

Brown Middle School Handbook 2023-24

Our Vision

The *vision* of Brown Middle School is to ensure all students receive an equitable and meaningful education that challenges them to perform at their greatest potential so each one can experience a future without limits. As a faculty we commit to making all decisions with this vision in mind for the betterment of our students.

Our Mission

The mission of Brown Middle School is to promote students on to high school who are prepared for future learning and can successfully work toward college or a career. Because we believe that all students can learn and should have equitable access to great teaching and support, we will provide every child with:

- A safe and orderly learning space
- Meaningful lessons aligned to our State standards that challenge student thinking and push them to learn and grow
- Support that is timely and appropriate
- Activities related to both the academic and social-emotional needs of our students

To The Student

This handbook contains important rules and regulations pertaining to Brown Middle and other Hamilton County Schools. **You and your parents should carefully read this information and sign the student/parent acknowledgement on the last page of the handbook. This perforated sheet will then need to be returned to your Culture of Care teacher by the end of the first week of school.** We encourage you to become familiar with the contents of this handbook and keep it with you for reference throughout the school year. You will be held accountable for all rules and regulations listed within this book.

ACADEMICS:

Grading Policy

It is expected that parents monitor Power School all year since this is the main avenue by which to relay grades. Report cards will not be sent home at the end

of each quarter, but progress reports will can be viewed on PowerSchool every 3 weeks. Reminders will be communicated on the weekly call. Report cards can and will be printed out at the school when a guardian comes to the school to make the request and pick up the printed report card. Parents may access computers at Brown Middle School to check Power School at any time. Conferences may be set up by contacting your child's teacher or team leader. If you need PowerSchool login information, contact Mrs. McArthur, our Attendance Clerk.

Numerical grades will be used to report progress:

A 90 – 100 **B** 80-89 **C** 70 - 79
D 60 – 69 **F** 59 and below

To determine quarterly grades, the following formula is used:

- Homework/Classwork/Quizzes (Formative Assessments) – 50% of quarter grade
- Tests/Essays/Projects (Summative Assessments) – 50% of quarter grade

Final grades are the average of Semester 1 and Semester 2.

Make-Up Work

Excused absences (those meeting Board requirements) will entitle students to make-up work missed for full credit. Unexcused absences may result in reduced credit for completed make-up work. Make-up assignments will be provided by the teacher. Students shall have five (5) school days to complete these assignments. Request for make-up work is the responsibility of the student.

Promotion and Retention Guidelines

1. Promotion to the next grade level requires that a student pass Math AND Language Arts for the year AND another core academic class.
2. For promotion to the next grade level, students must pass three academic subjects and these must include *both* Math and Language Arts. If either Math or Language Arts alone or any two combined academics are failed, the student must repeat the grade or attend summer school.
3. A minimum yearly average of 60% must be obtained to successfully pass.

Recognizing Academic Achievement

Recognition of outstanding student performance is an ongoing process at Brown Middle School. Students are recognized for their achievement through the Honor and Star Roll. Students earning A's and B's and no U's in conduct, in all subjects, will be named to the **Honor Roll**. Students earning all A's and no U's in conduct will be named to the **Star Roll**. Qualifying students also have the opportunity to become members of the BMS BETA Club. Honor Roll and Star Roll recipients will also receive various incentives the following nine weeks for their hard work.

ATTENDANCE:

Absences

According to Hamilton County School Board Policy, **excused** absences are granted for the following:

1. Personal Illness – Doctor's note required
2. Personal Appointment (i.e.: Doctor / Dentist) – note required from the professional's office
3. Court appearance – court documentation required
4. Death in the immediate family – documentation required (parent, grandparent, sibling).
5. Religious holiday
6. Three (3) parent excuses for illness will also be accepted.

All documentation for excused absences must be sent to school within five (5) days of the student's return to school.

Excessive Absences

The law requires that school officials report to the court any parent, guardian, or other person in a parental relationship with a child who is unlawfully absent from school for any five (5) unexcused days during the school year. The student is then referred to the social worker.

