

## **WELCOME TO GREENEVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### **A MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATION**

Welcome to Greeneville Middle School! We are so excited that you are here and look forward to a great year with you. GMS is a great place to grow and learn and develop into productive, responsible young ladies and gentlemen. There are many varied activities and a challenging curriculum to help guide you and mold you into what you want to be. It is vital for the success of our school that you contribute your talents and abilities so we can reach our goal of being the best middle school in Tennessee.

This student handbook is for you to use as a reference concerning policies and procedures. It is important that you and your parents/guardians read and understand the information so everyone can work together to create a safe and caring learning environment. It takes all of us doing our part to continue to provide the best and safest educational experience for our students.

GMS will challenge you with a rigorous and relevant curriculum that will prepare you for high school and beyond. Our classes are designed to meet individual needs and to equip you with knowledge, skills, work ethic, and character for a successful future. We have high expectations for all students. We have a dedicated and professional staff that does what is best for students on a daily basis.

### **GMS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The GMS School Improvement Team has worked together to devise a plan for our school. These teams are made up of staff, parents, students, and community members. You may request a copy of the entire plan from the administration and a copy is on file in the office and library. This plan was submitted to the Tennessee State Department of Education and approved. The following are our beliefs at GMS:

1. Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
2. Teachers, parents, students, and the community share in the responsibility of nurturing and supporting each child.
3. A safe, comfortable, and educationally challenging environment promotes learning.
4. Character education, positive relationships, and mutual respect between students, staff, and parents contribute to the self-esteem of all.
5. The educational needs of all students are met through innovative instructional/teaching strategies that enhance learning at each student's developmental level.
6. The school will support the health education and wellness of each student by providing an environment that promotes healthy lifestyles.

The mission of Greeneville Middle School is to maximize learning opportunities in order to meet the Tennessee state performance goals, while encouraging students to adopt healthy lifestyles and be successful life-long learners.

Greeneville Middle School strives to provide each student with a foundation upon which habits of self-sufficiency, responsible citizenship, and life-long learning are built. Our teachers and staff will continue to take a holistic approach to meeting the needs of the middle grade child in compliance with the Tennessee Middle Grade Policy. As a Twenty-first Century School of Distinction, we are dedicated to utilizing technology to augment classroom instruction, thus increasing proficiency and offering a curriculum that prepares students to compete in a global society.

## **GREENEVILLE SCHOOLS IN ACTION**

The Greeneville Middle School G.S.I.A. exists to promote the welfare of our children. They sponsor many educational opportunities for our students, family activities, and gifts to our school. All parents are encouraged to join the G.S.I.A. and participate in the activities. We are always looking for new ideas. If you are interested, you can sign up at Open House or contact the main office for more information.

## **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

The Greeneville Middle School Teachers believe that parent-teacher communication is very essential in the educational process of children. Grade cards will be sent home four (4) times a year. Interim reports are also sent home at the mid-point of each nine-week grading period. Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled during the school year. Parents are encouraged to contact the school whenever the need arises. However, we would request that you call the school to schedule a conference, because our teachers' schedules do not allow time for drop-in conferences.

Teachers may use the website, Canvas, email, Remind 101, and social media to communicate homework and other important information as well. You can access the GMS web site at <http://gms.gcschools.net/> and you will find many other important links. GMS also has a Facebook page where announcements and achievements are posted. Powerschool is an online program that can be utilized on a weekly basis to check grades and attendance. See guidance for more information on Powerschool.

## **SAFETY**

Your child's safety is our number one priority at Greeneville Middle School and we are committed to continue providing a safe and caring environment for our students. We have several measures in place to achieve this goal, and they include the following:

- Utilization of our full-time School Resource Officer
- Principal and Assistant Principal visits to the classrooms to review expectations and responsibilities of students
- Guidance classes on topics such as bullying, harassment, conflict resolution and how to report concerns to staff
- Individual guidance services as needed
- Scheduled, unannounced locker searches
- Unannounced drug dog visits
- Visibility of staff during transition times
- All outside doors will remain locked
- Visitors will be screened by office staff

Our safety checklist also includes conducting fire drills, tornado drills, and lock down procedures so that students and staff will be prepared in case of a real event. Our safety committee is comprised of GMS staff and parents.

