

# **Rush Strong School Middle School Student Handbook 2016-2017**

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*Rush Strong School and the Jefferson County School System do not  
discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability  
in any of their programs, practices, or activities.*

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## **WELCOME**

Welcome to a new school year at Rush Strong School! We are excited about the coming year and look forward to working with you to help your children grow academically, socially, and emotionally. At Rush Strong, we believe that this partnership is extremely important in a child's educational success. Communication is the key to that success, and this handbook is intended as one way to promote communication.

Please review the information in this handbook carefully. Important guidelines, policies, and procedures used in Jefferson County Schools and at Rush Strong School in particular have been included for your easy reference. Please note that the information in this student handbook is not inclusive of all Jefferson County School Board policies and is subject to change through administrative decision and/or school board action.

If you have any questions or need clarification for any policy or procedure, please feel free to contact the school. The staff of Rush Strong School looks forward to an exciting and successful year for our students and their families.

## **JEFFERSON COUNTY AND RUSH STRONG SCHOOL**

### **MISSION AND VISION**

*Jefferson County Schools' Mission: Success and productivity for every student in Jefferson County.*

*Jefferson County Schools' Vision: We will ensure success for every student through high quality, standards-based curriculum, highly effective instruction, balanced and reliable measurement, and targeted response to learning.*

## RUSH STRONG SCHOOL SCHEDULE AND HOURS

Doors will be unlocked at 7:10 each morning for early student drop-off. **Students should not be dropped and they will not be allowed to enter the building before 7:10.** Upon entering the building, students must report to the gym and sit in their assigned areas. They may not go to lockers or other areas of the building during this time. Breakfast begins at 7:20, at which time students may report to the cafeteria to eat breakfast.

Students who arrive at school after 8:05 will be considered tardy and must report to the main office to receive an admit slip to class. **At 8:05 all outside doors except the main entrance will be locked**

### Class Schedule.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Period</b>	<b>8:00—8:05</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Period</b>	<b>8:05—8:50</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Period</b>	<b>8:54—9:30</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Period</b>	<b>9:43—10:28</b>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Period</b>	<b>10:32-11:17</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Period</b>	<b>11:21—12:06</b>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Period</b>	<b>12:10—1:25</b>
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Period</b>	<b>1:29—2:09</b>
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Period</b>	<b>2:13—3:00</b>

First Load Bus Dismissal.....	3:05
Walkers/Car Riders Dismissal.....	3:00
Walkers.....	3:17
Second Load Bus Riders.....	3:20 (approximately)

# PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

This handbook has been prepared as a guide and source of information for the following purposes:

- To develop a code for students.
- To provide direction for self-discipline and a desirable self-image.
- To enter into a partnership with the home in sharing responsibility.
- To assist in making decisions.
- To keep the community informed and supportive.
- To provide information on school policies and procedures.

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

### Assemblies

Assemblies are a regularly scheduled part of the curriculum and, as such, are designed to be educational as well as entertaining experiences. They provide one of the few opportunities in school to learn formal audience behavior. Regardless of the type of program, courtesy demands that the student body be respectful and appreciative. In live entertainment—unlike radio, television, or movies—the performers are very conscious of their audience. Talking, whispering, whistling, stomping of feet, and booing are discourteous and therefore not permitted. Yelling is appropriate only at pep rallies.

### Cafeteria

Breakfast and lunch are offered daily in our cafeteria for a nominal cost. Every effort should be made not to charge meals; however, in such cases lunch and breakfast charges shall not exceed five (5) days in length per student. After the fifth day of charges, the student will not be permitted any more charges, and will be required to bring his/her lunch until charges are paid. Free or reduced meal prices are available to those students who meet the criteria. Applications for free/reduced meals are available in the main office and must be approved by the administration. Extra items (such as chips or ice cream) are also available for purchase, but are to be paid with cash only and do not qualify as part of the free/reduced menu.

### Care of School Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, and furniture supplied by the school. Students who disfigure property, break windows, or cause damage to school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage or to replace the item. Disciplinary action will also be taken. Any unlawful act taking place on the school grounds or on buses not only makes the student subject to penalties which the courts may prescribe, but also could result in suspension or dismissal from school.

## **Change of Address or Telephone Number**

Any student having a change in address or telephone number should inform the office immediately.

## **Dances**

School dances will be held periodically throughout the year. Only Rush Strong Middle School students are permitted at dances; no guests will be allowed. Students are expected to follow all school rules and dress code regulations will be enforced. If a student is absent from school on the day of the dance, he/she will not be allowed to attend the dance. Students must be picked up on school property; students who are not picked up on time will not be allowed to attend the next dance.

## **Dismissal Procedures**

The academic day ends at 3:00. **No early dismissals will be allowed after 2:45.** A bell will ring at 3:00 to dismiss first load buses only; these students will exit through the front doors and load buses. It is very important that a student ride the appropriate bus.

Car riders will be called after first load bus riders. Car riders will report to the gym and sit quietly so they can hear when their names are called.

Second load bus riders will be dismissed to the gym to wait for their buses. Second load buses will arrive at approximately 3:45.

**Note: All students going home by any other means than his/her normal transportation must have a note signed and dated by a parent/guardian. Office staff will verify the change and return the note to the student. Students must show these notes to bus driver before getting on a bus.**

## **Field Trips (Board Policy 4.302)**

Field trips designed to stimulate student interest and inquiry and to provide opportunities for social growth and development are considered appropriate extensions of the classroom.

To be educationally beneficial, a field trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and opportunities for students to summarize the experience at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in selecting field trips:

1. Value of the activity to the particular student group or groups;
2. Relationship of the field trip activity to a particular aspect of classroom instruction;
3. Suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level;

4. Mode and availability of transportation; and
5. Cost — Cost per student shall not be calculated so as to include the payment of the cost of any school personnel, or others, except the sponsor(s) of the group or club which takes the trip.

### **Guidance Office**

Ms. Good provides counseling and support services for students at RSS. Students must make an appointment and have classroom teacher permission before visiting the counselor. Every effort will be made to see students during their PE or related arts time.

### **Hallways**

Students should move through the hallways in an orderly fashion at all times in order to keep disruption of learning to a minimum. **Horseplay will not be tolerated.**

Students shall not be in the hallways during class without a pass from their classroom teacher. Students out of class without a pass will be escorted back to their respective class. Students should always ask the teacher to issue a pass and sign out prior to leaving the classroom. Students should be in the hallway during class in emergencies only or on official classroom business, such as going to the library or office.

***NOTE: No student should be in the hallways before or after school hours without administrative approval.***

### **Internet Usage (Board Policy 4.406)**

Students in Jefferson County will participate in projects using the Internet in a directed manner to support curriculum and research activities. Teachers and students will use the Internet to participate in distance learning activities, to ask questions of and consult with experts, to communicate with other students and individuals, and to locate material to meet their educational and personal information needs. The administration reserves the right to revoke a student's Internet/computer privileges. These guidelines are provided so that you are aware of the responsibilities involved with using the Internet. A student **WILL NOT**

- use offensive or inappropriate language, or language that would promote violence or hatred, and do not respond to such.
- reveal his (or other's) personal address, phone number, or credit card information.
- use the network in such a way as to disrupt use of the network by others or abuse access time.
- harass anyone by sending uninvited communication.
- send electronic information from accounts that do not belong to him without the owner's authorization.
- access unauthorized or inappropriate areas on the network.
- make unauthorized copies of software or information.
- access the network at the school without a signed Internet Use agreement.

- transmit any material in violation of any state or federal regulation.
- use the network for commercial or for-profit purposes.
- use the network for product advertisement or political lobbying.
- damage computer, computer system, or computer networks.
- access obscene, pornographic and/or sexually explicit material on the network.
- invade the privacy of other network users.
- use the network in ways that violate school policies and behavior standards.

