

Big Ridge Elementary Student Handbook

Absence -- Returning to School after an Absence

It is required by state law that absences of children from school whether from illness or non-illness be verified by a note from the parent or guardian. Please include the child's name, dates (including year) not in attendance, and the reason for the absence. If illness, the nature of the illness should be given. Excused absences (with a parent note or doctor excuse) include illness, death of immediate family members and religious holidays.

The name of each student who is absent without excuses for five days during the school year must be reported to the school social worker. This refers to a **total of five days**, and does not necessarily mean five consecutive days. See appendix for HCDE attendance policy and explanation of excused absences.

Arrival and Dismissal

Children may be dropped off **after 8:05 A.M.** at the **downstairs entrance closest to the kindergarten rooms.** There is **no** adult supervision before 8:05 a.m. If your children do not ride the bus and you cannot transport them between these times, you may enroll them in our before and after school care program. This program is designed to help parents at a minimal cost on a full-time, part-time or selected daily basis. Breakfast will be served from 8:05-8:20. At 8:20 the breakfast line will close but students may finish eating until 8:30. Students not eating breakfast will go to the gym.

Students who arrive after 8:30 a.m. must come to the front office with a parent to be signed in by the parent as tardy. All children must be in homeroom by 8:31.

Morning Traffic and Afternoon Traffic

1. All car rider traffic should pull in at the south entrance. Cars coming from the north on Cassandra Smith may turn left (both a.m. and p.m.) **IF there is room to turn left. If the traffic is stopped, please go on and turn around at Greenway to come back. Please DON'T make U-Turns.** Do not change lanes once you are in line unless directed by the teacher on duty. As traffic exits the campus, it will be released one lane at a time and you can turn to the right or left on Cassandra Smith as you exit. Cars coming from the south will turn right into the car rider entrance. Once again, please stay in the lane you are in until exiting, unless otherwise directed.
2. Two name signs per child will be provided each year. Additional signs are available for \$1.00. Please display the sign the entire time you are in the car rider line or you will have to park and come into the building to show your id to pick up your child.
3. While you are in the car rider line, **PLEASE PUT YOUR CAR IN PARK AND HANG UP YOUR CELL PHONE.** The safety of our children requires full attention as they are unloading and loading into their cars.
4. The front circle will be closed starting at 7:55 AM and will close so that buses can be loaded starting at 3:00 pm.
5. In the afternoon, parents who are parked in the north lot and wish to pick up their child/ren may do so from the car rider line. **No parent/guardian is allowed to walk up and pick up their child.** All cars must have a Big Ridge issued car sign!
6. **All volunteers in the building who are picking up their child, MUST be in the car rider line by 3:15. We will not dismiss students to volunteers from the classroom. Volunteers must follow the same dismissal procedures as all other car riders.**
7. Please do not park in areas reserved for handicapped parking.

Before and After School Care

The Hamilton County Department of Education Child Care Program provides before and after school care on the school site. Information regarding, times, fees, and staff may be obtained by contacting the Child Care Program between 6:00-8:00 a.m. and 3:15-6:00 p.m. The phone number is 843-4791 and the program is run out of the school cafeteria.

Bus Transportation

Please review the bus rules with your children. Permission to ride a bus other than the one to which your child is assigned can only be granted by the principal. The request must be made by the parent in the form of a written

note. Please bring the note to the office early in the day. The note must be signed by the principal and presented to the bus driver.

Tennessee State Board of Education States:

“A pupil shall become ineligible for pupil transportation when his behavior is such as to cause dissension on a school bus, or when he disobeys State and Local Rules and Regulations pertaining to pupil transportation.”

