East Ridge Middle School

HANDBOOK

2015-2016

### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Students who ride buses will arrive before 7:35 and will be supervised in the gymnasium. Students may not move to the instructional areas until the bell rings at 7:35 unless they have an appointment with a particular staff member. A note is required. Students are to leave the building to board the buses promptly at 2:45. The following Hamilton County Board of Education policy is also in effect:

The School Board cannot be responsible for students left in the morning at school more than five minutes prior to the first bus arrival time and for students who are not picked up by the time the last bus leaves in the afternoon.

**ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is the most important factor in the establishment of a good scholastic record. Work missed due to absences is difficult to make up. There is no substitute for the actual participation in the daily classroom discussion and work. NO student is allowed a certain number of days to be absent from school.

Pupils are required by law to attend school regularly and on time. Pupil absences are defined in the following paragraphs that explain the Tennessee Compulsory School Attendance Law:

All children in Tennessee must attend some day school from his seventh birthday until his eighteenth birthday or until he has received a diploma from an accredited high school.

There are six legal reasons for excusing a child from school attendance. Please understand that an excuse does not qualify a student for perfect attendance. It is only to prevent court action and to allow makeup work to be assigned. The following are legal reasons:

1. The child’s personal illness with a physician’s statement required
2. Death in the family (absence not to exceed three days)
3. Illness in the family requiring the child to give temporary help (a physician’s statement is required in this case also)
4. Children will be excused from school attendance on special and recognized religious holidays regularly attended by persons of that faith.
5. School business
6. Court appearance

### Absence Excuses: If a student is absent from school for any reason, he/she must bring a written excuse to his/her homeroom teacher showing his name, the date(s) of absence, the reason, and signed by the parent or guardian. The home or business telephone number must be also included.

### STUDENT CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM-STUDENT APPEALS

It is the principal’s responsibility or his/her designee to establish either by committee or other means the effect that absences have on a student’s grade after three (3) absences in any given nine weeks period. Parents are urged to attend the committee meeting. Any student with an average above 70 may have their grade lowered for the nine-week grading period. The committee will decide how much to lower the grade, but it may lower the grade to as low as 69 which is failing. A grade average of less than passing shall remain at that level. If the absences are continuous and the reasons known, the principal may bypass the hearing and allow the student to make up the work. Students need to understand that absences will result in a lower grade for each class missed unless evidence acceptable to the principal is presented to the principal or his/her designee. It is the responsibility of both parents and students to contact the school in the event an appeal is to be made for the grade issued due to excessive absenteeism.

### SCHOOL CONDUCT

1. Students should be seated with all materials, ready to begin work when the tardy bell rings.
2. Students are to abide by the rules initiated by teachers.
3. Students are under the jurisdiction of all teachers while in the halls, at lunch, during assemblies, etc.
4. Students must leave the property of others alone.
5. Possession or use of tobacco products in any form in the building or on campus is prohibited. State law requires a citation to court even on the first offense of tobacco possession.
6. Tardiness will not be permitted at any time unless the student has a written excuse from the teacher or administrator causing the tardiness.
7. Students should not go to a teacher seeking a pass. They should obtain permission from the teacher to whom they are assigned that period before going anywhere. The teacher to whom the student is scheduled to be with should know where that student is at all times.
8. The rules for behavior in the classroom are the same when a substitute is present. Failure to comply will result in the disciplinary action by the regular teacher.
9. Students must follow all rules and regulations regarding bus safety and conduct.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

1. Sexual harassment toward any student by an employee, other student, or an individual associated with the school system will not be tolerated.
2. Sexual harassment will be defined as conduct, advances, gestures, words of a specific sexual nature or words which are commonly accepted to have a sexual connotation which:
3. Interferes with the student’s work or educational opportunities.
4. Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.
5. Implies that submission to or rejection of such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of receiving grades or credit.
6. Implies that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for determining participation in any student activity.
7. Students who believe that they are victims of sexual harassment shall report such activity to a school administrator or a school guidance counselor. Confidentiality will be maintained and no reprisals or retaliation will occur as a result of a good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, all of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred, will be investigated.
8. If satisfactory resolution of the allegation is not reached at the school level, the student may appeal the matter to the superintendent, and ultimately, to the School Board.
9. Sexual harassment among the student body shall result in the suspension from school as a minimum punishment. A police report will be filed.

### DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of Hamilton County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of handicap, race, color, national origin, sex, age, or religion in any of the programs or practices in the school system. A complaint may be filed by anyone who has a grievance regarding discrimination as set forth in one of

the following statutes: (1) The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Section 504, (2) Title VI of the Civil Rights act of 1964, or (3) Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972.

### DISRUPTIVE MATERIALS

Students are prohibited from bringing the following items to East Ridge Middle School as they are considered disruptive: electronic devices (not including calculators), any type of cards, magazines, lasers, and skateboards. Other items may be identified as disruptive on site by the teachers and administration.

### STUDENT POSSESSION OF CELL PHONES OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones and other personal electronic devices should not be used during the school day.

Students may keep cell phones in their lockers during the school day. If a cell phone, or other electronic device, is found in a student’s possession during the school day it will be confiscated. **Hamilton County Middle School Policy states:**

1. The first time a cell phone (or other electronic device) is taken from a student it will be turned over to school administrators for ten days.
2. A second violation will result in a phone confiscation for 20 days.
3. A third violation will result in a phone confiscation for the remainder of the school year.
4. Any electronic device not picked up within one week after the last school day becomes the property of the school.
5. Schools are not responsible for any theft or loss of any electronic device whether it is confiscated or in the student’s possession.
6. Large headphones are prohibited and will fall under these electronic device guidelines.

### RULES GOVERNING BUS PUPILS

1. Be on time at the designated bus stop. Be at the bus stop prior to bus arrival. Help keep the bus on schedule.
2. Do not stand in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
3. Wait until the bus comes to complete stop before attempting to enter the bus.
4. Do not at any time extend arms or head out of the bus window.
5. Do not leave your seat or attempt to move about while the bus is in motion.
6. No loud talking or unnecessary yelling. Classroom conduct should be observed. Misbehavior could divert the driver’s attention and cause a serious accident.
7. No profane or immoral language. No improper conduct and no smoking while on the bus.
8. Keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisles.
9. Do not at any time throw any object while on the bus or throw anything out of the bus window.
10. Be absolutely quiet when approaching or crossing a railroad track.
11. Do not in any way damage the seats or the inside of the bus. Persons responsible for damage will be made to pay the cost of the repairs.
12. Help look out for the safety and comfort of smaller children.
13. The driver is in full charge of the bus and pupils.
14. Pupils must obey the driver at all times. Pupils must not cross the road behind the bus. Always cross in front.
15. In case of a road emergency, remain in the bus until the driver gives instructions.
16. You must get off at your regular stop unless written permission is granted in advance.

Bus transportation shall be conditional on good behavior and observance of the above rules. Drivers are authorized to enforce these rules and pupils who violate them will be denied the privilege of bus transportation. Good behavior and obeying safety rules are required of all students. Penalty for misbehavior is left to the discretion of the principal (depending on the circumstances).

### DISMISSALS

Dismissals during the school day are discouraged. Dismissals may be granted for doctor appointments, court appearances, funerals, or school service activities. Dismissals for reasons other than those listed will be handled individually by the administration. A parent or guardian MUST sign the student out in the dismissal book at the front desk. Students being dismissed will be called to the office or sent for by an office aide. Students are not to come to the office and wait for someone to pick them up. Dismissals will not occur during the last fifteen minutes of the school day. Dismissal before 10:45 a.m. will result in a full day’s absence being recorded. NO DISMISSALS WILL BE MADE BY TELEPHONE. STUDENTS WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO NEIGHBORS OR FRIENDS. ONLY ADULTS DESIGNATED ON THE STUDENT’S EMERGENCY CARD WILL BE ABLE TO DISMISS STUDENTS OR CHANGE ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS TO GET HOME.