Any items produced by students will not be posted to the Internet without written parental permission. If permission is granted, items will be considered fair use and available to the public. A written parental request shall be required prior to a student's being granted independent access to electronic media involving district technological resources. The form must be signed by the student and by the parent/legal guardian of any student under 18. This form shall be kept on file by the school as a legal, binding document. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) wish to rescind the agreement, they must do so in writing.

## **Library**

The goal of the library is to provide resources for classroom and individual use in sufficient quantity, quality, and variety to implement the instructional program in all areas, and to support the development of the user.

RSS students go to the library as a part of the Related Arts curriculum. The library is also open at other times for students to work individually, in small groups, or in a particular academic class. Books are borrowed for two (2) weeks at a time with one renewal. Library skills, reference skills, and research skills are taught individually and in groups. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the end of the school year. Students who owe books/fines will not be permitted to attend special activities or field trips.

## **Lockers (TCA 49-6-4203c)**

Lockers are available for all RSS students. Lockers will be assigned at the beginning of the school year by homeroom teachers. A student may use only his/her locker, and may not have access to any additional lockers or other students' lockers. Since lockers are a permanent part of the building, students are expected to keep them in good, usable condition. No one should leave class to go to his/her locker except with special permission. All school property, including lockers and storage areas, are subject to search for good cause.

Student backpacks must be kept in student lockers. For safety reasons, students may NOT carry backpacks to classes during the day.

It is the student's responsibility to see that his/her locker is kept locked and in order at all times. Locks purchased by the school will be loaned to students. These locks are a requirement and

must remain secured on lockers. A student may be required to pay for a lock that has been lost or damaged.

### **Main Office**

Students and/or parents must report to the main office to do the following things:

- Enroll in school
- Turn in a note for an absence
- Check in (if tardy for first period)/check out for early dismissal
- Report a student accident
- Obtain an application for free/reduced meals
- Check for lost items
- Obtain insurance forms
- Withdraw from school

Students must have permission from teachers to come to the office, and they will not be allowed to go past the front desk without permission.

## **Medicines (Board Policy 6.405)**

If under exceptional circumstances a child is required to take non-prescription or prescription medication during school hours and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the principal or the principal's designee will assist in self-administration of the medication if the student is competent to self-administer medicine with assistance in compliance with the following regulations:

Written instructions signed by the parent will be required and will include:

1. Child's name;
2. Name of medication;
3. Name of physician;
4. Time to be self-administered;
5. Dosage and directions for self-administration (non-prescription medicines must have label direction);
6. Possible side effects, if known; and
7. Termination date for self-administration of the medication.

The medication must be delivered to the principal's office in person by the parent or guardian of the student unless the medication must be retained by the student for immediate self-administration. (i.e. students with asthma) Volunteer personnel, trained by a registered nurse, may administer glucagon in emergency situations to a student based on that student's Individual Health Plan (IHP). The administrator/designee will:

1. Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication to be self-administered;
2. Keep written instructions from parent in student's record;

3. Keep an accurate record of the self-administration of the medication;
4. Keep all medication in a locked cabinet except medication retained by a student per physician's order;
5. Return unused prescription to the parent or guardian only; and
6. Ensure that all guidelines developed by the Department of Health and the Department of Education are followed. Medicines

The parent or guardian is responsible for informing the designated official of any change in the student's health or change in medication. A copy of this policy shall be provided to a parent or guardian upon receipt of a request for long term administration of medication

### **Parents/Visitors**

All parents and visitors must sign in at the office first. For the protection of our students, our front doors will be locked at 8:05 each morning. We must insist that all visitors enter the building by the front door and immediately go to the office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Parents and visitors who do not sign in will be requested to return to the office to do so. Students will only be called to the office to see a visitor in cases of extreme emergency.

### **Students may not bring guests to our school.**

Parents may NOT go into their child's classroom during the school day to speak with a teacher, as this interrupts the instructional program. They may request an appointment by calling the school, sending a note, or emailing the teacher.

Parents may NOT go into a classroom at the beginning or the end of the day. This time is dedicated to preparation for the day and other necessary tasks. Immediate concerns will be relayed to teachers by the office staff, and teachers will respond as soon as possible.

## **Parking**

Parking will be allowed in the front of the building or lower parking lot only.

Because of traffic and parking limitations, parents are urged to leave students at designated entrances during morning drop-off. Parents will not be permitted to park in the front to drop off/pick up their children during regular drop-off/pick-up times.

In the afternoons, no visitors should be parked in the front of the school between 2:45 P.M. and 3:45 P.M. This is a bus loading zone and must be kept open for buses. Car riders will be dismissed at 3:15 P.M. from the cafeteria/side entrance. Students may NOT be picked up in the lower parking lot.

Please DO NOT drive through the FRONT parking lot while buses are loading or unloading, as there are children moving through that parking lot.

### **Sale of Items**

School pictures and yearbooks are available at appropriate times of the year. The price of these items is determined by the cost of production. Fundraising sales are held as needed on a school-wide basis and by designated school groups and clubs. Students are not permitted to sell items of their own or to raise funds for other organizations during the school day or on school property, including school buses.

## School Closings and Delays

In the event of severe weather, school may be closed or the starting time delayed. The same conditions may also necessitate early dismissal. This situation will be announced over local radio and television stations,

The One Call Alert System, as well as posted on the Jefferson County Schools website, <http://jc-schools.net>. If no report is heard, one can assume that school will be in session on regular schedule. **Please do not call the school.** Telephone lines must remain open for emergencies.

### School Fees

Some consumable materials and general supplies for classroom use must be purchased by the school. These items and other necessary school expenses are supplemented by a school fee, which is currently \$20.00. This fee includes a \$5.00 technology fee.

### School Insurance

Accident insurance is available for our students. Applications and information brochures will be sent home with the students during the first week of school.

Students who participate in sports must show proof of insurance, which coaches will keep on file and also turn in a copy to the office. These students may either purchase the insurance policy offered or present a statement signed by the parent(s) which assures the school that the parent(s) has insurance or is willing to accept all financial responsibilities related to participation and travel. Forms for such permission and agreements will be furnished by the principal and will be kept on file in the principal's office.

### School Safety

Everyone has a responsibility for maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment at school. These rights and responsibilities are listed below:

***Students have a responsibility to report to their teacher or principal:***

- Any student threats of violence, either direct or indirect.
- Any knowledge of alcohol, drugs, or weapons at school.
- Any suspicious/unknown person in or around the school.
- Any student use of gang symbolism.
- Any student issue involving bullying.

***Administrators will report or cause to be reported to a child's parent:***

- Any violence or threats of violence from/or to the child.
- Any violation of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or weapons policies by the child.
- Any student who leaves the school grounds without permission.

**Student Deliveries/Parties**

In order to maintain a safe environment and prevent disruption of the school day, deliveries (flowers, balloons, singing telegrams, etc.) to students will not be allowed. Birthday parties are not permitted. Food and/or drinks sent to school for the purpose of celebrating a birthday will not be permitted. Special events and activities that correlate with subject material may be held at the discretion of the administration.

**Student Valuables**

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money, expensive jewelry, radios, cameras, etc. to school, or leave money or other valuables in lockers or in the P.E. dressing rooms. Rush Strong School is not responsible for articles stolen or lost at school.

**Student Withdrawal from School**

When a student withdraws from school, regardless of the reason, a student transfer form must be completed and signed by all the student's teachers and anyone else on the staff who might reasonably have a claim on fees, monies, books, and/or materials. A Release of Records form should be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian. This procedure provides a smoother transition to the new school.