Hamilton County Department of Education Policy For Students Riding School Buses

Students who ride school buses shall abide by the following rules and regulations:

1. Students shall be at the bus stop at the scheduled time. The bus schedule does not allow additional time to wait for those students who are tardy. Students will stand a safe distance from the flow of traffic at the bus stop and wait until the bus door is open before moving toward the bus.
2. While the bus is loading or unloading, students shall enter or leave the bus promptly and in an orderly manner.
3. While riding the bus, students shall be under the supervision of the driver and shall obey the driver at all times.
4. Students shall conduct themselves in such a manner that they will not disturb other riders on the bus or distract the attention of the bus driver.
5. The use of abusive or obscene language is strictly forbidden at all times.
6. Students are not permitted to bring weapons of any kind, pets or other living animals on the bus.
7. If there is no seat available, students shall stand in the aisle of the bus, facing the front, and hold to seat rail, or as directed by the driver.
8. Students shall not tamper with any of the safety devices such as door latches and fire extinguishers.
9. Students shall not shout or make gestures toward anyone outside the bus.
10. Students shall not extend their hands, arms, head or any other part of their body through the window.
11. Students shall not yell at anyone outside the bus.
12. Students shall not deface or litter the bus. They shall not write on the bus, damage seats, or throw paper, food, or other objects on the floor of the bus, nor from the bus. Unnecessary abuse of the school bus by a pupil; e.g., cut seats, broken glass etc., will result in the pupil becoming ineligible for transportation. Said pupil shall become eligible again only when payment is made for damages and assurances given that the abuse will not recur.
13. Food, gum and drinks may not be consumed or chewed on the bus, and smoking is not permitted.
14. Students shall keep aisles of the bus clear in order to admit passage in the aisle.
15. Students shall not ask the driver of the bus to let them off the bus at any other place except their regular stop without written permission signed by the principal.
16. Students who must cross the road or highway to enter the bus are encouraged to wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver has signaled them to cross in front of the bus.
17. Students who must cross the road after leaving the bus in the afternoon shall go to a point on the shoulder of the road ten feet in front of the bus and cross the road only after the driver has signaled them to cross.
18. The driver has the authority to assign a student a seat when it becomes necessary for disciplinary reasons.

Disciplinary Guidelines for Bus Riders

These rules of conduct have been developed to provide a safe and pleasant environment for students while being transported. Transportation is an elective provided by the Board, and failure to comply with any of the rules will be grounds for excluding a student from riding the bus.

Disciplinary Action for Minor Offenses:

First Referral -- Verbal Warning

Second Referral -- Letter to Parent

Third Referral -- 3 day Bus Suspension and conference with parents

Fourth Referral -- Suspension of riding privileges for ten (10) days, in addition to parent(s) conference

Fifth Referral -- Suspension of riding privileges for the remainder of the year.

Disciplinary Action for Major Offenses:

First Offense -- 5 day suspension and parent conference

Second Offense -- Suspension of riding privileges for remainder of the year

NOTE:

Students who endanger and/or harm other students while being transported may warrant suspension of riding privileges for the remainder of the year.

Students suspended through the end of a school year will require a meeting with the principal, driver and Director of Transportation before being readmitted onto the bus.

The Director of Transportation can refuse to transport a child that is considered a threat to the safety of the other children.

Child Abuse

Any teacher, nurse, counselor, administrator or other school professional acting in an official capacity who has reason to believe a child under age 18 has been subjected to or adversely affected by physical, mental or emotional abuse/neglect must report this to the county Department of Social Services or appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with the S.C. Child Protection Act of 1977.

Discipline

The school staff will emphasize strict compliance with school standards on the part of all children during the school year. Fighting, talking back, name calling, or using profanity do not create a positive atmosphere for learning. Your children are in our charge from the time they leave home until they return. We act in place of you, the parent, and as adults and teachers, we expect obedience, respect, and good work habits from children. We are depending on you to support our efforts in emphasizing positive behavior. Fighting will result in an automatic 5 day suspension from school.

Big Ridge Positive Behavior Support has been adopted as our support system which reinforces students making positive choices. The focus is on the positive choices students make, not negative choices. At Big Ridges we will be:

- RESPECTFUL
- RESPONSIBLE
- SAFE

All discipline matters will be handled in a calm, reasonable manner among teachers, students, and parents. However, when a student’s behavior affects other students and prevents the teacher from teaching, the teacher or principal will take appropriate action.

