necessary to fill out one per child in the same family. Students must know their MSIS Number in order to purchase a school lunch. That number will be given to them on the first day of school. If a student does not know his/her number, they will go to the end of the lunch line and be given time to remember it.

No student will be allowed to leave school to go out to eat. Parents may bring a student a sack lunch and drop it off for the child. **If a parent brings a lunch bought outside of school (ex. McDonald's) then the parent is required to stay and eat lunch with that child.**

**Solicitations by Students** The collection of money and the participation of the Desoto County Schools in the collection of money for various charitable and welfare purposes shall be subject to approval of the principal. All sales and money collections must be approved by the principal. Fund-raising activities are restricted to school organizations only.

**Special Education Service** Special Education services are provided in a variety of settings. Resource classes and self-contained classes are available. There is a community based program for those students requiring both academic and life skills. Services are also available for language/speech disorder, emotionally disabled, hearing or visually impaired, and physically disabled.

**Student Complaints and Grievances** Students have both the right and responsibility to express school related concerns and grievances to the administration. For the discussion and consideration of a grievance, any student or group of students should request a meeting time and place with a school principal. One faculty member of the student's choice may be present at such meetings. Such time and place will be designated upon request.

**Student Fees, Fines, and Charges** Fees may be charged to students to defray expenses for courses in which student use consumable items. All fees must be justified and itemized in writing by the teacher charging the fee. In addition, any fee must be approved by the building principal and must comply with DCS policy.

**Telephone Use** Due to the heavy volume of business in the school office, it is requested that parents do not call the school to have messages delivered to their children except in cases of emergency. Parents should try to make





arrangements with their children before they come to school. Students are to use the office telephone only in cases of real need, such as illness requiring a student to go home. Students will not be called from class to speak to a parent or to make a phone call to a parent.

**Visitors:** Parents, guardians, and members of the community are always welcome at our school. For reasons of safety, we do insist that all visitors sign in at the office upon arrival, obtain a visitor's pass, and sign out at the time of departure. No adult or other visitor should enter any classroom without specific permission from the principal.

## COMMUNICATION

**Auto Dialer** Auto Dialer is used as a communication tool to parents. Students who miss one or more periods will have their parent notified by phone that evening. Other notifications are reminders for report cards as well as state testing.

**Email** Teacher emails may be found on school website.

**Web Page** The Olive Branch Middle School web page consists of a wealth of great information about our school. On the website you can find information on principals and staff, cafeteria, calendars, bus routes, and announcements. You can also find pictures of our sports teams and organizations. Please feel free to visit and learn more about our school. [www.desotocountyschools.org/obm/](http://www.desotocountyschools.org/obm/)

**Remind:** Both the school and many classroom teachers use *Remind* to send out important announcements. You can sign up for the school's *Remind* on the school's webpage.

## SCHOOL SERVICES AND CLASSES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

**Band** The band classes are open to all interested students in grades six, seven, and eight.

**Carnegie Units** One Carnegie credit is given to students who successfully complete Accelerated Math 8, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math, 7<sup>th</sup> Compacted math, and Tech Foundations.



**Cheerleading** Cheerleading squad members are selected from eligible sixth and seventh graders at the end of each academic year for the following year's squad. In addition to ability, those who are selected must have an overall "C" average and acceptable behavior both at school and in the community.



**Counseling Services** Students and parents are encouraged to contact the school guidance counselors, who are available to help with a variety of student needs. Your counselor can provide information about subjects you need to take, about scheduling your classes, and about personal/social problems with which you need assistance.

**Dance Team** Dance Team members are selected from eligible sixth and seventh graders at the end of each academic year for the following year's team. In addition to ability, those who are selected must have an overall "C" average and acceptable behavior both at school and in the community.

**Fellowship of Christian Students** The Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) is a nondenominational organization. FCS membership is open to all students and has a student elected board. FCS builds positive leadership through school and community service.

**Gifted Education Program** Each middle school has a gifted education program for the intellectually gifted. Certified gifted education teachers focus on the areas of thinking skills, creativity, communication skills, research skills, and leadership skills. For specific information see the gifted education teachers or counselors.

**Library Services** A full-time librarian is available to help students learn reference skills. The librarian encourages students to read and has books that should be of special interest to all students. Students should treat books with care so that others may enjoy them. Fines will be charged for damaged, lost, or late books.