Tardiness

Being in class is essential to student learning. This means not being late to school nor when travelling from class to class. For this reason, tardiness cannot be tolerated. Unexcused tardies will result in referrals to the office and appropriate consequences. Tardiness to school and class will result in a Saturday School placement after three unexcused tardies. Students arriving to school after 7:15 each morning must sign in with the Attendance Clerk (Mrs. McArthur) in the Attendance Office located within the main office.

Early Dismissal of Students

The following early dismissal guidelines exist for the safety of your child:

- No student will be released to an individual not listed on the student's emergency card.
- A valid picture I.D. must be presented by the approved individual wishing to dismiss any student.
- All visitors to the Brown Middle School campus will have their information run through the Raptor System to complete a background check for safety compliance.

TRANSPORTATION:

Bus Riders

Upon arriving in the morning, bus riders will enter the building through the front doors. All students will put their ear buds and phones away upon entry and hats will be removed from their heads. Any student wishing to eat breakfast will report to the cafeteria for breakfast and then will report to the gym when instructed to do so by the cafeteria monitors on duty each morning. Other students (not eating breakfast) must report to the gym and sit in their designated grade/team area. *No student will be permitted in the instructional areas before the first bell.* Dismissal of bus riders in the afternoon will be through the front doors or through teachers' exterior doors (where permitted). No one will remain in or re-enter the building unless under the direct supervision of a teacher. Students are not to leave the school campus while waiting on afternoon buses. Only bus riders are permitted in the front of the building in the afternoons.

Car Riders and Walkers

The building will be opened at 6:45 A.M. each day. Students should not be dropped off at school prior to 6:45 AM. Parents transporting children to school must use the traffic loop in the **upper parking lot** (near gym) for loading and unloading students. All car-riders must enter the gym and go directly to the cafeteria for breakfast or their assigned bleachers. At the end of the day, all car-riders and walkers must exit through the gymnasium. Any students not picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal will be accompanied to the front of the school building for pick-up. Supervision is not available for students after this time. *NO students may be dropped off or picked up in the lower lots near the main building.*

Violators are subject to citation by the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department.

BEHAVIOR:

Code of Acceptable Behavior

Students must adhere to a code of good behavior not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of others as well. All staff members will post and enforce the 3 BMS schoolwide rules / behavioral expectations. At the beginning of each semester, students will be trained on these 3 rules and what they look like in each area of the school. Each team and grade level will enforce the School-wide Positive Behavior System (PBIS). Rewards will be monitored and enforced by the team. The Administration of Brown Middle School will address extreme behaviors individually. Some specific District-wide guidelines include, but are not limited to:

ZERO-TOLERANCE Violations

- Possessing a firearm or an explosive, incendiary or poison gas device
- Unlawfully possessing, using, or selling illegal or stimulant drugs or drug paraphernalia (Over-the counter, prescription, and "look-alike" drugs may be dealt with in the same manner as illegal drugs).
- Committing battery (bodily injury) upon any teacher, principal, or any other employee of the Hamilton County Department of Education
- Threat by Electronic Device

The student violator will be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year.

Student Suspension

According to Hamilton County School Board Policy, reasons for suspension from school may include – but are not limited to – the following:

- Willful and persistent violation of the rules of the school **or** truancy
- Immoral or disreputable conduct or vulgar or profane language, fighting.
- Student refusal to provide their *proper name* when asked by an adult
- Violence or threatened violence against the person of any personnel attending or assigned to the school
- Willful and malicious damage to real or personal property of the school, or the property of any person attending or assigned to the school
- Inciting, advising or counseling others to engage in any of the acts listed above (or other school rule violations) including the use of social media to disrupt the learning environment at Brown Middle School
- Marking, defacing, or destroying school property
- Possession of a knife or other weapon(s) on school property, as defined in TCA 39-17-1301
- Possession of any chemical, such as tear gas or mace, which has the capacity to injure or render an individual defenseless
- Assaulting a school administrator or teacher with vulgar, obscene or threatening language
- Possession, use, transfer, sale, or being under the influence of alcohol
- Possession, use, transfer, or sale of tobacco products
- Any other conduct prejudicial to good order

Schoolwork missed during suspension must be made up.

Students suspended from school will be considered trespassing if they are on any Hamilton County school property prior to the end of their suspension.