Dismissal Changes

Dismissal begins daily at 3:15 pm. **Changes from the usual way that your child is transported home must be put in writing and sent to your child’s teacher.** If we do not have those directions in writing (or in an emergency, by phone), your child will be sent home the usual way. We do not take the word of a child for changes in dismissal. *An emergency is defined as a sudden illness, death, or personal injury.*

***Bethel Bible Village** is private property. Please refrain from parking, dropping off, or picking up your child on their property. On special occasions when we have an overflow of traffic, they are gracious enough to allow Big Ridge parents to park. All parents/ guardians must follow the guidelines below during times Bethel is allowing parking on their grounds:

1. Do not park on the grass.
2. Park only on one side of the street . In the event of an emergency, personnel must b able to get through.
3. Follow the posted speed limit.
4. If there are cones present on the Bethel lot, DO NOT part on their property.

Early Dismissal

STUDENTS WILL NOT BE DISMISSED AFTER 3:00.

Occasionally a medical appointment or family emergency makes it necessary for children to be released before the regular dismissal time. In this event, the parent or guardian must sign the student out in the office and state the reason for leaving early. **Leaving early can be as detrimental to learning as arriving late and is considered a part of truancy.** Please avoid signing your child out early unless it is absolutely necessary. **Once lost, instructional time cannot be regained. Please help us maximize instructional time with your child by reducing early dismissals.**

The school will not release your child to a stranger under any circumstances. If the need arises and it is necessary for you to take your child out of school, you must write a note naming the person to whom permission is given to pick up your child.

Dress for Students

Cooperation is asked in sending your children to school appropriately and comfortably dressed.

Students in grades K-5 may wear shorts; however, they should be to the tips of the fingers when hands are held by the student's side. Short shorts are not permissible.

T-shirts with inappropriate pictures and/or words, tank tops and "muscle" shirts for boys and tank tops, mini skirts, spaghetti straps, and spandex or midriff tops for girls are unacceptable apparel. Pants should not sag below the waist and must not touch the floor.

Shoes that are "fashionable" are often very impractical and unsafe for children to wear to school. Climbing stairs, playing on the playground and other school related activities require shoes which are flat with a closed toe and heel. Shoes with retractable wheels are not permitted. Please consider safety first as your child dresses for school.

Electronic Equipment/Toys

The Hamilton County Department of Education Code of Acceptable Behavior dictates that students are not allowed to possess **cellular phones or pagers** while on school property unless approved by an administrator. The staff at Big Ridge also requests that students not bring electronic equipment such as portable CD players, portable video games (Game Boys), Hit Clips, headphones, MP3 players, etc. Valuable toys and Trading Cards should also be left at home. These items are disruptive to the learning environment and students become upset if they are lost or broken.

Emergency Procedures

Fire Drills - Fire drills are required twice a month. The signal for a fire drill will sound. The teacher will lead the class to the nearest exit and will call the roll.

Tornado Drills and/or Safety Drills – These drills are held three times a year. The principal will notify the school by intercom the time of the drill.

For the safety of students and staff, if the we are under a tornado warning, NO students will be dismissed from the building. Our entire building will be in tornado position and unable to manage the front door.

Nuclear Accident - Big Ridge Elementary is 10 miles from Sequoyah Nuclear Plant. Students and staff will be transported to CCA, 1301 Dallas Road should an emergency occur.

Emergency School Closings or Delayed Openings

Connect-Ed calls are usually made to announce school closings. Also, please remember to listen to your radio or television for information on school closings, early dismissal, or delayed openings due to snow or adverse

weather conditions. The school is informed of closings and delays via Connect-Ed calls and email. Remember Big Ridge is a **Hamilton County School**.

