

**Loftis Middle School  
Student & Parent Handbook  
2023-2024**

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## Mission

The mission of Loftis Middle School's faculty and staff, in partnership with parents, students, and members of the community, is to provide a safe learning environment that promotes and encourages the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development of our student body. Students will be challenged to become and to excel as lifelong learners, independent thinkers, respectful individuals, and hard workers able to do difficult things, as well as responsible citizens able to thrive in a rigorous high school.

## Vision

At Loftis Middle School we believe that consistency and best practices employed every day for every student creates a culture of success. All students at Loftis will take ownership of their learning and show measurable growth in their ability to read, write, and think through classrooms dedicated to grade-level curriculum with strategic questions to increase student academic discourse. Additionally, students will experience deeper connection to their peers, educators and the school community through increased student collaboration, building-wide behavior expectations, and Student Success Planning.

## Commitment

Loftis Middle School administrators, faculty, and staff will keep all students at the core of every decision made. We are committed to creating a diverse, supportive, and rigorous learning environment. We will continue to offer a varied and academically challenging course of study in which every student has an opportunity to succeed by exploring personal talents, developing life skills, investigating rigorous content and achieving at the highest academic level.

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Superintendent of Hamilton County Schools  
North River Community Superintendent  
Principal  
Assistant Principal  
Dean of Students  
Bookkeeper  
Secretary

Dr. Justin Robertson  
Elaine Harper  
Dr. Mary Catherine Gatlin  
Amy Medley  
Dr. Jennifer Warnack  
Amanda Harris  
Heather Kuffrey

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

Comprehensive School Counselors

SEAD Coach  
Social Worker  
Attendance Clerk & Front Desk  
Media Specialist & Technology Contact  
School Nurse  
Cafeteria Manager  
Head Custodian

Kelly Owen  
Delaney Harris  
Stephen Olmstead  
Emetria Boyd  
Dawn Walker  
Jana Clemons  
TBD  
Kelly Houston  
Raymond Jenkins

Orange Team Lead (6<sup>th</sup>)  
Red Team Lead (6<sup>th</sup>)  
Navy Team Lead (7<sup>th</sup>)  
Gold Team Lead (7<sup>th</sup>)  
Green Team Lead (8<sup>th</sup>)  
Silver Team Lead (8<sup>th</sup>)  
Special Education (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>)  
Related Arts (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>)  
Athletic Director

Shannon Dudley  
Betsy Poe  
Janice Ward  
Kelsey Powers  
Kathleen Gaither  
Ashley Carr  
Rasheila Buttram  
Drew Daniels  
Harry Mills

**Loftis Middle School**  
8611 Camp Columbus Road  
Hixson, TN 37343  
423-843-4749 (phone)  
423-843-4758 (fax)

### **Communication**

## The school will use the following methods for communicating with families:

**PowerSchool** – Parents and Students have access to real-time information on grades, attendance, comments, assignments and scores directly from the teacher's gradebook via the PowerSchool web portal and the free PowerSchool Mobile app. The PowerSchool portal link is <https://powerschool.hcde.org/public/home.html>

Parents may monitor their child's grades, receive school messenger information, keep their contact information up to date, and contact teachers through PowerSchool. Since PowerSchool provides real-time information on student grades, **paper progress reports will not be printed**. All students and parents are provided a PowerSchool login. If you do not have one or having issues accessing your account, please contact the front office.

### School Messenger

School Messenger is the system used to communicate school and district information to families. These messages can be related to inclement weather, school events, and student attendance. Messages can be sent via home phone, cell phone, text message, or email. **It is imperative that you keep your contact information up to date in PowerSchool so you may receive these messages.**

### [Loftis Middle School Website](https://lms.hcde.org/)

The school website is a primary communication tool for families. Please check the website frequently for school policies and updated information. <https://lms.hcde.org/>

## ACADEMICS

### Homework & Make-up Work

Responsibility and self-discipline are essential for student success. Homework, as part of a well-rounded education, provides an opportunity to practice skills and increase understanding. Loftis Middle School students will have homework every night.

Make-up work for all absences is required.

- Students are responsible for make-up work which shall be arranged at the teacher's convenience. During an absence students are encouraged to:
  - ~ Check Power School, Canvas and other online resources
  - ~ Contact another student in the class
  - ~ Contact the Counselor's office after three (3) days
- Make-up work must be completed within five (5) school days of the absence. Teachers may provide additional time if extenuating circumstances warrant.

## Grades

Progress Reports may be accessed at any time on Power School. The parent/student portal is <https://powerschool.hcde.org/public/home.html>. Please see the section on Power School in this document for more information. Grades reported in Power School may vary from teacher to teacher (list of all grades, average of grades, or estimate of the grade up to that point).

**Grade Components** - The grading formula for each nine week's grade is as follows

### ►Formative Practice

►Any form of practice is not recommended to be graded.

*"The thrust of [practice] is toward improving learning and instruction. Therefore, the information should not be used for assigning 'marks' as the assessment often occurs before students have had full opportunities to learn content or develop skills." Manitoba Education and Training. Reporting on Student Progress and Achievement: A Policy Handbook for Teachers, Administrators, and Parents. (Winnipeg, 1997,9)*

### ►Formative Assessment 40%

►After a formative assessment, students must be given effective feedback in order to adequately prepare for the summative assessment.