Brown Middle School Discipline Plan

Major Offenses - Immediate office referral

(Consequences will be dictated by the COAB)

- Extreme and repeated disruption of instruction
- Fighting
- Bullying
- Profanity or extreme verbal assault directed toward staff or students
- Theft or intentional damage to school or another person's property
- Use of or possession of tobacco, alcohol, illegal substances, or weapon
- Violence or threatened violence toward staff or student

Consequences for Major Offenses:

(Admin will have final decision on consequence for major offense. Parent notification is part of each consequence)

- ISS/Suspension
- Choice Academy
- Saturday School
- Alternative placement
- Expulsion
- Cited to juvenile court

Minor Offenses - To be addressed through teacher & team interventions *adhering to the School-wide Positive Behavior Policy, but repeated offenses will become Major Offenses after 3rd time of same behavior*

- Classroom disruptions
- Tardiness
- Horseplay
- Failure to bring materials to class
- Dress code violations
- Vulgar/profane language w/o specific direction
- Disrespect

Consequences for Minor Offenses:

(teacher / team interventions)

- Redirection/warning/ Parent contact

- Classroom consequences
- Parent conference
- Behavior Contract
- Loss of privileges

Consequences for Minor Offenses (cont'd):

After following classroom & team intervention procedures, severe or persistent offenses will be referred to an administrator for Major Offense consequence.

Gang-Related Activities

Anything associated with gang activity – either directly or indirectly – will not be tolerated in Hamilton County Schools. Any clothing item(s), manner of personal appearance (i.e.: “showing right or left,” displaying “colors”), hand signs, gestures, drawings or notes which are perceived as gang-related are inappropriate and unacceptable on our campus or at any school-sponsored event. Any violation of this policy may result in immediate suspension from school.

Student Harassment / Bullying

- ALL forms of harassment – verbal / sexual / written / physical threats – will be treated seriously and may result in suspension.
- Sexual harassment toward any student by any individual associated with the school system or by other students will not be tolerated and will be dealt with severely. Sexual harassment is defined as any inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to: sexual advances, gestures, words / phrases of a specific or commonly accepted sexual nature, or inappropriate touching.
- Any alleged harassment / bullying should be immediately reported to the school guidance counselor or Resource Officer.

Horseplay

HANDS OFF!! Horseplay often leads to a real fight or an injury. Therefore it will not be tolerated. The excuse of “But we were just playing...” does not diminish the harmful possibilities of horseplay. Students engaging in such potentially dangerous behavior will be subject to suspension.

Cheating

Any student caught cheating in any form will receive another assignment to replace that assignment with the expectation that the assignment be done completely by themselves. Continued incidents of cheating may result in suspension to a parent conference.

Student Possession of Electronics / Cell Phones...

Students must put their cell phones and electronic devices --not provided by the school—in their locker at the beginning of the school day.

The consequences for violation of this policy will be as follows:

1st Offense: Phone/ electronic device confiscated and returned ONLY to a Parent at the end of the day or to the student after 3 days.

2nd Offense: Phone/ electronic device confiscated for 5 school days.

3rd Offense: Phone/ electronic device confiscated for 10 school days

*Any phone or electronic devices not picked up within one week after the last school day in a school year become the property of the school.

* Schools are not responsible for any theft or loss of any electronic device whether it is confiscated or in the student's possession.

*Brown Middle is not responsible for electronic devices that are lost or stolen at school.

Rules Governing Bus Riders

Students may only ride the bus to which they are assigned. In order to ride a different bus, students must have a signed and approved "Bus Transportation Permission Form". These are available in the front office and will only be signed with prior written approval from parents.

All Hamilton County and Brown Middle School rules are also in effect on school buses and at bus stops at all times. Drivers are authorized to enforce bus rules in order to best protect the safety of their riders. Bus video may be pulled routinely by the administration at BMS to help monitor bus safety. Students referred to the school for violation of bus rules will receive consequences up to and including suspension of bus privileges and / or suspension from school. All Bus Pass Requests must be addressed first thing in the morning through the

front office. Students attending Brown Middle School on a Hardship Transfer are not allowed to ride the bus to and from school.