The following are some suggestions for parents and guardians that can help us achieve our safety goal:

- If your child reports a concern to you, please notify the administration or guidance office.
- Check your child's backpack, purse, or gym bag frequently.
- If you keep weapons or medication in the home, make sure they are locked up and secured.

- Monitor electronic and online communication

### **DISCIPLINE**

The Greeneville Middle School Staff believes that one of the most important lessons education should teach is discipline. While it does not appear as a subject, it underlies the whole educational structure; it is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency. Discipline is the key to good conduct and proper consideration of other people. With an understanding of the purposes of discipline in our school, students may form a correct attitude toward it. They will not only do their part in making our school an effective place of learning, but develop the habit of self-restraint which will make them better citizens in our society.

### **GMS Discipline Guidelines 2016-2017**

*All decisions on disciplinary actions will be approved or decided upon by the administration at GMS. The Greeneville Middle School discipline plan will be given to students during the first week of school for review and parent/student signature as well as being posted on the school website.*

### **DRESS CODE**

At Greeneville Middle School, appropriate dress and grooming are always encouraged. It is desirable that all students dress comfortably and in good taste. The home and school must cooperate closely in the dress code issue. School is the child's place of business, and children who are dressed in appropriate school clothing seem to do a better job. Students' attire shall not be disruptive to the learning environment or endanger the safety of themselves or others. We require students to follow our dress code policy. The administration will make the final decision on all dress code violations.

1. All shirts and tops must cover the stomach and back even when seated and should be able to be tucked into pants. Shirts and tops should not be low-cut or revealing. If sleeveless, the strap over the shoulder must be at least the width of a credit card. Underarm area should not be excessively exposed. Shirts with the arms and side cut out will not be allowed even if there is a tank top under it.
2. Hats, caps, visors, headbands, bandanas (on any part of the body), combs, picks, or miscellaneous head coverings may not be worn in the school building. Students may not wear sunglasses in the building.
3. Hair coloring or hairstyle must not draw undue attention to the individual. Administration will make final decision on whether or not it is appropriate.
4. Pants must be worn at the waist (no sagging). No skin should be shown above the kneecap if the student is wearing pants.
5. Patches, shirts, or any other wearable item bearing obscene, offensive, tasteless, sexual innuendo, or suggestive signs or symbols (weapons, alcohol, drugs), pictures, and words are not allowed.
6. Gang related attire is prohibited.
7. Shorts and skirts can be no shorter than 3 inches above the kneecap. If you can touch skin, they are too short.
8. Shoes must be worn at all times.

9. No industrial or pet chains or collars around the neck, wrists, or waist or chains attached to wallets.
10. Other than earrings, body piercing is prohibited.
11. Trench coats are prohibited.
12. Pajamas or house shoes are prohibited.
13. If leggings are worn, a skirt, shorts, or shirt must fully cover the front and rear of the student's midsection.

## **CELL PHONE AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY**

**The Greeneville Middle School Leadership team is currently rewriting the cell phone policy. The new plan will be given to students during the first week of school for review and parent/student signature.**

## **STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS**

It is the assertion of the Greeneville Middle School that students who attend GMS have certain rights, which are protected by the authorities of the school. These rights are inclusive of, but not limited to, the following:

- All students have the right to the best education that is possible.
- All students have the right to attend school without fear of bodily harm or verbal abuse.
- All students have the right to listen to teacher presentations without disruption.
- All students have the right to a drug free school.
- All students have the right to just and consistent treatment by administration and faculty.
- All students have the right to participate in the classroom and extracurricular activities under the guidelines of GMS policy.
- All students have the right to fair and accurate evaluation of classroom performance.
- All students have the right to have the ownership of their possessions respected and are responsible for their possessions.