### ►Summative Assessment 60%

►These should be given a grade that transparently reflects the standards and skills addressed.

*"When the guided practice has worked and the learning is done, verify mastery of each standard and assign the grade. Use report card grades to communicate about success, but not as the driving force to succeed."*

- Rick Stiggins, *Moving from Grading to Truly Effective Communication*, ETS conference Keynote presentation, (Portland, OR, 2009)

### ►Work Ethic & Conduct

►Since adhering to deadlines is compliance rather than mastery of essential outcomes, no late grades will be permitted on assignments. Instead, we will factor in a work ethic grade as 5% of the student's average.

<b>Work Ethic Grade</b>	<b>Conduct Code</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<b>0%</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Students completed 24% or less of work on time.</b>
<b>50%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Student completed 25%-49% of original work on time.</b>
<b>75%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Student completed 50%-74% of original work on time.</b>
<b>100%</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Student completed 75% or more of the student's original work by set completion date</b>

***\*Academic integrity concerns such as cheating or plagiarism will be addressed in the Work Ethic category and NOT deducted from assignment grade. Student should redo the assignment and receive the grade earned.***

### **Late Work/Bridging**

►Zeros are not Permitted. For students who struggle to find motivation, a zero does not motivate them to succeed or try harder. Zeros are punitive – punishment measures do not teach. However, finding success and tracking personal growth that can only come through practice, they will grow in confidence and ultimately perform better.

➤ We will grade late work for mastery of skills.

➤ We will offer students the opportunity to bridge their mastery on any assessment (formative or summative), but we may place time constraints and prerequisites on it.

### **Semester and Final Grades**

- First semester final grades are numeric average of the first and second quarter grades. Second semester final grades are the numeric average of the third and fourth quarter grades.
  1. Final grades are calculated by averaging the first and second semester grades.
  2. In TN Ready tested courses, the second semester grade is weighted 85%, and the remaining 15% is from TN Ready/TCAP test score, if available.
  3. In state-mandated EOC or district EOC (End of Course) tested courses, the second semester grade is weighted 75%, and the remaining 25% is from the EOC exam score, if available.
  4. There is no retake option on state-mandated tests.
  5. If state-mandated test results (TN Ready & EOC) are unavailable by the end of the year, final grades will be an average of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester grades in which each quarter counts evenly.

Report cards are issued at the end of each nine weeks. The final grade at the end of the school year is the average of the four quarter grades and determines if a student passes or fails (see Promotion/Retention policy). Incompletes may be given in extenuating circumstances and with administrative approval.

### **Grading Scale**

A 100-90    B 89-80    C 79-70    D 69-60    F 59-0    Incomplete

### **Star and Honor Roll**

Each grading period a list of students who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement is posted. All subjects count toward the list. All conduct grades must be S's. One N per quarter is allowed. No U's. Star Roll = all A's, Honor Roll = all A's and B's

### **Renaissance Program**

At the end of each semester, an assembly is held to recognize academic improvement and achievement, as well as perfect attendance. Students receive a Green, Silver, or White card, entitling them to privileges:

- Green – All A's and no U's in conduct

- Silver – All A's and B's and no U's in conduct
- White - Character Education Card

## **Promotion/Retention**

Promotion requires that a student pass math, language arts, **and** any one of the two following academic classes: science, social studies.

- Passing is based on the year-long average (minimum average of 60 in each academic subject).
- A student may be promoted with one failing grade, unless that failure is in math or language arts \*(summer options may be offered towards promotion)
- With more than one failing grade, a student may take advantage of summer options. The student may be promoted with administrative approval if satisfactory performance is achieved.
- Exceptions may be made for students who score in the advanced category on the state-mandated standardized achievement test in the failed area of curriculum.
- The Light's Retention Scale may be administered as a guide in considering retention and/or promotion by administration.
- The principal has the final decision on promotion or retention.
- Parents may appeal any decision to retain a student. Reconsideration appeals are made through the teacher, principal, appropriate director, superintendent, and, if necessary, the local board.

\*Summer school may not be available at the conclusion of the school year.

## **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.

## **Day Field Trips**

Field trips are considered appropriate extensions of curriculum and instruction. Students may be excused for school-sponsored activities, must make up any assignments missed, and are not to be counted absent.

To be educationally beneficial, the field trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advanced preparation and presentation of the objectives of the trip, and opportunities for students to summarize the experience at the conclusion with some academic credit given. To this end, teachers and administrators will be expected to consider the following factors in selection of field trips

- Value of the activity to the particular class group(s)
- Relationship of the trip activities to a particular aspect of classroom instruction
- Suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of age and grade level
- Cost of the trip

The Board must approve any mode of transportation other than car, seven-passenger (or fewer) van, or state-approved bus.