**Telephone Messages**

Telephone messages will be relayed to students at the end of the day for emergencies only. Students should make arrangements with parents regarding transportation, destination, or other plans before leaving home.

**Textbooks**

Textbooks are provided to each student at no cost to the student. Students are accountable for all free textbooks. Students will be required to reimburse the Jefferson County School System for any books that are damaged, destroyed, stolen, or misplaced. If a student loses a book during the school year, he/she must pay for the lost book before another one can be issued. Classroom teachers and the librarian make the decisions regarding book damage.

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM

## Child Custody/Parental Access (*Board Policy 6.209*)

The Board presumes that the person who enrolls a student in school is the student's custodial parent. Unless a Tennessee court specifies otherwise, the custodial parent shall be the one whom the school district holds responsible for the education and welfare of that child.

Parents or guardians shall have the right to receive information contained in school records concerning their minor child. The Board, unless informed otherwise, assumes there are no restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent's right to be kept informed of the student's progress and activities. If restrictions are made relative to the rights of the non-custodial parent, the custodial parent shall be requested to submit a certified copy of the court order which curtails these specific rights.

Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, the non-custodial parent, upon request, shall be given access to all of the student's educational records, including but not limited to, the student's cumulative file and the student's special education file, if applicable.

No principal or teacher shall permit a change in the physical custody of a child at school unless:

- The person seeking custody of the child presents the school official with a certified copy of a valid court order from a Tennessee court designating the person who has custody of the child; and
- The person seeking custody shall give the school official reasonable advance notice of his/her intent to take custody of the child at school.

**Grading Scale (Grades 3-12)** <http://jc-schools.net/Grading Policy.pdf>

<b>Grade Scale</b>	<b>Percent Range</b>
<b>A 4.0</b>	93-100
<b>B 3.0</b>	85-92
<b>C 2.0</b>	75-84
<b>D 1.0</b>	70-74
<b>F 0.0</b>	0-69

## **Interventions**

In accordance with state guidelines, all RSS students will be screened through a universal process to determine what types of academic interventions must be made. An intervention time has been added to the schedule, and all students will receive focused instruction according to their needs during this time.

## **Make-Up Work**

Students who have an absence are required to make up any work that they have missed. *Arranging to make up work is the responsibility of the student immediately upon his/her return.* In the event of an extended absence, special arrangements may be made through the office and/or the student's homeroom teacher regarding make-up work. A zero or incomplete will be recorded for work that a student fails to make up.

## **Parent Conferences**

There are two designated conference dates during the school year for the purpose of discussing student progress or other pertinent information. Parents who would like to request additional meetings may make appointments for conferences with teachers by calling the school or sending a note to the teacher. Conferences shall be physically accessible to all students, parents and/or guardians.

## **Reporting Student Progress (Board Policy 4.601)**

Student progress reports shall be provided at least once every 9 weeks for grades K-12. The reporting procedure shall be in writing and shall be uniform for all reporting periods during each school year.

Student progress reports shall indicate the students' conduct, attendance and academic progress, and other information necessary to communicate effectively with the parents.

In addition to the regular progress reports, principals and teachers are encouraged to confer with parents on the educational progress of their children. All students in grades K-12 shall receive an informal midterm progress report at the mid-point of each nine-week instructional period. Teachers shall consult with parents of students who are working at an unsatisfactory level or whose performance shows a marked or sudden deterioration. Parents shall be notified by the teacher as early in the school year as possible if the retention of a student is being considered.

A supplemental letter of personal consultation may be used when a teacher desires to give some explanation not covered by other reporting methods.

## **Testing Programs (Board Policy 4.700)**

The Board shall provide for a system-wide testing program which shall be periodically reviewed and evaluated. The purposes of the program shall be to:

1. Assist in promoting accountability;
2. Determine the progress of students;
3. Assess the effectiveness of the instructional program and student learning;
4. Aid in counseling and guiding students in planning future education and other endeavors;
5. Analyze the improvements needed in a given instructional area;
6. Assist in the screening of students with learning difficulties;
7. Assist in placing students in remedial programs;
8. Provide information for college entrance and placement;
9. Assist in educational research by providing data.

State-mandated student testing programs shall be undertaken in accordance with procedures published by the State Department of Education.

Other tests may be given as requested by students, teachers, or parents when approved by the principal.

Any test directly concerned with measuring student ability or achievement through individual or group psychological or sociometric tests shall not be administered by or with the knowledge of any employee of the system without first obtaining written consent of the parents or guardians.

Results of all group tests shall be recorded on the students' permanent records and shall be made available to appropriate personnel in accordance with established procedures.

## **Technology**

Technology has become an essential part of our school as we move through the 21st Century. In order to be prepared for the future, students must have the skills for the 21st century and as much experience and training as possible in the field of technology. Each classroom is equipped with several types of equipment, including interactive Promethean boards. There are four computer labs in our school, two stationary and two mobile. Students and parents must acknowledge and sign the Use of Technology Agreement before being allowed to use a school computer.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Tennessee Law**

The Compulsory Attendance Law (TCA 49-6-3007; 49-6-3001) requires that all children in Tennessee, six years old to seventeen years old shall attend school continuously. Also, the law affirms that the primary responsibility for regular attendance resides with the parents and/or guardians. Principals will report promptly to the Director of Schools or designee the names of

all children who have withdrawn or have been absent an aggregate (total) of five (5) days without an excuse. The school shall send a written notice to the parents/guardians when their child has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences. Upon receiving this written notice, the parent shall comply with compulsory attendance law within three (3) days. If compliance is not met at the end of three days, the Director of Schools or his designee shall implement the procedural steps outlined by the school system for reporting truancy cases to the attendance officer. These procedural steps may include a referral to Family Resource Center, Jefferson County Truancy Review Board, and/or Juvenile Court.

### **Jefferson County Board of Education Policy**

Absence is defined as non-attendance for an entire day, a major portion of the school day, or seventy-five percent (75%) of any class, study hall, or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled. Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his/her designee.

Upon returning to school, the student must present a **written** account of the absences signed by his/her parent or guardian to the school office. The absence will be designated as excused or unexcused, and the student must present the office documentation to his/her teachers.

Excused absences shall include:

1. Personal illness *with a doctor's note*;
2. Death in the family;
3. Legal or court appearance;
4. Religious observances;
5. Doctor's appointment;
6. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the student has no control;
7. One day is provided for students when their parent or custodian is deployed into active military

service. One day is also provided for students when the parent or custodian returns from active military service.

Students participating in school-sponsored activities, whether on- or off-campus, shall not be counted absent. In order to qualify as "school-sponsored," the activity must be school-planned, school-directed, and teacher-supervised. ***NOTE: A student attending a school-sponsored activity is counted as attending school and is responsible for all school-work missed.***

Late arrivals/early dismissals disrupt the learning day and are strongly discouraged. Such arrivals/dismissals will be permitted for the following reasons only:

1. In case of emergencies;
2. With a valid doctor's appointment;

3. With a validation of funeral attendance of immediate family including parent, grandparent, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, uncle, or aunt.

***NOTE: Any student arriving late or leaving early must be signed in/out through the front office according to Board Policy 6.208 (see “Release During School Hours”).***

Clock time for unexcused late arrivals or unapproved early dismissals will accumulate on the student's attendance record and will be considered as part of the student's aggregate days missed as determined by the school calendar. These aggregate days may be reported to parents for five (5) day notifications and to the attendance officer for ten (10) day notifications in compliance with Compulsory School Attendance Law.