## **PHONE USE**

Students are expected to make after-school plans before arriving at GMS each day. Student phone use will be limited. However, if a student feels it is necessary to call home, they will be allowed to do so during their lunch time. Phone calls from parents will not be forwarded to classrooms during instructional times. Our office staff will be glad to relay important messages.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for success in the school, as well as any vocation chosen in life. All teachers keep accurate records of attendance and tardiness. We would like for you be aware of the following rules concerning attendance. Parents are held legally responsible for keeping their children in school. If a child accumulates 5 or more unexcused absences during the school year, according to state laws this constitutes truancy. If your child(ren) reaches 5 unexcused days there can be a referral made to Greene County Juvenile Court Truancy Intervention Program. A written statement from a licensed physician may be required for each

absence after a student has been reported to the Truancy Board. Please refer to Greeneville City Schools Board of Education Policy 6.200 for the complete list of excused absences.

A parent/guardian may write parent notes for five days absent each semester. A doctor's statement is required after the third day in a row of absence, otherwise the absence will be considered unexcused and the Truancy Officer will be notified. The parent's notes and doctor's statements must be turned in the first day the child returns to school.

GMS classes begin at 7:40 a.m. as determined by the Greeneville City Board of Education. Five tardies in a semester to first period will count as unexcused absence and will result in disciplinary action. There are no excused tardies other than those accompanied by a doctor's note. GMS asks that parents try to schedule routine medical appointments (i.e. doctor, dental, etc.) after school hours.

Unexcused absences, caused by failure to bring a written excuse, may prohibit a student from making up work missed during an absence.

- (a) personal illness
- (b) illness in the family temporarily requiring help from the child
- (c) death in the family
- (d) recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of their faith
- (e) participation in a GMS sponsored activity away from the school.

#### **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS BEFORE DISMISSAL**

When students arrive on the school property at the beginning of the school day, they must remain on the school grounds until dismissed that afternoon, unless they are properly checked out of school by the parents. Students will be disciplined appropriately if they leave school grounds without permission. Parents should not check out their students early on a regular basis. Students who ride buses are not to leave the bus after boarding until they reach school in the mornings and their home in the afternoons. Any temporary change in a student's bus schedule must be made in writing to the principal's office. In order for a student to leave school in any other manner, the student's parents or guardians must check the student out through the main office.

#### **LEAVING SCHOOL AFTER DISMISSAL**

Students who ride a bus are to wait in the commons until their bus is called. Bus riders will board buses in the front of the building. Car riders will report to the back of the building for pickup. After 3:00pm, car riders should report to the front porch for their ride. Parents should make arrangements for their child to be picked up no later than 30 minutes after dismissal (3:10 pm). Students may not leave school grounds on foot unless they normally walk home and have a note giving them permission to do so.

#### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

The Greeneville Middle School Staff realizes that there are certain occasions when a child must be checked out of school early. We request that the child bring a note from home to the office so that we can alert the teachers to the fact that he/she will be checking out early. For the safety of your child, we require that the parent or guardian come into the office and sign his/her child out of school. Brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, etc., do not have the legal right to check your child out of school without written permission from the parent or guardian.

#### **SCHOOL BUS SERVICE**

**Riding the school bus is a privilege to students, but they can be removed at any time for disruptive and unsatisfactory conduct.** All students being transported are under the authority of the school bus driver and must obey the following regulations when riding the bus:

1. Transportation via school bus is not mandatory. Missing a bus does not constitute an excused absence from school. The principal and the bus driver share responsibility for the

- conduct of students who are transported on school buses. A student becomes ineligible for transportation when his/her behavior is unsafe and distracting to other students and the driver. Only the administration has the authority to suspend a student from riding a bus.
2. Bus drivers are authorized to assign seats, maintain order and discipline, and recommend suspension of transportation privileges. Students must cooperate with them at all times and follow their directions.
  3. Conduct on school buses: All transportation rules and regulations set forth by the state and county will be observed by students. The student will be expected to reimburse the school system for damage done to the bus. Suspension from the bus can result if the student is involved in fighting, discourteousness, vandalism, etc. At any time a student goes home in a manner different from his/her regularly assigned way, the student must have a written request, signed by the parent and approved by the office. This must be done in advance upon the student's arrival at school. The school will not permit students to make late arrangements by telephone to change transportation or unauthorized stops.
  4. The following are several guidelines for correct bus behavior:
    - (a) No eating or drinking on the bus.
    - (b) Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
    - (c) No throwing of objects on the bus or out of the bus.
    - (d) No climbing over seats or standing while the bus is in motion.
    - (e) No distracting the driver's attention with loud noises or horseplay.
    - (f) No use of tobacco in any form.
  5. Bus students are picked up and delivered at the front of the building. Parents should pick up and deliver students at the back of the building during normal drop off and pick up times (7:00 – 7:40 and 2:30 – 3:00). Students may not be dropped off at the steps across from Hardin Park on Magnolia Dr. Checkouts are handled through the front office.