## **ATTENDANCE**



Regular attendance is an important factor in student achievement and in establishing a good scholastic record. Students are required by state law to be in school a majority of the day to be counted present. This means, on a regular day, students must be in school 3 hours and 30 minutes. Should the day be shortened to a half day, the student must stay a half day to be counted present. Students not in attendance during the school day are not allowed to participate in after school programs or events (sports, dances, etc.). Students being dismissed and missing more than ½ day will not qualify for perfect attendance. Students on quarantine will be counted present as long as they complete the required assignments.

The law requires that school officials report to the juvenile court any student who is unlawfully absent from school for an extended period of time. A parent, guardian, or other person having charge and control of a child may be fined up to \$10 a day for each day the child is absent without a proper excuse.

## **Hamilton County Department of Education: Attendance Law / HCDE Policy / Procedures**

### **Attendance Law Explained**

According to the law (Tennessee Code Annotated 49-6-3001(c)) every parent, guardian, or other person residing in this State having control or charge of any child between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17), both inclusive, shall cause such child or children to attend a public or non-public school, and in event of failure to do so, shall be subject to the penalties hereinafter provided. Any child who is habitually and unlawfully absent from school must be reported to the appropriate judge having juvenile jurisdiction in that county, the child to be dealt with in such manner as the judge may determine to be in the best interest of the child. The judge may assess a fine of up to fifty dollars (50.00) or five (5) hours of community service against the parents or legal guardians of Kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) children if the child is absent more than five (5) days during any school year. (Tennessee Code Annotated 49-6-3007(f)).

### **Hamilton County Department of Education Board Policy (6.200)**

**The following are legal reasons for excusing a student from attending school:**

Personal Illness- Students are excused who are sick and whose attendance would be detrimental to their health and the health of other students. A physician's statement may be required.

Death in Immediate Family- Students may be excused for three days in the event of a death in their immediate families including mother, father, step-parent, brother, sister, or grandparent. Extenuating circumstances may require a longer period of excused absence

Family Illness- Students having an illness in the family which requires them to give temporary help will be excused from attendance after receipt of a physician's statement concerning the necessity of the student's assistance.

Religious Holiday- Students shall be excused on special or recognized religious holidays regularly observed by that particular faith. Prior approval is required should these days occur while school is in session.

Personal- Students who are absent for a good cause (doctor or dental appointment which cannot be scheduled at times other than school hours, court appearances, etc.) may be excused upon proof of appointment. Prior approval by parent or guardian, and the principal or his designee is required.

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

**HCDE attendance procedures are as follows:**

- By law students are allowed five (5) unexcused absences per school year. HCDE will allow parent excuses to serve as documentation for three (3) additional personal illness days. After the five (5) unexcused days and the three (3) additional personal illness days, parents must provide medical services documentation for the following: personal illness, family illness, or personal (defined above). To avoid student absences being recorded as unexcused, a written statement signed and dated by the parent or guardian and any medical documentation should be presented to the appropriate school official within five (5) days of the student returning to school.
- If the following conditions apply, school social workers will contact parents about their child's attendance:
- After four (4) unexcused absences, parents will be notified by school social worker to attend an Attendance Review Team (ART) meeting.
- After more than five (5) unexcused absences, parents will be notified by school social worker via legal notice to attend an Informal Truancy Hearing before juvenile court representatives.
- If unexcused absences continue after the Informal Truancy Hearing, parents will be petitioned to attend a Formal Hearing before a juvenile court judge.

**If the following conditions apply, school social workers will contact parents about their child's attendance:**

*After ten (10) or more unexcused absences:*

Parent/guardians will be notified via legal notice indicating that their child has become truant and a petition may be filed with Hamilton County Juvenile Court. If unexcused absences continue after the Informal Truancy Hearing at Juvenile Court, parent/guardians will be petitioned to attend a Formal Hearing before a Juvenile Court Judge at which time fines and community service may be assessed.

NOTE: Vacations are not excused absences.

## **SCHOOL CONDUCT**

Read about the Hamilton County Schools expectations for student conduct and Code of Acceptable Behavior [here](#).

- Students:
  - must be seated with all materials, ready to begin work when class begins

- are to abide by the team rules initiated by teachers
- are under the jurisdiction of all faculty and staff when in the halls, during lunch, assemblies, extra-curricular events, field trips, etc.
- are to leave the property of others alone
- should not be in the hall without a hall pass signed by a teacher

**Academic Integrity** concerns such as cheating or plagiarism at Loftis Middle School will result in disciplinary action.

- **First Offense:** Team consequence and parent notification
- **Second Offense:** Referral to the office and notification to parents

### ► *Credit and Copyright*

Students should not engage in plagiarism activities as this is cheating. Students should not violate existing laws governing Copyright and Fair Use. Students should evaluate the quality, credibility, and validity of websites and provide proper credit and citing techniques.