If school is delayed, we will not have a teacher on duty at the regular time. The building will open as follows:

- One hour delay- building will open at 9:05 and will follow the usual arrival procedures, including breakfast.
- Two hour delay- building will open at 10:05 and students will go straight to class. No breakfast will be served.

In the event of an early closing of schools due to ice and snow, bus students will be transported as close to their home bus stops as possible.

Field Trips

Educational field trips are planned to provide experiences correlated with subjects studied in the classroom. When a field trip is to be taken, your child will bring home a permission form giving the destination and date. This form must be signed and returned to the teacher before your child will be allowed to go on this trip. All trips are chaperoned by school personnel who may be assisted by parent volunteers. Transportation is by school bus or approved and properly insured charter buses.

Field trips that are scheduled for classes are for students in that grade level only. Due to liability concerns, **younger and/or older siblings are not allowed to come. Parent attendance on field trips will be determined by the grade level.**

Breakfast and Lunch Program

An excellent breakfast and lunch is served daily. **The cost for lunch is \$3.00 and breakfast is \$2.00.** Menus are sent home monthly. One carton of milk (plain or chocolate) is included with a lunch. Students may purchase extra milk for 50 cents per carton.

Each child is assigned a 6 digit account number. You may send money in by the day or pay ahead by the week, month, etc. If writing a check, please make the check payable to "Big Ridge Elementary" and include the **child's name and account number** on the memo line. Children are allowed to buy their lunches or bring their lunches any time; **however, in order to promote good eating habits, carbonated beverages are not allowed during lunch time.**

Lunch for guests is \$4.50. Holiday/special meal is \$5.00. Please make lunch reservations by writing a note to your child's teacher on or before the day you plan to come and include which menu item you wish to eat.

Due to Federal Lunch Program Mandates- please do not bring food or drinks from fast food establishments to share with your child at lunch.

Medication

School Board Policy 445.3 e. states:

Medications should be limited to those required during school hours and necessary to maintain the child in school. Medications should be administered by school nurses or other non-medical school personnel designated by the school principal. Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day must comply with the following regulations.

1. A written permission form for prescription medications will be provided to the school by the Health Services Department. This form must be completely filled out and signed by both the parent(s) and child's licensed health care provider.
2. A new permission form must be provided to the school at the beginning of each new school year. The permission form must be updated when there is a change in dosage or time of medication.

3. Medication must be brought to the elementary school office by a parent or guardian in the original prescription bottle and refilled in like manner. No medication is to be brought to or from school by the elementary student.
4. Any unused medication must be picked up by parent or legal guardian at the end of the school year. Unused medication that is not picked up on or before the last day of school or medication that has expired, will be properly disposed of by the school.
5. Prescribed asthma inhalers must be kept with the student at all times and readily accessible for self-administration with parental authorization.
6. The school system retains the right to reject requests for administering medication that are not in compliance with the above guidelines.

Do not send medication of any kind to school with your child.

Notes Required from Parents

The school requires notes from parents explaining the following:

- absences
- requests for early dismissal
- late arrival
- permission for field trips
- permission to ride bus with another student after school
- prolonged absence from school (trips, hospitalization, etc.)
- changes in usual method of transportation home
- allergic reactions (insect, milk, food)
- specific medical treatment or special health needs

Parents' Address, Telephone Number

Please notify the office immediately of any changes in address, home phone number, place of employment and/or work phone number.

Parties

A winter holiday and a Valentine's Day party are scheduled each year under the direction of the teacher and homeroom parents. Look for announcements listing the details of these parties. Special events and activities which correlate with subject material may also be held at the discretion of the staff.

Invitations and/or thank you notes for private parties may not be distributed at school.

For the safety of students with any chemical or food allergies, **any food provided should be purchased at a store and have a complete ingredient label attached.** Balloons are not allowed even as decorations due to latex allergies and other dangers associated with balloons.