### GRADES

Report cards are issued at the end of each nine weeks. The final grade is the average of the four-quarter grades and determines if a student passes or fails. An incomplete may be given but must be made up within two weeks, or the grade automatically becomes an F. **It is the student’s responsibility to make up an incomplete.** Parent/teacher /student conferences may be scheduled through the school office or by contacting the team leader directly.

The Hamilton County Schools Grading Scale is:

##### A 93-100

B 85-92

C 75-84

D 70-74

F 69 or below

### SEARCHES

1. Search of Lockers
2. The principal may order the search of lockers or other enclosures used for storage by students as well as any areas accessible to students. The search can be done in the principal’s presence or the presence of any designee.
3. Individual circumstances requiring a search may include incidents on school property, including school buses, involving, but not limited to, the use of dangerous weapons, drugs, or information received from law enforcement, juvenile or other authorities indicating a pattern of drug dealing or drug use by students of that school, any assault or attempted assault on school property with paraphernalia or dangerous weapons are held on school property by one (1) or more students.
4. Search of Students and Containers
5. A student may be subject to physical search; or a student’s pocket, purse or other container may be required to be emptied because of the results of a locker search, or because of information received from a teacher, staff member, or other student if such actions are reasonable to the principal.
6. All of the following standards of reasonableness shall be met:

a. there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a particular student has violated school policy;

b. the search will yield evidence of the violation of school policy or will lead to a disclosure of a dangerous weapon, drug paraphernalia or drugs;

c. the search is in pursuit of legitimate interests of the school in maintaining order, discipline, safety, supervision and education of students;

d. the scope of the search is reasonable related to the objectives of the search, and is not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction,

e. the search is not conducted for the sole purpose of discovering evidence to be used in a criminal prosecution.

1. Field Trips: A student, his/her possessions or room may be searched while the student is on a school-sponsored field trip. The reason for the search must be based on reasonable information or evidence that the student has violated or is violating a rule related to the trip.

### MEDICATION

Medication will not be dispensed to students. This includes, but is not limited to aspirin, Tylenol, cold medicine and antibiotics. An exception is when children require long-term prescription medication such as Ritalin. Only in this case will the medication be administered by the principal or his/her designee in compliance with the following regulations:

1. A written permission form, signed by both parent and child’s physician, is provided to the school and includes:

a. Child’s name

b. Name of medication

c. Time to be administered and Dosage

d. Possible side effects

2. The permission form must be updated when there is a change in dosage or time of medication. A new permission form must be provided to the school at the beginning of each new school year.

1. Medication in the original prescription bottle must be brought to the school office and refilled in a like manner. This medication may be brought to school by the student provided it is taken to the office or clinic immediately upon the student’s arrival at school.
2. Middle and secondary school students may self-administer medication provided the above conditions are met and permission is obtained from the parent, child’s physician, and school principal.
3. The administration of all medication will be documented on the medication log with the initials of the person dispensing the medicine.
4. Medication will be kept under lock in an area designated by the principal.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Lockers**: Homeroom teachers assign hall lockers. There is a maintenance fee of $15.00 which covers the cost of all combination locks being reprogrammed from the previous year. No other lock can be used. Lockers are to be occupied by only the person to whom it is assigned. Lockers are subject to periodic checks.

**School Fees**: East Ridge Middle School charges a nominal fee to cover costs not paid by the Hamilton County Department of Education. This year the fee will be **$30.00**. This fee is used to provide additional postage, printed materials, workbooks, software, duplicating equipment and various other supplies, etc. Some classes charge an additional fee for supplies and materials for projects which are to be made and taken home. Locker rental is $15.00.

**Money and Valuables:** Large amounts of money or other valuable items should not be brought to school. If the items and money are brought to school, they should be in the possession of the owner at all times. The school cannot accept responsibility for stolen money or other articles.

**Tardies:** Failure to arrive to class on time will result in an unexcused tardy. Unexcused tardies result in detentions or in-school suspension. The office will give tardy slips ONLY if someone in the office is responsible for the tardiness. Teachers are responsible for passes of students made late. Students are to be in class at 7:45 a.m. Students arriving after that time are tardy. Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. must go directly to their homeroom teacher. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must sign in at the main office and receive an admit slip before going to class.