- The **expectations for behavior** in the classroom are the same when a substitute teacher is present. Any names left by the substitute will result in disciplinary action for those students when the regular teacher returns.
- Any student who has been suspended one time will not be allowed to attend a **field trip** for the quarter in which the incident/suspension occurred. Any student who has been suspended two times may be ineligible for field trips for the remainder of the year.
- The **following items** are not allowed at school (unless approved by a classroom teacher/school official), as they are considered disruptive:
  - ~ personal technology devices such as cell phones, smart watches, or radios,
  - ~ sports cards, collectible cards, or playing cards
  - ~ skateboards
  - ~ Gum
- Students should not bring in outside food or drinks to consume during bus duty time or during class. Teachers may allow students to have bottled water in class. Outside food and drinks are allowed during lunch time in lunchboxes. Outside food deliveries are not allowed.
- **Cell phones** are disruptive to the learning environment and according to experts are not developmentally appropriate for middle school aged students. Therefore, cell phones are not to be used during the school day. All cell phones and electronic devices (including smartwatches) are to be placed in lockers and/or backpacks upon arrival to school and remain there for the duration of the school day.

Faculty members are expected to confiscate a phone or device if seen inside the building. If a student refuses to turn over the device, the student will be disciplined for defiance. If a device is taken by a school employee, the phone will be turned over to administration and the following consequences will apply:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense** – Parents will be contacted and may pick up the device at their convenience  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense** –Parents will be contacted and the phone may be picked up after 3 days  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense** – Administrative discretion

**Loftis does not assume any responsibility should any devices be lost, damaged, or stolen whether the device is confiscated due to violating the cell phone rules policy or in the student's possession.**

Read [here](#) about anti-bullying in Hamilton County Schools, including what parents can do.

TCA 49-6-3401(a)(12)

1. There is a relationship between the conduct and school setting such that there is a significant possibility of disruption of the education process.
2. The conduct results in the student being impaired or exhibiting inappropriate behavior at school, on a school bus or at a school function.
  - The school principal is required by state law to **notify the local police authorities** of the following offences:
    - ▶ Possession, sale, or transfer of drugs
    - ▶ Assault (verbal or physical) of any staff member
    - ▶ Misconduct resulting in serious personal injury
    - ▶ Possession of a dangerous weapon in a threatening situation

**ANY THREAT TO DO HARM TO ANOTHER STUDENT, SCHOOL EMPLOYEE OR SELF WILL BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES.**

### **Discipline for Rule Violations**

A student who, for any reason, neglects or refuses to abide by the educational standards of the school or whose conduct is detrimental to the school may expect to receive such consequences as but not limited to the following:

- Verbal warning
- Written reprimand/documentation
- Letter or email home to parents
- Phone call to parents
- Teacher assignment (Detention)
- Team conference
- Office referral
- Suspension from extra-curricular activities, as determined by the teachers, coaches, or administrators

- Removal from class/In-School-Suspension
- Suspension, pending a parent conference with teacher and/or principal
- Suspension from school
- Expulsion from school by the Hamilton County Department of Education (removal from the rolls)
- Alternative School
- Shadowing (parent/guardian will attend classes with student)
- Work detail

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

The purpose of ISS is to provide an alternate highly structured educational environment for students whose behavior has become disruptive to the learning of others in the regular classroom. Students are counted present at school and are provided course work to be completed while in ISS, but other assignments may be given by teacher once student returns. ISS is an intervening step for minor infractions before a student is suspended out of school. If a student is assigned ISS by the administration (teachers cannot assign ISS), a phone call will be made informing the parent of the reason the student was assigned ISS and the day(s) the students will attend ISS. If a student is absent on the days ISS is assigned, these days in ISS will be served upon his/her return to school.

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

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 rules of the school,
2. Immoral or disreputable conduct, or vulgar or profane language,
3. Violence or threatened violence against a person or any personnel affecting the school,
4. Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of the school, or the property of any person attending or assigned to the school,
5. Inciting, advising, or counseling others to engage in any of the acts listed above,
6. Marking, defacing, or destroying school property,
7. Possession of pistol, gun or firearm, real or look-alike, on school property,
8. Possession of a knife or other weapon(s), as defined in TCA 39-17-1301, on school property,
9. Possession of any chemical, such as tear gas or mace, which has the capacity to injure or make an individual defenseless,
10. Assaulting a school administrator or teacher with vulgar, obscene or threatening language,
11. Unlawful use or possession of any item which federal law prohibits dispensing without a prescription from a licensed doctor, dentist, or veterinarian,
12. Any other conduct, prejudicial to good order or discipline in the school.

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 accusation, and given a chance to respond. A principal may suspend a student for a maximum of ten (10) calendar days (short term suspension). **Short-term suspensions may not be appealed.** Long-term

suspensions (over ten days) should be appealed to the Disciplinary Hearing Authority. 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. A conference with the students, his/her parents or guardian, and the principal or his/her designee shall occur before a suspended student may be readmitted to school.