Birthday parties, special treats, and/or surprise parties will not be allowed in order to prevent disruption of lunch, classes and daily activities. If you wish to do a treat for your child's birthday, this must take place during lunch or recess and SCHEDULED with the teacher.

Balloon, flower, and/or cookie bouquets will not be accepted in the office for delivery to students in classrooms, nor can they be delivered to classrooms by parents or others.

Physical Education

Physical Education class is required by federal law.

A student may not be excused from regular participation in the physical education program except on the basis of a written statement by a physician. State Board of Education rules, regulations, and minimum guidelines provide that the physician's statement shall include the following:

1. Nature of the disability
2. Probable duration of the disability
3. Type of activity which the pupil may safely undertake.

Modifications/adaptations are made for students with temporary and/or chronic health issues.

Tennis shoes are required in Physical Education Class.

Recess

Children have outdoor recess everyday, weather permitting. A student may not be excused from regular participation in recess except on the basis of a written statement by a physician.

Report Cards/ Progress Reports

Report cards and progress reports will be held for all school charges. This may include but is not limited to; cafeteria charges, library book charges, textbook charges and fundraiser charges.

Requesting Student Records

If you need a copy of any student records, you must submit your request in writing. You must state the specific records you are requesting. The office staff will have 48 hours to prepare the records for pick up.

Smoking Policy

There is to be **no smoking anywhere on the school grounds or within 50 feet of the school**. Adults are role models for children and all of us need to set good examples for them indoors and out-of-doors.

Tardiness

Students are tardy if they are not in homeroom by 8:31. A parent must accompany their child to the office to sign them in as tardy. The parent must list reason for late arrival, and the student must get a tardy slip before going to class. Students riding late buses are not counted tardy.

Telephone Messages

Neither students nor teachers will be called to the telephone during regular class time. You have the option to leave a message for a teacher. Students are not permitted to use the school telephone to make arrangements for after school social activities. Please have after school plans finalized before the child comes to school each day.

Textbooks and Library Books

Care - Hamilton County school officials and teachers realize that good textbooks for every pupil are a major factor in upgrading education; therefore, we are interested in promoting proper care of books. To maintain textbooks in good condition requires a positive and vigorous program of care and conservation in every school. This program needs the cooperation of pupils, parents, teachers and school officials.

Lost or Damaged - Strict enforcement of rules is necessary regarding the proper handling of books. Appropriate damage fees shall be collected where abuse or improper care occurs. Proper amounts shall be collected when books are lost. No replacement of dirty or damaged books will be made unless sufficient damage fees are paid to cover the excessive damages.

Volunteering and Observing

Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their child's education. Parents may volunteer and/ or observe in the classroom but must adhere to the following:

- All parents and legal guardians must stop at the school office to secure a "classroom observation badge" to observe in a specific classroom. This badge will include the parent or guardian's name and the specific classroom to be visited. If multiple classroom visits are requested, the parent/guardian must return to the office to secure a badge for each classroom observation.
- Each classroom will have a designated "OBSERVATION" place for the parent/guardian.
- The parent/guardian will not communicate or disturb the teacher or any student in the classroom.
- Parent/guardians must do their observations in the classroom not at the classroom door.
- Following the observation if the parent/guardian wants a conference with the teacher, the parent/guardian must make a request in the office with the administrator. The parent/guardian conference will be scheduled for another day.
- Volunteers must be volunteering, not lingering. Volunteers must complete volunteer assignments at the designated location.
- If a parent/guardian violates the procedures outlined, the privilege of classroom observations/ volunteering will be rescinded by the principal for that parent/guardian.

Withdrawing a Student

When withdrawing a student from school, please notify the school office several days in advance. This will enable teachers to complete all records prior to the student's last day in school. **A student's records will only be forwarded to the new school when all textbooks and library books are returned and all outstanding fees are paid.** Please contact the cafeteria manager to close out your child's lunch account.