## **Assignment of Students (*Board Policy 6.205*)**

### ***To schools:***

Students, including those in kindergarten, are expected to attend the school in the school zone to which they are assigned by virtue of the residence of their legal and/or custodial parent(s). Residence is defined as the location of property where the student lives in a dwelling with the parent on a daily basis, eating meals, sleeping, playing and performing what are considered routine family activities.

An application to attend school outside a student's zone of residence must be submitted to the principal. Permission will be considered under the following conditions:

- The student's attendance will not cause the student/teacher ratio to exceed the state guidelines in the class or grade-level for the out-of-zone school.
- The parent will provide regular daily transportation to and from school.
- The receiving principal agrees that the enrollment of the student will not adversely affect the efficiency of the operation of the school.
- The director shall establish specific procedures for such enrollment.

### ***To classes:***

The principal shall be responsible for assigning all students to classes. Students who enter the system from another school system are to be placed by the principal in the grade and/or level as indicated by records from the former school. If the student's placement is inappropriate in the grade or level assigned, he/she may be reassigned by the principal to another grade level. Parents shall be kept advised.

### **Attendance of Non-Resident Students (*Board Policy 6.204*)**

Only students residing within the boundaries of Jefferson County will be eligible for enrollment. However, a student residing outside the boundaries of Jefferson County may attend schools within the school system only if the custodial parent of a student is a full-time employee of the school system.

### **Release During School Hours (*Board Policy 6.208*)**

The following procedure will be observed with regard to dismissal of students:

1. No student will leave school prior to regular dismissal hours, except with the approval of the principal and parent. Elementary students will be permitted to leave school prior to regular dismissal time only in the company of a parent, legal guardian, school employee, police officer, court officer, or a person designated in writing by the parent(s).
2. When dental and medical appointments cannot be scheduled outside school hours, parent(s) must send a written request for dismissal or call for the student in person.
3. Children will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child, or who is the parent or guardian registered on the school record.
4. No principal or teacher shall permit a change in the physical custody of a child at school unless:
  - a) The person seeking custody of the child presents the school official with a certified copy of a valid court order from a Tennessee court designating the person who has custody of the child; and
  - b) The person seeking custody gives the school official reasonable advance notice of his/her intent to take custody of the child at school.

### **Transfers Within the System (*Board Policy 6.206*)**

Transfer students will meet the same enrollment requirements as new students.

Students whose families change their residence to another school zone within the county after the first month of school may complete the school year at their former school. Students who present evidence that they will move during the school year and who desire to enroll in a new school in the new area may do so with prior written request for a change of school area. The superintendent may grant other exceptions to this policy for good and sufficient reasons.

Principals shall allow credit for work transferred from other schools only when substantiated by official transcripts or successful completion of comprehensive written examinations approved, administered, and graded by the principal or his/her designated representative.

In the case of elementary school students, the examination shall cover the last grade completed.

If pupils are admitted to approved schools from unapproved schools by examination, it shall be the duty of the principal thus receiving them to keep the examination papers on file for a period of at least one year.

Students who are suspended from one school in Jefferson County cannot enter another school in Jefferson County.

### **Truancy Referrals to Juvenile Court**

The Director of Jefferson County Schools hereby notifies parents/guardians of the truancy reporting procedures. Truancy cases shall be reported to a Juvenile Court appointed TRUANCY REVIEW BOARD. Jefferson County Schools shall provide student record information (including Family Resource Center contacts) to the Truancy Review Board for those students who have accumulated five (5) or more unexcused absences. Parents/guardian may file an objection to the child's school record being shared with the Truancy Review Board. This may be done (after receiving a notice) by giving a written statement of objection to the principal of the child's school, or it may be done within three (3) days following the first truancy notice given by the student's building principal. If no objection has been filed within three (3) days, student unexcused absences shall be reported to the Truancy Review Board. A petition shall be filed in Juvenile Court for a truant student whose parent/guardian has filed a written objection to a Truancy Board review. The school shall continue to send written notices to parent(s)/guardian(s) after each five (5) days of accumulative absences. Parents must provide documents to the principal verifying any absence due to medical, funeral, legal, or religious holidays. These should be provided the day the student returns to the school.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Board of Education believes that acceptable behavior is an essential ingredient of an effective educational program. It expects students to conduct themselves in such a manner as to reflect favorably upon themselves, their families, their community, and their school. The professional staff is expected to ensure student conduct which allows for an acceptable learning atmosphere both inside and outside the classroom and to help students develop self-discipline and self-direction. To this end, the staff is authorized to take reasonable measures to establish appropriate school behavior. Any professional employee shall have the authority to control any student's conduct while under the supervision of the school district. This authority to control student conduct shall extend to all activities of the school, including all games and public performances of athletic teams and other school groups, trips, excursions, and all other activities under school sponsorship and direction. Such measures include use of reasonable force to restrain or correct students and maintain order.

## GENERAL DISCIPLINE POLICY

Rush Strong Middle School utilizes an Assertive Discipline Program. Students should be sure to familiarize themselves with this process. This program is designed to alter the behavior of students who choose not to conduct themselves in a positive manner. The basic purpose of assertive discipline is to create a setting where teachers can teach and students can learn. This requires respect between students and teachers, so that the rights of both groups are not violated. To help teachers and students understand the underlying principles of assertive discipline, it will be useful to develop a common language which will improve understanding between all groups during regular school hours and at school functions.

1. Civility: Understanding that there is a right and wrong way to conduct oneself, depending on the situation.
2. Honesty: Having a respect for truth and for the property of others.
3. Integrity: Following your conscience and keeping your head regardless of what other people do.
4. Courtesy: Treating others as you want to be treated.
5. Prudence: Thinking before you act; considering the consequences before you act; considering alternatives.
6. Tolerance: Making an effort to understand others, even if you do not agree with them; living and letting live.

What this school is or wishes to become depends on what the students are or wish to become. This is not something that can be given to you; rather, it must come from within. The faculty may initiate it, but the student body must complete it, or it won't be completed at all. Don't wait on someone to make your situation better; begin the task yourself. We promise to help you and support you along the way. **If you win, we win.**

### **Assertive Discipline Plan: Explanation of Process**

The PURPOSE of this plan is to establish a clear and consistent hierarchy of consequences to enable the administration to deal promptly and fairly with students who violate school rules. It is also the purpose of this discipline plan to establish a safe and orderly school environment in which the rights of all students are protected and the efforts of the teachers to maintain order and teach students are supported. The principals, teachers, and staff reserve the right to determine whether or not a student's behavior is inappropriate. The hierarchy of consequences ranges from the less severe to the more severe, ultimately reaching the point where expulsion is recommended.

## **Classroom-Level Discipline**

In order to protect the learning of all students, each teacher shall have the right to discipline students according to his/her classroom discipline plan. For each violation of classroom rules, a student will receive a write-up and a corresponding consequence; consequences will be the teacher's decision. Two classroom write-ups within the same class period in one day will result in the student receiving a "Refocus" period (one period in ISS) as a consequence.

The teacher will contact parents when behaviors become frequent or if the nature of the behavior warrants contact. Once a student has committed five violations of classroom rules within a semester, he/she will receive an office referral and be sent to an administrator. Classroom write-ups start over at the beginning of each semester.

A teacher may refer a student to the office automatically if the student commits a severe classroom disruption (e.g., overt refusal to obey, severe disrespect, fighting, vandalism, or any other action which prevents the class from functioning).

## **Administrative-Level Discipline/Office Referral**

Administrative discipline occurs as a result of an accumulation of classroom write-ups or because of a severe disruption to the school process. Administrative discipline generally follows a hierarchy of consequences, but the administration reserves the right to choose the consequence. Consequences of the assertive discipline plan are listed below.

Disciplinary plans written in a student's I.E.P. will take precedence over the normal Assertive Discipline Plan.