## **STATE-MANDATED ZERO TOLERANCE OFFENSES RESULT IN ONE YEAR SUSPENSION.**

### **Bus Information & Expectations**

- Students are to ride the bus to which they are **assigned based on their place of residence**. If you are unsure of where your bus stop is or need to request a bus stop be added please go to the district bus stop locator found [here](#).
- In the event of an emergency, with a written request from the parent or guardian, the principal may approve a student to ride a bus other than his or her regular bus that one time. The written request must be brought to the main office by lunch time and must include the student's name, bus number to be ridden, and parent's signature with a telephone number where they may be reached for verification. **No phone requests will be approved.**
- Students should plan to **arrive at the bus stop approximately 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time** of their bus. The drivers strive to stay on schedule; however, traffic and/or weather conditions can impact their actual arrival time at your stop. The bus schedule does not allow additional time to wait for those students who are late.
- Students who must cross the road or highway to enter the bus are encouraged to wait until the bus comes to a **complete stop**, and the **driver has signaled them to cross in front of the bus**.
- Students who must cross the road after leaving the bus in the afternoon shall go to a point on the shoulder of the road **ten feet in front of the bus** and cross the road **only after the driver has signaled** them to cross.
- Students shall stand a safe distance from the flow of traffic at the bus stop and wait until the **bus door is open** before moving toward the bus. Students shall not play on highways or streets.
- While the bus is loading or unloading, students shall enter or leave the bus promptly and in an **orderly** manner.
- The driver has the authority to **assign** a student a seat at any time.
- The use of **abusive or obscene language** is strictly forbidden at all times.
- Abuse of the school bus by a student (cut seats, broken glass, etc.) will result in that pupil becoming **ineligible for transportation**. Eligibility will only be restored when payment is made for damages and assurances given that the abuse will not recur.
- Transportation is **not** provided for a group of students to ride a different bus to attend a party, Scout meeting, etc.
- Transportation is **not** provided for students to ride a different bus two or three times per week after school in order to be transported to or near a place of employment.
- Students **shall** conduct themselves so that they will not disturb other riders on the bus or distract the attention of the bus driver and keep aisles clear in order to allow passage
- Students **shall not**:
  - bring knives or sharp objects of any kind, firearms, pets or other living animals on the bus

- tamper with any of the safety devices, such as door latches, fire extinguishers, or cameras
- shout or make gestures toward anyone outside the bus
- extend their hands, arms, head, or any other part of their body through the window
- deface or litter the bus – write on the bus, damage seats, or throw paper, food or other objects on the floor or from the bus
- consume food or drinks
- smoke or vape
- ask the driver to let them off the bus at any other place except their regular stop
- block aisles or emergency exits

These rules have been developed to provide a safe and pleasant environment for students. Transportation is an elective provided by the board. Failure to comply with any of the rules will be grounds for excluding a student from riding the bus.

**Details regarding Disciplinary Action for Bus Behaviors can be found in the Code of Acceptable Behavior linked above. Administration will make final decisions regarding progressive discipline**

Students who endanger and/or harm other students while being transported may warrant suspension of riding privileges for the remainder of the year. Students suspended through the end of the school year will require a meeting with the principal, driver, and Transportation Supervisor before being readmitted onto the bus.

Whenever a bus, for disciplinary reasons, is required to return to school, or help is requested by the driver over the radio or by other means, the offense is considered major and subject to suspension of the offending party or parties. When a bus is returned to school, there will be an investigation to determine the cause. If the bus is generally disruptive, with no one or even a small group of students readily identifiable as the instigators, all the student riders will be warned that future disruption will cause all riders to be denied bus service for the next day after the second disruption. After an incident where a bus has to return to school, a dispatcher will meet with the driver to review and investigate the occurrence and to make recommendations for future improvements. Any incident that involves the breaking of a law, including vandalism of the bus, is always considered a major offense.

The disciplinary procedure outlined above for major and minor offenses will be enforced by the principals and transportation supervisor. No exceptions will be made as to the enforcement of the discipline noted in the Code of Acceptable Behavior, unless the school determines that a harsher penalty is more appropriate.

The responsibility for setting up the parent conferences will rest with the school. Every referral after the first one shall be sent to the parents by the school through the mail. Principals shall act on referrals within 24 hours to preclude a problem from getting worse before some action is taken. Each school shall provide a designated slot for referrals at the location of the teacher mailboxes. One driver at each site will be designated to daily pickup of all referrals at that site and take them to the dispatcher that day.

The transportation supervisor can refuse to transport a child that is considered a threat (danger, risk, hazard, etc.) to the safety of other children, the driver, and the assistant.

## **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 Community Superintendent.
2. Submission of a complaint or report of harassment or sexual harassment will not affect the reporting individual's future employment, grades, or work assignments.
3. 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.

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 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.

## **Expulsion**

The Board of Education may expel students when the progress or efficiency of the school makes it necessary. In case of a verified handicapped student or SED student, the school system may temporarily place the student on a homebound program until a more appropriate program is designed. Rules and Regulations 0520-1-5-3. 016 (-1-3.09) (3-viii-II). The board, however, shall not, nor shall the superintendent make any distinction whatsoever 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

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 any 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:

- **Weapons and dangerous instruments** - These 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.
- **Drugs** - Any student who unlawfully possesses or is under the influence of any drug including any controlled substance or legend drug.
- **Assault** - Any student who commits aggravated assault or commits an assault that results in physical contact with any teacher, principal, administrator, and other employee of the school, or school resource officer.
- **Threat by Electronic Device** - Any student who transmits 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.

## EMERGENCY / SAFETY PROCEDURES

### Emergency Closing of School

In cases of inclement weather, please DO NOT CALL the school. **The School Messenger phone/email system will be used for closings or delays.** A call from the school will come quickly! In the meantime, check the Facebook page, listen to local radio, or watch local TV news stations for up-to-date information.