Other Miscellaneous Behaviors

- *Displays of affection* (i.e.: holding hands, hugging, kissing, etc...) are inappropriate within the school setting, at school events or anywhere on campus.
- The following items are not allowed at school and **will be confiscated:** *Radios, recorders, televisions, hand-held video games, gambling paraphernalia, trading cards (and other collectibles), cameras, blankets, stuffed animals, and toys of any kind.*
- *Food and drink is not allowed in the classroom other than bottled water.*
- *Students must remain in their assigned area at all times.* Any student in the hall during class must carry a signed and dated pass from the teacher. Failure to follow these rules will result in a Saturday School placement.
- *Instructional time is important and protected.* Students will use the restroom as a class at a designated time escorted by their teacher.

General Information

Finances

There are no “school fees” charged to students at Brown Middle School. However, some class/school activities and publications may require a fee (i.e.: field trips, yearbook, etc.). Teachers and staff as is necessary will relay these fees to your child. Each child will be given an Agenda and a lock. **The cost to replace the lock is \$10. All students must have a lock on their locker.**

Field trips and Dances require payment by cash or a credit/debit card can be used on the OSP site. Refunds are not provided unless trip is cancelled. Dances that are postponed due to uncontrollable circumstances will be rescheduled, therefore no refunds will be given. Cash or a money order is required after May 1.

Cafeteria

A complete meal (breakfast and lunch) is available in our cafeteria on a daily basis and at no charge to students. A la carte items (i.e.: candy, chips, juice drinks) are also available on a cash-only basis.

Cafeteria Behavior Expectations while eating are posted throughout the cafeteria. These are expected to be followed in order to ensure a relaxed but safe environment for all students. Failure to follow expectations will result in students being re-assigned to eat on the stage. Further disregard of cafeteria expectations will result in Saturday School and/or Administrative referral. No food or drink should ever leave the cafeteria.

Dress Code

We have a standardized dress code at Brown Middle (a full page description follows this section of the handbook). In order to protect the learning environment at Brown Middle, no student will be allowed to attend classes if his/her attire does not meet the dress code. Any student out of dress code will call a parent to bring appropriate clothing and will be required to remain in ISS until the clothing can be brought. Students will be eligible for “Dress Down Days” throughout the school year as reward for positive behavior and improvement in academic performance. These days will be noted and students will be notified by their team teachers if they are eligible.

Library

The Library / Media Center is open for use by all students from 7:00 A.M. until dismissal. Books are checked out for two (2) weeks. Students are expected to return all materials – in good condition – on or before the due date. If a book is damaged or lost, the student must pay the cost of repair or replacement.

Medication

If prescription medication must be taken during school hours, the parent or guardian must secure a medication consent form (available in the front office) and have it properly completed. This form requires a physician’s and a parent’s signature.

All medications must be kept with the **school nurse** in the original prescription bottle. Medication will be dispensed according to doctor’s orders and after students have signed the medication log. An exception to this rule is **prescribed asthma inhalers**. These may be kept with the student at all times, provided that the medication consent form is on file in the main office. Over-the-counter medications (i.e.: aspirin, Tylenol, Benadryl, cough medicine, cough drops, etc…) will not be dispensed to students nor may students keep them. *Students possessing over-the-counter or prescribed medications on school grounds may be subject to Zero Tolerance violation.*

Extracurricular Events

At Brown Middle School, we offer numerous extra-curricular activities. These include athletic events, clubs, special celebrations and after-school dances. An admission fee may be charged for some of these. ***Students who are absent from school on the day of an extra-curricular event or receiving discipline may NOT attend that activity.*** Transportation to and from these events is the responsibility of the parent. ***Any student remaining on campus more than 15 minutes past the end of any after-school activity will lose the privilege of attending similar activities for the remainder of the school year.***

Parent Involvement

We encourage parent involvement at Brown Middle School. There will be plenty of opportunities to get involved during the school year. Some of these include, open house, parent nights, and celebration day volunteer opportunities.

Athletics

Brown Middle offers a full athletic program. Our sports for girls include: cross country, softball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, track, tennis and cheerleading. Sports offered for boys include: cross country, football, basketball, soccer, wrestling, track, tennis, and baseball.