**Telephone Use**: During the regular school day, students may use the phone in the main office. ONLY EMERGENCY CALLS MAY BE MADE. Students must get permission and a **TELEPHONE PASS** from the appropriate teacher to come to the office to use the phone. Permission to use the phone then must be granted by the secretary. Students will not be called from class to receive a call.

**Textbooks:** Textbooks are furnished without charge via the teacher in each class. Students must keep the books in THEIR OWN LOCKERS and take care of them. Students who damage books beyond normal wear will be assessed for such damages. If a book is lost, the student must pay for it BEFORE another book can be issued. This should be done promptly so the student work will not suffer. If the original book is found, a refund will be given.

**Visitors:** Parents are always welcome, but ALL visitors MUST check in at the main office and get a visitor’s pass before visiting any area of the campus. Students may NOT bring relatives or friends to school to visit.

**Emergency Drills**: The school is equipped with an emergency alarm system. Students will be familiarized with this system. Teachers will instruct as to what action to take, which exit to use, and where to meet. During drills DO NOT TALK OR RUN. Tornado drills will be held before the tornado season, and students will be given appropriate training at the time. Safety drills will occur throughout the school year. Check the bulletin boards in each class for general information.

**Makeup Work: MAKE-UP WORK IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT**. After three days of absence, students or parents may call the secretary or guidance office to get make-up assignments. Make-up work for fewer than three days will be handled by the individual teacher when the student returns to school. Unless special permission is granted, a student has a number of days equal to the number of days absent to make up his/her work. This is not to exceed five days unless the student has been absent more than five days, in which case an additional day will be granted for each day missed above five. Excused absences (those meeting State attendance rules) shall entitle students to make up work missed. Unexcused absences may result in make-up work which receives reduced credit. After an excused absence, make-up work shall receive up to 100% credit. Any work completed after an unexcused absence, including suspension days, may be made up at the discretion of the teacher with a deduction of no more than 10%. Make-up work DOES NOT HAVE TO BE ALLOWED for students who were in class when the work was assigned.

**Hall Passes**: All students in the halls during class periods MUST have a pass from the teacher.

**DISCIPLINE FOR RULE VIOLATIONS**

Repeated Violations of minor rules or serious violations might result in a student being removed from the school environment. A list of offenses that might result in suspension or expulsion follows:

1. Willful and persistent violation of the school rules, or truancy;
2. Immoral or disreputable conduct or vulgar or profane language;
3. Violence, or threatened violence against the person of any person attending or personnel assigned to a public school;
4. Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of said school, or the property of any person attending or person assigned to said school (with remuneration in full before reinstatement);
5. Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in any of the acts herein enumerated;
6. Marking, defacing, or destroying school property (with remuneration in full before reinstatement);
7. Possession of a pistol, gun, firearm, or fireworks on school property;
8. Possession of a knife, etc., as defined in TCA 394901 on school property;
9. Assaulting a principal or teacher with vulgar, obscene or threatening language;
10. Unlawful use or possession of barbital or legend drugs as defined in TCA section 51-1201
11. Any other conduct prejudicial to good order or discipline in any public school; and /or
12. Student walkouts.

Any principal or principal-teacher of any public school in this State is authorized to suspend a pupil from attendance at such school, including its sponsored activities, or from riding the school bus, for good and sufficient reasons. Before a student is suspended, he/she is to be informed of the accusations, the basis of the accusations, and given a chance to respond. A principal may suspend a student for a maximum of ten (10) calendar days (short-term suspension) without appeal. A long term suspension (more than ten (10) calendar days) or expulsion may be appealed at the zone discipline committee. The principal or his designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parents or guardians of a suspended student. If the parents cannot be contacted, the suspended student shall be supervised at school until time for his/her normal transportation. The principal shall notify the superintendent, attendance officer, and parents or guardians in writing when a student is suspended. A conference with the student, his/her parents or guardian, and the principal or his/her designee shall occur before a suspended student may be readmitted to school.