### Fire, Tornado & School Safety Drills

The school is equipped with an emergency alarm system. You will be familiarized with this system. Your teacher will tell you what action to take, which exit to use, and where to stand. During drills DO NOT TALK, AND DO NOT RUN. Tornado drills will be held before the tornado season; you will be given appropriate instructions at that time. Fire drills will be held once per month. School Safety drills will be held at the beginning of each semester. Check the bulletin boards in each of your classes for general information.

### Searches

School officials may search students, their possessions, and lockers, if deemed necessary.

This is not limited to the school day; also included are school activities at or away from school and school field trips.

### Individual Student Searches

- If a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that a particular student is in possession of contraband, he or she may conduct a search of the student's person and personal effects in accordance with procedures listed below.

- If the official feels an object on the student's person, the student will be given an opportunity to remove the object. Students will be instructed to empty pockets. If a search is deemed necessary, a school administrator will conduct a pat down search of the student's outer clothing. The pat down search will be done in the presence of an adult witness and away from other students.
- If the student refuses to consent to a pat down search or to remove an object from his or her person after a pat down search, school officials shall take steps to detain the student, if possible. Also, a school official shall immediately summon local law enforcement officers and appraise the responding law enforcement officers of all information in the school official's possession relative to the attempted search of student.

### **Refusal to Cooperate with School Officials**

A student's (1) initial refusal to permit a metal detector check as this procedure, a student's (2) refusal to follow the check and search part of this procedure, a student's (3) refusal to permit a pat down search pursuant to this procedure - will be grounds for immediate disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension from school. If a student fails to permit a metal detector check as provided in this procedure, local law enforcement officers shall be immediately notified.

## **DRESS CODE**

Student dress should support an atmosphere of learning. Students may not wear any type of clothing or look that is distracting to the learning environment. The Loftis dress code is the same for all students. In terms of decisions regarding school dress, the professional judgment of teachers and administrators will prevail. If a student is not sure if an article of clothing is dress code appropriate, he/she is encouraged to bring it to school and ask a teacher or administrator for approval before wearing the item in question. Please refer to the dress code chart on p. 19.

### **Dress Down Days**

Students have the opportunity to earn a dress down day weekly throughout the school year. Students earn dress down by being present each day and meeting work completion and submission expectations.

Dress Down Guidelines are as follows:

- Students may wear Jeans or shorts of school-appropriate length. Pants and shorts should have no holes and should be hemmed.
- Students may wear school appropriate printed shirts or sweaters.
- Items Not Allowed:
  - Spandex, athletic shorts, sweatpants, or leggings are NOT allowed
  - No see-through tops, sleeveless, tank, muscle, spaghetti strap, midriff, or low-cut tops
  - No undergarments should be seen at any time. This includes bralettes, boxer shorts, & underwear.
  - Dresses, skirts, or skorts

### **Dress Code violation steps:**

- Students are first encouraged to wear an item from our PTA supported dress code closet.
- If a change of clothes cannot be found in the dress code closet the student will be sent to ISS to attempt contact a parent to bring a change of clothes if possible.
- If clothes cannot be found in the closet or sent, then student will remain in ISS for the duration of the day.

## General Dress Code Expectations

## Not Allowed

<p>Shirt Expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solid color</li> <li>• Must have sleeves (long or short)</li> <li>• Collared (golf, polo, or oxford style)</li> <li>• Solid colored long sleeves if worn under short sleeves</li> <li>• Only top two buttons may be unbuttoned</li> <li>• Quarter-sized logo</li> <li>• Loftis t-shirts</li> <li>• Shirts do not have to be tucked in but should be long enough to be tucked</li> </ul>	<p>Shirts cannot be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stripes, checked, words, or other designs</li> <li>• Sheer or see-through material</li> <li>• Sleeveless</li> <li>• Low-cut</li> <li>• Short or cropped</li> <li>• Shirts should not be oversized</li> <li>• Undergarments should not be seen at any time (this includes bralettes)</li> </ul>
<p>Pants should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solid color</li> <li>• Chino or twill fabric</li> <li>• Hemmed or cuffed</li> </ul>	<p>Pants cannot be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denim</li> <li>• Leggings or jeggings</li> <li>• Rolled, frayed, or have holes</li> <li>• Cargo pants</li> <li>• Sweat pants</li> <li>• Pants should fit appropriately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Sagging pants and No tight fitting pants</li> <li>• Undergarments should not be seen at any time (this includes boxers and underwear)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Shorts should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solid color</li> <li>• Chino or twill fabric</li> <li>• Should reach past fingertips</li> <li>• 5 inches above the knee or longer</li> <li>• Hemmed or cuffed</li> </ul>	<p>Shorts cannot be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rolled or frayed</li> <li>• Cargo</li> <li>• Athletic</li> <li>• Shorts should fit appropriately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No sagging shorts and no tight fitting shorts</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Shoes must be worn at all times.</p>	<p>Shoes - House shoes and Flip Flops are not allowed.</p>
<p>Outerwear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crew sweatshirt (Loftis or solid color)</li> <li>• Solid colored sweaters (pull-over &amp; cardigan)</li> <li>• Quarter-zip fleece pullovers</li> <li>• Small brand logos only (quarter-sized)</li> </ul>	<p>Outerwear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No full zip jackets or coats in class (may be worn to school and stored in lockers)</li> <li>• No chest size/full body logos</li> <li>• No oversized sweaters or sweatshirts</li> <li>• No hoodies</li> </ul>
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piercing in ears only</li> <li>• Undergarments shall be covered at all times</li> <li>• Religious head wear as appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>Other items not allowed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dresses, skirts or skorts (religious exemptions)</li> <li>• Tattoos (henna or permanent)</li> <li>• Students are not allowed to write on themselves or their clothes.</li> <li>• Visible undergarments</li> <li>• Hats or head coverings (religious exemptions)</li> </ul>