Administrative discipline accumulates for the entire school year. Consequences of disciplinary actions that cannot be served at the end of a school year due to time constraints will be carried over to the beginning of the next year.

### 1st Office Referral

- ISS *or* OSS *or* Placement in Jefferson Academy *or* Recommendation for expulsion
- **and** Referral to guidance (optional),
- **and** Parent conference or call,
- Behavior contract (optional).

## 2nd Office Referral

- ISS *or* OSS *or* Placement in Jefferson Academy *or* Recommendation for expulsion
- **and** Referral to guidance (optional),
- **and** Parent conference or call,
- Behavior contract (optional).

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Office Referral

- ISS *or* OSS *or* Placement in Jefferson Academy *or* Recommendation for expulsion
- **and** Required referral to guidance,
- **and** Required parent conference,
- Behavior contract (optional).

## 4th Office Referral

- OSS *or* Placement in Jefferson Academy *or* Recommendation for expulsion
- **and** Required referral to guidance,
- **and** Required parent conference with the Administration of Jefferson Academy,
- Behavior contract (optional).
- **Note: Students who reach this level will be on probation and will not be allowed to attend any future special activities, whether in-school or after school.**

## 5th Office Referral

- OSS pending placement in Jefferson Academy *or* Recommendation for expulsion.

## **Relationship Between Student and Teacher**

A student's most direct and frequent contact with a school official is with the classroom teacher. When a student has a problem that relates to a specific class, the following steps should be followed in trying to solve the problem:

1. The student should discuss the matter with a teacher at a time other than class time and at a time which is mutually convenient.
2. If that fails, the student, the parent, and the teacher should discuss the matter.
3. The next step would be to involve the assistant principal or the principal.
4. Actions which cannot be resolved at the level of assistant principal/principal would go to the Assistant Director of Schools, the Director of Schools, and the School Board, in that order.

At any point, particularly in the early stages, a guidance counselor can be involved to help solve the problem.

It is strongly recommended that all students become completely familiar with the guidelines of the program and use them to make this the best school year of their career.

### **In-School Suspension (ISS)**

One of the disciplinary options used at Rush Strong Middle School is in-school suspension. It is isolated study for students who have violated certain school policies (**Policy 6.316**). Students are assigned to in-school suspension by the administration only, and students must report directly to the ISS room with all books, pencil, and paper at 8:05 A.M. on the date assigned. Students assigned ISS will have all school privileges revoked during their assignment, and may not re-enter the regular school program until all in-school suspension time has been served. Failure to comply with ISS rules could result in the student being assigned additional time in ISS, being placed on OSS, or being assigned additional office referrals. The class is located in Room 120.

### **Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)**

According to T.C.A. 49-6-3401, any school administrator of any public school in this state is authorized to suspend a pupil from attendance from such school, including its sponsored activities, or from riding a school bus, for good or sufficient reasons. T.C.A. 49-6-3401 also provides that if a principal or assistant principal determines that an offense has been committed which would justify suspension **for more than ten (10) days**, he/she may suspend a student unconditionally for a specified period of time or upon such terms and conditions as may be reasonable. The student, the parent or guardian, or any other person holding a teaching license who is employed by the school system (if requested by the student) may file an appeal to a disciplinary hearing authority (DHA) for any suspension over 10 days. The appeal must be in writing, and it must be filed with the director of schools within five (5) days after receipt of the notice of suspension (**Policy 6.316**).

**Note: If a student is suspended out of school on the day of an after-school activity/game, he/she will NOT be allowed to attend the activity/game.**

### **Detention**

If detention is assigned by an administrator, it will be held after school or during lunch. Students may be required to remain as long as one hour beyond the school day as a disciplinary action. **In case the student rides a bus or is in a car pool, one-day notice will be given.** If a student is assigned an administrative detention and fails to serve it, the student will be disciplined according to his/her placement on the appropriate level of the Assertive Discipline Plan (**Policy 6.315**).

## **Behavior Contract**

After discussion with an administrator, a teacher may place a student on a behavior contract. This contract will be more severe than the typical classroom plan. The typical behavior contract results in the student being referred to an administrator sooner than would occur under a classroom discipline plan. A student may also be placed on an administrative behavior contract for a relatively serious offense or continued misconduct. An administrative contract gives the student a specified period of time in which to prove that he/she will obey school rules. Administrative behavior contracts may be extended into the next semester or school year. After a student returns from Jefferson Academy, and an offense could result in being placed back on a behavior contract for the remainder of the semester or year.

## **SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE POLICIES**

*Note: In addition to the penalties listed below, each violation will be added as a step on the Assertive Discipline Plan.*

### **Alcohol Policy**

Students will not possess, distribute, consume, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages, in school buildings, school grounds, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school sponsored activity at any time, whether on or off school grounds. Upon information that a student is suspected of violating this policy, the principal of the school shall be notified immediately. If it is determined that board policy has indeed been violated, the principal shall notify the student's parent or guardian and the appropriate law enforcement officials. The penalty for first offense violations of the alcohol policy will be to remand the student to Jefferson Academy until such time he/she successfully completes the Academy's instructional and behavioral programs. During the suspension period, the student should implement and complete an alcohol education program that would include the effects and consequences of alcohol use on personal health and safety. (Program to be approved by Jefferson Academy.) **NOTE: Parent/student will be responsible if any expense is incurred for the alcohol education services.** If a student violates the alcohol policy a second time, he will be subject to expulsion from the school system for a minimum of one (1) calendar year from the date of infraction (**Policy 6.307**).

### **Discrimination/Harassment and Bullying/Intimidation/Cyber Bullying**

#### *Discrimination/Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious, Disability)*

Students shall be provided a learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic and religious and/or disability discrimination/harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee or any student to discriminate against or harass a student through disparaging conduct or communication that is related to a disability or is sexual, racial, ethnic or religious in nature.

The following guidelines are set forth to protect students from discrimination/harassment.

1. Student discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated. Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words either written or spoken of a sexual, racial, ethnic or religious and/or disability nature which:
2. Substantially interfere with the student's work or educational benefits, opportunities, or performance; or
3. Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment; or
4. Imply that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of receiving grades or credit; or
5. Imply that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for determining the student's grades and/or participation in a student activity.

### *Bullying/Intimidation/Cyber-Bullying*

Students shall be provided a safe learning environment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully, intimidate or create a hostile educational environment for another student. Bullying and intimidation are defined as either physically harming a student or damaging his/her property, or knowingly placing the student in reasonable fear of such, or creating a hostile educational environment. Cyber-bullying means bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices. The policy addresses conduct taking place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop immediately before boarding and immediately following deboarding. This policy also addresses conduct when the act of bullying or cyber bullying takes place off school property or outside of a school sponsored activity, it is directed specifically at a student or student has the effect of

creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption to the educational environment or learning process.

Alleged victims of the above-referenced offenses shall report these incidents immediately to a teacher, counselor or building administrator. Any allegations shall be fully investigated by School Administrator or designee (as set forth in Student Concerns, Complaints and Grievances 6.305).

There will be no retaliation against any person who reports harassment or participates in an investigation. However, any employee who refuses to cooperate or gives false information during the course of any investigation may be subject to disciplinary action. The willful filing of a false report will itself be considered harassment and will be treated as such.

Any student disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal the decision in accordance with disciplinary policies and procedures.

Hazing means any intentional or reckless act in this state, on or off LEA property, by one (1) student acting alone or with others, that is directed against another student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that student or that induces or coerces a student to

endanger that student's mental or physical health or safety. Coaches and other employees of the school district shall not encourage, permit, condone or tolerate hazing activities (**Policy 6.304**).