### EXPULSION

The Board of Education may expel students when the progress or efficiency of the school make it necessary. In case of a verified handicapped student, the school system may temporarily place the student on the homebound program until a more appropriate program is designed. The board, however shall not, nor shall the superintendent make any distinction whatever on account of or by reason of the race, color, creed, or national origin of any pupil who may be in attendance or seek admission to any public school maintained by the district in the determination of or the recommendation of action under this policy.

**ZERO TOLERANCE OFFENSES (resulting in expulsion)**

According to state and federal law, a student who commits a zero tolerance offense is expelled for one calendar year, unless modified by the Superintendent. This includes offenses on school properties, including buses and at school-sponsored activities. All violations will be reported to local law enforcement officials.

The following are zero tolerance offenses:

* Possession of a firearm or explosive, flammable or poison gas device, such as mace.
* Possession, use, sale of illegal, prescription, non-prescription or counterfeit drugs or drug paraphernalia.
* Striking a teacher, principal, administrator, or any other employee of the Hamilton County Department of Education. (School Resource Officers are included in this list.)
* Transmitting by an electronic device a credible threat to cause bodily injury or death to another student or school employee and the threat causes actual disruptive activity at the school

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS

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.

1. **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 Personnel and 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.***

2. **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.

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

4. 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.

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.

# School District Action

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. The school system shall take such other steps as are necessary to prevent recurrence of the harassment.

4. The school system shall keep the complainant informed of the status of the complaint.

Title IX Coordinator - (423) 209-8654

(Title IX prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds.)

### East Ridge Middle School Dress Code 2015-2016

The school dress and grooming shall be modest, moderate, and decent. Apparel or appearance which tends to draw attention to an individual rather than to a learning situation must be avoided. In matters of opinion, the judgment of the teachers and principals will prevail. Items listed below are the appropriate apparel to wear.

# *ALL ITEMS LISTED BELOW MUST BE SIZE APPROPRIATE*

***Size Appropriate means it fits. Not too big – Not too small.***

## SHOES

* Shoes and socks **must be worn** at all times. Shoes must be laced or other wise fastened.
* No open-toed shoes or sandals are permitted.

## PANTS

* Pants must be solid colors of tan (khaki), black or navy. ***Size must be Appropriate***
* Pants must not sag.
* Pants must be hemmed. They cannot have tears or splits**. *Size must be Appropriate***

## SHORTS AND SKIRTS

* Shorts and skirts are not allowed. (Knee length skirts are allowed for those who object to wearing pants on religious grounds.)

## SHIRTS

* Any shirt with both a collar and buttons at the neck are allowed for students. ***Sized and Buttoned Appropriately.***
* No writing or pictures are allowed on the shirts with the exception of a very small name brand emblem that appears on one side at chest level.
* Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
* **School sponsored T-shirts will be allowed and are not required to be tucked in. *Size must be Appropriate***

## OUTERWEAR

* **School sponsored jackets, “hoodies,” or windbreakers will be allowed for students**.
* Non school sponsored outerwear must be placed in the student’s locker during the school day. These may not be worn in the classroom. School sponsored hoodies must be worn with the hood down.
* Any solid color sweater, fleece pullover shirt, or sweatshirt will be allowed**.** Sweatshirts should not have hoods or pockets. ***Size Appropriate***
* **All outerwear may be subject to calendar and temperature limitations.**

## Miscellaneous

* Hair, make-up and jewelry must not disrupt the educational process in any way.

## Hats should not be brought to school. Hats should not be worn at school.

* Large headphones will need to be placed in the lockers.

**The administration reserves the right to add to or delete from the above code in order to maintain a safe educational environment. In the event of heating or cooling problems, the administration reserves the right to alter the dress code.**

**Book bags may be brought to school in the morning and placed in assigned lockers. Students will collect book bags from their locker at the end of the day. Book bag, purses, cell phones and other electronics may not be taken to class. These items must remain locked in a student’s locker during the school day.**