#### **HOURS**

GMS office hours are from 7:00 A.M. until 3:30 P.M.

#### **ATHLETICS**

Greenville Middle School offers a variety of athletic teams for boys and girls. We encourage students to try out for our teams. Students must have a current physical form on file from a physician before they can participate. School physicals must be submitted to the athletic director and must be dated after the TSSAA specified date. This date is April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014 for the school year 2014/2015. Students who are not on our teams are encouraged to come to our games and to be part of the GMS Spirit. GMS athletic teams include football, cheerleading, volleyball, cross country, basketball, wrestling, track, golf, baseball, and softball.

GMS does not allow student-athletes to participate in more than one sport per season. We feel that being part of a team is a very valuable experience for our students. Being part of a team takes dedication and giving your all for your teammates, coach, and school. Students are more than welcome to participate in multiple sports as long as the seasons do not overlap.

#### **CLUBS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

GMS also offers several clubs for students. They include Dance Team, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Jazz Band, Small Ensemble, Honors Choirs, and Life Skills.

#### **GRADING SCALE**

The Greenville City School System has adopted the following grading scale:

**A = 93-100**

**B = 85-92**

**C = 75-84**

**D = 70-74**

**F = Below 70**

### **GUIDANCE**

**Counseling services are available to every student at Greeneville Middle School. These services include assistance with personal or school-related problems, educational planning, career information, interpretation of test scores, or any other concern that the student may feel he/she would like to discuss with the counselor. The counselor is also available for consultation with parents upon request. The philosophy of our office is that each child is unique, and each has the right to the assistance that will assure his or her success at Greeneville Middle School.**

### **LOCKERS**

- 1. Each student is assigned a locker through his/her homeroom. Students are to keep the same locker all year unless their teacher or the office makes a change.**
- 2. Students may not deface lockers in any way. This includes writing, painting, or gluing cards, pictures, or posters in or on them.**
- 3. Each student is assigned a lock for their locker as part of their school fees. School issued locks should remain on lockers at all times. School administrators have master keys to open locks at any time.**
- 4. Books or personal property left in the locker are the responsibility of the individual student and not the school. Your locker should be kept locked at all times. Students are cautioned against telling their combination to each other or they cannot expect their property to be safe.**
- 5. If, for some reason, your locker does not function properly, you should report it to the office.**
- 6. Lockers belong to the school and are checked periodically by school officials to assure cleanliness and, if necessary, to search for possible stolen materials or items which may be forbidden in school.**
- 7. Students are not to share lockers with other students.**

### **CLINIC**

**Greeneville Middle School has a clinic area that is to be used by students who become ill or are injured at school. GMS has a part-time nurse. Minor injuries can be treated and temperatures can be taken. Students may pay a fee to receive common medications from the clinic's stock medications. If a student is required to take medication at school, it must be in a proper container and appropriate forms must be filled out. More information concerning medication can be obtained by contacting school nurse or Guidance. It is vital that all parent contact information is up to date with the school. This will allow us to reach you in an emergency.**

### **WITHDRAWALS**

**In order to withdraw from Greeneville Middle School, the student or parent must see Guidance for instructions.**

### **VISITORS**

**We encourage parents to visit the Greeneville Middle School. However, all visitors are requested to check in at the school office, identify themselves, and give reason for their visit. Appointments for conferences with the principal, counselor, or classroom teachers should be scheduled through the Guidance office. Students from other schools may not visit school or classes during the school day.**

### **CAFETERIA**

**Cafeteria Rules are as follows:**

- 1. Students should talk in a normal, inside voice. Students should not break line and should use good manners at all times.**

2. Students throwing food at each other or on the floor will receive strict disciplinary action.
3. Students should always be orderly and walk in the cafeteria.
4. Students are not to visit from table to table.
5. Students are to pick up their own papers and spilled food. They are to return their own trays to the dishwashing area.
6. Food, snacks, and drinks may not be taken from the cafeteria area.
7. Students are to remain in the commons, unless they have permission from the teacher on lunch duty.
8. No outside restaurant food or drink is permitted in the GMS cafeteria.
9. Energy drinks are not permitted at GMS.