### Consequences

Any incident of possible harassment or hazing involving students versus students will be investigated and infractions may result in warnings, parent contact, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and/or dismissal from school. Any incident of possible harassment involving staff or teachers will be reported to the Director of Schools.

### **Disrespect Policy**

In cases of general disrespect towards any staff member, students will receive an office referral. In cases of severe disrespect, overt refusal to follow administrative directions, or in the threatening of an employee, the student may be suspended out of school for up to ten days or recommended for placement in Jefferson Academy.

### **Dress Code Policy**

Students should dress appropriately at all times. Dress should never distract from school activities or prove a hazard to the student's safety or the safety of others. If, in the judgment of the school administration, a student is not appropriately attired or exhibits grooming which constitutes a distraction or disturbance to the school environment, the student may be sent home and not be readmitted until he/she is properly attired or groomed. **Note: The Jefferson County Schools dress code is considered to be a minimum standard. Principals may modify only to the extent that it is a higher standard (Policy 6.3101).**

The following attire is considered inappropriate:

- Hats/headbands
- Tank tops, jerseys, shirts, blouses, sweaters, or dresses which are inappropriately revealing or suggestive (NO spaghetti straps)
- Clothing with large or revealing holes
- Clothing that allows undergarments to be visible when standing or sitting
- Clothing that has obscene or profane language, depiction of alcoholic beverages or unlawful substances, and or gang related
- Clothing which exposes the midriff (Tops must extend below the beltline and/or be tucked in at all times.)
- Skirts, shorts, pants, and dresses which are not knee length or longer
- Sleeveless shirts worn by males
- Clothing that contains messages, slogans, or symbols that promote racial discord
- Body-piercing jewelry (except for the ears)
- Hair that is an unnatural hair color or distracts from the learning environment
- Jewelry/accessories with metal spikes or chains

Additionally:

- Trousers must be secured/belted at proper waist level.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- All tops must start at the base of the neck and extend to the tip of the shoulder.
- Piercings must be confined to ears. No piercings will be allowed in the nose, lips, eyebrows, or other body parts while at school.

On the first offense, the administration may notify the student's parent or guardian and have the student remedy the problem by changing clothes or by removing/reversing objectionable clothing, jewelry, and head covering. When the problem has been corrected, the student can return to class. If the violation cannot be corrected, the student will be assigned to ISS for the day. Repeated violations will be added as a step on the Assertive Discipline Plan.

### **Drug Policy**

Students shall not consume, use, possess, give, exchange, transfer or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, hallucinogenic drug, marijuana, or intoxicant of any kind. This also includes, but is not limited to, abuse of inhalants and prescription drugs. The above violations are subject to disciplinary action if they occur on school real property; at a school activity at any time whether on or off campus; or in a school vehicle. In accordance with state law, any student who unlawfully possesses any drug including any controlled substance, legend drug and/or drug paraphernalia shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The principal shall also notify the proper law enforcement authorities.

Abuse of prescribed drugs and/or over-the-counter drugs and/or look-alike drugs shall be considered in the same manner as illegally obtained substances. Students shall not attempt to market or distribute any substance, which is represented to be or is substantially similar in color, shape, size or markings to a controlled substance.

Over-the-counter or prescribed medications must be brought to the school by the parent. No student shall keep medication in his/her possession unless directed by a medical professional. Medications shall be retained in a designated location during the school day and administered by the principal's designee. All prescriptions shall bear the name of the medication, directions for administration and the name of the issuing pharmacy. When a principal or designee determines that a student is in violation of the above policy, the student will be subject to discipline according to the Assertive Discipline Plan (**Policies 6.307 and 6.309**).

### **Electronic Communications Device/Cell Phone Policy**

Before entering Rush Strong Middle School (or any facility under the supervision of school officials) all pagers, cell phones, or similar electronic communications equipment must be powered off and remain off until students are dismissed from school. In addition, personal electronic devices such as CD players, i-pods or MP3 players, including devices with mobile wireless access, may be stored in backpacks, purses or personal carry-alls. However, the use of the devices during school hours is strictly forbidden. Use or improper storage of the personal

electronic device will result in confiscation of the device until such time as it may be released to the student's parents or guardian. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action

**(Policy 6.312).**

Students who violate this policy shall receive the following discipline:

- First offense: Device confiscated for remainder of day (to be released to parent/legal guardian only at end of day).
- Second offense: Device confiscated for 30 calendar days (to be released at the end of 30 days to parent/legal guardian only).
- Third offense: Office referral. Device confiscated for 30 calendar days (device released to parent/legal guardian only).

Note: All components of cell phones (SIM cards, etc.) will be confiscated with the cell phone. The electronic device policy includes all forms of message modes currently available in electronic communication devices, (i.e., voice communication, text messages, and transmission of visual images). Use of cameras on personal communication devices is strictly prohibited during school hours. Failure to surrender a phone or electronic communication device will result in a violation of the disrespect policy. Additionally, electronic pagers can be considered drug paraphernalia by Tennessee state law (TCA 49-6-4202).

**Fighting Policy**

When students are involved in a fight, defined as an exchange of physical blows, combatants will receive the following discipline:

- First Offense: 3 days out-of-school suspension, and citation to court.
- Second Offense: 5 days out-of-school suspension, citation to court, and visit Jefferson Academy for orientation.
- Third Offense: Recommendation for placement in Jefferson Academy, and citation to court.

Note: In all instances, law enforcement officials may be called. Additionally, students who incite fights but are not actively involved (that is, students who carry rumors, put others up to fighting, or carry information back and forth between other individuals who subsequently fight) subject themselves to the same penalties as those who are involved in the fight. Students who are intimidated or harassed by another student should report it to a teacher or administrator. Teachers are to report these incidents immediately to an administrator. In sum, **fighting will not be tolerated on the campus, on the school bus, or at any school-sanctioned event.**

### **Inappropriate Display of Affection Policy**

No inappropriate display of affection between students is permissible. Students who violate this policy will be given an office referral and disciplined according to the Assertive Discipline Plan.

### **Profanity Policy**

Use of profanity at Rush Strong Middle School is prohibited. Students who use profanity will be given an office referral and disciplined according to the Assertive Discipline Plan.

### **Prohibited/Disruptive Items**

Students will not be allowed to have any items which may be disruptive to the educational process. Such items may include, but are not limited to, electronic devices, radios, pagers, water guns, laser pointers, skateboards, roller blades, scooters, toys, playing/trading cards, etc. Such items will be confiscated immediately and given back to the student at the end of the day. For any further incidents, students will be given a level on the Assertive Discipline Plan.

### **Tobacco Policy**

Students shall not possess or use tobacco products in any form during the school day, any time on school campus, during any in-school activities, during any practice or meeting for co-curricular or extra-curricular activities, nor while being transported by school or school system-provided vehicle (**Policy 6.307**). At each level of offense for possession or use of tobacco, matches, lighters, etc., these items will be confiscated permanently. Students who violate this policy shall receive the following discipline:

- First Offense: Three days out-of-school suspension and citation to court.
- Second Offense: Three days out-of-school suspension and an orientation at Jefferson Academy and citation to court.
- Third Offense: Placement in Jefferson Academy, and citation to court.

### **Weapons and Dangerous Instruments Policy**

Students shall not possess, handle, transmit, attempt to use, or threaten to use any dangerous weapon in school buildings or on school grounds at any time, or in school vehicles and/or buses or off the school grounds at a school-sponsored activity, function or event. Dangerous weapons for the purposes of this policy shall include, but are not limited, to a firearm or anything manifestly designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting death or serious bodily injury, or anything that in the manner of its use or intended use is capable of causing death or serious bodily injury. Students are further forbidden to use any substance such as chemicals or any instruments such as pencils, scissors, razors, or compasses when they are used or attempted to be used in a manner which renders the item dangerous or with the intent to do harm. Upon information that a student is suspected of violating this policy, the principal of the school will be notified immediately. The principal will notify the student's parent/guardian, and the appropriate law enforcement officials as required by law. If, after appropriate inquiry and obtaining of the

facts of the accusations, the student is found to be guilty, he/she will be subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school (**Policy 6.3091**).