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Arrival and Departure

Students who ride buses will arrive before 7:05 A.M. and will be supervised in the grade designated sections of the bleachers of the gymnasium. Students who eat breakfast may report to the cafeteria as soon as they arrive at school. **No outside food or drinks may enter the building during arrival times.** Students who eat breakfast will remain in the cafeteria until 7:05, when they will be dismissed by teachers on duty. Students may not move to the instructional areas until the bell rings at 7:05, unless they have an appointment with a staff member. Students are to leave the building to board the bus promptly at 2:15 P.M.

The School Board cannot be responsible for students left in the morning at school earlier than thirty (30) minutes prior to the beginning time of school and for students who are not picked up by the time the last bus leaves in the afternoon. **In the morning students who do not ride the bus should enter through the main entrance only.**

### Car Riders

Car riders must be dropped off and picked up in front of the building. For safety reasons students MAY NOT enter or exit vehicles in either of the side parking lots, or in the rear of the school without prior approval from the administration. Car riders are to report to the bleachers in the gymnasium, the media center for study hall, or the cafeteria if they choose to eat breakfast. Students will remain in their chosen location until dismissed at 7:05 by teachers on duty. **No outside food or drinks may enter the building during arrival times.** Afternoon car riders will be called from class as rides arrive. Parents will receive car tags to display in their windshield. Please print your student's name and grade level in dark marker.

- **Please do not use cell phones in the line.** We are literally standing in traffic, help keep us all safe!
- **Please do not block the left lane** until just before time for the car line to begin moving (6:40am and 2:05pm). In the mornings, deliveries and employees need access and in the afternoons, this creates a disturbance for parents needing to dismiss early or attend to business in the office. Additionally, blocking both lanes when traffic is not moving creates a safety issue should fire or ambulance ever need to access our building in an emergency.
- **Please do not drop students off in the faculty lot to avoid the car line.** This creates a safety and accountability concern.

**Student Drivers** - Loftis Middle School students MAY NOT, at any time, drive a motorized vehicle to or from school. This policy also extends to any student who may be old enough to operate an automobile.

### Tardiness

Tardiness will not be permitted at any time, unless the student has a written excuse from the teacher or administrator causing the tardiness.

Students are to be in class at 7:15 A.M. Students arriving after 7:15 A.M. are tardy and must sign in at the main office to receive an admit slip before going to class. Students delayed by a teacher need to get a pass from that teacher. The office will only issue a tardy slip if someone in the office was responsible for the tardiness.

**THREE (3) TARDIES TO ANY CLASS WILL RESULT IN AN OFFICE REFERRAL. THE TARDY POLICY IS FOR EACH QUARTER. EXCESSIVE REFERRALS TO THE OFFICE WILL RESULT IN MORE SEVERE CONSEQUENCES.**

### **Dismissals**

Dismissals during the school day are discouraged. Dismissals may be granted for doctor appointments, court appearances, funerals or school service activities. A parent/guardian/or designee **MUST** sign the student out at the front office. Students being dismissed will be called to the office or sent for by an office aide. Do not come to the office and wait for someone to pick you up.

**\*NO DISMISSALS WILL BE MADE BY TELEPHONE.**

**\*THERE WILL BE NO DISMISSALS AFTER 1:45.**

### **Hall Passes**

All students in the halls during class periods **MUST** have a pass from his/her teacher. Student hall passes are in school-issued agenda mates. Normally, only one student should be out of the class at any given time. Teachers and students are to use hall passes found in the agenda-mates.

### **Visitors**

Parents are always welcome. However, to protect the safety of the school environment, **ALL** visitors must check in at the main office and get permission and a visitor's pass before visiting a classroom. **A valid state issued ID is required to gain entry.** Prior arrangement with the teacher or office administration is required. **Students may NOT bring relatives or friends to school to visit or shadow.**

### **Telephone**

During the regular school day, students may use the phone in the main office. **THIS PHONE IS FOR EMERGENCY CALLS ONLY.** Students must get permission from the appropriate teacher to come to the office to use the phone. Permission then must be granted by the secretary. Students will not be called from class to receive calls. **REMEMBER: ABSOLUTELY NO CELL PHONE USE DURING REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS 7:15 – 2:15.**

### **Withdrawals**

Notify the Attendance office the day before withdrawal when possible. Get your withdrawal sheet from the office, and have it signed by all appropriate teachers and staff. All debts, including library fines and textbook charges, must be paid and/or returned. No records will be sent to another school until a student

is properly cleared of all obligations.