#### **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, furniture, and equipment supplied by the school. Students who deface school property or do other damage to school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item. All damages to books, school property, or equipment must be paid before the student can receive his/her final report card.

#### **TECHNOLOGY**

As part of the Greeneville City School System, GMS is proud to be a leader in our state in the use of technology. Technology is incorporated into the curriculum on a daily basis and is for student use under teacher supervision. Any destruction of the technology equipment or misuse of software or Internet capabilities will result in strict disciplinary action. All families must sign the Acceptable Use Policy in order for students to use the Internet. With the incorporation of our 1:1 technology initiative, all students will receive a laptop computer. A signed agreement detailing usage and rules for each student laptop will be distributed in addition to the Acceptable Use Policy.

#### **WEAPONS**

Students may not bring any item, which could be considered dangerous to their well-being and safety or that of others. Violation of this school rule is a felony and will be referred to the local law enforcement officials for prosecution.

#### **TOBACCO-DRUGS-ALCOHOL**

Students are not to use tobacco products of any kind, or any kind of drugs, including alcohol, at Greeneville Middle School. Students may not be in possession of any of these things on Greeneville City School property at any time.

#### **TUTORING**

GMS offers after school tutoring for our students. This service begins after Labor Day and ends in April. Tutoring hours will be from 2:45-5:00. A tutoring bus is available for students who live in the city limits. Students who do not ride the tutoring bus must be picked up by 5:00. Permission is required for this service and forms are available from the main office. This is a free service and intended to help students who are having difficulty with skills. Students are expected to follow school rules and be respectful of all staff.

#### **SOLICITING AND SALES**

Soliciting and/or sales by individuals or non-school groups are not permitted. School clubs and organizations must secure permission from the principal to sell items of any type in school or at a school-sponsored activity.

#### **ASSOCIATION for MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION**

**Greeneville Middle School is a member of the Association for Middle Level Education. The AMLE believes that developmentally responsive middle schools are characterized by educators committed to young adolescents, a shared vision, high expectations for all, and an adult advocate for every student, family and community partnerships, and a positive school climate. This organization has identified six components that successful middle schools provide for the education of young adolescents. These programmatic components are**

- 1. Curriculum that is relevant, challenging, integrative and exploratory**
- 2. Multiple learning and teaching approaches that respond to their diversity**
- 3. Assessment and evaluation programs that promote quality learning**
- 4. Organizational structures that support meaningful relationships and learning**
- 5. School-wide efforts and policies that foster health, wellness, and safety**
- 6. Multifaceted guidance and support services.**

**At Greeneville Middle School, we are committed to achieving these components. For more information, please visit <http://www.amle.org/> or contact the administration at GMS.**

### **NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE POLICY**

**The Greeneville City School System does not discriminate in employment, admission, or participation in educational programs on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, or handicap.**

**The Greeneville City School System complies with the provisions of Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Acts of 1973.**

**Assistant Director for Administration is Title VII, and Title IX Coordinator for the Greeneville City School System.**

**Director of Special Programs is Title VI Coordinator, Disabilities Coordinator, and 504 Compliance Officer.\***

**Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to:**

Suzanne Bryant  
Assistant Director  
Greeneville City Schools  
P.O. Box 1420  
Greeneville, TN 37744-1420

**OR**

Office of Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, D.C. 20202-1172

**\*Please notify Jeff Townsley at (423)787-8009 should you require special assistance while participating in a school activity of function.**

*A complete listing of Greeneville City Schools' policies can be found at <http://greenevillecity.schoolinsites.com/> along with other pertinent information about schedules, awards, school board members and many other important points.*

*Please visit the Greeneville Middle School website at <http://gms.gcschools.net/> to visit links that will be beneficial to the student and the parent. Teachers have individual websites with information about their classes and homework. The monthly newsletter and calendar are posted every month along with pertinent information about what is going on at GMS. Thank you!*