According to the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, any student who brings a firearm to school must be referred to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system in addition to the above-stated procedure. Additionally, the student may be required to show proof of satisfactory psychological examination before being readmitted. NOTE: Pocket knives are not permitted at Rush Strong Middle School.

### **Zero Tolerance**

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the following offenses will not be tolerated:

#### Firearms (as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921)1

In accordance with state law, any student who brings or possess a fi rearm on school property shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The director of schools shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

#### Drugs

In accordance with state law, any student who unlawfully possesses any drug including any controlled substance, legend drug and/or drug paraphernalia shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The director of schools shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

#### Battery/Assault

In accordance with state law, any student who commits or threatens battery/assault upon any teacher, principal administrator, another student, or any other employee of the school or school resource officer shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The director of schools shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

#### Electronic Threats

In accordance with state law, any general education student who transmits by an electronic device any communication containing a credible threat to cause bodily injury or death to another student or school employee and the transmission of such threat creates an actual disruptive activity at the school that requires administrative intervention shall be expelled for a period of not less than one calendar year. The director of schools shall have the authority to modify this expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

#### Notification

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the principal of the school shall notify the student's parent or guardian and the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system as required by law (**Policy 6.309**).

## **Bus Conduct Policy**

Bus service is an extension of the classroom. Therefore, the board expects students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for classroom behavior. Students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver while on his/her bus and all reasonable directions to be followed. Students shall remain well back from the roadway while awaiting the bus. Pupils shall enter the bus in an orderly fashion and go directly to a seat and remain seated until the destination is reached. Students shall keep their hands, arms, and heads inside the bus. All articles such as athletic equipment, books, musical instruments, etc., must be kept out of the aisle. The emergency door must be used for emergency only. Students who must cross the street at a bus stop shall wait until they receive a signal from the bus driver. When students must cross a street upon entering or leaving the bus, it shall always be done in front of the bus far enough in front of the bus so that the driver may adequately observe them. This means that students shall be able to see the face of the bus driver. The driver shall hold his bus with warning lights flashing until the crossing has been completed. In the afternoon, any student who desires to get off the bus at any location between the school and the pick-up point must present the bus driver with a note granting permission from his/her parent/guardian and approval by the principal or designee (signature required) of the school that the student attends. Any student wishing to ride a bus other than his/her designated bus must have written parental/guardian permission with approval by the principal or designee (signature required). Transient students shall be expected to abide by the discipline policies adopted by the Jefferson County Board of Education and rules adopted by the staff of their terminal school. The principal of the student transported shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline problem and may be called upon to assist if necessary. Students are not permitted to sell food products on school buses. The teacher(s) and students on field trips are responsible for cleaning up all waste. A student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if determined by the principal that his/her behavior is such as to cause disruption on the bus, or when he/she disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to pupil transportation (**Policy 6.308**).

## ***Bus Discipline Procedures***

### 1<sup>st</sup> Bus Referral to an Administrator

- Warning or Assigned Seat or Bus Suspension or Bus Suspension for the remainder of the year,
- Parent Contact,
- Contact the Bus Supervisor before being allowed to return to the bus (Optional),
- Meeting with the Bus Driver and Student (Optional)

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Bus Referral to an Administrator

- Bus Suspension or Bus Suspension for the remainder of the year,

- Parent Contact,
- Contact the Bus Supervisor before being allowed to return to the bus,
- Meeting with the Bus Driver and Student (Optional)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Bus Referral to an Administrator

- Bus Suspension or Bus Suspension for the remainder of the year,
- Parent Contact,
- Contact the Bus Supervisor before being allowed to return to the bus (Optional)
- Meeting with the Bus Driver and Student (Optional)

### 4<sup>th</sup> Bus Referral to an Administrator

- Bus Suspension or Bus Suspension for the remainder of the year,
- Parent Contact,
- Contact the Bus Supervisor before being allowed to return to the bus (Optional)
- Meeting with the Bus Driver and Student (Optional)

### 5<sup>th</sup> Bus Referral to an Administrator

- Bus Suspension for the remainder of the year,
- Parent Contact,
- Contact the Bus Supervisor before being allowed to return to the bus (Optional)
- Meeting with the Bus Driver and Student (Optional)

Note: The number of bus suspension days will range from a few days to a school year, and in general will increase with each additional referral. However, administrators reserve the right to determine the number of days of bus suspension based on the offense and the student's prior infractions on the bus.

The following specific bus offenses will result in the consequences listed below:

***Fighting:*** The first offense for fighting on a bus will result in the student's suspension of bus privileges for 10 days and a 3 days out-of-school suspension and citation to court for disorderly conduct. The second offense for fighting will result in a 30-day bus suspension and 5 days out-of-school suspension and a citation to court for disorderly conduct. The third offense for fighting will result in a bus suspension for one calendar year and orientation at Jefferson Academy.

***Use of Tobacco:*** First offense will result in suspension off the bus for 5 days and citation to court. Second offense will result in suspension off the bus for 10 days and a citation to court. Third offense will result in suspension off the bus for 30 days and a citation to court.

***Drugs/Alcohol/Sexual Offenses:*** Offenses that involve drugs, alcohol, or are sexual in nature will result in a bus suspension for one calendar year and will follow the school's policy with further discipline.

An attempt shall be made to notify parents in person or by phone concerning any suspension and/or expulsion of bus privileges. In addition, written notice shall be mailed. The parent is required to discuss the matter with the principal/assistant principal, and transportation supervisor before transportation privileges are restored. The suspension of a student from riding the school bus shall follow the same procedures as for any other school suspension. It is the responsibility of the principal, assistant principal, and/ or transportation supervisor to notify the bus driver of disciplinary action taken (the same day of occurrence if possible).

## **ATHLETICS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **Interscholastic Athletics (Board Policy 4.301)**

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another person or otherwise be discriminated against in any athletic program of the school. Equal athletic opportunity shall be provided for members of both sexes. To be eligible to tryout or participate in interscholastic athletics, a student must be currently enrolled in that school.

Interscholastic athletics shall be administered as a part of the regular school program and shall be the principal's responsibility. The principal or his/her designee must accompany an athletic team on trips.

Middle school athletics shall be coached only by Board-approved personnel. Middle school athletics shall be governed according to their respective conference bylaws and may not participate in a conference without bylaws. A copy of the bylaws must be on file with the central office.

There shall be a complete annual physical examination of every student prior to his/her participation in interscholastic athletics. Cost of the examination shall be borne by the parent or guardian of the student. These records shall be on file in the principal's office.

No principal or teacher of any school under the control of the Board shall dismiss his/her school or any group of students for the purpose of permitting them to practice or play baseball, football, basketball or any similar game within the regular school hours of any school day of the week without written permission from the director of schools. This does not prevent the inclusion of regular physical training lessons in the daily school program.