## **Fees**

According to state of Tennessee, school and class fees can be requested but cannot be required. Loftis Middle School requests a nominal school fee to help with costs not covered by the Hamilton County Department of Education. The Art, Science, & Technology Fee for 2022-2023 will be \$20.00. Classes may request an additional fee for supplies and material for projects.

## **Student Lockers**

Lockers are assigned by homeroom teachers. As stated above, the maintenance fee is part of the school fee. A locker is to be occupied by only the person to whom it is assigned. Students are responsible for the contents and condition of the locker assigned to them. Each locker is equipped with its own combination lock for security. Other kinds of padlocks are prohibited. Students should not give their locker combinations to other students. **Lockers are subject to periodic check.** Locker problems should be reported to the assistant principal.

**Money and Valuable Articles - PLEASE** do not bring large amounts of money or other valuable items to school. **DO NOT** leave money or other valuables in lockers or desks. The school cannot accept responsibility for money or other articles that are stolen or borrowed.

## **Medication**

All medication, including prescription and over-the-counter (even aspirin), must be left in the **Nurse's Office**. Parents are required to submit a form, **PARENT/GUARDIAN AUTHORIZATION TO ADMINISTER MEDICATION AT SCHOOL**, authorizing the medication to be administered by the school nurse or other personnel. The form can be obtained in the school nurse's office or school office. All medications must be accompanied by a **HEALTH CARE PROVIDER AUTHORIZATION TO ADMINISTER MEDICATION AT SCHOOL**, as well (on same form as parent authorization). Whenever medication is administered, a log sheet will be initialed by the school nurse indicating that medication has been received.

## **Sports**

Before participating in sports, candidates must have the approval of the coach and pass a physical exam. Students are encouraged to participate in one or more sports. All students are given equal opportunity to participate through tryouts. Team membership one year does not guarantee membership the next year.

To be eligible to participate in athletics, students must be passing 5 out of 6 classes, including related arts. Students must have passed 5 out of 6 classes the previous 9 week grading period to meet eligibility criteria. Fall participation is based on the previous 4<sup>th</sup> nine weeks grading period, not the yearly average. Students not promoted to the next grade are ineligible to participate in sports.

Check our website for up to date coaching information and dates.

## Lofts PTA

A primary source of support for our school comes from our Parent-Teacher Association. This group is especially interested in the welfare of the students in the community and strives to help in any way possible. Parents are urged to join the PTA and to attend the meetings. For more information about PTA or to join, please email [loftispta@gmail.com](mailto:loftispta@gmail.com).

## Loftis Website

Please visit <https://lms.hcde.org/> to see all the current events, learn more about teams and clubs, contact information for faculty and staff, and all other Loftis info.

## Digital Citizenship

Digital Citizenship is defined as the norms of appropriate, responsible behavior with regard to technology use. By embracing technology and to explore its various forms, students have a responsibility to model proper digital etiquette in using technology.

Although the following list provides a good foundation for proper Digital Citizenship, it is by no means exhaustive. If you have any doubt about whether a contemplated activity is acceptable, consult your teacher or administrator.

- ***Cyberbullying/Inappropriate Activity:*** Students must not engage in cyberbullying/inappropriate activities: mean/inappropriate text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, or sending or posting embarrassing pictures or videos through text messages, email, or websites. Students must report any suspicion of cyberbullying/inappropriate activity to a teacher or administrator.

- ***Digital Footprint:*** A digital footprint a.k.a. digital shadow is permanent information that a student places on the web, normally through social media, and is both searchable and can be copied and used by others elsewhere. A digital footprint can be a blog, picture, comment, graphic, etc. that represents the reputation of the student based upon the participation of the student using web activities. These activities along with the digital identity create a web reputation or web profile. Students should properly represent themselves while online and should adhere to activities that will protect their reputation. Students should not provide personal information or monetary information to unknown or unsecure websites. **Be thoughtful in what you post online, as it will be with you forever and may have lasting negative consequences.**

## Notice of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of the Hamilton County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, 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 1972, Section 504; (2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; or (3) Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Mrs. Sheryl Randolph is the Title VI and Title IX coordinator for Hamilton County Schools. She may be reached by calling (423) 209-8654.

### **Discrimination is Against the Law**

TITLE VI: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in all programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance. *34 C.F.R. Part 100*

TITLE IX: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in all programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. *34 C.F.R. Part 106*

SECTION 504: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. *34 C.F.R. Part 104*

TITLE II: Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities. *28 C.F.R. Part 35*

Inquiries regarding grievances or compliance with Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 and Title II should be directed to: Hamilton County Department of Education or

<https://www.hcde.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=350278&pageId=730130>

Tennessee Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

710 James Robertson Parkway Andrew Johnson

Tower, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Nashville, TN 37243

<http://www.tennessee.gov/education/civilrights.shtml>

**A link to the Hamilton County Schools Calendar for 2023-2024 can be found [here](#).**