APPENDIX I

Hamilton County Board of Education Sexual Harassment Policy

The Hamilton County Board of Education is committed to safeguarding the rights of all students and employees within the school system to learn and work in an environment that is free from all forms of harassment and/or sexual harassment.

It is the policy of the Hamilton County Public School System to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment of any type. The school system prohibits any form of sexual harassment or harassment based upon age, religion, disability, or race/national origin.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, employee of the school system, and School Board member to harass a student or an employee through conduct or communication in any form as defined by this policy.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require school districts to have officially adopted policy statements of nondiscrimination on the basis of sex, disability, national origin, and race.

I. Harassment Defined and Prohibited

It is the policy of the Hamilton County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, religion, age, marital status, or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by the herein-referenced federal statutes. Any employee or student of this school system shall be punished for infractions of this policy as provided for herein.

II. Sexual Harassment Defined and Prohibited

1. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- a. Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining or retaining employment or of obtaining an education; or
- b. Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education; or
- c. That conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or education or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment or education environment. Any sexual harassment as defined when perpetrated on any student or employee by any student or employee will be treated as sexual harassment under this policy.

2. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- a. sexual advances
- b. verbal harassment or abuse
- c. subtle pressure for sexual activity
- d. touching of a sexual nature including inappropriate patting or pinching
- e. intentional brushing against a student's or an employee's body
- f. demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status
- g. demanding sexual favors especially when accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status
- h. graffiti of a sexual nature
- i. displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, or other written materials including making and playing sexual explicit audio/video tapes

- j. sexual gestures including touching oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activities in front of others
- k. sexual or "dirty" jokes, or
- l. spreading rumors about or rating other students and adults as to sexual activity or performance.

III. Reporting Procedures

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment or sexual harassment by a student or an employee of the school system, or any third person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment or sexual harassment, should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school system official as designated by this policy. The school system encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal of each school or available from the central office locations.

A. ***In Each School*** The school principal is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of harassment or sexual harassment at the school level. Upon receipt of a report, the principal must notify the Assistant Superintendent for School Operations immediately without screening or investigating the report.

Student to student complaints should be reported to the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and the Assistant Superintendent for School Operations immediately. A written report will be forwarded simultaneously to the Deputy Superintendent. If a complaint made by a student is given verbally, the principal shall reduce it to written form within 24 hours and forward it to the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of School Operations under a ***confidential cover***.

B. ***System-Wide*** The HCDE School Board hereby designates the Superintendent, and/or his designee, to receive harassment reports or complaints of sexual harassment from any student, employee, or individual who states he/she is a victim of harassment or sexual harassment. The complaint shall be filed directly with the Superintendent of Schools and/or his designee.

C. Submission of a complaint or report of harassment or sexual harassment will not affect the reporting individual's future employment, grades, or work assignments.

D. Use of formal reporting forms is not mandatory; however, a sample of the reporting form is attached to this policy.

The school system will respect the ***confidentiality*** of the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed as much as possible, consistent with the school system's legal obligations and the necessity to investigate allegations of harassment and take disciplinary action when the conduct has occurred.

IV. Investigation and Recommendation

By authority of the school system, the Superintendent or his designee, upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment or sexual harassment, shall immediately authorize an investigation. This investigation shall be conducted by school system officials or by a third party designated by the Board of Education. The party making the investigation shall provide a written report of the status of the investigation within 20 working days to the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent. The twenty (20) day period may be extended by the Superintendent or Board of Education if the investigation warrants the extension.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment or sexual harassment, the school system shall consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the sexual advances if sexual harassment is alleged, relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

The investigation shall consist of, but not be limited to, personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation shall also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.

In addition, the school system shall take immediate steps to protect the complainant, students, and employees pending completion of an investigation of alleged harassment or sexual harassment.

The investigator(s) shall make a final report including findings and recommendations for disciplinary actions, if any, to the Superintendent of Schools upon completion of the investigation.