Middle school students in good academic standing are eligible to participate in RSS sports programs. The following is a list of athletic activities available at Rush Strong:

- Cheerleading
- Football
- Volleyball
- Girls' Basketball
- Boys' Basketball
- Golf
- Track

### **Middle Eight Athletic Eligibility**

All middle schools will adhere to the following rules:

1. Each player prospect must meet each eligibility standard and have written parent permission prior to tryouts.
2. Each player prospect must have a current physical report on file prior to tryouts.
3. Each player prospect must have proof of insurance information on file in the office prior to playing any extra-curricular athletics.
4. All current rules of the Middle Eight Conference will be followed to include:
  - a. A student cannot repeat a grade for any reason and remain eligible.
  - b. A student cannot be 15 years old before September 1 of the participating year.
  - c. The previous semester's grades will qualify a student eligible or ineligible the following semester. Students failing more than one subject during a semester will not be eligible.
  - d. No student will be allowed to participate in an athletic event if he/she has been absent that day.

### **Jefferson County Schools' Athletic Code of Conduct**

Good sportsmanship and proper conduct are behaviors that are learned during athletic events, and are the responsibility of administration, staff, coaches, parents, athletes, and the community at large.

All parents and players will be required to abide by the Jefferson County Code of Conduct while at any athletic event. Written agreements will be kept on file, and the Code of Conduct will be posted at events. Possible consequences for violation of the code may vary, but could include being escorted out of the event or suspended from attending games or dismissal from the team.

## **Student Clubs and Organizations (*Board Policy 6.702*)**

Student organizations are an extension of the academic curriculum and are intended to complement the

basic instructional program. One or more staff members will serve as sponsors of each activity and will attend all meetings. Each sponsor will evaluate the activity and make recommendations concerning changes, continuance, or deletion from the school's activity program. An approved copy of the aims, objectives, and constitution for each organization will be kept on file in the principal's office.

The principal, in cooperation with the faculty and student body representatives, shall approve all clubs and organizations within the school.

The director of schools shall approve all requirements imposed by clubs which have restricted membership. Sororities, fraternities, and all secret organizations are prohibited.

School clubs and organizations in which students may participate include the following:

- Band
- National Junior Honors Society
- 4-H Club
- Scholars' Bowl
- Student Council
- Yearbook

**Jefferson County Schools**  
**Family and Community Engagement Plan**  
**Family Engagement Standards**

**Executive Summary and Background**

In April 2005, Jefferson County Schools completed the Family Friendly Schools Institute provided by the Tennessee State Department of Education. The three-day session focused on means and methods to increase family and community involvement in the local school. The following Family and Community Engagement Plan is based on the concept that families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life. As a result of this influence, positive results with student achievement occur when schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning.

The focus of the Plan is to build trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, families, and community members. It also recognizes, respects, and addresses families' needs, as well as class and cultural differences. The Family and Community Engagement Plan was developed with input from local stakeholders - administrators, teachers, staff members, school board representatives, students, parents, and community leaders.

Every school in the district has received a copy of this plan and will be expected to incorporate the standards as part of its own parent involvement plans. The principals in this district have received training concerning the Family Friendly Schools Initiative and are working to include parents in all aspects of their respective schools. The Family and Community Engagement Plan is a working document and will continue to grow and develop as the current process is evaluated annually for effectiveness. All stakeholders will be involved in the evaluation process.

**Purpose**

The Jefferson County Schools Family and Community Engagement Standards were developed to:

- Set expectations for family and community involvement at both the district and individual school levels.
- Ensure that programs, activities and procedures in all schools are planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents.
- Provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children.

## Use

The following standards are intended to be used to:

- Develop family and community engagement programs.
- Set goals and priorities related to family and community involvement.
- Evaluate current programs for compliance with the district wide policy.

## DISTRICT LEVEL

**Standard D1: There is a district policy for parent and community involvement, adopted by the Jefferson County Board of Education, which identifies clear and measurable goals.**

Indicators:

1. There is a written policy document that is on file and is available to all stakeholders.
2. The district's family and community involvement policy is available in English and other languages, as needed.

**Standard D2: The district leadership actively supports the involvement of parents and community members in all schools.**

Indicators:

3. Measurable goals for increasing family and community involvement are included in each School Improvement Plan.
4. The district provides adequate personnel and monetary support to increase family and community involvement at the individual school level.
5. The Family Resource Center is provided to ensure families have access to appropriate services and receive assistance as needed.
6. Staff development is provided for school personnel on how to increase the level and quality of family and community involvement.

**Standard D3: The district leadership actively pursues the involvement of families and community members in the education process.**

Indicators:

7. District level personnel distribute information to families and community members through a variety of methods: newspaper, Internet/websites, newsletters, etc.

8. The district works collaboratively with other local agencies and organizations to improve family and community involvement in the schools. Organizations to include: Family Resource Center, Head-Start, state run Pre-School Programs, Mossy Creek Literacy Council, etc.

**Standard D4: District level personnel are expected to be friendly and respectful and to treat families as partners in their children's education.**

Indicators:

9. All families are welcome at the district office and receive quality customer service, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

### **SCHOOL LEVEL**

**Standard S1: Family and Community Engagement is incorporated into the School Improvement Plan.**

Indicators:

10. Action items in the School Improvement Plan relate to family involvement and its contribution to students' academic achievement.
11. The School Improvement Plan is developed by all stakeholders - administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community members.

**Standard S2: The faculty and staff use a variety of ways to involve parents and community members in the education process.**

Indicators:

12. Family and community programs are offered at various times throughout the school year and the school day.
13. A minimum of two Open Houses/Parent Teacher Conferences are held each year.
14. Funds are designated for family and community involvement events.

**Standard S3: The school is responsive to the needs of its families and community members.**

Indicators:

15. All families are welcome at the school and receive quality customer service, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

16. Principals are encouraged to identify any barriers to parent involvement. Resources are provided in English and appropriate languages for students and parents.
17. Events at the school are publicized well in advance through a variety of medias.

## **CLASSROOM LEVEL**

**Standard C1: Classroom teachers are expected to be friendly and respectful and to treat families as partners in their children's education.**

Indicators:

18. Teachers provide families with information concerning their child's curriculum and outline expectations for successful academic achievement.
19. Teachers and parents are in frequent, two-way communication concerning a child's progress in school.
20. Families are kept up to date on their child's progress by a variety of methods: newsletters, notes, phone calls, etc.

**Standard C2: Teachers value the uniqueness of each child and respect the family's experiences, knowledge, and culture.**

Indicators:

21. Families are invited to share their experiences, knowledge, and culture with other students in the school.
22. Teachers are trained in multi-cultural, gender-fair, and disability-aware practices and use them in working with families.
23. All families are welcome by the teacher and receive quality customer service, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

## **HOME LEVEL**

**Standard H1: The family has high but reasonable expectations for their child's academic achievement.**

Indicators:

24. Children's achievement is encouraged through positive reinforcement and modeling appropriate behavior such as love of learning and discipline.

25. There is a genuine interest by parents and community members in a child's growth, development, and achievement.
26. The family has clear rules and consequences.
27. Parents make sure their children go to school on time and attend school regularly.

**Standard H2: Family and community members actively support the school and district's efforts to provide a quality education to all students.**

Indicators:

28. Parents and community members are actively involved at the school by volunteering in the classroom, serving on committees (including professional development), attending conferences, and organizing events.
29. Parents and community members are involved in district initiatives by serving on committees and attending meetings/activities.
30. Parents and community members communicate to the school staff what they expect of the school in an appropriate and respectful manner.

**Anyone desiring additional information concerning parent and community engagement may go to the county website at <http://jc-schools.net>.**

**To access the state Report Card for Jefferson County Schools, use the following directions:**

1. Go to <http://jc-schools.net>
2. On the right side of the screen under Quick Links, click on **Report Card**.
3. This link takes you to the state webpage. Under "View System Report Card", click the drop down menu and select **Jefferson County**.
4. Click on **Go**.
5. The information presented is for the entire school system. To view your child's school, scroll to the bottom of the first screen and select the school of interest in the drop down menu.
6. Click on **Go**.