**Music/Chorus** Music/chorus classes are open to all interested students in grades seven and eight.

**Physical Education** In grades seven and eight, physical education (PE) classes are available as elective courses. In these classes, students are introduced to a variety of sports such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, aerobics, football, and track. Students who are in the football, basketball, volleyball, and/or track classes must be able to participate in the games and meets which are held in the afternoon, at night, and on Saturday depending on the sport.

**School Yearbooks** School yearbooks are published each year depicting every area of school life. Orders are taken for yearbooks during the fall for spring delivery.

**Sixth Grade Activities** Sixth grade students will participate in the following activities as part of the regular schedule: choir (by choice), band (by choice), P.E., health, study skills, computer and library/AR time (activities are subject to change).

**Robotics** Robotics provides an opportunity for students to learn about engineering, programming, web design/graphics, and teamwork. Students are selected from eligible 6th and 7th graders; those who are selected must have a genuine interest in the program, make a six-week commitment during competition season, have acceptable behavior, and maintain a "B" average. Competition occurs in the fall of the following year, so students will compete during 7th and 8th grades.

### STUDENT RECOGNITION

**Principal's List and Honor Roll** To be on the principal's list a student must earn all A's and satisfactory in conduct during a grading period. Students who earn A's and B's plus satisfactory in conduct are on the Honor Roll. Students who are on the Principal's List or the Honor Roll will be rewarded with a special event such as a breakfast, a lunch, or other types of rewards in their honor.

### EMERGENCY DRILLS AND PROCEDURES

Olive Branch Middle School has a crisis management plan for emergency situations. All students should thoroughly acquaint themselves with the following:

**Fire Drill and School Evacuation Plan** Students are to become familiar with the school evacuation plan which is posted in each classroom. The signal to evacuate will be given over the intercom. All students should immediately become silent and follow the teacher's directions.

**Tornado Drill** The following definitions and actions apply:

*Definitions:*

- Severe Weather Watch – weather conditions are such that severe thunderstorms may develop.
- Severe Weather Warning – severe thunderstorm has developed and will probably affect those areas stated in the weather bulletin.
- Tornado Watch – weather conditions are such that a tornado may develop.
- Tornado Warning – a tornado has been formed and sighted and may affect those areas stated in the bulletin.

*Actions:*

Tornado Warning – a tornado warning will be announced by the intercom, if electricity is not available, the notification to implement these tornado warning procedures will be announce verbally by the office personnel. Relocate all students to areas offering the greatest tornado resistance. Teachers will supervise their students and will keep their roll books with them. When reaching the designated shelter areas, students and teachers will be seated with their backs to the walls, knees drawn up, and head between their knees. Coats and jackets, when available, could be used to cover the head, arms, and legs so as to reduce injuries from flying pieces of glass and other debris.

## 20176-2018 Olive Branch Middle School Student Handbook Consent Form

**\* \* \* \* Please sign and return this form to your child's school. \* \* \* \***

Dear Parents,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all that you do to make Olive Branch Middle School a success. This handbook contains rules, regulations, discipline codes, and many other aspects that pertain to you and your child throughout the school year. Students are to keep these handbooks with them at all times during the day. The handbook also serves as a way for teachers to communicate with parents. Please make sure that you and your child take time to read through this handbook and sign the form below stating that you have read and understand the entire handbook and its rules and return it to the student's homeroom teacher. We thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,  
Olive Branch Middle School Staff

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the parent/legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Print Name)* *(Print Name)*  
have read and understand ALL the policies, procedures, and guidelines in the Olive Branch Middle School student handbook issued to my child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

### **DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT**

In an attempt to keep DeSoto County Schools safe for all students and staff, the following behaviors will not be tolerated:

- The use of possession of gang graffiti, gang drawings, gang writings, gang dress, or gang activity.
- Distribution of illegal drugs, prescription drugs, or substances dangerous to students (Distribution includes giving substances to students)
- Students involved in the above activities will be suspended for a period of no less than three (3) days, have a disciplinary hearing and may be expelled.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**\* \* Please sign and return this form to your child's school. \* \* \* \***

**This page has been left blank intentionally  
so it can be torn out and turned in with your signature.**