V. School District Action

- A. Upon receipt of a recommendation that the complaint is valid, the school system shall take such action as is appropriate based on the results of the investigation.
- B. The result of the investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures shall be reported in writing to the complainant by the school system. The report shall document any disciplinary action taken as a result of the complaint.
- C. The school system shall take such other steps as are necessary to prevent recurrence of the harassment.
- D. The school system shall keep the complainant informed of the status of the complaint.

VI. Reprisal

The school system shall discipline any individual who retaliates against any person who reports alleged incidents of harassment or sexual harassment or who retaliates against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing relating to a harassment or sexual harassment complaint. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment which creates a hostile environment.

VII. Non-Harassment/False Accusations

The school system recognizes that not every reported incident or advance or consent of a sexual nature constitutes harassment. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a personal or social relationship having a discriminatory effect requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

False accusations of harassment or sexual harassment can have a serious detrimental effect on innocent parties. Any person who knowingly and intentionally makes a false accusation, for any reason which would be contrary to the spirit and intent of this policy, shall be subject to immediate and appropriate disciplinary action.

VIII. Right to Alternative Complaint Procedures

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse which may include filing charges with the Tennessee Department of Human Rights, initiating civil action, filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, or, in certain instances, seeking redress under state statutes.

IX. Sexual Harassment as Sexual Abuse

Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment may constitute sexual abuse under Tennessee Law. In such situations, the school system shall comply with Tennessee Law regarding the reporting of suspected abuse to appropriate authorities.

X. Discipline

Any school system action taken pursuant to this policy will be consistent with requirements of federal law, Tennessee statutes, and school system policies. The school system will take such disciplinary action it deems necessary and appropriate, including warning, suspension, or immediate discharge, to end harassment or sexual harassment and prevent its recurrence.

XI. Policy Distribution

A copy of the foregoing policy and reporting procedure shall be published in the school system's policy manual, shall be included in each student handbook published by the school system, and shall be posted in a conspicuous place in each school building and other HCDE work sites. Current HCDE employees and students shall be informed of this policy annually by their immediate supervisor and/or school principal. New employees shall sign a harassment/sexual harassment acknowledgement form at the time of employment.

Appendix II

Attendance policy

The Hamilton County Board of Education believes in the establishment of a tradition of regular school attendance for each student. This establishes the first step toward a successful academic career culminating in a high school diploma and this is an essential concept to learn for the job market.

RECORDING

The Hamilton County Department of Education has a state approved system for maintaining attendance records for each student enrolled in the district.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- 1. Personal Illness:** Students are excused who are sick and whose attendance would be detrimental to their health and the health of other students. A physician's statement may be required.
- 2. Death in Immediate Family:** Students may be excused for three (3) days in the event of a death in their immediate families including mother, father, stepparent, brother, sister, or grandparent. Extenuating circumstances may require a longer period of excused absence.
- 3. Family Illness:** Students having an illness in the family which requires them to give temporary help will be excused from attendance after receipt of a physician's statement concerning the necessity of the student's assistance.
- 4. Religious Holiday:** Students shall be excused on special or recognized religious holidays regularly observed by that particular faith. Prior approval is required should these days occur while school is in session.
- 5. Personal:** Students who are absent for a good cause such as a doctor or dental appointment which cannot be scheduled at times other than school hours, court appearances, etc. may be excused upon proof of appointment. Prior approval by parent or guardian and the principal or his designee is required.

6. Approved School Sponsored Activities: Students shall be marked present when participating in a school sponsored activity away from the school building.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

The law requires that school officials report to the court and parent/guardian of a child who is unlawfully absent from school for any five(5) days during the school year (this means an aggregate of five (5) days) without adequate excuse. When a student reaches five (5) unexcused absences, the school will notify the parent/guardian that their child must attend school on a regular basis by mailing the Attendance Notification Letter. After ten (10) days absence without adequate excuse, a student is referred to the school social worker. If the child continues to accrue unexcused absences after the referral, a legal notice will be mailed by the school social worker.