Prior to participating in any sport, a student must have a complete physical by a doctor. Also, a *Hamilton County Sports Physical Form* must be completed and signed by the physician and the parents. *No student who is repeating a grade is eligible to participate in a sport for the entire year.* Student-athletes will be denied playing/practicing privileges if their behavior and/or academics become unsatisfactory during any particular sport's season. Decisions will be made by the administration on an individual basis.

Use of Telephone / Messages for Students

Students must have a pass from a teacher or administrator and must sign the phone log book in order to use the phone in the main office. Classroom instruction will NOT be interrupted for students to use the phone or for office staff to call students to the phone. Only emergency messages will be delivered to students in the classrooms.

Chromebooks

Chromebooks are furnished without charge. The cost of replacing a lost, stolen or damaged Chromebook is not cheap and is the responsibility of the student's guardian who signed for the Chromebook. For this reason, we highly recommend that every family seriously consider the insurance policy offered by the HCS sanctioned carrier. The current rate to replace a school issued Chromebook is more than \$400. In addition, students are also responsible for lost or damaged chargers. The current rate to replace a charger is \$30.

Lost Chromebooks must be paid for before a new Chromebook will be issued.

Visitors

We welcome parents and other visitors to our school. However, to protect the educational environment and ensure school safety, all visitors must check in at the main office and receive a visitor's pass before going into other parts of the building. A valid photo ID must be rendered before a visitor's pass is awarded. ***If a parent wishes to visit a class in session, we ask at least 1 day prior notice, so we may ensure that critical instruction or testing is not interrupted.*** When permission is granted to a parent to visit a class while in session, the parent/guardian is not permitted to interact with other students or teachers, but focus only on their own child.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Hamilton County Department of Education affirms that it complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Anyone who believes he/she has been discriminated against may file a complaint with:

Hamilton County Department of Education and / or
The Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
P.O. Box 2048, 04-3010
Atlanta, GA 30301-2048

BROWN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mrs. Karyn Cox, Principal
School Phone: (423) 344-1439

Mr. Elias Smith, Assistant Principal
School web site: bms.hcde.org

2023 - 2024 Dress Code

The purpose of a standardized dress code is to promote an environment that focuses on learning and safety. The required uniform for Brown Middle School is detailed below. In all matters of opinion, the judgment of administration will prevail. **ALL STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO WEAR BROWN MIDDLE SCHOOL SPIRITWEAR DAILY. It can be purchased at school or online.**

Pants: Khaki, Black or Navy. Cotton twill only. No leggings allowed.

Shorts: Khaki, Black or Navy shorts may be no more than “fingertip length” above the knee. Shorts must have a hem.

Shirts: Long or short sleeved shirts must be SOLID Purple, White, Black or Gray; Button-up or Polo style with collar or a BMS spirit shirt.

Outerwear: Fleeeces (**without pockets or hoods**), sweaters and BMS sweatshirts without hoods, ONLY, are permitted inside the classroom and must be Solid Purple, White, Black or Gray. All other outerwear(coats/jackets) must be put in lockers.

Shoes: Athletic or casual dress shoes only. **No** high heels, house shoes, slides, sandals, flip flops, or crocs.

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POINTS OF CLARIFICATION FOR DRESS CODE:

- All students must wear pants at waist level, and pants should be size appropriate.
- Hoodies may not be worn at any time while the student is in the building.
- No pictures or words allowed on outerwear. (Solid colors or BMS logo only).
- No sunglasses or non-prescribed glasses, hats/caps, bandanas of any kind, sleeveless shirts, tank tops or cropped tops may be worn.
- When wearing jeans, skin should not be showing.
- Blankets are not allowed on campus at any time.
- All students are allowed to wear jeans on Fridays if they wear a BMS spirit shirt.

BMS Learning Expectations

- B Be prepared**
- M Make smart choices**
- S Show respect**

We will discuss these expectations in depth at the beginning of each semester so that all students are fully aware of the schoolwide rules and what they look like in every area of our building and at all times during the school day. All teachers and staff members will uphold these three rules using the same expectations for all students.

I have read all content in this handbook and understand that these are the expectations that I will be required to uphold for the 2023-2024 school year as a student at Brown Middle School. I also understand that in matters of opinion, the decision of the Administration at Brown Middle School will prevail.

Student Name (printed) _____

Student Signature _____

1st period Teacher Name _____

Parent Name (Printed) _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____